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 Nigerians and their
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**Song, dance
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**NLC plans
 strike over
 deregulation**

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has got the needed instrument to go on strike whenever the Federal Government deregulates the petroleum sector.

In Yola, the National Executive Council (NEC) of the NLC yesterday, gave the leadership of the Congress, the authority to embark on strike whenever the Federal Government deregulates the oil sector.

The Vice-Chairman of the Congress, Mohammed Erena, disclosed this in an interview with newsmen, stressing that the government had been insincere with its position on the deregulation policy.

He explained that the government was deliberately creating petroleum scarcity to justify the deregulation of the sector, pointing out that "the position of President Obasanjo has been conflicting with that of the Information Minister on the deregulation of the oil sector."

He also expressed dismay over the wranglings between the Minister of Finance, Adamu Ciroma, and the Central Bank of Nigeria on the poor exchange rate, adding that "the government is not committed to its economic policies."

"The NLC Vice-President appealed to the government to be responsive to the yearnings of the people, and to check the inflationary trends particularly on the prices of foodstuff and other basic needs of the people.

Erena, however, commended the Obasanjo-administration "for enhancing the unity of this country."

He appealed to the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) to temper justice with mercy on its strike, "because it is the children of Nigerian masses that are schooling in this country."

He advised that the strike would also have "a negative effect on the lives of the masses, who do not have means to study abroad."

Ekwueme, Awoniyi, others boycott PDP meeting

As president Olusegun Obasanjo yesterday spearheaded a move to save the ruling Peoples

Democratic Party (PDP) from collapse, topnotchers of the party conspicuously absented themselves from

the gathering in what appears to be a major setback..

The meeting which was convened by the President in consultation with the Na-

tional Executive Council (NEC) of the party was not attended by Dr. Alex Ekwueme, Chief Sunday Awoniyi, Major-General David Jemibewon (former Police Affairs Minister), Alhaji Asheik Jarma and Alhaji Musa Musawa among other members of the PDP

board of trustees, which Ekwueme chairs.

A dependable source confided in *Daily Trust* that the meeting which was called at the instance of the President was hurriedly arranged and that invitation cards

contd. on pg 2



KUTA REPORT: Indicted Senators to vacate posts

Senate may reconvene today in a stormy session as the battle line has been drawn between Senate President, Pius Anyim's leadership, and the Senators indicted by the Kuta panel.

The session is expected to pressurise Senators indicted by the report to vacate their posts as either chaimen or vice chaimen of Senate

By Ibrahim Modibbo & Reuben Yunana

committees

Those in this category include: Senators Abubakar Girei, Deputy Chairman, Solid Minerals Committee; Gbenga Aluko, Deputy Chairman, Senate Committee on National Population; Florence Ita-Giwa, Deputy Chairman Senate Services Committee;

PDP resolves to enforce discipline, unite factions

The emergency national convention of the PDP convened by President Olusegun Obasanjo ended in Abuja yesterday with a resolution to revamp the party's waning image.

The meeting also resolved to unite all PDP factions and impose severe

sanctions on members found to be involved in anti-party activities.

Minister of Information and National Orientation, Prof. Jerry Gana, who is also Secretary of the party's board of trustees, told journalists that members who attended the meeting reaffirmed their faith in the fundamental

contd. on pg 2

20 varsities to forfeit N12bn ETF fund

Although the Education Tax Fund (ETF) plans to assist the country's education sector with N12 billion in its 2001 intervention programme, some major beneficiaries may lose their allocations, a record of the board's activities has shown.

The record shows that 20 universities, two polytechnics and two colleges of education, which had not accounted for the initial funds they received for the execution of the projects

contd. on pg 2

...yet to get N253m from NUC

An insight into why members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) have continued their strike emerged yesterday.

The National Universities Commission (NUC) is yet to disburse the N253 million which the Federal Government directed it to release for the payment of outstanding allowances of lecturers, the NUC Executive

contd. on pg 2



EX-THIS, EX-THAT: Former Senate Presidents, Dr. Chuba Okadigbo (left) and Chief Evan Enwerem (right) with Chief Chris Okolie at the extra-ordinary PDP meeting in Abuja... yesterday. Pix Kennedy Egbonodje

NEWS

FG bans officials from presidential jets

In an apparent move to save aircrafts in the presidential fleet, President Olusegun Obasanjo has restricted their usage by government functionaries particularly those travelling to countries serviced by commercial airlines.

The directive came on the heels of government's dogged efforts to buy new presidential jets for both the president and vice-president and principal officers of the

By Suleiman Mohammed

National Assembly.

Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Chief Ufot Ekaette gave the directive in a circular reg. No. SGF/OP/1/S.3/IV/348 dated April 19, 2001, addressed to Ministers, Special Advisers to the President, Service Chiefs, Inspector General of Police and the Head of Service of the Federation (HOS).

The circular, titled, "Use of Aircraft in the presidential

air fleet by government functionaries", noted with dismay that a number of government functionaries travelling within Africa had formed the habit of requesting for the aircraft in the presidential fleet even if such destinations are well serviced by commercial airlines.

"The practice is at variance with extant policy, which allows detailing of aircraft in the presidential fleet to only destinations within Africa not serviced by commercial airlines or are known to have difficult connections", it noted.

Indicted *contd. from pg. 1*

mended that all indicted senators be barred from holding positions including chairmanship of standing committees.

Another senator who might lose her seat is chairman, federal capital territory, Senator Khairat Gwadabe.

At the height of the crisis in the senate because of the Kuta report, Senator Mamman Ali had moved a motion for her removal for what he called non performance.

However, Senate President Pius Anyim had noted that the issue was not for debate but said as chairman of the selection committee, he would liaise with his members to look into the possibility of reconstituting the committee.

It is also expected that the leadership of the Senate may appoint other senators to head the committees.

Chairman, Senate Committee on Information, Senator Jonathan Zwingina con-

firming the development when he told National Assembly correspondents that "the leadership of the senate standing committees might be changed in line with the mood of the senate."

Immediately before the release of the report of the Harmonisation Committee and after documents and vouchers have been flying around the Senate alleging massive fraud running into millions of naira.

Last Friday, Senator Zwingina addressed senate correspondents where he announced the arrest of an aide of former Senate Deputy President, Haruna Abubakar for allegedly inducing an account staff to obtain vouchers pertaining to financial transactions in the Senate.

Irked by the scenario, the People's Democratic Party at an extra-ordinary session called by President Obasanjo, has set up a committee to reconcile the warring factions in the senate.

Ekwueme *contd. from pg. 1*

were not sent to important personalities in the party including PDP governors who declined to attend because they had not been officially invited.

But former chairman of the party, Chief Solomon Lar, former NADECO chieftain, Dan Suleiman, NMA chairman, Alhaji Lawal Kaita, Ango Abdullahi, Garba Nadama and Alhaji Ali Baba alongside Dr. Chuba Okadigbo who was invited on self-recognition to the meeting, were in attendance among other top members of the party.

In a brief speech at the occasion, President Obasanjo delved into the history of the party and stressed the need for a new focus, "re-energise, re-shape, reform and to make our party to become dynamic and effective as a party".

"I don't believe that there is anything that happened in the intervening period to change the basis for founding the party", he said.

The PDP national chairman, Eng. Barnabas Gemade

said the meeting was a follow-up to the national convention held 23 days ago, adding that it would afford the group, apparently under threat from emerging political associations to honestly examine themselves.

He referred to the March 30 convention, describing those who opposed the alleged plan to extend the tenure of the national executive as disgruntled elements in the party. He then advised that the meeting called by the president should form a cohesive platform in the face of new challenges.

The meeting which was later held behind closed doors at the International Conference Centre (ICC), Abuja, is expected to discuss among other things, the proposed five-year single term for the president and governors, the restructuring of the NEC of the party and the way forward in the emerging new political associations.

A similar meeting of the party is expected to take place in the six geopolitical zones of the country.

principles under which the party won the 1999 elections.

"We also resolved to go back to the basic principles of the party, in terms of the objectives that led to its formation and that all PDP governments at all levels must perform effectively," he said.

He expressed participants' worry over the dwindling economy of the country and the desire by government to work creditably, so as to reinvigorate the na-

in the 1999 intervention year.

The fund, which was established by a Decree in 1993 to assist in the rehabilitation of public education facilities through tax deductions from the profits of private companies, disbursed more than N8.2 billion to beneficiaries in 1999.

However, of the 36 federal and state universities, which shared the money, only 16 completed their projects, while the rest carried out only parts of theirs.

In the group of non-performing institutions are University of Lagos and Rivers State University of Science and Technology (RSUT), which have not accounted for the N17.7 million initially given to each of them.

The report showed that the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Delta State University, Abraka, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Lagos State University and University of Ibadan had accounted for

Secretary, Prof. Munzali Jibril, said in Abuja yesterday.

Two weeks ago, government ordered the NUC to source the fund and disburse to universities to resolve the current dispute between government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) over the restoration of standards in the university system.

Jibril told newsmen that the commission had requested banks to release the money from the interest that

As Nigeria prepares to host 25 world leaders, including former US president, Bill Clinton, for an HIV/AIDS Summit starting in Abuja tomorrow, there appears not to be any noticeable preparedness on the part of the host-government.

The usually elaborate preparations for visiting world leaders evident in the beautification of streets, pasting of posters or banners and restriction of movement in certain strategic places were not noticed as at the time of going to press, life went on normal physical pointer to

Low preparation for world leaders

By Halima Yakubu &

Austine Odo

the august event.

The International Conference Centre witnessed normal activities, except the extra-ordinary meeting of the PDP held there yesterday.

The story was the same at the NICON Hilton hotel where some of the dignitaries are expected to stay and major streets in the city show no evidence of the impending visits either.

Details of preparations for the summit appear hazy, except for an address over the weekend by Health Minister, Prof. ABC Nwosu in which he confirmed the attendance of former president Clinton as the Chairman of the summit with Libyan leader, Col. Mu'ammarr Ghaddafi, also attendance.

Also expected are the UN Secretary General, Dr. Kofi Annan, and Ghanaian President, Mr. John Kuffour.

PDP *contd. from pg. 1*

tional economy "and thereby touching the lives of ordinary Nigerians for good."

Gana, who reacted to the active involvement of many top notchers of the PDP in the formation of new political associations recently, declared the convention's resolve to restore party discipline and party supremacy to enhance a sense of direction at all levels.

"Discipline must be applied at all stages of the party

and that is why we resolved that all misunderstandings must be settled according to the party's constitution," he said and counselled members not to rush to the press, "on what we should regard as a family affair."

The PDP national chairman, Chief Barnabas Gemade, who announced that the summit also reaffirmed its vote of confidence in the leadership, said that participants agreed to focus more

on the discipline of party followers.

Chairman of PDP's Board of Trustees, Chief Alex Ekwueme, had withdrawn his leadership at the party's last convention.

Some of the members of the party's board of trustees were among those who initiated the formation of two new political organisations, the National Solidarity Association and the National Frontiers.

20 varsities *contd. from pg. 1*

their initial allocation, but had not justified the second disbursement of N23 million to each institution.

In the same category with the second group are University of Ado-Ekiti, Federal University of Agriculture, Umudike, University of Uyo, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria Defence Academy, Kaduna, and Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma.

Although six other institutions, including University of Benin and Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Efe, have advanced beyond the second stages of their projects, they may lose future allocations because they have carried out between 88 per cent and 91 per cent of work on their projects.

Similarly, two Polytechnics, two Colleges of Education and two state Ministries of Education failed to complete their projects for 1999.

Officials explained that because of the failure of the institutions to show proof of work done on their projects, the defaulting universities would not draw the maximum of N59 million allotted to each during the year, in addition to the allocation for the year 2000.

The report also stated that every defaulting Polytechnic would not draw the maximum N24.7 million allocated to it during the year, while each non-performing College of Education would not draw the total of N18.3 million assigned it in 1999.

Meanwhile, records have shown that none of the 18 universities which qualified for fund disbursement in the year 2000 intervention programme, has advanced beyond the second stages of their project.

In the polytechnics sector, four institutions have drawn the maximum N10 million due to each of them, last

year, while four others have not received any money from the fund because of their failure to account for the previous year's allocation.

Only the Federal College of Education, Obudu, Cross River, and the College of Education, Zuba, in the Federal Capital Territory, among the 60 Colleges of Education in the country, failed to receive any funds from ETF last year.

A senior official said that the fund had received N15 billion from the Federal Inland Revenue Service and disbursed N12 billion between last year and March.

He said that in the 2001 intervention programme, the fund planned to assist each institution with double the amount it received from last year.

Under the ETF intervention programme, each institution is expected to identify a project for funding by the fund.

NUC *contd. from pg. 1*

accrued from the universities stabilisation fund, which the NUC lodged with them.

He gave an assurance that the commission could afford the money and described the directives by government as a positive step towards resolving the current crisis in the university system.

Speaking on the review of the curricula of Nigerian universities, Jibril said that the exercise was aimed at ensuring that university graduates

were competitive in the modern world.

He stressed that the present structure did not encourage personal initiative by graduates.

He said that the review would not result in the limitation of admission spaces for students in the humanities, pointing out that with the granting of autonomy to universities, the institutions would have a free hand to determine their admission patterns.

The NUC executive secretary said that the commission was satisfied with the performance of private universities in the country in their adherence to standards, adding that there was no need to complain.

Jibril, however, warned that the commission would withdraw recognition to any of the private universities, which failed to subscribe to the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board for students admission.

NEWS

Contracts: FG to insist on engineering designs - Minister

The Federal Ministry of works and housing has stopped awarding contracts for federal roads, which are not accompanied with the engineering designs, the Minister of State for Works and Housing, Mr. Garba Ali, has said.

Ali told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) shortly after inspecting the 40km Vom-Manchock road, which is being executed at a cost of N2.9 billion, that the decision was taken because roads constructed without designs usually had serious techni-

cal defects.

Designs usually specifies the width of the road, thickness of the asphalt, points where bridges or culverts will be constructed the thickness and sizes of the culverts or bridges as well as other technical details designed to make roads withstand poor soil condition and flooding." He stressed.

He said that in future designs for all roads must be produced by competent engineering firms and that they would be scrutinised by officials of the ministry before contracts in respect of the

projects would be awarded.

"This is because this government does not just want to build roads~ but will like to construct roads that will not fail easily," all said, "we will adopt this approach in our efforts to rehabilitate all federal highways in the country".

He chided past administrations in the country for executing major road projects without designs, saying that many federal roads develop pot-holes or were easily washed away by flood because "standards were not set for the contractors to

meet".

The minister also said that henceforth, the use of consultants for all federal projects would be made mandatory and that the measure was part of the steps to ensure that high quality roads were constructed.

The new road, which starts from Vom, near Jos, passes through Ganuwari, the village of former minister of sports and youth development, Damishi Sango and terminates at Manchock, a town in Kaduna state.

One of the engineers supervising the project told the minister of state that Sango, who is very influential in the area~ was helpful in persuading the villagers to allow the new road to pass through their farms.

NEPA rejects Niger Republic's request for tariff review

NEPA at the weekend rejected Nigerien President Tandja Mamadou's request for a downward review of tariff on the electricity that Nigeria supplies to Niger Republic.

By agreement, Nigeria is obliged to supply electricity to West African countries through which the River Nigeria runs because the hydro-electricity dam on the River is located in Nigeria, making it impossible for those countries to dam the river for the same purpose.

The damming of River Niger, if done at a second point, will have dire consequences on the Kainji Dam, a principal power generation outfit for Nigeria, as the water left over will not generate power at installed capacity.

NEPA's Assistant General Manager for Public Affairs, Muhammad Mousa-Booth, quotes the power house's chairman, Sen. Liyel Imoke, as telling Mamadou, who hosted NEPA management in Niamey at the weekend, that a downward review was "simply impossible."

"In fact, the chairman

told the Nigeriens that the review they should expect is an upward review which will be effected when the quality of service improves," Mousa-Booth said.

Imoke assured Mamadou that NEPA was being restricted to reposition it to meet current high power demands of its customers and urged the Nigerien government to pay up its dues to enable NEPA to perform better.

Mousa-Booth, who described the trip as very successful, said Mamadou promised that Niger Republic would pay up its eight million dollars electricity debt.

Niger Republic also appealed for additional wattage and suggested a change in the routing of payment from London and Paris to the West African sub-region.

The NEPA spokesman said that Niger Republic also invited NEPA to participate on her privatization programme and hinted that NEPA had requested for more information to facilitate further discussions.

Shari'a: two singers receive 10 strokes each

Two praise-singers, Gambo Mai Bishi and Dauda Maroki, yesterday in Funtua received 10 strokes each for violating the Shari'a Legal System.

The Funtua Shari'a Court, presided over by the Alhaji Dahiru Dan'ayya, punished the singers for performing with their drums and trumpets in parts of Funtua town.

The offence allegedly contravened the local government's Shari'a by-laws.

The caning of the violators was conducted at court premises and was witnessed by hundreds of people, in-



Gov. Yar'adua including the singers fans.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) recalls that the Shari'a Court in Katsina recently remanded in prison custody, a renowned musi-

cian, Surajo Mai Asharalle, "for contempt of the Shari'a Court".

Mai Asharalle was brought before the court for performing in Katsina in violation of the Islamic Code, and was asked to stop it but he refused.

The artist bluntly told the court that he would not stop the trade "because it is my only means of livelihood with which I feed myself and family", and this stunned the hundreds of people who thronged the court premises to watch the proceedings.

For this, the court ordered him to be remanded in

the Katsina Central Prison for seven days, after which the musician was discharged after he apologised to the court and written an undertaking never to sing in the state again.

NAN also reports that because of the current clampdown on praise-singers and musicians in the state, most of them had moved to neighbouring Kaduna where they now earn a living.

Ondo deputy governor in accident, six hospitalised

Six persons were hospitalised on Wednesday when the Ondo state deputy governor, Mr. Afolabi Iyantun, was involved in a road crash while monitoring the conduct of the by-elections to the House of Representatives and state House of Assembly in Ilaje and Ese-Odo council areas.

One of the security aides of the deputy governor was in critical condition in the accident which occurred along Okitipupa-Igbokoda road, while the official back-up jeep, occupied by the state treasurer of the Alliance for Democracy (AD), Chief Victor Okunnuga, was badly damaged.

although Iyantun was not hurt, the jeep had a head-on collision with an oncoming pick-up van, as the driver of the jeep tried to overtake a car on the convey.

The incident occurred during a heavy rain at about noon, but the deputy governor's convoy was rescued and the victims taken to Okitipupa general hospital for treatment.

Efforts to speak with Iyantun proved abortive but an aide, who was in the entourage but pleaded ano-

nymity, attributed the cause of the accident to an alleged "over-speeding and recklessness on the part of the driver of the deputy governor's official car", adding that the heavy rain during the journey also made it impossible for the driver to notice the on-coming pick-up vehicle.

The hospital medical director, DR. E.A. Olawande,

was not in the office when a News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) correspondent visited the hospital, but a nurse on duty said that the affected security aides had been referred to the state

specialist hospital, Akure, for intensive medical care.

Meanwhile, the damage vehicles have been parked at the private residence of the deputy governor at Ode-Aye.



L-R: The Deputy Governor of Niger State, Dr. Shem Zagboyi Nuhu, Governors Segun Osoba and Alh. Abdullahi Adamu of Ogun and Nasarawa states respectively at the National Economic Council meeting held at the State House Abuja....last week. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje.

Imoke blames power outage on low water in dams

NEPA at the weekend blamed current power outages across the country on the low level of water in the nation's dams.

Chairman of its technical board, Sen. Liyel Imoke, however, assured that on-going rehabilitation of NEPA facilities would make this the last season when water level would affect power supply. Imoke, who spoke in Niger Republic when he visited President Tandja Mamadou, lamented that the dry seasons had led to a shortfall in water level and had "drastically cut down power supply."

NEPA assistant general manager for Public Affairs, Muhammad Mousa-Booth,

quotes Imoke as stating that thermal stations which would have been the back-up bases, were equally helpless because most of them were bad.

He further quoted Imoke

as saying that the units were being rehabilitated and maintained to take care of shortfalls in power generation.

The chairman said that none of the 18 units at Afam thermal station was func-

tional, while only three of the 20 units at the Delta thermal station were functional.

He said only three of the 10 units at Sapele Thermal Station were functional, while the Egbin Thermal plant

could boast of only four units out of its six units.

Imoke said that the two dead units at Egbin had a combined capacity of 440 megawatts, making them virtually indispensable.

20 varsities may forfeit N12 billion ETF allocation —report

Although the Education Tax Fund (ETF) plans to assist the country's education sector with N12 billion in its 2001 intervention programme, some major beneficiaries may lose their allocations; a record of the activities of the board has shown.

The record of the board made available to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) at the weekend in Abuja

showed that among the institutions were 20 universities, two polytechnics and two colleges of education, which had not accounted-for the initial funds they received for the execution of projects in the 1999 intervention year.

The fund, which was established by a decree in 1993 to assist in the rehabilitation of public education facilities, through tax deductions from

the profits of private companies, disbursed more than N8.2 billion to beneficiaries in 1999.

However, out of the 36 federal and state universities, which shared the money, only 16 completed their projects, while the rest carried out only parts of theirs.

In the group of non-performing institutions are university of Lagos and Rivers State University of Science and Technology (RSUT),

which have not accounted for the N17.7 million initially given to each of them.

The report showed that the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Delta state university, Abraka, Ahmadu Bello university, Zaria, Lagos state university and University of Ibadan had accounted for their initial allocation, but had not justified the second disbursement of N23 million to each institution.

NEWS

Fertiliser gulps N75m in Kano State – Commissioner

Kano State Government spent N74.1 million to purchase fertiliser and other farm inputs between 1999 and 2000, the state Commissioner for Agriculture, Alhaji Yusuf Ado Kibiya, has said.

Yusuf told newsmen in Kano yesterday that 4,077.75 of the 4,800 tonnes, allocated to the state for the 1999/2000 dry season farming scheme, were also received.

He said the state government, in order to revive agricultural production, spent N1.5 million and that it had

purchased 30 tonnes of improved wheat seeds, which were distributed to



Rabiu Kwankwaso, Kano State Governor.

participating farmers in the state.

Yusuf revealed that N2 million was spent under its agro-pest control and crops' protection programmes where assorted chemicals and farm implements were procured.

He said that 415 of the 40,000 irrigable hectares, belonging to the state government, located at Bunkure and Kadawa, were leased out to 2,003 beneficiaries while 140 bulls were purchased and distributed to farmers as loans.

N10 million monthly deduction hampers council's performance

The Chairman of Yola North Local government Council in Adamawa State, Alhaji Mohammed Attah, has decried the deduction of more than N10 million monthly at source from the Council's statutory allocation, saying it is affecting the performance of the council.

Attah made the disclosure in Yola at the

weekend, while conducting newsmen round the N32-million government lodge under construction.

"This money could have been channelled into providing amenities to the people".

He added that teachers in the payroll of the council did not tally with the deductions made in respect of their salaries and called for stoppage of such

deductions.

The Chairman also decried the attitudes of some state government parastatals toward the execution of the Council's projects, stressing that allocation of lands in the local government area to the state government had forced the council to site projects "at not-too-strategic locations".

Attah said that two clinics had been constructed by the council at N10 million for

Govt. sets up committee to probe causes of communal clashes

A high-powered Committee to unearth the immediate and remote causes of the recent communal disturbances in Quan-Pam and Wase Local government Areas of Plateau State has been constituted by the State Governor, Chief Joshua Dariye.

Dariye disclosed this while addressing a joint meeting between officials of the state government, local government Chairmen and the traditional rulers in Jos recently.

He said that the legacy of peace and tranquillity the state was known for was being threatened by avoidable communal feuds.

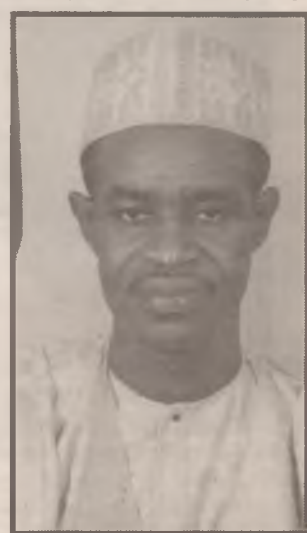
Plateau, once referred to as the home of peace and tourism, was recently plagued by communal clashes in which four people were killed in Kundun village in Quan-Pam Local Government Area on March 7, 2001 over a farmland while eight people lost their lives on April 14 in Nasarawa village in Wase Local Government Area over a farmland.

He said rather than channelling their energies on such unholy disputes the people should channel them toward gainful socio-economic activities.

According to him, communal disputes resulting from land and boundary problems were ill winds that blew nobody any good and as such, traditional rulers, Local Government Chairmen and security agencies, should close ranks and find lasting solutions to them.

He then called on Local Government Chairmen to carry traditional rulers and security operatives along with them while administering their areas so as not to create any vacuum while the chairmen travelled out of their areas. Dialogue rather than confrontation, he said, should be employed in tackling all matters that could be volatile, pointing out that peace could not be attained on a platter of gold.

The meeting, whose objective was to fine-tune security operations in the various Local Government Areas of the state and attain governments re-engineering programmes, later went into a closed-door session.



Bonni Haruna, Adamawa State Governor.

improved healthcare delivery system and to curtail the long distance search for a clinic.

"We have also solved the problem of Mambilla and Kala'a streets which are always water-logged by constructing wide drainages and feeder roads as a permanent solution," the Chairman said.

He described the projects as "people-oriented" because they directly affected the people and called on the State Urban Planning and other state government-owned parastatals to see the council as a partner in progress, which is operating towards achieving goals to better the lives of the people.

Some communities in Kebbi State have continued to use industrial salt for cooking in spite of efforts by the state government to discourage its consumption, the State Director of Nutrition, Alhaji Sani Yusuf, has said.

Speaking at a one-day seminar, organised by Nestle Foods Plc on nutrition in the state, Yusuf said that the state government had made efforts to discourage its consumption because of its harmful effects.

He gave the names of the affected local government areas as Bagudo, Arewa and Dandi, all situated along the border between Nigeria and the Republics of Benin and Niger.

He said that officials of the Health Ministry, in conjunction with local government officials, had raided local markets and seized industrial salt on sale

Some Kebbi communities use industrial salt for cooking

and organised enlightenment programme on the dangers of using industrial salt but to no avail.

"The people prefer the salt, possibly obtained from neighbouring countries, because of its sharper taste in soup," he said.

He warned that the prolonged use of the salt could lead to a disease called goitre, noting that the Ministry and local government councils would continue the enlightenment campaign and seizure of industrial salts found in markets in the areas.

Also speaking, the Managing Director of Nestle, Mr. Jean-Louis Chaumeil, commended the Federal Government for eradicating poverty through the new

special programme on food security (SPFS), saying, "We are, indeed, happy that one of the key components of SPFS is the promotion of good nutrition.

He said it was unfortunate that the high rate of poverty had impacted negatively on the productivity of the average Nigerian worker, influencing the income, economic growth and opportunities for the people.

Chaumeil stressed, "Nutritional deficiencies and chronic diet-related diseases affect millions of Nigerians, reducing their work output."

Experts in the field of nutrition, health officials, students and the public attended the seminar.

Lady Nwizu calls NPI to improve its services

By Tashikmah Hallah

The Comptroller-General of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), Lady Uzoamaka Nwizu, has decried the failure of the National Programme on immunisation (NPI) to extend its services to the border areas.

Lady Nwizu, stated this yesterday when the co-ordinator of NPI paid her a working visit. She lamented that most of the people living in the border areas have been neglected in such welfare services.

The Comptroller-General while charging the NPI to further intensify its coverage of the border areas, disclosed that the welfare of immigration officers and their families has been tremendously enhanced in the past one year.

According to her, "because the NIS has placed great premium on the welfare services of its staff all efforts are geared towards the completion of the Immigration

Village Pilot Project as well as the take-off of command building project in some states of the federation.

Lady Nwizu added that the Comptroller-General of Immigration Annual Conference scheduled for 24th and 25th April, 2001 is aimed at giving a voice to investors and stakeholders in the economy of the

Lawmaker enlightens electorates on Assemblymen's disposition

Disturbed by the notion that members of the National Assembly were selfish and careless about the plight of the electorate, a member of the Lower House, Hon. Abdullahi Matori, has begun an enlightenment campaign in his constituency, "to tell the people the true positions of things."

Matori, who represents Bauchi Federal Constituency, told his people in Bauchi at the weekend that the presidency was to be blamed over the non-provision of roads, boreholes and health centres in each constituency.

"The 2000 budget made provision for about N80 million for the amenities but President Olusegun Obasanjo failed to provide

the funds instead, preferring a new plane which the Lower House also rejected," Matori said.

He explained that the Lower House was willing to approve the purchase of a new plane for the President provided he included the provision of amenities to the constituencies. He said that the 2001 budget made provision for a 200-km road, three boreholes and a medical centre for each Federal Constituency and blamed the Presidency for failure to release the funds.

Matori said efforts were being made to convince the presidency to include the provision of amenities with the request for a plane because of the importance of the amenities to the electorates, "and I appeal to you to bear with the problems of the Lower House.



Prof. A.B.C. Nwosu, Health Minister.

country as it relates to the statutory duties of the Immigration Service.

Earlier in his speech, the National Co-ordinator of NPI, Dr. Awosika, disclosed that the NPI has extended its coverage to communities across the Nigerian borders in view of their daily interaction with Nigerians.

Dr. Awosika, however, expressed satisfaction with the conduct of the Immigration Service at the borders.



EDITORIAL

Parlous times

Last week the parlous state of our economy attracted the attention of the National Economic Council which called a meeting between Vice-President Atiku Abubakar and all the 36 state governors in Abuja. Also at the meeting were the governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, (CBN), Chief Joseph Sanusi, Finance Minister, Malam Adamu Ciroma, Special Assistant to the President on Petroleum, Alhaji Rilwanu Lukman as well as the Chief Economic Adviser to the President, Chief Philip Asiodu.

At about the same time in the House of Representatives, the Committee on Finance, the Finance Minister, and the CBN Governor traded blames over who was responsible for our plummeting economic fortunes and the massive inflation that has made life unbearable for the average Nigerian. The Finance Ministry said CBN was to blame which it said reported directly to the Presidency. On the other hand the CBN heaped the blame on the Federal Government, which it said, contrary to its advice, released large sums into the system from the petroleum windfall leading to the free fall of the naira against the US dollar.

The buck-passing aside, the state of the economy is serious enough. Indeed according to the chairman of the House of Representatives' Committee on Finance, Hon. Sanusi Daggash the economy is showing signs of collapse. The exchange rate is going out of hand and the fall of the naira is on a daily basis and no one in his right mind would watch the situation without taking positive action to check the slide.

In the banking sector, the Minimum Interest Rate (MIR) and Discount Rate and rising inflation have been a major source of concern. Inflation in particular rose from 2.5 per cent in July last year to 17 per cent in November and 20 per cent last January. Also, the MIR ranged between 14 and 16 per cent.

Experts attribute the high inflationary spiral to the release to states of the crude oil windfall and the upward review of such ongoing projects as the National Stadium in Abuja which was initially awarded at N38 billion but has risen to 100 billion with an additional contract award of N26 billion for electrical works. CBN officials specifically blamed the Federal Government for the ill-advised injection of excess funds. Although sources said the CBN, between March and April, tried to mop up excess liquidity in the system, actually mopping up 60 billion naira, its efforts came to nought in the face of jumbo fund injection by the Federal Government. Other measures the CBN took include the raising of minimum interest rate to 14.5 per cent in January, and increasing the cash reserve ratio to 12 per cent.

That all these fiscal measures have not yielded any positive result in checking the confusion in our monetary system tells a lot about the two years of this administration. A major source of the unfavourable response to treatment by the economy is low productivity. This is in turn caused by inadequate infrastructures such as electricity, water supply and roads among others. The unbridled rise in the exchange rate and inflation also ensured a negative the growth process.

The National Economic Council, which met for over three hours in Abuja, raised hopes that a drastic solution may be in the offing for the drastic economic ailment. But that hope too was dashed as the participants were ill-prepared to respond to the situation. The meeting broke without fixing a date to reconvene. All the spokesperson of the meeting could say was that the meeting was postponed to, "allow enough time for stakeholders in the economy to fully exhaust the issues and suggest ways of reviving the fast sliding exchange rate of the naira." And in the fire-brigade manner all things Nigerian are handled the NEC meeting will now be monthly.

Meanwhile, Nigerians are daily confronted with a declining purchasing power while prices of commodities, especially basic food items, are rising by the day. Also by the day they are further confronted with a rather confused and unfocused economic management where key officials are at their best only while shifting blame.

The Federal Government, halfway through its tenure, must now streamline its economic management machinery and prioritise its projects. A situation where one arm gives its expert advice and is ignored cannot inspire the needed commitment to carry through any economic policy no matter how well thought out.

Daily Trust believes the Federal Government should as a first step take measures to shore-up the value of the naira and improve the performance of our public utilities. This would enable local industries to produce, and set the economy on the path of growth and attract foreign investors.

TUESDAY COLUMN

Nigerians and their elected leaders

By Murtala Mohammad Aliyu

When Nigeria threw off military rule and restored democracy in 1999, the country's newly elected leaders immediately set their sights on eliminating the worst aspects of the old regime. They ended long lines at gasoline stations. They set about shoring up the country's crumbling infrastructure. They went to war on corruption and tried to balance the books. Two years later, the gas lines are back. The infrastructure is still a shambles. The latest government budget includes \$330 million for a national soccer stadium — more than will be spent on health or education. And Nigerians are wondering why the promising future is starting to look so much like the dreary past. When he took office in May 1999, ending 16 years of corrupt and brutal military rule, President Olusegun Obasanjo, a retired general, raised hopes at home and abroad that he would be able to make the tough choices necessary to revive the economy of Africa's most populous nation. He immediately made funds available to purchase fuel and ended the shortages that, even though Nigeria produces 2 million barrels of oil a day, had forced motorists to wait in long lines and led to massive blackouts, hampering the economy and impeding foreign investment. But those hopes have faded.

Gasoline lines have reappeared in recent weeks, and the electricity supply is dwindling, largely because politicians and former military leaders are siphoning off the fuel to sell at a 400 percent mark-up on the black market, according to diplomats, government officials and irate motorists. At the same time, Obasanjo not only included the new stadium in his latest budget but also allocated tens of millions of dollars for new jets for himself. The planned expenditures contrast sharply with Obasanjo's rhetoric during his first year in office, much of which was spent globe-trotting to seek relief from Nigeria's \$35 billion foreign debt while promising austerity and poverty reduction at home. Diplomats and politicians here say Obasanjo and other political leaders are gearing up for elections in 2003.

In their efforts to cement political alliances and win over various constituencies, they are allowing this nation of 120 million to slip back to the edge of economic collapse in a budget-busting binge characterized by a refusal to make potentially costly decisions on halting corruption and privatizing the vast, inefficient state-run economy. "This is what happens when you start running for re-election two years early: You can't make the tough choices," said a diplomat who follows economics. "You try" to give everyone something. It stinks politically."

Even Obasanjo's critics acknowledge that he inherited an enormous task, taking office with an empty treasury, billions of dollars of debt and an infrastructure that had suffered from decades of neglect. But there is growing concern at home and abroad that he is committing many of the same mistakes that helped Nigeria's military justify its last takeover, in 1983. While few say that the now discredited and demoralized military poses a threat to democracy; there is concern that a return to ostentatious government spending and the resulting lack of economic growth will fan the regional, ethnic and religious rivalries that constantly test the strength of the Nigerian federation. "People generally are disgusted," said Tunji Braithwaite, a lawyer and former presidential candidate known for his opposition to the military. "Things like the stadium are absolutely a white elephant, with no rational thinking. Corruption is surging, not declining."

It is criminal to have gas lines in this country, yet they are growing worse. "It is hard to see where this is going to end." Nigeria's immense population and prodigious oil production ensure that concern about the country's future extends far beyond its borders. "The United States views Nigeria as a vital ally in West Africa, a region beset by conflict in nearby Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea and political instability in Ivory Coast", U.S. officials said. And while the Bush administration has been largely silent on policy toward Africa, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell told the House International Relations Committee last month that "I think we can be sort of proud now as to the start that President Obasanjo has made putting his country back on the right path." But a State Department report released March, said Nigeria's economy is "static, with growth still impeded by grossly inadequate infrastructure, en-

democratic corruption and general economic mismanagement. The country's ports, roads, water and power infrastructure are collapsing." What economists, analysts and diplomats find especially worrisome is that the government has made so little progress in setting up a viable economic program at a time when oil prices have skyrocketed on the world market, providing millions of dollars in extra revenue. "The pervasive corruption so cripples the system it makes it impossible for any solution or formula to work," said Mofia Akobo, an environmentalist.

"What is worse is that Obasanjo appears to be totally unable to deal with the situation. It is a very tricky and dangerous situation for the country," he added.

Obasanjo recently joked that the fuel supply was "jinxed" and said he could do little to solve the shortages because the legislature had blocked all moves to deregulate the heavily subsidized price of gasoline, making smuggling inside and outside the country extremely profitable. Jackson Gaius Obaseki, director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corp., said in a report released recently that the fuel crisis was caused by an increase in demand for gasoline coupled with the fact that the nation's four refineries, hobbled by lack of maintenance, were operating at only 31 percent capacity. But gasoline is readily available all over the country. Busy intersections and gas stations are lined with young men openly displaying five-gallon plastic jugs full of fuel — available for four times the official price of 80 cents (N800) a gallon.

While most gas stations receive a limited amount of fuel to sell at the official price, tankers arrive at night and unload much larger quantities that are then sold on the black market, according to gasoline sellers. That is part of what makes people such as Emanuel Seuger so bitter. Waiting in a gasoline line that stretched a least a mile in the southern city of Port Harcourt, Seuger said he blamed the government for the problems. "I wait in line every day for at least two hours. Sometimes I lose the whole day or spend the night in line," he said, sitting in the cab of his pickup truck, inching ahead one car length every few minutes. "I blame the government for not being able to fix the problem. We have two refineries in Port Harcourt. How can we not have gasoline? I feel like I'm trapped in hell."

As for the budget's soccer stadium, Obasanjo has defended building a world-class facility for the nation's premier sport as necessary for the country to host international games. And "he has argued that Nigeria's aging fleet of official aircraft endangers the lives of those they transport. But economists and international analysts here say the new budget is not only wasteful, it jeopardizes a vital \$1 billion emergency standby loan authorized by the International Monetary Fund and seen as crucial to easing Nigeria's constant liquidity crisis. This is because the budget spends far more on projects such as the stadium than the government agreed to when it negotiated the loan. "We have an economy that has almost reached its capacity for inefficiency," said one diplomat.

Courtesy, Washington Post, through nrafindadi@yahoo.co.uk.

LETTER OF THE DAY

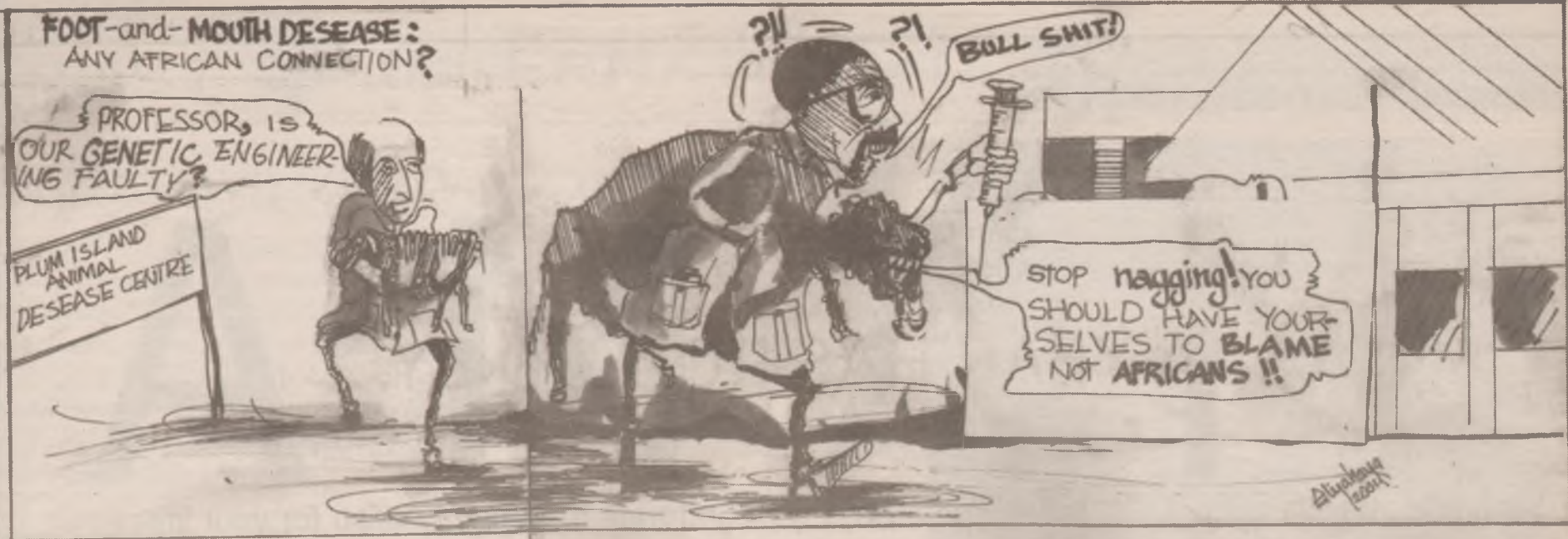
Reconstruct Katarko-Goniri Road

I want you to publish this letter in your widely read newspaper, in order to save the lives of many people.

The contract awarded for the construction of Katarko to Goniri road is a good gesture to the people of Gujba Local Government in easing the peoples' transportation problems, but it is a failure in the sense that the road has many sharp bends which may lead to accidents living some with injuries and others dead. What I want the government of Yobe State to do is to construct the road by straightening the bends or else construction will lead to destruction.

Abubakar Borma
Mubi, Dept. of Engineering
University of Maiduguri
P.M.B. 1069 Maiduguri,
Borno State

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YOUR LETTERS

Re: Obasanjo and 2003, the incumbency factor

Dr. Tilde's discourse on Agenda 2003 (Obasanjo and 2003, the incumbency factor in 2003) *Weekly Trust* March 16, 2001, was brilliantly articulated and extremely interesting.

I quite agree with all his postulations. However, in defining the attitudinal possibilities of the Northern electorates vis-à-vis Obasanjo's *Tazarce*, Dr. Tilde forgot to

mention that the Northerners are not really ignorant and indolent. Their seeming meekness and resignation to every kind of intimidation and oppression is as a result of their appreciation of the realities on ground.

This can be understood more if we recalled what had taken place during the Abacha years. While the southern youths and their elders were busy organising a million-man

march rally, at the height of the era of sycophancy; and the Niger-Deltans were foolishly engaging the Federal security forces in an apparent self-defeating suicide mission; and the so-called pro-Democracy activists were unashamedly campaigning for deadly sanctions, from the western nations as a result of their frustration; the Northerners were calmly invoking God for Divine

intervention. Who wins? Certainly, every body knows the answer.

I also agree that history does not necessarily repeat itself. But let it be known that we have resorted to our intrinsic pastime. During this year's Hajj, we organised a prayer session in the Holy land

passionately invoking Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Ta'alah*) to keep our country together and in peace. We also invoked Him to intervene and punish those who betrayed, marginalized and oppressed us. Despite their enormous loot, may He deprive them and their

collaborators a repeat of their 1999 success; and may He repeat for them and their *Tazarce* Agenda what He did to the Abacha's *Tazarce*.

Need we say who will win Again?

Hassan Sani Indabawa, No. 6A, Ahmadu Bello Way, Nassarawa G.R.A., Kano.

Daily/Weekly Trusts must not die

Weekly Trust made its debut at a time when the North was under heavy attack from the Southern press and was in dire need of a medium through which to counter the negative reporting it was suffering.

Before the advent of *Weekly Trust*, there was

a dearth of newspaper reading culture in the North due to the near extinction of newspapers and magazines published in the area. But the debut again of *Daily Trust* out of *Weekly Trust* stable shows Media Trust's determination to face the realities of its immediate environment.

The papers, however, must not be allowed to go the way of their predecessors. The Northern public have the responsibility of keeping them on the newsstand through patronage and contribution to their pages by our elites and academics.

Isa Sanusi, Gashua, Yobe state.

WAEC, stop rejecting passport in hijab

Permit me the use of your medium to call on the management of the West African Examination Council (WAEC) to stop rejecting passport taken with hijab.

I accompanied my sister to submit her completed form in one of the offices and after

cross-checking the form, the officer in-charge told us that everything was okay but that we must retake another passport saying, "we don't accept any passport snapped in hijab irrespective of how good it looks".

I am, therefore, calling on the management of the council to reconsider

this rule, as the use of hijab is compulsory for all Muslim ladies.

I am also calling on the federal government to intervene as this policy infringes on Muslims' right of worship.

By A.M. Usman, 18, Ibrahim Taiwo Road., Kaduna.

Gear-up, Media Trust

I am a regular reader of your newspaper *Daily Trust* to contribute to this page. Your success could not be something on the spur of the moment but as a result of diligent and assiduous work. Therefore, the rapid assimilation of the paper

into the mainstream of Newspaper Industries in Nigeria is magnificent.

However, more effort should be put in, in order to make your reports more incisive, balanced and investigative.

Cheers! *Daily Trust* and more grease to your elbows.

Kabir Abdulkadir, No 574, Yan Gwanjo Katak Market, Jos, Plateau state.

Dear readers,
We welcome contributions/reactions to this page through our e-mail address below:
e-mail: dailytrust@yahoo.co.uk
Editor

Mr. President, this is a democracy

President Olusegun Obasanjo should reconsider his deregulation policy for the following reasons:

That he was once a military Head of state of Nigeria and, therefore, should have had the opportunity to know what Nigerians like and what they dislike.

Mr. President was jailed for unjust course, tortured and humiliated, hence, one assumes he would reason along with the Nigeria Labour Congress in its fight to alleviate the suffering of

Nigerians in the midst of abundant human and natural resources in the county.

In a democracy, a president should not threaten and insist on implementation of unpopular programmes and policies at the expense of the majority. He should listen to the voice of reason.

Mr. President should not be deceived that Nigerians are comfortable. This is one of the hardest times in the history of Nigeria. Nothing is easy and

forthcoming except the air we breathe.

Mr. President should not be deceived by the sycophants around him into thinking that all is well but should look inwardly and retrospectively. We want to see and feel the difference between the military and civilian administration in Nigeria. Though it may be too early, one year should be enough for Nigerians to begin feeling the impact of democracy.

P.T.Y. Dalli, 5b, Rimi drive, Kaduna.

Kudos to Gov. Yar'adua

Allow me the use of your medium to thank the government of Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'adua of Katsina state for making the dream of the people of Mani a reality by the tarring of Katsina/Mani road.

Mani, an ancient Hausa community which once serves as

Trasn-Sharan Route has been without good road network, potable water, Health care facilities and other basic amenities due to neglect by successive administration in Katsina state.

It is therefore, a dream come true for the PDP-led government of Alhaji Umaru Musa Ya'radua to have make

the construction of this road its priority. While wishing him good luck and Allah's blessing, we wish to say we are grateful to be associated with the PDP government under the exemplary leadership of governor Umaru Musa Yar'adua.

Mani concerned citizens, Mani, Katsina state.

M A M A

A YEAR HAS ROLLED BY... A

We remember you today and always with gratitude to Almighty Allah for your life

Children

Prince Mustapha Ademola and
Alhajas Risikat/Kudirat Kekere-Ekun

Dr. Tajudeen Ayodele Kekere-Ekun and
Alhaja Munirat Kehinde Kekere-Ekun

Mr. Abdul Lateef and
Mrs Lateefat Biola Kekere-Ekun

Rtd. Commodore Abdul Rasaq Abiodun
and Alhaja Risquat Titilayo Davies

Mr. Bashir Olusegun and
Rafat Olajumoke Kekere-Ekun

Mr. Abdul Fatai Akintola and
Hon. Justice Kudirat Olatokunbo Kekere-Ekun

Mr. Nurain Olukayode and
Mrs. Shakirat Morinola Anjorin

Alhaja Kudirat Agosto (Sister)
for Brothers and Sisters

Grand Children and Great Grand Children

Prayers by:

Ansar-ud-Deen Society of Nigeria(Division2)

at her residence

**1, Efunboye Street, Off Shylion Str,
Palmgrove, Lagos at**

11:00 a.m, on

Tuesday 24th April 2001.



Alhaja Sidikat Adunni Kekere-Ekun

(12/5/1920 - 24/4/2000)

How Buyoya survived coup attempt

On April 18, a little-known lieutenant, Lt. Gaston Ntakarutimana, overran the Burundian state radio in Bujumbura and announced he had seized power. From far away Libreville where he was negotiating with ethnic Hutu rebels, the Burundian president, Pierre Buyoya rang former South African president, Nelson Mandela and assured him that he was in control.

Not a few people swallowed his position, then, with a pinch of salt. Now, we know better. Loyal forces foiled the coup even while he was away.

Gitau Warigi of The Nation newspaper based in Nairobi, Kenya contributes this piece on the power play in Bujumbura

Burundi's President Pierre Buyoya is not ruling out a wider conspiracy behind last Wednesday's attempted coup and has ordered a commission of inquiry to fully investigate the affair.

In an exclusive interview with the *Sunday Nation* on Saturday, President Buyoya also did not rule out complicity by what he termed "elements" opposed to the Arusha peace accords and to his government's policy of negotiations with Hutu rebel leaders.

"According to some indications that have come out, the incident [coup] was like an isolated case. But it shows that there was a group of mutineers who might have been helped by other people," he said.

President Buyoya was in Libreville, Gabon, when a little-known junior officer, Lt Gaston Ntakarutimana, took control of Burundi's national radio station with several dozen soldiers of his platoon and announced the overthrow of the government.

But within hours, loyal forces had surrounded the radio station and began the process of flushing out the coup plotters, who finally surrendered towards midnight on Wednesday.

Army spokesman, Col Augustine Nzabampema, told the *Sunday Nation* on Thursday that the situation had been "fully" contained and that initial investigations suggested that Lt Ntakarutimana had acted on his own and not as part of a bigger conspiracy in the military. Nobody was killed in the attempted putsch, he offered.

"We have looked into his past and what we have come up with is a picture of a very troubled man," said the Army spokesman. According to other sources in the civil service, investigators had unearthed notes from his apartment on a draft presidential speech dating back to 1998, when the lieutenant was in the military academy.

"He was dreaming of being president even then," commented one officer.

In Bujumbura, news of the coup was received with apprehension. Most shops were closed, people rushed back to

their homes, and the streets were quickly emptied of traffic.

Firing could be heard coming from the direction of the radio station, where the confrontation between the loyalist forces and the coup makers was largely confined.

But there was little outright panic, only a mood of quiet resignation. "We, Burundians, are used to this kind of thing. We just pray whoever takes over does so without much bloodshed," commented

emerged indicates that Lt Ntakarutimana was not supported solely by members of his small platoon but that recruits in the military academy located in Bujumbura also tried to come to his aid.

Col Nzabampeina admitted that a group of the recruits had been intercepted as they made their way to the radio station, but he claimed that after interrogation it turned out "they didn't understand what was happening". No other vital

According to other sources in the civil service, investigators had unearthed notes from his apartment on a draft presidential speech dating back to 1998, when the lieutenant was in the military academy

Monique Kayeye, 22, a receptionist at the Le Doyene Hotel located in central Bujumbura.

Information that has since

installation besides the official radio station was targeted by the coup plotters. Private radio stations, which are many in Bujumbura, went on



Pierre Buyoya

undisturbed. In the period when official radio had been captured, the military relied on the private stations to counter the message of the coup.

The implications certainly were not lost on Burundians that the liberalisation of the airwaves and the profusion of private radio stations will undermine the classic coup maker whose effectiveness depends on him being in control of a centralised, usually State-owned, broadcast machinery.

President Buyoya would not be drawn on the fate of the coup plotters. But military sources said a military court would try the culprits after investigations are completed. A civilian in the Public Prosecutor's office has

been named to head the commission of inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the coup attempt.

"I think the political meaning [of the coup attempt] is quite clear, Buyoya told the *Sunday Nation* at his Bujumbura residence. "Within Burundi society there exists an opinion that has always been against negotiations and change, but it is a minority opinion. This kind of attitude is to be found in all reforming societies."

There are simmering resentments in powerful sections of Burundi society, especially within the Tutsi elite, over Buyoya's readiness to pursue negotiations with leaders of the armed Hutu rebellion.



Former South African President Nelson Mandela speaks as President Clinton listens with African leaders and Burundian peace negotiators in Arusha, Tanzania, August 28, 2000.

TRUST  INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA & THE MIDDLE EAST



Members of the South African National Association of People Living With HIV/AIDS protest outside the offices of a pharmaceutical company in Johannesburg, April 16, 2001.

Kenya to legalise cheap AIDS

drugs

Kenya has drafted a bill to legalise the import of cheap generic HIV/AIDS drugs, the government has said.

Health Minister Professor Sam Ongeri said brand-name drugs protected by "unrealistic" laws are "unaffordable".

He said the law would not violate patent-protection provisions of the World Trade Organisation, of which Kenya is a member.

Professor Ongeri's announcement comes only days after a group of pharmaceutical companies dropped a lawsuit to prevent South Africa from importing

generic AIDS drugs.

Thirty-nine drugs companies that were contesting the South African law unconditionally dropped their case last Wednesday.

Professor Ongeri said that 700 Kenyans died of AIDS each day, and that 2.2 million people in the country were infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

He said up to 50% of hospital beds in the country are occupied by AIDS patients.

The drugs companies had taken the South African Government to court in an attempt to block legislation which gives it powers to import or manufacture cheap versions of brand-name drugs.



Kenyan President Moi

The World Health Organisation and the International Aids Society, which represents specialist AIDS doctors and researchers, welcomed the legal settlement.

UN team not satisfied with Liberia

As the 7 May deadline for the coming into effect of the UN sanctions on Liberia draws near, current efforts by Monrovia to avert the sanctions may have failed to impress the UN team that visited the country last week.

Sources close to the UN Security Council's Sanctions Committee, which visited Liberia and other West African countries as part of efforts to verify Liberia's compliance with measures aimed at averting the sanctions, told *Pan African News Agency*, PANA, that the UN team was not impressed with what it saw.

"I think Liberia can start bracing up for the sanctions, because the team was not impressed with the measures so far taken by the country to avert them (sanctions)," the source said.

During its weeklong trip to the sub region, the committee visited Guinea, Sierra Leone, Mali and Liberia where they discussed the situation in the three Mano River states and the sanctions issue with the presidents of those countries.

Led by the Sanctions Committee Chairman, Singa-



Taylor

pore Ambassador to the UN, Kishore Mahbubani, the team also met with Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo in Abuja and visited the ECOWAS Secretariat.

It is expected to submit a report on the visit to the Security Council.

By resolution 1343 on 7 March, the UN slammed sanctions on Liberia, accusing the country of supporting the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in its 10-year war against the government of Sierra Leone and using the rebels against other countries in the area.

The sanctions, whose take-off date was delayed for two months at the request of

ECOWAS, may include a travel ban on the leadership of the country.

Liberia has been under a UN arms embargo since 1992.

The resolution requires Liberia to expel all members of the RUF from the country, cease financial and military assistance to the rebels and end direct or indirect import of Sierra Leone's rough diamonds not regulated through the Certificate of Origin regime.

Other aspects of the resolution requires Liberia to freeze funds or financial resources operated for the benefit of the RUF and ground all Liberian-registered aircraft until the country's register of aircraft was updated.

Liberian President Charles Taylor is required to help ensure that the RUF allowed the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) to deploy unhindered across the country.

Liberia said it had met all the conditions stipulated in the resolution.

An ECOWAS verification team has also visited Liberia to monitor its compliance with the measures.

Palestinian group admits suicide bombing

A Palestinian group, the Popular Army Front, has said it was behind a suicide bombing in which two people were killed and more than 40 injured in Israel.

Israeli police believe that one of those killed in the bus stop attack in the Israeli town of Kfar Saba, north of Tel Aviv, was the suicide bomber.

A PFA statement, which could not be verified, said the bombing fell near the anniversary of Israel's 16 April assassination in Tunis of Khalil al-Wazir, the Palestine Liberation Organisation's military chief, also known as Abu Jihad.

A spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said earlier that Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority bore full responsibility for the attack and said the culprits would "pay the price".

Raanan Gissin accused the Palestinian security forces

of "aiding and abetting and supporting the terrorist activity".

The Palestinian Authority denied the charge.

"We reject the Israeli accusations that put responsibility on us for the explosion this morning at Kfar Saba," Tayeb Abdel Rahim, secretary of the Palestinian presidency, told the news agency AFP.

The blast happened near a bus stop at about 0900 local time (0700GMT).

Eyewitnesses say the suicide bomber was trying to get onto a bus when he detonated the explosives.

"When the bus got to the stop, a suicide attacker stood next to it and activated a device," central district police commander Yehuda Bachar told Israel Radio.

No group has yet said it carried out the attack, but the Islamic militant organisation Hamas described it as an act of self-defence.

Hamas, which carried out

a similar attack in Kfar Saba three weeks ago, on Friday threatened resistance to what it called Israeli occupation "by all available means".

Kfar Saba, near the West Bank, has been the site of several recent bombings.

A suicide bombing in the town on 28 March left three people - the bomber and two teenagers - dead and a number of schoolchildren injured.

One person was injured when two explosions struck the town eight days ago.

Israeli opposition leader Yossi Sarid postponed a planned meeting with Mr Arafat, originally scheduled for Sunday night, following the explosion.

"It's forbidden to let terrorists dictate our agenda, but when there are victims and injured, it is difficult to talk and one must take account of the grief," Mr Sarid told public radio.

The attack came shortly after a meeting between Israeli and Palestinian security officials ended with conflicting reports on whether progress had been made.

Israeli sources said they had reached agreement on putting in place new measures to end nearly seven months of violence.

But the chief Palestinian negotiator at the meeting, General Abdelrazeq al-Mjadada, said Israel's response to Palestinian concerns about territorial incursions was insufficient.

Shortly after the meeting, the badly beaten body of a Jewish settler was found in the West Bank town of Ramallah. Police believe the attack was politically motivated.

More than 460 people have died since the Palestinian uprising began last September - the vast majority of them Palestinians, but also at least 70 Israelis.

Iranian court sentences 100 rioters

A court in Iran has sentenced 100 people put on trial following last year's riots in the provincial city of Khorramabad.

Some have been given prison sentences ranging from a few months to five years, others have been fined.

The riots were sparked when opponents of reform took to the streets to stop a national students conference being held last August.

Several days of violence followed during which a policeman was killed. Many other people were injured.

The violence also left an aftermath of bitter recrimination between the reformist and conservative political factions.

Three separate official inquiries blamed different quarters for the disturbances.

They were triggered when hardline right-wing militants disrupted an attempt by two liberal figures to address the annual student gathering.

About 150 people were later arrested and put on trial. Reports say 50 of those are still being investigated by the judiciary.

It is not clear whether all those convicted are from the student side or whether some are from among the hardliners who attacked and besieged the airport when the two would-be speakers arrived.

The deputy interior minister, Mustafa Tajzadeh, who was in Khorramabad at the time, described the hardliners as fascists and demanded their prosecution.

But he, himself, has been put on trial over the affair.

Gunmen kill doctor in Nairobi

Gunmen shot dead a doctor in a Nairobi estate yesterday morning as he left his business premises.

Dr James Mwaniki was killed at the Maringo shopping centre by a gang of four, who also snatched 12,000 Shillings from his wife.

The incident occurred outside the surgeon's New Maringo Cafe. He died on his way to Mater Hospital.

Dr Mwaniki, a renowned surgeon and paediatrician, operated two clinics on Outer Ring and Kayole estates.

Nairobi Provincial police chief Geoffrey Muathe said the gangsters appeared to have targeted Dr Mwaniki as they did not steal his Mercedes Benz car. He said the group was suspected to be

a hit squad involved in various killings in Nairobi's Eastlands.

Recently, gunmen stormed into a Kayole shop and shot dead Mr James Ongati. They escaped without stealing anything. They allegedly gained access through a backdoor. Similarly, a woman was killed in Mlango Kubwa, Mr Muathe said.

"We believe some elimination squads are on the loose," he told the *Sunday Nation* by telephone.

In the city's Huruma Estate, a motorist was critically injured by a gang of six who carjacked him.

Mr Muathe said Mr Francis Mbau, a Huruma beer distributor, had slowed down on the bumpy Juja Road when he was ordered to surrender his car keys.

He was shot twice in the stomach. However, his driver, Mr Francis Gatheri, was unharmed. They escaped in his vehicle.

A member of a gang associated with the six who operate from the Korogocho and Mathare slums, police said, was killed recently as they attempted to raid a supermarket.

Elsewhere, four people were arrested and a machinegun with nine rounds of ammunition recovered. Two of them, passengers in a Nairobi-bound bus, were arrested at Nyamakima after a tip-off.

The suspects took police to a house in the Korogocho slums where two accomplices were arrested.

Investigations would be extended to other towns, police said.

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

World Report

Manh, new Vietnamese leader

The Vietnamese Communist Party has elected, Nong Duc Manh, as its new secretary-general, the country's most powerful leadership post.

Mr Manh, currently chairman of the National Assembly, replaces 70-year-old Le Kha Phieu, who has been forced to step down.

Mr Manh, 61, is the country's first secretary-general with no direct experience of Vietnam's long wars for independence.

In his first news conference as party leader, he said he wanted Vietnam to be an industrialised country by the year 2020. He also promised to crack down on corruption.

The announcement of his promotion came on the fourth and final day of the Communist Party Congress in Hanoi.

"We must fight against negativeness - especially bureaucracy, corruption and wastefulness," Mr Manh told delegates.

He told reporters he had been elected by secret ballot and there had been more than one candidate.

Mr Manh, a trained engineer, is the first secretary-general with a university degree.

He started his official life in provincial government, before joining the politbureau at the seventh Party Congress in 1991.

A member of the Tay minority, Mr Manh's first taste of high office was as head of

the party committee for nationalities, where he fashioned ethnic policy.

Analysts say his expertise in this regard may stand him in good stead following recent violent unrest among Vietnam's central hill tribes.

Otherwise, they see him as something of a dark horse politically, but one who presents a much more modern image for the party.

He is well-dressed and articulate, and has visited the United States once - in stark contrast to the man he replaces, who had never travelled abroad when he came to power.

"Mr Manh certainly comes from the professional, rather than the ideological side of the party," says the BBC.



Nong Duc Manh hugs his predecessor, Le Kha Phieu at the closing ceremony of the 9th Communist Party Congress in Hanoi, on Sunday.

Colombia probes arrested drug baron

Colombian police are investigating allegations that a notorious Brazilian drug baron arrested in Colombia had links with left-wing rebels.

If links are proven, it would show the guerrillas are processing and exporting drugs and are therefore drug traffickers.

That would put the entire peace process between the Colombian Government and the FARC, in its third year, in jeopardy as President Andres Pastrana has always maintained he will never negotiate with drug dealers.

Mr Pastrana said the FARC would have to demon-

strate that they were not involved in drugs trafficking.

"Otherwise there will not be any international support for the peace process," he said.

The FARC claims it only raises money through levying a tax on peasants who

grow coca plants - from which cocaine is made - but it denies it operates as a drug cartel.

Washington is providing hundreds of millions of dollars in military aid to train Colombian anti-narcotics troops who operate in rebel-dominated areas.

Gunmen storm Turkey hotel —take guests, staff hostage

Heavily armed Chechen gunmen have stormed one of Turkey's most luxurious hotels and taken some 30 guests and staff hostage.

At least 20 gunmen burst into the lobby of the Swissotel in Istanbul late on Sunday night, firing automatic weapons into the ceiling. Reports say they have taken their hostages to a fifth-floor conference room.

The gunmen are assumed to be protesting against Russian military action in the breakaway republic of Chechnya, and have asked to see the Turkish Interior Minister Saadettin Tantan.

Hundreds of police surrounded the hotel yesterday morning, while the area was sealed off.

The Turkish authorities, who have been negotiating with the gunmen, said they have made "political demands".

"We are doing everything possible," Istanbul governor Erol Cakir said.

Some guests escaped from the hotel through the fire exits. "There were tourists in the lobby at the time, including a woman," said a guest who managed to run out of the hotel.

Witnesses said that guests screamed and ran as

the attackers burst into the hotel.

A man visiting guests in the hotel said: "They were dressed in black and there were shots. I ran out immediately."

Hotel workers said they heard gunshots, but it is not known whether anyone has been hurt.

"The hostage takers are behaving well. Those who need the toilet can go," a hotel employee told the Turkish NTV channel by mobile phone some four hours into the siege.

One of the group con-

ODD WORLD

US schools seek teachers

Shortage of teachers is troubling schools in the United States as well as in England.

It is estimated that schools in the US need to find an extra two million teachers in the next 10 years if they are to replace those retiring, and to cope with projected increases in pupil numbers.

As well as initiatives such as encouraging former military personnel to re-train as teachers, school authorities are also looking overseas for new recruits.

While in England schools have tended to recruit staff from Commonwealth countries, such as Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, in the US schools have recruited from a wide range of countries.

These have included regions such as Eastern Europe, South-East Asia, Central America and the Pacific Rim.

In Philadelphia school authorities are seeking to recruit teachers from Spain and India with science and maths teachers in particular demand.

What will also be familiar from recruitment difficulties in England is that struggling schools, particularly those in more deprived areas, have greater problems finding staff.

Qualified teachers in the area often prefer to apply for jobs in the more affluent suburbs rather than in inner-city schools, which often suffer high levels of violence and low academic achievement.

Marj Adler, personnel director for Pennsylvania schools, said: "Someone who wants a job in math and science can make a lot more money in a lot easier role elsewhere."

"It's kind of a fact of life that we have to turn over every rock we can."

As a starting salary, teachers in Philadelphia can earn \$31,000 (N3.7m) which compares favourably with teachers' pay in India, Spain and the Philippines.

US blames Peru for shooting down plane

US officials have claimed that the crew of a surveillance plane tried to stop Peruvian authorities from shooting at a plane carrying US missionaries.

The anti-drugs surveillance plane provided the Peruvian Air Force with location data on the Cessna flown by the missionaries.

The plane was shot down by a Peruvian fighter jet shot over Peru's Amazon jungle region on Friday.

But a US intelligence official told Reuters: "The US crew repeatedly expressed their concern that the nature of the aircraft had not been determined."

"Despite serious concerns raised by the US crew the shutdown was authorised by Peruvian authorities."

Missionary Veronica "Ronnie" Bowers, 35, and her seven-month-old adopted daughter, Charity, were both killed when their single-engine plane was riddled with bullets before ditching into

the Amazon River.

Mr Donaldson was wounded. Also onboard but unhurt were Mrs Bowers' husband, Jim, 35, and their son Cory, six.

US President George W Bush said: "What took place in Peru is a terrible tragedy, and our hearts go out to the families who have been affected."

The Peruvian Defence Ministry expressed "deep regret" over the deaths.

But it defended its actions, saying the plane had been intercepted after it ignored internationally-recognised warnings, leading to suspicions that it was involved in drug-trafficking.

The missionaries dispute this version of events.

A spokesman for their organisation, the Pennsylvania-based Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, said: "All regulations were followed, such as a flight plan, remaining in Peruvian airspace, and maintaining contact with the flight towers."



Relatives of the hostages talk on their mobile phones in front of the Swissotel in Istanbul.



NEPA

NATIONAL ELECTRIC POWER AUTHORITY

PRESS RELEASE

NEPA Weekly Situation Report (3)

This week, we want to start you off on a small but very important project. Ever wondered what a million customers can do to impact effectively on the Nigerian Power System and save the Nation billions of Naira without blinking an eye lid?

We tell how this can be done. And that's the project. Each member of our one million customers (we have over 2 million registered customers) should switch off a 100 watt bulb when not necessarily in use for any meaningful activity. If you have done so, now do this simple calculation

1,000,000 customers x 100 watt bulb = 100,000,000 watts.

The product of this is: $\frac{100,000,000 \text{ watts}}{1,000,000} = 100\text{MW}$

(1,000,000 watts being equal to 1 megawatt of power)

100 MW! That's as easy as a hot knife cutting through butter.

You will have achieved this straight from the comfort of your home without building a small power station, mounting barges or installing skid-mounted power plants

Go on and do it. The Nation will be better for it!

OUR BULLETIN FOR WEEK NO. 3: 08/04/2001 TO 14/04/2001

1. PEAK DAILY GENERATION IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK 01/04/2001/ TO 07/04/2001

DAY	DATE	GEN. (MW)
SUNDAY	01/04/2001	2161
MONDAY	02/04/2001	2167
TUESDAY	03/04/2001	2228
WEDNESDAY	04/04/2001	2070
THURSDAY	05/04/2001	1993
FRIDAY	06/04/2001	2068
SATURDAY	07/04/2001	1596

2. PROJECTED AVERAGE PEAK GENERATION IN THE CURRENT WEEK- 08/04/2001 TO 14/04/2001 = 2043 MW

3. PEAK WEEKLY GENERATION FROM EACH POWER STATION IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK (01/04/2001 TO 07/04/2001)

STATION	MW
KAINJI	286
JEBBA	350
SHIRORO	415
AFAM	29
SAPELE	256
EGBIN	854
IJORA	10
DELTA	213
CALABAR	H/R (Hot Reserved)

4. PROJECTED AVERAGE DAILY GENERATION FROM EACH POWERSTATION IN THE CURRENT WEEK - 08/04/2001 TO 14/04/2001

STATION	PROJECTED GENERATION (MW)
KAINJI	285
JEBBA	314
SHIRORO	190
EGBIN	850
SAPELE	220
AFAM	18
DELTA	165
IJORA	NIL
CALABAR	NIL
AVERAGE TOTAL	2042

5. AVERAGE ESTIMATED DAILY NATIONAL DEMAND FOR MONTH OF APRIL: 3500 MW

ENERGY SAVING

The project we started you off on earlier in this report is only a major component of our energy-saving programme, by which we advise our valued customers on how to use electricity wisely and putting an end to unnecessary wastages. And there can be no better time like this when we are experiencing limitations in our generation status.

HERE ARE SOME MORE USEFUL TIPS WHICH YOU CAN APPLY, BY:

- Ensuring, for example, that when they are in use, your refrigerator or freezer is not overfilled. They operate more efficiently and economically only when filled to capacity.
- Making sure that your refrigerator or freezer is not set to run colder than necessary. We recommended that you always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Ensuring that when using the oven for meal cooking, try to use it for a full meal rather than using both oven and surface units. If you have three dishes to be cooked at slightly different temperatures, pick the mean temperature to cook all three. (For example, the mean of 325, 350 and 375 degrees temperatures is 350 degrees.)
- Making sure you do not use oversized water heater. The oversized water heater wastes energy heating unneeded water. It should in fact be avoided to reduce your initial cost.
- Switching off all appliances not in use. Especially, when you are not home remember to switch off your water heater, air conditioners, television sets or indeed all lights you do not need before dark.
- Switching off security lights
- Switching off street lights during the day.
- Ensuring that when cooking with the electric cooker you use pots or pans that match the ring sizes.
- Using energy-saving bulbs.
- Ensuring that you do not fill the electric kettle just to make a cup of tea. Use just enough water to cover the ring. Hot water kettles come in different sizes, you may choose the one to meet your needs.

We thank our esteemed customers for their continued demonstration of understanding and patience.

LET US WORK TOGETHER FOR THE GREATER GOOD OF OUR COUNTRY.

Management

BUSINESS DAY

12 states get N13b World Bank facility

Semi-urban areas in 12 states selected from across the six geo-political zones of the country are to benefit from a N13.1 billion (or 97 million dollar) World Bank development credit for the execution of various projects aimed at reducing poverty in Nigeria.

The states to benefit from the community-based poverty reduction programme are: Abia, Cross River, Ekiti, Kebbi, Kogi, Yobe, Enugu, Delta, Osun, Benue, Gombe and Zamfara.

Each of the 12 states will receive eight million US dollars, about 1.1 billion naira, according to the agreement which was signed at the weekend in Abuja between representatives of the federal government, the World Bank, as well as representatives of six of the 12 states.

The project will commence in June 2001, with a pilot scheme to be undertaken by six of the benefiting states, comprising Abia, Cross River, Ekiti, Kebbi, Kogi and Yobe, while the remaining six states will commence the execution of the project in September this year.

The World Bank Country Director in Nigeria, Mr. Mark D. Tomlinson, who signed on behalf of the bank disclosed that the new credit agreement is an "interest-free" loan granted to the country and would be paid within 35 years with a moratorium of 10 years. The loan, however, attracts a service charge of 0.75 percent.

He said this is an "effective" poverty-targeted programme requiring the poor communities' control of the process of development, stressing that "government

By Ahmed Shekarau

needed to support these community-based initiatives in a way that empowered the communities." In other words, the projects to be implemented would be initiated, implemented and controlled by the respective benefiting communities.

In his remarks, the Minister of Finance, Mallam Adamu Ciroma, who signed on behalf of the federal government noted that the 12 states were chosen by the government "for having the highest levels of poverty in



James Wolfensohn, World Bank President, the six geo-political zones of the country".

Ciroma reiterated the significance of the poverty



President Olusegun Obasanjo

reduction project, saying "this is entirely different from all previous poverty alleviation programmes be-

cause it is schemed as a bottom-up project to be initiated and executed by the beneficiaries themselves."

He assured that the federal government has, in conjunction with the World Bank, initiated appropriate modalities for the monitoring and evaluation of the project in the 12 states.

Commenting on behalf of the six states that signed the pilot scheme of the programme, the Yobe State Governor, Alhaji Bukar Abba Ibrahim, expressed the appreciation of the beneficiary states, assuring that the

respective states will ensure judicious utilisation of the funds.

The 97 million dollars funding for the project came from the International Development Association (IDA), an arm of the World Bank (60 million dollars); African Development Bank (ADB) (27 million dollars); the federal and state governments and the benefiting communities providing a total of 10 million US dollars as counterpart funding. About 560,000 US dollars was provided by the Japanese government for project preparation.

Senate Committee insists on establishing Onitsha Inland Port

A disagreement ensued between the management of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) and Senate Committee on Marine Transport over the establishment of additional ports in the country, as Senator Chuba Okadigbo insisted that Onitsha be included among the towns where inland ports are to be located.

The Managing Director of the Authority, Malam Bello Gwandu has listed the towns slated to benefit from the project to the ten Senators who visited the ports in Lagos. They include, Kano, Kaduna, Enugu, Jos, Okitipupa and Aba.

Before he gave his reasons for choosing these towns and essence for having inland ports, Senator Okadigbo said; "hold on Mr. Director General as I listen attentively when you were mentioning the towns where inland ports would be located and I am surprised that Onitsha which is a commercial city was omitted."

Stories from Tokunbo Oloke, in Lagos

At this juncture, Gwandu apologised and promised that it is true Onitsha is very important in the East and that it would be included forthwith.

Explaining reasons for establishing the inland ports, the NPA boss said, this would enhance the movement of cargo to the hinterland to complement the port's inadequate capacity for containers and bulk cargo traffic, and make clearance of cargo easier. He added that lands have already been acquired in Ifo, Ogun State, Aba in Abia State for such.

On the privatisation of the ports, the chairman of the committee, Senator Martins Yellowe hinted that "Senate was not aware that NPA is to be privatised, saying that the executive arm of government had been championing this cause without informing them.

But he said he would like to see an NPA which is properly commercialised and to make sure they are provided

with adequate equipment to carry out their statutory responsibilities.

However, Yellowe stressed that as they were going to empower the authority to separate autonomously, they would not jeopardise nor mortgage the security interest of the country and that they would continue to provide enabling environment for the authority and her numerous customers to operate without any hitch.

The Senate committee members include: Senator Martins Yellowe as chairman, Senator Davou Zang, vice chairman; Senator



Bello Gwandu, NPA MD.

Mojisoluwa Akinfenwa; Senator Chuba Okadigbo; Senator S. Ngelele; Mr.



Anyim Pius Anyim, Senate President Adamu S. Musa, Secretary and Mr. J.F. Ahmed, Deputy Secretary.

... as NPA plans another port in Lagos

Worried by the incessant congestion of the Lagos ports, the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) has concluded plans to construct another big port complex in the state.

Briefing the Senate Committee on Marine transportation which visited the Lagos Ports, the Managing Director of NPA, Malam Bello Gwandu, disclosed that since

most imports prefer Lagos ports to other ports in the country, it has become imperative to have another port in the state to solve the problem of port congestion permanently.

Malam Gwandu said he has already instructed NPA's marine engineers to look for another suitable location for the proposed new port, adding that the master plan for the

new port was still being designed.

Gwandu promised to forward the plan to the Senate as soon as it was completed. Also, when asked to mention a particular port which NPA can be compared with in the world, Gwandu told the Senators that "it is a pity that the Authority had hitherto been deprived of its autonomous rights which would have enabled it operate in conjunction with either Singapore or Hong-Kong ports.

"You have to treat me like the Managing Director in other developed ports in the world before our port can be compared with any of them for now," he said.

On the high level of pilfering in the port, the Managing Director stated that the Authority has curtailed pilfering of containerised cargoes considerably, while pilfering of uncontainerised ones like cars has remained problematic. He told the Senators that the authority has therefore taken security as its major priority this year and had spent a lot of money in this direction as well as fortify the existing securities which include the port police and NPA security personnel.

"We equally try as much as possible to reduce the number of people coming into the port on daily basis," he added.

Rumpus in Iwopin pulp and paper mill

Iwopin community and the worker's union of Iwopin Pulp and Paper Mill, Ogun Water side, have sent a distress call to President Olusegun Obasanjo over the palpable crises and decay which the company has been thrown into.

The grouse of the workers operating under the banner of National Union of Printing, Publishing and Paper Product Workers (NUPPPROW) is predicated on the worsening financial situation of the company, which has brought untold hardship on the workers and their families.

Specifically, the workers and the community are seek-

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, in Abeokuta

ing the intervention of the Federal Government to institute a probe panel on the activities of the current management of the company over alleged profligacy, gross incompetence, mismanagement and high handedness.



Lawrence Nwuruku, Minister of State for Industry.

According to the chairman of the Union, Mr. Obayomi Owolabi, Iwopin Mill, the biggest newsprint manufacturing company in Ogun State has been lying prostrate since the departure of the expatriate management in 1993.

"Today, this company capable of employing 5000 workers has less than 80 on its payroll," he said.

Business Day gathered that the problem of the company began last year when

the management refused to implement the Federal Government approved N7,500 minimum wage.

The Deputy Managing Director and Chief Executive of the company, Mr. Samuel Taiwo Olaye, had announced that the new wage was not applicable to the company because it is not in the same status as other Federal Government owned and controlled parastatals.

It was further gathered that because of the poor state of the company, production was stopped in 1999 and the company could not carry on with its work force, let alone pay any minimum wage. What followed was a wave

of retrenchment.

However, the union disagreed with the management, insisting that management's claim that it would not pay the minimum wage was dishonest and unacceptable.

According to the union, the wave of retrenchment of staff was also unjustified and needless because the company has enough to keep afloat.

In the same vein, members of the Iwopin community have accused the present management of the company of failing to implement the terms of agreement reached with the communities at the inception of the company.

BUSINESS DAY

Nigeria Machine Tools gulps N2bn, still in doldrums

The Federal Government has spent over N2 billion on the Nigeria Machine Tools (NMT) Limited, Oshogbo since inception 20 years ago but still in the doldrums, the Minister of Industry, Chief Kolawole Jamodu has disclosed.

The minister said at the end of an inspection of facilities at the NMT plant at Oshogbo that the Federal Government's commitment to the company was aimed at promoting Nigeria's drive "towards self-reliance in the development of manufacturing tools."

A statement issued by the press secretary to the minister, Mr. S.O. Babajide, disclosed that Jamodu, however, lamented that the Federal Government's motive of establishing the company was "yet to be realised" ever since its establishment.

He noted that the Federal Government has, after President Obasanjo's visit to the company, begun consultations and meetings aimed at upgrading the company's facilities and training its staff to ensure patronage of its products. He assured that the government is making fur-

Stories by Ahmed Shekarau

ther efforts to encourage the NMT to be technologically up-to-date and respond to challenges posed by globalisation.

In his remarks, the chairman, board of directors of NMT, Chief Molade Okoya-Thomas, appealed for further support from the government to enhance the company's productivity.

He particularly called for speedy endorsement of the company's proposals for adequate patronage by relevant government agencies.

Meanwhile, the industry minister had expressed disgust at the state of facilities



Kolawole Jamodu
Minister of Industry

at Iwopin Pulp and Paper Company (IPPC).

The statement disclosed that Jamodu had after inspecting facilities at IPPC decried "the colossal waste of the country's resources" in the company.

"Chief Jamodu was highly touched by the state of neglect of the machinery, equipment and infrastructure and opined that it was a clear evidence of ineptitude of past administrations," the statement revealed.

He assured however that the present administration in the country has reassessed its priorities by making substantial allocation of resources to the industrial and energy sectors of the economy, stressing that this is a mark of the administration's commitment towards executing programmes that would enhance the lives of the masses.

The minister enthused further that the government is adopting measures to make the private sector the economy's engine of growth, stressing that such private sector-led drive is intended to attract both local and foreign investments into the nation's economy.

Sales of the newly introduced Chevron Lubricants is expected to hit three million litres before the end of the year, Marketing/Technical Service Manager of the official distributor of the product in Nigeria, Fair Wings Oil Ltd., Kayode Adepoju, has disclosed.

Adepoju who spoke with *Business Day* in Lagos, expressed optimism that the lubricants introduced into the Nigerian market last month will penetrate the market because of the specialised nature of the product and especially the protection and performance they give which were not previously available in the country.

One of the formulations,

Chevron to sell 3m lubricants this year

From Rakiya A. Muhammad,
in Lagos

he noted, utilises the most advanced additive technology available, combined with Chevron's unique Isosyn-base stocks, which has comparable performance result with synthetic oils.

The Marketing Manger, who said quality was their watchword, assured that by the end of this month, 28 different brands of the lubricants will be in the market.

He listed their star markets to include Julius Berger Ltd and West African Portland Cement, among others.

Meanwhile, in a chat

with *Business Day*, vehicle owners and maintenance managers who have used the products expressed satisfaction over their performance



Ray Wilcox,
Chevron MD.

Fortune Bank's share capital hits N2b

From Ma'ashin Ibn Ma'ashin,
in Lafia

Fortune International Bank Plc. management has said that the bank has authorised share capital of N1.5 billion out of which N1 billion is fully paid up, and the shareholders are strongly committed to increase the paid up share capital to N2 billion by 31st December 2001.

The chairman of the bank, Mr. Henry Mac-Pepple, made the disclosure at the official opening of the Lafia business office of the

bank in Lafia, the Nasarawa State capital.

In his address at the occasion, Mr. Mac-Pepple described the bank as one which ranked amongst the few financial institutions in Nigerian banking industry that would have doubled the N1.0 billion stipulated by the CBN.

He was optimistic that the bank would achieve that N2 billion mark in paid up

share capital soon.

Mr. Mac-Pepple disclosed that over the last two years of operations, the bank has recorded outstanding achievements in profitability and balance sheet growth.

Mr. Mac-Pepple acknowledged that the achievements would not have been made without the support and commitment of customers and in particular the Nasarawa State government.

On investment in information technology, Mac-pepple said the bank runs on the most current version of "Globus" - banking software to aid its service delivery.

"All business offices of Fortune International Bank are linked to a Wide Area Network (WAN) which provides our customers, online real-time integrated banking services, that enable account holders to access their accounts irrespective of where such accounts are domiciled," he said

He informed the bank's clients at the Lafia business office that they would be able to transact business through their accounts from any of the bank's branches nationwide.

He also disclosed that the bank has joined a consortium of banks to implement the smart card project which enables clients transact business using electronic payment system.

The bank's chairman assured that in due course, the bank would revolutionise some of the traditional methods of payment whereby cash is usually carried over long distances to effect transactions.

He boasted that the bank was set to redefine the standard of banking as it is currently practiced in Nigeria and have imposed into the next decade.

Habib Bank records N510m profit, pays N188m dividend

Habib Nigeria Bank Limited has realised a profit after tax of N510,820,000 in the 2000 financial year, out of which it issued out a total dividend of 25 kobo per share which sums up to N188.9 million. Also, the bank's directors recommended a bonus of one share for every five shares held by shareholders at the end of last year.

The bank's profit after taxation, however, dropped from N630,019 million recorded in 1999 to N510,820, showing a decrease of N119,199 million.

The chairman's statement which disclosed this to shareholders at the bank's Annual General Meeting held in Abuja, announced an increase in the bank's total assets from N15.793 billion as at December 31, 1999 to N22.351 billion by December 31, 2000. This shows a growth of 42 per cent in the year 2000 over the previous year's position.

The chairman's statement which was presented by

the banks vice chairman, Mr. Zakir Mahmood noted that a review of Habib Bank's performance in the year 2000 revealed that it recorded impressive results.

The bank's gross earnings for the year 2000 according to the bank's annual report and accounts stood at N3.88 billion.

This is against the N3.071 billion recorded at the end of December 1999, showing an improvement of 27 per cent over the 1999 position. The bank's total deposit, which was N12.156 billion as at 31st December, 1999, rose to N16.313 billion at the close of the year 2000. This shows a marked improvement of 34 per cent.

Similarly, total shareholders'

funds as at December 31, 2000 stood at N1.798 billion against the figure of N1.399 billion recorded at the end of 1999.

Besides, Habib Nigeria Bank has committed N77.4 million to funding of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the country. This



Kola Abiola,
Habib Nigeria Bank Chairman

is in line with the Central Bank of Nigeria's (CBN) directive to all commercial and merchant banks in the country to set aside 10 percent of their profit after taxation to SMEs financing.

A five-year financial summary of the bank's accounts revealed that while its profit after taxation from 1996 to 2000 stood at N1,982,960.00 (or N1.89 billion), its gross earnings for the same period was N11,036,556.00 (or N11.04 billion). Habib Nigeria Bank's net assets for five years, beginning from 1996 to end of 2000, however, stood at N5,598,559.99 (or N5.6 billion).

The chairman's statement disclosed that the bank's Board of Directors intends to make a right issue of N302,306,000 to the existing shareholders, in order to reposition the Bank for the challenges ahead.

The statement disclosed further that the year 2001 holds great prospects for the bank as the entire nation continues with efforts to sta-

bilise the current polity and seek economic growth through privatisation, deregulation of the telecommunications industry and increased liberalisation of the economy among other policies.

Habib Nigeria Bank Limited, which commenced operation in 1983, is the only second generation bank that offers interest-free banking services. It was established through a joint venture between Habib Bank Limited, Pakistan, holding 40 per cent and its Nigerian promoters, holding 60 per cent of its shares.

The bank recently opened a corporate office in Abuja to enhance its operations in view of the city's rising prospects as a centre of commercial activities.

The bank's directors have already approved the appointment of Mr. Kola Abiola as the Bank's Chairman, to replace Malam Adamu Bello after his recent appointment as Minister of Agriculture.

BUSINESS DAY

NGO establishes 'garri' processing factory

A network of grass roots women's non-governmental organisation called, "Abakan Ofutop," in Ikom Local Government Area of Cross River State, has established a 'garri' processing factory.

Speaking at the launching of the factory at Ikom, the executive director of "Abakan Ofutop," Mrs. Virginia Inah, said that the NGO would also run a micro-credit scheme for its members.

The move is aimed at providing modern hygienic methods of cassava processing, which had eluded peasant farmers in the past, in addition to improving the income generation capacity of rural women.

Other envisaged programmes of the organisation, according to Inah, include a public enlightenment campaign against deforestation, female genital mutilation and early pregnancies among young girls.

Inah disclosed that the body would embark on a massive campaign for women's participation in politics, as well as enlightenment on HIV/AIDS in the area.

In a message to the launching, Gov. Donald Duke commended the "Abakan Ofutop," for embarking on the 'garri' processing project.

The governor, who was represented by the Commissioner for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Mr. Chris Agibe, said that the wealth creation programme of the government was aimed at creating a conducive atmosphere for self-help projects in the state.



Donald Duke, Cross Rivers State Governor.

Duke said that the government would encourage women-oriented programmes "so as to better their lot, given the enormous ratio of women's population to men."

The governor also called on other non-governmental organisations in the state to emulate the "Abakan Ofutop," while lauding the group for the initiative.

Also speaking, the Chairman of the Ikom Local Government Council, Mr. Chris Nja, noted the high level of poverty among rural women in the area and pledged to assist the group to improve on the well-being of its members.

Nja also called on the group to tackle the problem of early pregnancies among young girls in the area by embarking on campaigns to encourage girl-child education.



Minister of Finance, Mallam Adamu Ciroma (left), World Bank Country Director, Mr. Mark D. Tomlinson (centre) and Ekiti State Governor, Otunba Niyi Adebayo appending on documents at the signing of a credit agreement on Community-based Poverty Reduction Project recently in Abuja. Pix: Felix Onigbinde

NNPC/Chevron provide mobile clinic to communities

The NNPC/Chevron joint venture has provided Health and Educational facilities to communities in some parts of Delta State, as part of community relations efforts.

The facilities include Mobile Clinic specially designed for the well being of the people in the Benikrukru area. Two 3-classroom blocks fully furnished. Others include a 2,000 ft deep portable water well, a 75,000 litres steel water storage tank water treatment plant and water distribution system.

According to Chevron's General Manager Public Affairs, Mr. O. A. Omole in a statement, the school and water project are located in Benikrukru while the Mobile clinic travels through the creeks in the Escavos and Benin Rivers, dispensing health care to various communities.

Omole stated that the health Eeruces provided free of charge to the people were being operated in collaboration with the Delta State Government "while the government provides the personnel, Chevron Funds the purchase of equipment, drugs and dressing as well as other necessary supplies.

Rakiya A. Muhammad, in Lagos

At the commissioning of the projects recently by the Delta State Governor, Chief James Ibori, he commended NNPC/Chevron for assisting the Delta State Government in providing amenities for the people.

Mr. Dick Filgate, Chevron's Asset Management General Manager who handed over the facilities on



Gaius-Obaseki, NNPC GMD.

behalf of the joint venture declared, "we have provided the projects with the hope that they would improve the quality of life while galvanising the comprehensive and sustainable development of Benikrukru and other communities in the area."

He appealed to the people to reciprocate by ensuring a more conducive environment for the company's operations.

Qatar, Dolphin gas pact may be signed September

Qatar and Dolphin Energy Limited (DEL) are moving ahead on a landmark deal to channel Qatari gas to the United Arab Emirate (UAE), but a final development and production-sharing agreement (DPSA) may not be struck until September, industry sources said.

Qatar and DEL, majority owned by the United Arab Emirates' offsets group (UOG), in March signed a "commercial-term sheet agreement" for the long-awaited \$3.5 billion project.

Qatari oil minister, Abdullah al-Attayah said at the signing ceremony that he expected a DPSA to be signed in June.

Industry sources now say that target date looks ambitious and expect the final DPSA and general sales agreements to be in place after the summer.

Qatari officials, while admitting the final signing could be some months off, said Doha was ready to put pen to paper.

"From our side there is nothing much left that remains to be finalised," a senior Qatar petroleum (QP) official closely involved with the deal told Reuters.

"The term sheet is comprehensive and lays down all the conditions of the development and production sharing agreement."

Analysts said a PSA of Dolphin's scale typically would take about a year to finalise, but the pace would be quicker with this project since key details already had been hammered out.

Asked whether signing of the PSA could be delayed, the Qatari official said: "it could be from their (DEL's) side, but not from us."

"It is for them (DEL) to organise and put things in place at their end," the official added. "As far as we are concerned, we are prepared to sign the PSA for two billion cubic feet a day (CFD) of gas as and when they are ready."

UOG currently owns 51 per cent of DEL, with the remainder held equally by US Enron Corp and France's TotalFinaElf.

While the finishing touches are being put on the deal, industry sources said new potential foreign investors are sizing up DEL's prospects.

The gas deal would entitle DEL to develop a tract of Qatar's giant north field and produce up to two billion CFD of gas.

UOG is to invest \$2 billion in developing the north field tract, drilling and setting up production facilities.

The remaining \$1.5 billion would be invested to lay a pipeline and set up receiving terminals at Dubai's Jebel Ali and Taweelah in Abu Dhabi.

First gas is targeted to reach the UAE capital, Abu Dhabi by late 2004 or early 2005, about 1 billion to 1.5 billion CFD of Qatari gas would be consumed by utilities in Abu Dhabi with the remainder supplied to Dubai.

DRC revokes Israeli firm's monopoly on diamonds

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has cancelled an Israeli company's monopoly on buying and exporting the country's diamonds, the primary source of foreign exchange for the war-wretched Central African country, according to reports from Kinshasa.

It suspended the monopoly enjoyed by the Israeli firm, International Diamond Industries, since July 2000, declaring that private traders "are authorised to resume their activities from April," a statement by the country's mining ministry said.

The DRC is the world's third-largest diamond exporter, whose exports accounted for about 70 per cent of the nation's total exports revenues in 1999.

The government of assassinated president Laurent Kabila had monopolised the diamond trade ostensibly to guarantee a regular income for the state, but the move was reported to fuel illegal trafficking.

The Israeli-based company reportedly agreed to pay Laurent Kabila's government 20 million U.S. dollars last July for a flow of diamonds worth up to 240 million dollars a year.

A UN report this week called the deal a "nightmare," for the DRC's government and a disaster for the country's diamond trade.



Joseph Kabila, DRC President.

The government said market liberalisation was aimed at maximising revenues and curbing diamond trafficking.

The observatory on transparent governance said the illegal trade amounted to between 300 and 400 million dollars a year.

The diamond sector directly or indirectly provides some 2 million jobs in the two central Kasai provinces and the eastern Oriental province of the DRC, which has been divided into two by government forces and rebels.

The civil war in the country erupted in August 1998, drawing in Rwanda and Uganda, who backed rebels, and Zimbabwe, Angola and Zambia who supported the government.

Star Fe

Song, dance ca



Agile dancers



A courtier adjusts Queen Amina's gown



More students of the ABU

The Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria rose in joy on Saturday 21st April when the 18th edition of the Nigeria University Games (NUGA) was officially declared open. It seems that all roads led to the Ahmadu Bello University on Saturday, and the vast university appeared to be quite

By Tadaferua Ujorha

ever-widening, and delightful circle all around the Ahmadu Bello University Bookshop, which was the spot from which the carnival commenced. It took a while for the groups that made up the carnival to congregate but soon they were all together, and then the splendid carnival which was a veritable rainbow of colours stepped forth, and

with their bows and arrows and wore gowns of fiery red and they moved along with a lively stride. *Daily Trust* learnt that this Club was formed in Bomo, a farming community just outside the borders of the Ahmadu Bello University, as an attempt by the hunters to co-ordinate their activities in the village. It was gathered that the hunters always went as a group when hunting and

trapped or killed. Normally, when a hunter is successful on the hunt he cuts off the tail of the animal, as evidence of his bravery and triumph. Bows, arrows and charms are the regular weapons or items used when the hunters are in the field.

Next on the line of the carnival was the Bajinta Hausa Cultural and Dramatic Social Club. Here was Queen Amina striding along gracefully in an orange silk gown, with her head held high, and brandishing a shining sword



Ninzam cultural group capable of handling the enormous concourse of sports men and women who beat a straight path to the university that weekend.

There were dynamic cultural persons too, as dancers, singers, drummers, actors, comedians, and the great host of the creative tribe soon began to gather. Slowly, they yielded a stirring note, and steadily a dance began to unfold. There were pockets of dancers who moved in an

headed for the new stadium where the opening ceremonies were scheduled to take place.

The splendid lawns, the fine hedges, and the matchless array of flowers served as a beautiful anchor or support to the carnival, which, as mentioned above, was a galaxy of enchanting colours. These colours were not only seen in the costumes of the various actors or persons that made up the carnival, but the colours could be perceived in the sheer beauty of human movement, and the unspoken wish to excel, even if it is just in a simple wish to execute a dance in the most exact or perfect manner possible. There were undergraduate students in the carnival and there were members of various Drama Clubs, from within and around Zaria. These clubs included the Akwudugbe Cultural Dancers, Kungiyar Miyetti Allah Bomo, Bajinta Hausu cultural and Dramatic Social Club, Gamji Club, Samaru, Ninzam Cultural Group, Kungiyar Maharba Bomo, Dragon Star Gymnastic, Acrobatic and Entertainment Group and Gamji Club, Giwa.

Members of the Kungiyar Maharba Bomo, came out

that some of their clients do escort them into thickly forested areas where they normally purchase animals that have been successfully

in her hand. This might have been the finest part of the entire procession, and it was certainly a very compelling section of the cavalcade of colourful persons that made up the carnival. Queen



Wawan Sarki: The court jester gesticulates

Feature

Carnival at ABU

Queen Amina was surrounded by a coterie of courtiers, guards and a fascinating praise singer otherwise called "Wawan sarki" in Hausa. From time to time this group would pause, while the court jester would present a continuing chant in praise of his suzerain. He yelled and pranced about quite energetically while presenting Queen Amina as one who has the courage of a man, and is phenomenal in the art of warfare. At this point all the guards held their spears and dances in a manner that was reminiscent

wore a very prominent beard. From time to time he rolled his eyes rather strangely. He carried a pestle, and also wore a large sheep skin which almost seemed to serve the function of a battle shield known in Hausa as *Garkuwa*.

His ability to move about and chant in an agile manner while carrying the massive pestle, and the fairly heavy sheep skin by his side, was

Bature, co-ordinator of the Bajinta Hausa Cultural and Dramatic Social Club mentioned that the club is keen on projecting Queen Amina, who is central to the history of Zaria. The club has been in existence for the past seventeen years, he added. Queen Amina wore a splendid Turban which yielded a corpus of little lights.

It had a very impressive

around all these colourful persons, while the song had almost reached epical heights and the dancers swayed in ecstasy.

From time to time carnivals hold at the Ahmadu Bello University, and they are usually co-ordinated by staff of the Department of English and Drama. The NUGA carnival was prepared over a period of one month, and it was



er cultural group in performance

of a battle formation. At most it conveyed their loyalty to Queen Amina, in a dramatic manner. "Wawan Sarki" himself rubbed a substance on his face such that he looked very dark, and he also

both intriguing and creative, and it conjured just that amount of the strange or the weird, which most court jesters are famous for. Nuhu

gleam. She wore a gown which was silky and stretched down to the ground. She had a 'crossed belt' as Nuhu Bature described it, and she strode about with a regal aspect that increased with every new step that she took. She seemed to become more royal with every fresh step that she took. There were the Ninzam dancers too, who came along with whistle and flutes, and danced around, raising dust with so much gusto. The Morning Star Acrobats were also on hand to thrill the crowd with a few stunts which were not entirely heroic. There were the students too, who seemed to be part of the Ahmadu Bello University Supporters Club. Singing and dancing, they cut a fine picture as they made their way up to the borders of the new stadium.

So, this was the carnival that passed on the opening day of the 18th edition of the Nigeria Universities Games (NUGA), one of the finest sights that morning was the point just after the Faculty of Human Medicine when the entire body of the carnival now moved down the valley. It was a most lovely picture when viewed from some three hundred metres ahead of the carnival. The sunlight played

co-ordinated by Mr. Steve Daniel with the active support of Mr. Dodo Lumumba, Mallam Mohammed Rabiu Isah and Sylvanus Dangoji, all staff of the Department of English and Drama, A.B.U. The Ahmadu Bello University is the largest University South of the Sahara and it would seem that with this recent carnival, the culture of carnivals has become a veritable tradition at this eminent citadel of learning.



Queen Amina sings



A drummer from Bomo



the court jester thinks again



Students of the Ahmadu Bello University.

Pix by Tadaferua Ujorha

Feature

Opening more trade relations between
Nigeria and the Netherlands

It seems that at last, President Obasanjo's voyage over seas in search of foreign investors for Nigeria was not a futile mission at all. Last week, a trade delegation led by the Minister of Foreign Trade for Netherlands, arrived Nigeria and held consultations with a cross section of the private and public sector in Lagos and Abuja.

Among the delegation were representatives of over 30 companies in the area of transport, information technology, agriculture, etc.

The aim of the delegation in the words of Mr. Gerrit Ybema, the Foreign Trade Minister, was to further improve bilateral relations and trade between Nigeria and the Netherlands.

According to him, from discussions held with businessmen in Lagos, the prospect of improved trade was promising. To this end, the Prime Minister of Netherlands is to visit Nigeria later this year to finish the arrangement needed to strengthen bilateral relations between the two nations.

The Netherlands trade delegation visited four ministers in Abuja. They include Dr. Adamu Ciroma of Finance; Alhaji Mohammed Bello of Agriculture, Chief Ojo Maduekwe of Transport and Engr. Mustapha Bello of Commerce.

Speaking in the office of the Minister of Commerce, the leader of the trade delegation, Mr. Gerrit Ybema, said telecommunications

was crucial to the development of the country and said his country was interested in the information technology sector of the country. He also expressed the desire of his country to participate in trade with Nigeria in the

By Ikenna Emeka Okpani

aimed at trying to balance trade between the two countries which has been skewed in favour of Netherlands. In recent times,

Mustapha Bello, expressed happiness that the delegation was in Nigeria. For him, their movements around Abuja and Lagos will enable them to understand the country more and probably appreciate the fact that a lot of

Dutch-Nigerian Chamber of Commerce to work harder so as to achieve the necessary and desired trade relations between the two countries, he said the advent of democracy has created a conducive environment for foreign investors to participate in the Nigerian economy.

The Commerce Minister said the Obasanjo-led administration was rebuilding the dilapidated infrastructure, which the military destroyed, because it believed that adequate infrastructure will provide the needed incentive for investors. He said in the area of Power and Steel government was making frantic efforts at improving power supply to every part of the country. He revealed that government was also turning the rail system around to reduce the pressure on the road.

He asked the trade delegation to find a way of making the Dutch-owned KLM airbuses extend its routes to Abuja, noting that it was only the British airways at now that was coming to Abuja in addition to Lagos.

He promised the delegation that government was trying to redesign the country's custom evaluation system in order to ease off bottlenecks and promote easier access and advised foreign investors to seek for relevant information on the Nigerian

economy and investment opportunities from the Nigerian Investment Promotion Council.

The opening of more avenues for trade between the two countries, Engineer Bello said, will help government's poverty alleviation programme, as it would definitely provide employment for our teeming unemployed youths.

Nigeria is said to be the greatest receiver of Dutch investment in Africa but it seems it is not yet Uhuru for trade relations between the two countries. A trade that is skewed in favour of one side of the divide is not in the interest of a developing economy like ours. An economy that is dependent on another for its sustenance is not what Nigerians have bargained for, especially at a time our Naira was making an embarrassing decline in values in the midst of other world currencies.

As a reporter with *Guardian* newspapers noted, "we are tired of trade delegations which come and go without the required impact." Government should know that improving trade relations without creating the necessary item for trade will only plunge the country into more economic woes.

"The Dutch-Nigeria Chamber of Commerce should look into the trade relations between the two countries with a view to fashioning out a clear cut comparative advantage strategy which will form the benchmark for our trade relations.



Cross Section of the trade delegation from the Netherlands.

area of exportation of Nigeria's gas, which is being flared for now.

However, the trade minister said opening the private sector is the only way; by which real economic development will come to Nigeria, saying unless Nigeria did that her economy will never grow. An agency, according to him has been opened in the foreign trade ministry to promote exports from Nigeria. This is also

Dutch export to Nigeria has been on the increase, averaging over 70 percent while Nigeria's export in the same period has been on the decline.

Dutch export to Nigeria in the last two years is put at 420 million dollars while Nigeria is put at 150 million dollars in the same period.

In his reaction, the Minister of Commerce, Engineer

information about Nigeria in the foreign media was distorted.

The minister, who was in the Netherlands last October said the trade delegation's visit will further strengthen the result of their discussions last year. He praised the West African Milk Company, owned by the Dutch saying its products were ranked high in the Nigerian economy.

While encouraging the

The Press in Nigeria today

By Ochotokpo Onyiefu

Before the advent of the Fourth Republic, the Nigerian print media suffered a lot, from military autocracy, which lasted for several years. Such sufferings include, harassment and detention of journalists, disappearance of journalists, seizing and banning of the circulation of news materials, just to mention a few.

However, military autocracy which made the practice of journalism nearly impossible gave way to democracy on the 29th of May, 1999. This date gave birth to press emancipation and freedom of speech in Nigeria.

The print media is expected to have learnt their lesson from this ugly experience in the dark days of military rule in Nigerian. As such, they should protect democracy with utmost sincerity.

Unfortunately, the reports of prominent newspapers/magazines seem not to take into account the possible effect of biased reporting. The performances of the some print media as the nascent democracy nurtures itself, cannot be over emphasised. However, the study of ethics is expected to bring out the best in the practice of journalism. It is quite obvious that some print media have lost direction and focus, in the discharge of their constitutional

responsibilities, the very responsibility entrusted to them by Section 22 and 39 of the 1999 constitution. A critical look at this section of the constitution reveal that, the print media is a socio-economic and politics institution that should be nurtured on public trust.

As such, the print media is supposed to cry when we cry, it should mourn when we mourn, it should smile when we smile. It is valid to say that some print media have failed in these directions. "... When Salisu, the former Speaker was indicted for forgery, we in the North shouted and cried, "hang him, hang him". *TELL* also said, "hang him." *The News* said, "The face of a liar." When it was the turn of Enwerem, *TELL* said "hang him, hang him, hang him, and the South-West echoed hang him, hang Enwerem.

"Now it is the turn of a Yoruba man, whose crimes are more than that of Buhari and Enwerem put together, what do we get down South, "cover him". That double standard cannot usher in justice."

You will recall that, *The News* magazine, a South-West-based magazine removed Salisu Buhari, the former Speaker of the House of Representative in less than

two months into this nascent democracy. With exactly three issues of the magazine. This was a remarkable and a celebrated success by the Nigerian print media nationwide. The *TELL* magazine on the other hand removed Evan Enwerem, the first Senate

by his colleagues on the ground of incompetence. This was another celebrated and remarkable success by the Nigerian press.

Surprisingly, the same *TELL* and *The News* magazines, which went through all forms of threats and intimidations,



Prof Jerry Gana, Minister of Information.

President of the Fourth Republic, by way of helping the members of the House of Assembly to expose his past life, educational background and his age, these factors triggered Enwerem's oppositions, from his colleagues in the National Assembly. Enwerem was finally removed

and Salisu Buhari on grounds of forgery, perjury and falsification of credentials. Now these media see it as a forbidden act to venture into investigating the allegations levelled against their own son, Governor Bola Tinubu, on the same subject of forgery, perjury and falsification of credentials. In the light of these problems, Chief Gani Fawehinmi accused the South-West press of allowing

political preference and political prejudice, to becloud their sense of professional duties. Up till date, none of the Yoruba press have refuted this allegations, even though, it was not a legal suit, the Yoruba press should stop fooling Nigerians by their continuous silence on the allegations against Bola Tinubu. They should at least let us know their position as regard the allegations levelled against them by Chief Gani Fawehinmi and also their position on the Bola Tinubu's saga.

At this point, it is important for us to take a smart look at the back drop of the first republic and to state categorically that the Nigerian press were responsible for the first military intervention in the Nigerian politics.

Before independence, the Nigerian press had one focus, which they were all fighting for irrespective of their personal interest, religion or ethnic group. This fact made it possible for Nigeria to gain her independence in 1960. As soon as independent was achieved, there was a change of direction by the various press that existed at that time. The press became a weapon for the various regional governments to be used against others, the press virtually lost sight of their focus and this led to regional war in the mass media parlance. Which later led to riot and crisis in 1963 and 1964.

According to Cibon Rodney. "The Eastern Nigerian government banned the circulation of *Daily Times*, *Morning Post* and *Daily Sketch*, while the West banned the circulation of the *Pilot*. This crisis led to the collapse of the first republic and culminated in a three year civil war."

Uche also noted in 1989 that, "... both Ojukwu and Gowon acknowledged at the Aburi accord, while trying to find solution to the impending civil war, that the newspapers took side with their regional government, while Hassan Katsina said, the *outlook* was the worst of them, Ojukwu replied that the *outlook* was not but the *Post*, which they all in fact paid for, followed closely by the *New Nigerian*."

It is also obvious that the above quotation proves that, bias reporting, favouritism, ethnicity, act of omission and commission is capable of tearing the Nigerian nation apart.

Meanwhile, The public ought to know that whatever that is good for the goose is also good for the gander. If the Nigerian press do not drop the attitude of subjectivity and emulate objectivity, I bet you, the rights of the common man will continue to be trampled upon and this democracy, will soon disappear.

Ochotokpo Onyiefu writes from Garki, Abuja.

NEWS

KSBC staff get N13m lifeline

A N13 million lifeline is underway to offset the outstanding salary arrears of workers of the Kwara State Broadcasting Corporation.

The State Commissioner for Information, Mr. Wale Oladepo, broke the news at a get-together party organised by the state council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) to formally welcome him to Kwara State.

He described the state of Radio Kwara as a pathetic one and promised that efforts were being intensified to correct and improve the situation, particularly in the area of broadcasting and staff welfare.

The commissioner said already, the mast and transmitter for the broadcast station have been imported and awaiting collection at Kano, adding that the quality of broadcasting will be improved by the government through the provision of quality technical equipment.

Mr. Oladepo also hinted that the permanent site of the state owned *Herald* newspapers will soon be completed and commended the Ministry of Information for the safe keeping of the

From Abdul Laro, in Ilorin



Gov. Mohd Lawal printing machine.

The Commissioner stated that government will provide circulation vans for the *Herald* newspaper for effective operation because "it would enable it to do better in terms of circulation," considering its advantageous location as the gateway to the North and South.

He commended the exemplary leadership qualities of the state chairman of the NUJ, Alhaji Tunde Akanbi, in running the affairs of the council and promised to operate an open

door policy in his relationship with journalists in the state.

The commissioner said; "since my success is a collective one, I need your assistance to ensure my success through fresh stories and features, articles" among others, adding that journalists would not be kept in the dark about happenings within the government.

Mr. Oladepo assured that the government will honour its pledge on the completion

of the NUJ guest charlet.

Earlier in his address, the state NUJ chairman appealed to the commissioner to motivate the staff of Radio Kwara by paying their salary arrears, providing essential technical equipment and the completion of the *Herald* newspaper's permanent site.

He thanked the government for its assistance during the NUJ, NEC meeting and reminded the commissioner about government's pledge towards the completion of the union's guest charlet.

Gov. Adamu urges tolerance between Christians and Muslims

The Nasarawa State government has called on the leadership of the two religions in the state to check the excesses of their members who were all-out to create disaffection and disrupt the peace prevailing in the state.

The State Governor, Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu, made the call recently while receiving the state's

From Ma'ashin Ibn Ma'ashin, in Lafia



Gov. Abdullahi Adamu executive council of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) at the government house, Lafia.

The governor used the occasion to urge practitioners of both religions to imbibe the spirit of tolerance, and concern themselves with the preaching of peace and mutual co-existence.

Adamu posited out that without peace, there would neither be meaningful progress nor a conducive atmosphere to practice any form of religion.

The governor who said his administration will support any call for assistance from any religious body, and warned against threats or intimidation from religious leaders.

He promised to look into CAN's request for office accommodation and the appeal for government to return missionary schools to their owners.

Speaking earlier, the Nasarawa State chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Rev. Joshua Masin, had also appealed to the state government to increase the number of Christian pilgrims it sponsors to the holyland.

Anti-corruption commission makes case for restructuring

Stories by Austine Odo

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission has called for the restructuring of the federal civil service to identify corruption-prone areas for special attention to ensure success in the war against corruption.

Making the call at a meeting with the Head of Service of the Federation, Alhaji Yayale Ahmed, in Abuja on Friday, the commission's head of delegation, Mr. Olu Fadaka, said the cooperation of the civil service in this direction

was very necessary to guarantee the success of the current campaign. He expressed satisfaction with steps so far taken by the Head of Service towards checking corrupt practices in the civil service.

Alhaji Yayale Ahmed, in his speech, reiterated the Federal Government's resolve to complement efforts in the war against corruption. He stated that efforts were already in progress towards publicising the new public service rules and financial regulations for a change in the way the nation's civil service is being run.

The Head of Service also disclosed that modalities for the establishment of anti-corruption units in ministries and agencies have been completed, saying that improved communication

between the commission and his office would fine-tune the efforts towards success.

In another development, the Head of Service, Alhaji Yayale Ahmed, has reiterated his commitment to the training and retraining of civil servants to revitalise the civil service.

He stated this while receiving the chairman, governing board of the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) in his office on Friday, that since his assumption of office, he has been trying to fine-tune his plans with ASCON for a major training programme for civil servants.

Highlighting what he identified as the major need of the service, Alhaji Yayale said it was imperative to restore the core values of the service, apart from organising workshops for sensitisation on civil service rules and regulations.

ASCON chairman, Alhaji Abubakar Koko, who agreed with the need for training in the civil service, presented a proposal wherein he suggested a national conference on public service reforms for good governance and long term development.

Civil organisations sue for resource control

As the legal battle continues over resource control, a coalition of civil society organisations committed to participatory approach to constitutional reforms has made a case for federating units in the country to have control and ownership of resources in their areas.

The organisation which came together under the aegis of the Citizens' Forum for Constitutional Reform (CFRCR), in a memorandum to the National Assembly, recommended that the federating units should be accorded powers to control and own their resources, and should pay taxes to the Federal Government. The rate of such taxes they recommended, would need to be determined in consultation with the states, but should, however, not be in excess of 50 percent, considering that states would take on more spending responsibilities under true federalism.

According to the memorandum, which was made available to *Daily Trust* over the weekend, the taxes so deducted should go into the Federation account where allocations should be made to the Federal Government, equalisation fund and the local governments.

"Allocation from the equalisation fund to states shall be based on agreed

criteria. These would however, include state's income shortfall from the national average income, population and land mass. Section 44 (1) (3) of the constitution should be amended to rest ownership of resources in states," the group proposed.

According to the Forum, the exclusive jurisdiction of the Federal High Court should be reverted to its original concept of matters affecting federal revenue. High courts it maintained, should be given unlimited jurisdiction as in the 1979 constitution recognised by section 46 of the 1999 constitution.

According to the convener, Dr. Jibrin Ibrahim, the recommendations which were submitted to the National Assembly, were part of its tentative position. He said the forum would soon start an outreach programme that would involve debates on the issues arising from the review of the constitution of the country, especially as it affects local governments, states and the nation in general. This, he pointed out, would be followed by state zonal and national conferences to consider positions. In addition, the forum is carrying out a national scientific survey to gather quantifiable and reliable data on the responses of Ni-

gerians to the 1999 constitution. The reports will complement the findings from the outreach programme, leading to the production of an alternative model constitution, which is the cardinal objective of the forum.

Baptist Convention may establish private university

From Abdul Laro, in Ilorin

The Nigeria Baptist Convention plans to establish a private university this year. Reverend John Femi Taiwo said all requirements for the take-off of the university have been met by the Convention.

He said already, a team from the National Universities Commission, (NUC) had visited Iwo in Osun State where the institution will be located.

Reverend Taiwo disclosed that courses to be offered would include Sciences, Agriculture and Education, adding that "we are waiting for the final approval by government."

He announced the readiness of the body to take back mission schools from the state governments, explaining that most of the schools have been vandalised and would require rehabilitation to meet the required standard.

The Baptist Convention x-rayed the performance of the Obasanjo administration, saying it was doing well in ensuring among others, accountability in the system of governance and its efforts to enshrine judicious spending in the state.

Reverend Taiwo noted



The governor of Benue state, Mr. George Akume (L) and the governor of Ekiti state, Otumba Niyi Adebayo, during press briefing by the governors on the outcome of the National Economic Council meeting held at the Presidential Villa, Abuja . . . Thursday.

Pix Kennedy Faboroda

NEWS

Kebbi state rejects non-indigenous contractors

The Kebbi state government has rejected contractors nominated by the Federal Government to handle the construction of Universal Basic Education (UBE) classrooms in the state.

Governor Muhammadu Adamu Aliero, disclosed this during a press conference on the activities of his administration at the government house, Birnin Kebbi, recently.

Explaining what informed the state government's action, the governor said the contractors were not indigenous, had no antecedents in construction and were not conversant with Kebbi state.

According to him, if the Federal Government meant well, it should first have sought the state government's opinion or recommendations on

From Kabir Dogondaji,
Birnin Kebbi

projects, saying "we have our own indigenous contractors who know the job and could definitely do the job, so there is no reason why a Yoruba man from Ondo could just come and do a job for us here, simply because it is a Federal Government project", the executive added.

Governor Aliero observed that the whole issue had political undertones as all the contractors were PDP supporters. He further stated that if it were indigenous PDP contractors whom the people could hold responsible for poor performance, the government would have no raised objections.

His words: "if a contractor coming from Ogun or Ondo state to the state for the first time to execute a

certain job, abandon it after collecting 50 or 60% of the contract sum, how would any body from the state get him?" he queried.

He cited the example of Yauri, Koko, and Baguoda, national electrification project that was awarded to a southern contractor who collected a reasonable percentage of money and went back to the south, adding "up till now, no one has called him to order and the projects remain forgotten."

He reiterated that owing to experience, no body will sit in Abuja and just send contractors to Kebbi state.

He used the forum to highlight some of his achievements of his administration in the areas of education, health, rural development and agriculture.

He urged all local government councils to

judiciously utilize agricultural inputs sent to them by ensuring such inputs get to farmers. "We want every farmer to enjoy the dividends of democracy, therefore, the distribution of the assorted fertilizer and chemicals should not be based on political affiliation," he maintained.

Governor Aliero also spoke on the desert encroachment in Kebii state through indiscriminate wood-felling and bush-burning, saying "my administration seriously concerned with development, had to do everything humanly possible to discourage such acts and any body caught would be punished accordingly."

Adamu Aliero further disclosed that his administration had procured stoves to be sold to individuals all in an effort to discourage people from felling trees.

He explained that the state forestry project had been directed to police the forest and act accordingly.

Sultan celebrate fifth anniversary on throne

From Abdulfatai
Abdulsalam, Sokoto

Activities marking the fifth year anniversary celebration of the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammadu Maccido, kicked off over the weekend at Sultan Abubakar Mosque Sokoto with a special prayer by Alhaji Buhari Sardauna Malamai.

The Sultan, who was away in Saudi Arabia for medical check up, was represented by the Wazirin Sokoto, Alhaji Junaidu Wazirin.

Alhaji Buhari prayed for long life and prosperity for the Sultan to be able to run the affairs of the caliphate and the Muslim community.

He also prayed for the safe return of the Sultan and for his good health. After the special prayer, the congregation visited the tomb of Usman Dan-Fodiyo (Hubbare) to offer special prayer.

The Hubbare also has the tomb of Nana Asmau, daughter of Shehu Usman Dan-Fodiyo and Sultan

Ahmadu Rufai, Dan Muazu and Abubakar III and others. The celebrants visited the



Sultan Maccido

Waziri Junaidu history Bureau which have artefacts and intellectual works dating back to the jihadist era.

Those present at the occasion were the secretary to the state government, Alhaji Muhammed ... Dingadi, former Ambassador to Senegal, Ambassador Muhammad Bello Maidigurno, the state Commissioner of Police, Alhaji Abubakar Audu, Sokoto state head of service, Sokoto South local government chairman, Alhaji Dan Yaro among others.

According to a palace statement, the Sultan will on his return, meet with descendants of Shehu Usman Dan-Fodiyo as well as a book launch.

Resource control would be blessing to the North

An agricultural expert and chairman, Green Fingers Ltd., Prince R.A. Oluyede has said that the recent calls for resource control by the oil-producing states will be a blessing to the north with their wish is eventually granted.

Addressing journalists in Kaduna, Prince Oluyede said that with the tremendous agricultural potentials of the North, evident by the defunct groundnut pyramid, cotton, wheat and other export produce, the North could "conveniently call off the bluff of resource control agitates by concentrating on the development of agriculture and solid minerals.

The chairman of the Kaduna-based tractor refurbishing firm said that he shared the view of the Taraba state governor, Rev. Jolly Nyame that agricultural resources are more advantageous and crucial than petroleum. "Whereas oil resources, which the North might still have, might dry up in the next 15 to 20 years in the South, agriculture will last forever if properly developed and sustained."

He, however, expressed dismay that while agricultural income was used to develop the petroleum sector, petroleum income is not used to develop agricultural sector. "The sector has been abandoned to the detriment of the economy," he added.

"The repercussion of a stifling economy is now manifesting in the series of socio-economic disequilibrium

From Ibrahim Ka-Almasih,
Kaduna

and the unresourcefulness of the polity," the agriculturalist regretted.

The agricultural expert whose firm has been in the business of maintenance of agricultural implements for over 15 years, said it was not too late to redress the anomaly by earnest commitment to the harnessing and development of agricultural potentials of the North in particular and Nigeria in general.



L-R: Information Minister, Prof. Jerry Gana, the Governor of Kaduna State, Alhaji Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi and CBN Governor, Chief Joseph Sanusi at the National Economic Council meeting held at the State House, ... recently.

NCNC boss call for more college of education

The Executive Secretary of the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE), Prof. Gidado Tahir, has stressed the need for Colleges of Education in the country to begin massive production of teachers for the successful implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme.

Delivering a lecture at the weekend, at the 19th and 20th

convocation ceremony of the Federal College of Education, Pankshin in Plateau state, Tahir said that since the colleges were designed to train teachers and should teach in primary and junior secondary schools, there were no institutions better suited to produce teachers for the UBE than Colleges of Education.

Tahir, who was guest speaker at the convocation,

called on the Colleges of Education to strive and ensure that the teachers they produced were of good quality than could handle different instructions, whether in literacy, special education and vocation centers or the elementary levels of primary education.

He said that the burden of steady supply of required teachers for the

UBE programme had to be borne by Colleges of Education, stressing "the earlier the colleges started bracing up for the challenge, the better for all of us".

The executive secretary suggested that the colleges should either independently or in conjunction with some authorities, organize and run in-service Teacher education programmes to meet the needs of teachers at the state and local

Road marshals clash with commercial motorcyclists

A combined team of soldiers and mobile policemen rescued the Sector Commander of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) in Cross state, Mr. Emmanuel Ikekwe, from being mobbed in his office by rampaging commercial motorcyclists, the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports.

An eyewitness told NAN in Calabar at the weekend that the motorcyclists, numbering more than 300, on Thursday, last week, stormed the FRSC base, along the Edidem-Isang-Iso road, between 10 a.m. and 11.30 a.m., chanting war songs.

"Once inside the premises, they smashed the windscreens and headlamps of two parked FRSC vehicles and headed

straight on to the commander's office when the soldiers and policemen arrived," the eye witness said.

NAN also learnt that the motorcyclists were protesting against the action of the FRSC patrol squad, which, they claimed, resulted in a fatal motor accident along the Murtala Mohammed highway in Calabar.

One of their colleagues, it was alleged, died on the spot along with another person. A source said that the deceased cyclist was knocked down by a vehicle which was being chased by the FRSC patrol squad. At the time NAN visited the base around 2 p.m, some soldiers and policemen were keeping watch, while broken glasses littered everywhere.

Enron suffers third set-back

The start-up of the independent power plant installed for the Lagos state government by America's Enron at Egbin, near Lagos, suffered another blow at the weekend when NEPA rejected Governor Bola Tinibu's May 29 date.

A top official of the Lagos state government on the governor's entourage to NEPA headquarters in Abuja, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) that NEPA's managing director, Joseph Makoju, simply dismissed the proposed date as unrealistic.

It was the third time the project, on which Enron has already sunk \$600 million, would suffer such a fate.

A few days before its initial take-off date of March 12, 2001, Power and Steel Minister, Segun Agagu faulted the conception of the project and declared it illegal.



INSIDE POLITICS

Bafyau calls for Ali's resignation

Despite the peace initiatives by chieftains of the All People's Party (APP) to reconcile the warring factions in the party, the suspended national organising secretary of the party, Comrade Pascal Bafyau, has called for the immediate resignation of the National Chairman, Alhaji Yusuf Ali.

Comrade Bafyau's call has added another twist to the crisis that has bedevilled the party since its alliance of inconvenience with the Alliance for Democracy (AD) during the last presidential election in 1999.

Only last week, a former presidential hopeful and the party's major backer, Dr. Olusola Saraki also called for the resignation of the national chairman, alleging that the chairman has failed to move the party to greater height, since he assumed of-

By Tashikalimah Hallah

fice 18 months ago. Comrade Bafyau, in a chat with *Daily Trust* explained that the resignation of the National Chairman has become necessary following the



Alhaji Yusuf Ali chairman's inability to execute the party's manifesto, and most specifically, to offer a credible opposition to the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

The former president of

the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) explained that since the national chairman assumed office, about 18 months ago, the party's fortune has been nose-diving, adding that Ali is heading towards dictatorship through his style of leadership."

According to him, the recent suspension of some national officers of the party, including himself, was a deliberate attempt to silence the views and voices of those who wanted to uplift the party from its present position to a more credible national party. Said Comrade Bafyau, "let the chairman and his clique first address our impeachment issue, rather than pursuing a personal vendetta."

On the reconciliatory committee constituted by the party under the chairmanship of the Zamfara State governor, Alhaji Ahmed Sani Yerima, Comrade Bafyau ex-

plained that the ombudsman (Gov. Ahmed) has met with them but nothing tangible was recorded at the meeting.

Consequently, he said, for peace to reign in the party, Alhaji Ali should quit the stage as the national chairman of the party and let the party elders discuss the impeachment notice raised against the party executive and also have meaningful discussions with notable party leaders such as Dr. Olusola Saraki.

Comrade Bafyau, alongside, Mrs. Yinka Olajunmi, Publicity Secretary, Mr. Senibar Minima and Mr. Pan Obi were suspended during the party's NEC meeting held in Dutse, Jigawa State for an undisclosed anti-party activities.

However, Bafyau in an interview with *Daily Trust* maintained that they were suspended from the party follow-

ing an impeachment notice they served the APP chairman.

In the impeachment notice, Comrade Bafyau and his allies alleged that the chairman, Alhaji Ali failed to constitute the party's board of trustees, as stipulated in Article 12 of its constitution; and that he also failed to constitute committees of the party in accordance with article 20.

Other allegations are: Usurpation of duties and functions of elected principal officers by Ali, which contravenes article 14; the unilateral dissolution of state executive councils of the party and the appointment of a caretaker committee in violation of article 14:1, and the failure to initiate positive and comprehensive programmes of action towards fulfilling the provisions of article 15:1 regarding the convening of conventions and congresses of the party in preparation for the local government elections among others.

Their suspension is now subject of litigation before an Abuja High Court.

Mantu explains PDP's failure

From Buhari Bello, in Jos

The Deputy Senate President, Senator Ibrahim Mantu, has said that the failure of the PDP-led government to deliver the dividends of democracy to the people is largely due to the frequent clashes between the executive and the National Assembly. He attributed the clashes to ignorance, lack of experience and the failure of the two arms of government to realise that they must work together for the people to reap the dividends of democracy.

Senator Mantu made this known while speaking to pressmen in Mangu, shortly after being conferred with a honorary fellowship of the Federal College of Education, Pankshin, Plateau State.

According to the Deputy Senate President, "as you know, the first two years in the National Assembly were years of confrontation, disagreement, crisis and conflicts between the executive and the legislature. And at the end of the day, the people who voted us into power have been the victims of our fights or clashes with the executive."

He stated that the need to deliver dividends is what informed the present relationship between the two arms, describing it as the "best thing not because of anything but because we have both realised that we must work together if we want people to reap the dividends of democracy."

Continuing, Mantu added, "so we told ourselves: Look, are we here for this or we are here to do something for the people? And the answer was obvious that we are here to do something for the people. That is why we decided to find a meeting point somehow."

On the impending deregulation of the petroleum sector by the federal government, Senator Mantu explained that what was needed to end the lingering fuel crisis in Nigeria was liberalising the sector "and not deregulation by increasing prices."

While noting that the policy has some advantages, he "is agreed with increase in prices before deregulation. It was my belief that government could make fuel available without increasing prices."

"When you liberalise fuel it means that there will be no monopoly but again if you say it is deregulation, do you have to increase prices before doing that? That is another subject and Nigerians are saying no because prices have been increased in the past and their lives were not bettered," he maintained.

The Deputy Senate President who attributed the cause of the fuel crisis to leakages in the distribution network, observed that until the product is made available, it will be difficult for Nigerians to accept government's arguments as prices of petroleum products have been increased repeatedly without corresponding

Rep. alerts INEC over plans to rig election

A member of the House of Representatives, Alhaji Bala Kaoje from Kebbi State has alerted the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) of plans by the All People's Party (APP) to rig the forthcoming by-elections in his state.

To this end he said, the party has directed all APP governors to storm Kebbi State for the April 28th and May 5th by-elections into the vacant councillorship seats, one state House of Assembly seat and one senatorial seat.

Pointing out the obvious dangers of such a move, the legislator said it would be a threat to security in a state where the PDP controls the House of Assembly while the APP produced the governor.

Said he: "Everyone knows what they are going there to do, we are not afraid of that. But the issue is, this is politics and anything can happen.

"If any governor leaves his own state and comes to Kebbi, nobody can guarantee his safety there. Anything can happen."

According to him "the

By Reuben Yunana

sole aim of the APP governors is to storm Kebbi with money to buy votes."

"Those of us in the PDP are ready to face any challenge by anybody," he vowed, adding that the state which controls 18 out of the 20 state Assembly seats

would again repeat the feat by sweeping the polls.

Alhaji Kaoje also accused the Kebbi State Governor, Alhaji Adamu Aliero, of intimidating both civil servants and traditional rulers in the state into voting for APP in the forthcoming by-elections.

"The state governor has threatened to sack or transfer

anyone with PDP sympathies to places where they would be redundant or idle.

"He has also gone to the extent of warning our village and district heads that they would lose their seats if APP loses in their domains in the by-elections," the legislator claimed.

He, therefore, advised the

electorate in Kebbi State to disregard the governor's threats since his four-year tenure would soon elapse, "do not be coerced into making a wrong choice," he said.

He said the national secretariat of the PDP had since been alerted and has promised to take all steps to ensure a free and fair election in the state.

Accurate information is necessary for survival of democracy—Salim

As the fourth republic enters its second year, the clerk of the National Assembly, Alhaji Ibrahim Salim, yesterday said that for democracy to succeed members of the legislature should be properly fed with accurate and up-to-date information.

In an address at the opening of a three-day national conference of researchers and statisticians of national and States Houses of Assembly in Abuja, Salim said that accurate information would enable the legislators to perform their roles more effectively.

"In the past, both members of the public and some political analysts accused the legislatures of many societal ills," he said, "the legislatures were accused of wasting time on lengthy debates or taking hasty decisions on bills.

"But the result was that, not many people knew that many of the legislators were handicapped by a lack of sufficient information."

Salim further said that the task of providing the legisla-

tion was that of researchers, statisticians and librarians.

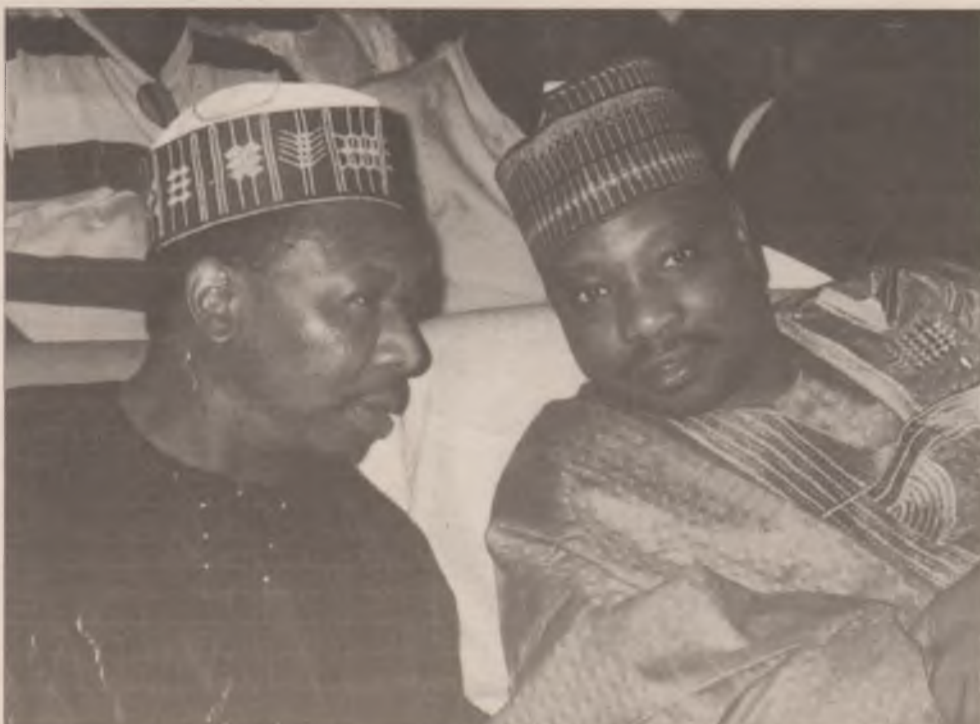
The clerk said that the conference with the theme, "the challenges of research in the Nigerian legislatures," would enhance the capacity of participants in understand-

ing and analysing basic research issues.

Also speaking at the occasion, the director of budget, planning, research and statistics and library services in the National Assembly, Alhaji Kabiru Suleiman, said that the conference was aimed at ex-

amining problems facing legislative research in the country.

He said that the conference was also aimed at familiarising participants with methods and techniques of information sourcing and date analysis in the context of the legislature.



National chairman of Alliance for Democracy, Alhaji Adamu Ahmed Abdulkadir (left) chats with Gombe state deputy governor, Barrister Joshua Lidani during a civic reception



Dr. Abel Guobadia, INEC chairman



INSIDE POLITICS

Oputa panel is unconstitutional - Tarfa

Mr. Rickey Tarfa, Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) is a first class lawyer who spends about 16 hours daily to study his cases before appearing in courts. The second Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) to be produced by the faculty of law, University of Maiduguri and the first SAN from Adamawa State. As a student in secondary school, in Hong, Rickey Tarfa came out with division one and went to the University of Maiduguri with the intention to read literature, the subject of his love but by daint of destiny, he ended up a lawyer. He was recently honoured by the Adamawa community in Abuja. A very shy, dedicated and highly respected family man, Rickey Tarfa spoke to our political editor, Ibrahim Modibbo on topical issue. Excerpts



say is your role model in appreciating law as a profession?

Well, professionally, unlike most lawyers who started their profession under other people, I did not do that. I braved it, and started on my own. I only had a stint during my one-year youth service with the firm of Messrs Olaniyan Ajayi and after that, I left to set up my own law firm. Basically, the role model I would think that spurred me in law were the appellate judges. Their judgements gave me the driving force and their exposition of the law is really what had kept one on his toes. This gave me a lot of aspiration and

and performs judicial functions and so long as it does that, it is the legislature that should set up such a body under the laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The president has no such powers. He can initiate it and then send it to the legislature, but the final authority should be the legislature.

When you take for instance, investigation of crime, it is purely a police function and if your human rights are being abused, it is the courts of records that have the right to investigate it, look into it and probably offer you compensation for the abuse you suffered. Murder cases are those that are supposed to be handled by the police, so you can't take it to Oputa Panel and expect any result different from what the laws of the country has provided. As far as my personal opinion is concerned, Oputa panel is not constitutional.

Many people believe that the Oputa panel can only bark, it cannot bite because it lacks the necessary instrument of power to punish offenders. Do you share the same view?

That is why the whole thing borders on the constitutionality, because of its shortcomings. If you now set up the Oputa Panel to discharge judicial functions, it presupposes that you should now give it judicial powers to enforce their own orders. But because it is not rooted in legality, the appropriate machinery has not been set in place to make it effective, so that even when it passes an order, it could be implemented. I think to a large extent, the misconception is that these people who are aware that the Oputa Panel may not be constitutional have always been harping on the fact that it is only an advisory body and would only recommend to the president. So, if they recommend to the president what does the president do? Is he going to enforce it? So, where does the president have the powers under the 1999 constitution to set up such a body? The whole thing is still murky and therefore not as clear as one would have expected.

I know that the former President, Ibrahim Babangida has challenged the powers of the Oputa Panel at the Federal High Court, Lagos and the matter has been referred to the Court of Appeal for constitutional interpretation of the constitution. It is hoped that at the end of the day, the Court of Appeal would decide on this contentious issue.

The courts used to be the last hope of the commonman, do you think that it is still the last hope of the commonman.

The only set up within the system that can really vouch and say that it is still maintaining its ethics is the judiciary. To a large extent, in terms of time, performance, of dedication, output and re-limiting the expectations of the common man, it still remains the judiciary. It would be difficult to rate the legislature and the judiciary on the same pedestal. So also is the executive.

You are on record as the youngest Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) the country has ever produced and the first from Adamawa state. How do you look at such a feat and what are the challenges before you.

Well, for the purpose of history, it could be quite interesting but at the same time I have not really been too excited in view of the fact that the challenges ahead is much more than what you have already done. I am not quite unaware that the challenges of becoming a Senior Advocate of Nigeria is very heavy. First of all, you have to take an undertaking that you would uphold the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and you must also

uphold the dignity and honour of the profession. Part of the thing is to train as many people as possible and presently, I have over 14 lawyers and more applications are coming on almost daily basis by people who want to come and acquire the skill. It is on record that we don't have enough lawyers to meet our current population - as statistics roughly have it that the ratio of lawyers to citizens of this country cannot even be 1:1000, which is grossly inadequate. So, we need the challenges of the profession. I am happy for one to be a Senior Advocate of Nigeria and secondly, to have come from Adamawa state is a fulfilment in one's professional undertakings. I shall not disappoint those that have conferred the title on me and I hope to try the utmost best I can to uphold the status of a Senior Advocate of Nigeria.

There are dearths of good lawyers these days and even academics and judges are complaining of low quality of lawyers produced by our universities these days. What do you consider as the major problems and what remedial measures would you suggest to tackle the problem.

You see, unless we have good educational system and set up, it would continue to be so. We have raised standards right from the primary level to the university stages so that we produce good students and I also want to believe that the concentration must come from the teachers, the parents and the society at large. Government has a very important role to play and unless government changes its attitude to education, it would be difficult to get good results. Everybody wants good education but no one wants to look critically at the problems for solution to be proffered.

I would suggest that we make the atmosphere of our universities more attractive for the lecturers as well as the students and equally make the atmosphere good for learning. Well, the answer still lies in the problem and both the teachers the society and the government must take the issue of education seriously.

Do you have any political aspiration now or in the near distant future?

No, I have always said that I have no political aspirations and it is not likely that I would have political ambition. The law profession is a very jealous profession and if you reach this level of excellence, it might be extremely difficult for you to combine politics with it. Once you have divided attention where too many things preoccupy your mind, you cannot really produce the best.

Presently, my politics is my profession. I take my job very seriously and it is not likely that I could leave my job to go and contest for any political office. I may be disposed to serving the government in whatever capacity as I can, just as I have done in the past, but nothing more than that.

Does the laws of this country have provision for more political parties under the current dispensation?

Well, constitutionally, if you talk about the right of association, it is inherent that people should be allowed to associate into as many groups as possible. I am not sure that there is any law that forbids the registration of more political parties. The more political parties we have the better, otherwise we are drifting towards a one-party structure and that would not be good for Nigeria.

From the legal viewpoint, do you think that the apostles of resource control have a point towards that direction?

It depends on how you are looking at it. It is either you are looking at it from those states who are at the centre of the litigation or you look at it from the other states who felt that the status quo ought to be so. My personal opinion is that it is a good thing that the matter was taken to court, because such grievances when it keeps holding for so long, the best way out is to approach the courts to have their own position on it. The courts would probably give whatever decision that would eventually be in the interest of the nation generally and it would douse the political tension in the land.

As the youngest Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) in this country, how would you describe your childhood?

Well, I was born in Garkida, a small village in Gombi local government area of the present Adamawa State in 1962. I went to primary school there and later proceeded to Government Secondary School, Hong where I finished in 1980.

From there, I went to the University of Maiduguri and I graduated in 1986. I proceeded to the Nigerian Law School between 1986 to 87 and had my (BL) Bachelor of Law, which qualified me to be registered as solicitor and advocate of the Supreme Court of Nigeria. I did my National Youth Service Corps in Lagos state and after that I immediately started my private practice establishing two law firms, one in Yola and the other in Lagos. I went back to do my masters in 1990 at the University of Lagos and since then I have remained in private practice. I became a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) in 2000.

What would you say, were your major influences in choosing law as a profession?

Well, you attended the same university with me and I want to say that in secondary school, I was an arts student who graduated with division one. One of the areas I had my greatest aptitude was in English literature. You know I attended the same literature courses with you even in the university and you are also aware at that time that we were making an 'A' grade in literature.

Ordinarily one would assume that one would have gone in for literature, but while one was making good grades in literature, one was equally making fairly good marks in political science and other arts courses, including the law itself. Law at that material time was the most competitive and because of that, I opted for law. Fortunately I got admission to read law. I must emphasise that literature played a very important role in my appreciation of law, even today.

I still maintain that literature holds the key to all subjects, as it remains a major inspiration to understanding the law.

In terms of personalities, who could you

determination to succeed in law.

Which is the most memorable case that you have handled since the beginning of your law practise to date?

Ah! It is difficult to say that this is the most memorable case as such because one is involved in many cases, all over the country. I had cases in Yola where one of my chambers is, in Jos and Ibadan where the court of appeal is, and majority of my practises are in Lagos, and it cuts across all fields. It is not the magnitude of the amount involved in a case that determines its importance, neither is the personality. I take all cases seriously, no matter the amount of money or the personality involved. It is the seriousness that I attached to all my cases that earned me the status that I have today. Sometimes the difficulty is, most cases that are heavy in monetary content either gets settled or probably does not get finished as soon as you want. Those ones that you feel are less important which may be assigned to junior counsels sometimes turn out to produce some very thorny legal issues that excite the brain.

What are your views on the Justice Oputa panel of inquiry into human rights abuses and violations?

Well, I have expressed an opinion and incidentally I have also had the early consultations of the former President General Ibrahim Babangida on the issue. I had consultations with some of his legal representatives and I have proffered my opinion on the legality of the Oputa panel. I have maintained that the Oputa panel is unconstitutional. The point is that the panel was constituted by President Olusegun Obasanjo. He was relying on the inquiry act which was a legislation existing under the military government. That was the time the president had the powers to constitute tribunals, the whole scenario has changed. This is a democratic dispensation, where all courts, be they inferior courts or courts of records can only be created by the legislature. It is only the legislature that can create the human rights commission because the human rights commission is an investigation panel. It is a body that receives evidences



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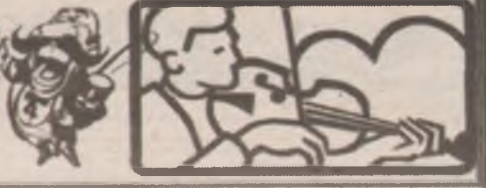
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Arts & Entertainment



Love and Courage in Jamila Mohammed's Pains and Sorrows

PUBLISHERS: ADAMA JOJI PUBLISHERS
PAGES: 112
AUTHOR: AL...KASIM 'ABDULDAKIR ABUGI

Set in contemporary Nigeria, the story revolves around Khairat, a girl whom nature has been very fair to, in terms of beauty. She falls into a relationship that is short lived by her partner's desire to go abroad. Then, a brief spell-binding relationship with Abdulrauf, and finally a romantic relationship in the University with Hassan which goes sour, and leaves her with a broken heart. Suddenly Khalid reappears, just when all hope is lost.

Pains and sorrows is a peep into the tumultuous love dramas that unfold in various scenarios among the youths of today. Jamila I. Mohammed has taken us on a familiar terrain, but she does this with a difference in thought and plot. She's short on the dialoging

pattern that makes prose tick. Most often she takes a narrative stance, which she diffuses with a little dialogue. As narration does not bring out the best traits and attitudes of a prose character, except from the author's point of view. Her characterization deserves commendation for its not flooded with unnecessary characters, but characters who have a purpose and more often than not, serve as the link between Khairat and her partners. In this category belong Cynthia and Tahir.

After Khalid's departure, Abdulrauf couldn't resist the beauty of Khairat and a relationship soon began much to Khairat's surprise, but unlucky as she is, its short hived again as she caught him (Abdulrauf) red handed with her

friend Cynthia. But in the spirit of love, she forgives Cynthia later on. One cannot miss the the persistent advise of Khairat's mother pertaining to her dealings with men like in Pg 56. The love of a man and a bottle of wine are sweet, for a season, but last for a time, a show of the civic responsibility parents owe their children.

The writer gives us a glimpse of her primary background the University, and the extravagant life styles associated with all student of sorts today.

One can notice the author's sentimental and passionate feelings in connection with her character Khairat, like on P 82 where she dwelled a little on the immorality involved in the courtships of today, a fact she didn't truly let us on in Khairat's case "A guy can go to any length to get in between a lady's legs and after accomplishing his aims acts differently, " Did Khairat succumb to the whims of her suitors? is a question the author didn't an-

swer. Khairat's laments and cry for love is very touching in P 87. Nonetheless, a nostalgic reunion takes place between Khairat and Khalid, on P98 and 99. They profess love again and like before, everything falls into place, but the novel takes an ironic turn as Hassan's letter touches a string in the heart singing a plea for forgiveness. Students of passion shall find this very alluring. But alas!

Like all other irresponsible pleas, his too is doomed. And Khairat and Khalid like-true lovers before them find solace in their souls and love in their hearts. Mohammed must be commended for a job well done as she has started on a very good note. The use of familiar places shows she's in tune with her environment Victoria Island, Lagos, Abuja, BUK and other places. Like all good writers Mohammed also vows her in loyalty to love, to family and to country. For instance, Nigeria is my fatherland you can see that I'll not be there (Oxford) forever. Always put it at the back of your mind that my love will always, be there

for you. This confirms her love for our nationhood and to mankind.

Surely one cannot fail to notice that omissions abound in the text, like in Pg 20 'The both hugged each very closely, omission of the word 'other' between each and 'very' is noticed here. In some parts Mohammed can be said to be verbose, that is she could have done away with many phrases and words. For her employment of too many clichés as prose writing is all about the creating of new forms of literature. She can give us a better read in the next edition. But above, all, what Mohammed lacks in technicality she makes up for in her fluidity, plot and the narration of her story, and she is very much welcome aboard to give the likes of Zainab, Alkali and Hasiya Mohammed a helping hand.

Jamila I. Mohammed's debut holds abundant promises and aspirations. May she bloom in season, write more and the pains and sorrows shall be wiped away by the Muse

Al-Kasim Abugi writes from Minna, Niger State

Book Review

Ike marks 70th birthday with literary harvest

By Samson Ojo, Lagos

One of Nigeria's foremost academics and writer, Professor Vincent Chukwuemeka Ike will clock 70 years old on Saturday, April 28, 2001. That milestone will be celebrated both in NdiKelionwu, the Scholar's place of birth in Anambra State and Lagos where Ike lived and worked for decades.

In NdiKelionwu, Orumba North Local Government Area of Anambra State, a service of thanksgiving in Professor Ike's honour will hold at St. Margaret Anglican Church from 11.00 a.m. The service will be presided over by the most Reverend Maxwell S.C. Anikwenwa, (J.P.) Dean of the Church of Nigeria, Archbishop of Province 11 and Bishop of Awka.

The Lagos celebration will be flagged-off, with a commemorative event tagged "Ike Literary Harvest". It will hold on May 3. The monumental event will feature among others things, the presentation of Professor Ike's eleven existing novels, a thrilling new novel titled "Conspiracy of Silence" published by Longman, a collection of the distinguished writer's short stories, "The Accra Rivera" from Oyster St. Iyke and several of his non-fictional works.

As part of the momentous celebrative event, a critical study of professor Ike's works titled "Chukwuemeka Ike: A critical Reader" edited by Kanchana Ugbabe and published by Malthouse press will be unveiled.

The Lagos event will hold at the Banker, Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria, 19, Adeola Hopewell Street, Victorial Island, Lagos, beginning at 1.30 p.m. Dignitaries expected at the event include; Hon. Justice (Dr.) Aguda Akinola (Chairman), Dr. Alex Ekweme (Guest of honour), Governor Chinwoke Mbadinuju of Anambra State (Host) and His Majesty, the Ezearo, who will be the Royal father of the day.

Others include, Information and National Orientation Minister, Professor Jerry Gana, Dr. Mrs. Kema Chikwe (Aviation), Chief Bola Ige (Justice), Pro-

fessor Babalola Borishade (Education), Chief Ojo Madekwe (Transport) and Ms. Boma Bromillow-Jack (Culture and Tourism).

Also expected to be in attendance are Dr. (Mrs.) Catherine Achoru, spe-

cial adviser to the President, on Culture matters, Professor Akin Mabogunje, Senator Mike Ajegbo and Onyecabo Obi, as well as Dr. Abel

Guobadia and M.P. Ndure.

The reviewers of the day will be Dr. Rcube Abati, Kanchama Ugbade and Mr. Richard Mofe Damijo. Ike Literary Harvest is being organised by the Chukwuemeka Foundation and Oyster

St. Iyke limited in collaboration with the Nigerian Book Foundation, Natural Documentation Centre for Science and Technology, University Press Plc., Longman Nigeria Plc and Malthouse Press Limited.

What's Her Name?

3 LETTERS

DOT
EVA
MAE
NAN
PEG

4 LETTERS

ANNA
BESS
CORA
ILSA
IONE
IRIS
IRMA
LENA
LORA
NORA
RHEA
ROSE
SARA
TINA

5 LETTERS

ADELA
ANITA
BELLE

DAISY
DIANA
ELLEN
ERICA
GRETA
HELEN
LORNA
MARGE
NANCY
RHODA
SALLY
SUSIE
THEDA

6 LETTERS

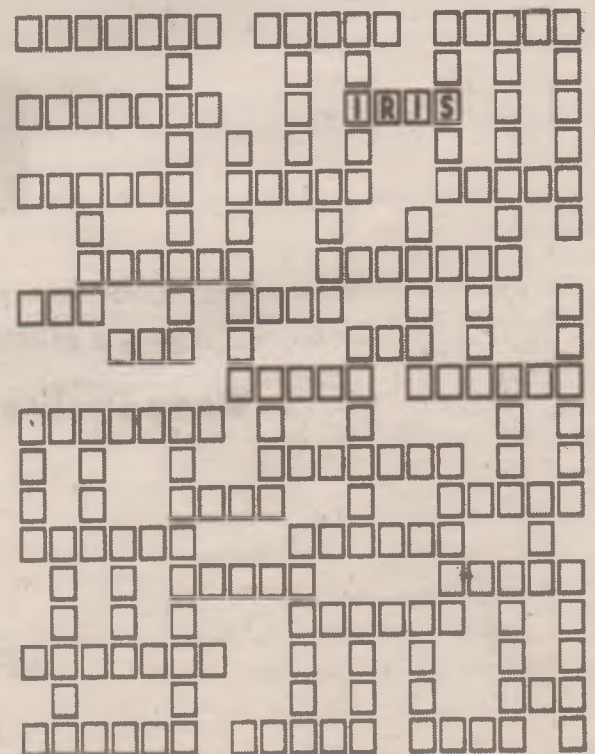
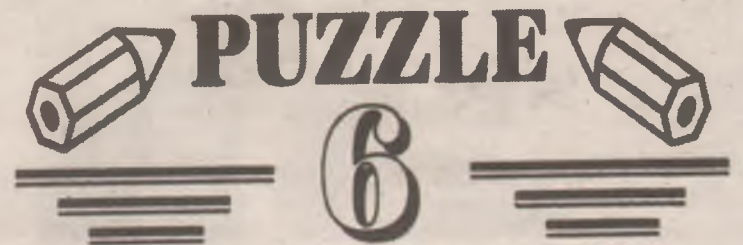
CARRIE
ELAINE
HONORA
JEANNE
JESSIE
NADINE
PAMELA
SALOME
SELENA
SHEILA
STELLA
YVONNE

7 LETTERS

ANNETTE
BARBARA
CLARICE
EUGENIA
LOUELLA
LUCILLE
ROBERTA
ROSALIE

9 LETTERS

CATHERINE
ROSABELLE



Arts & Entertainment

New Nigerian: The first 20 years by Turi Muhammadu Part XIX

'The darkest year'

The civil war rages, and the activities of foreign nations are examined once more. There are developments in Northern Nigeria such as the establishment of the Interim Common Services agency, (ICSA). The state of the nation's finances during the war is highlighted

Books

Under the facade of humanitarian activities, the agencies were seen to be aiding the rebels at home and abroad. In the November 28 issue of the New Nigerian for instance, it was reported that the Federal Government had accused CARITAS of helping rebels with food, medicine and money for arms purchases despite several warnings. The Catholic relief agency was also accused of sponsoring about 200 mercenaries from Europe.

Their propaganda campaign abroad against the Federal Government had even more negative effects. One of these was the running debate in the British parliament over the Nigerian Civil War.

This assumed such ridiculous and presumptuous dimensions that the Federal Government protested to the British Prime Minister to stop the debates. Indeed, the anti-government activities of CARITAS were only mitigated by the presence of four foreign observers in Nigeria-Major General Sulaiman Hoffman (Algeria), Brigadier-General Negga Teghegn (Ethiopia (OAU)), Mr. Nils-Goran Gussing (UN) and Col. Karl Areskoo (Sweden). This team consistently observed that there were no plans to wipe out the Ibos or Catholics by the Federal Government. Indeed, even at this point there were conscious efforts by the Federal Government to reintegrate Ibos in liberated areas and instil unity in the nation.

If there were any single words to describe the war aim of Nigeria (and coincidentally, those of the New Nigerian) they were "national unity". With the benefit of hindsight, we can see that this aim was being achieved even as the war raged on. Colonel Adeyinka Adebayo, Military Governor of the Western state was quoted by the New Nigerian of November 29 as saying that "The war to crush the rebellion has brought the country closer". Another Colonel on the war-front, Benjamin

Adekunle, "Black Scorpion," was quoted by the New Nigerian of October 11 as saying that "If Nigeria fails (to unite), Africa will be ruined" Chief Enahoro, the Federal Commissioner for Information quoted in the New Nigerian of April 8, put it even more elaborately: "If

Nigeria breaks, no-one knows how many African countries will survive.

Every country is an accident of history and it is no excuse to say that the imperialists created Nigeria or any other country."

This objective explains the meticulous manner in which unity was pursued. In a speech on October 1, Independence Day, General Gowon stated that his government was "fighting against external enemies". True to the word, Ibos in liberated areas were immediately reintegrated into the mainstream of Nigerian life. According to the New Nigerian of November 28, the Federal Ministry of Education approved educational grants for East Central State students who signed the oath of allegiance to the Federal Military Government. Similarly, government corporations and private sector firms were reported to have resumed business in liberated areas of the East. These included the Nigerian Tobacco Company, the United African Company and Leventis, all in Enugu.

By the year-end, the New Nigerian of December 3, quoted the Military Governor of the North West State, Police Superintendent Usman Farouk as saying that "more Ibos are now returning to the state." In the same edition, the paper also reported that seven Igbo students were admitted into the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

However, nothing exemplified the quest for national unity as much as the "National Reconciliation" speech by Gowon on December 1. In the speech, published in the New Nigerian of December 2, he said among other things that "one of the crucial tests by which the leadership of this country will be judged after the war is the extent we can achieve national reconciliation and reintegr-

ation of the Ibos... Outside the, rebel-held areas, Nigerians have never been as united as they are today. This is the real basis for my hope."

Urgent as the need was, the take-off of the 12 new states was delayed till April 1, 1968. This was no doubt necessitated by the competing demands of the day. However, in view of the importance of establishing these new states, the issue was taken up with all seriousness. On the appointed day, the fol-



General Yakubu Gowon

lowing were named Military Governors. Alhaji Audu Bako (Kano), Col. D. L. Bamigboye (Kwara), Major Abba Kyari (North Central State), Col. Musa Usman (North East State), Chief Superintendent of Police Usman Farouk (North West State), Asst. Comm. of Police J. D. Gomwalk (Benue-Plateau), Col. Mobolaji Johnson (Lagos) and COL. S. O. Ogbemudia (Mid- West State).

Other steps to consolidate the new states included the sub-division of the states into administrative areas for convenience. Thus, according to the New Nigerian of October 17, the North Central State had initial nine administrative areas namely. Katsina, Dutsinma, Funtua, Daura, Zaria, Kachia, Birnin Gwari, Jema'a and Kaduna. The major reason why the state structure was so important was the fact that it did foreclose the option of secession as preached by the Igbo rebels.

When the Sardauna's government was overthrown the succeeding Military Government for the North under Major Hassan Usman Katsina continued to fund the newspaper.

With the creation of states, the North was broken up into six states. For the Northern Nigerian Newspapers Ltd. this meant having six owners.

An Interim Common Services Agency (ICSA) made up of the six Northern Governors was set up to look after institutions that could not be easily broken up. These included the Northern Nigeria Newspapers, the Ahmadu Bello University, the Bank of the North, the Northern Nigerian Development Company and the Kaduna Polytechnic. The ICSA became the owner of the Institutions and was responsible for their finances. A board of directors was appointed for each institution. At the beginning of each financial year the management of each institution prepared a budget which was considered by its board of directors. The

budget proposals were then presented to ICSA for approval. The approved budget for each Institution was then shared between the six Northern states who paid their shares directly to the institution concerned.

In the case of the New Nigerian each state appointed a director as follows:

- Benue/Plateau M. Bawa Shemu
- North-Central Alhaji Abubakar Imam
- Kano Alhaji Habibu Abbas
- North- West Alhaji Shehu Kakale Shuni
- Kwara Mr. J.S. Olawoyin
- North- East Alhaji Abba Jiddun Gana (The first Chairman of the company).

The first meeting of the new Board took place on 26th September, 1968. Among those present were M. Bawa Shemu

- M. Habibu Abbas
- Mr. Josiah Sunday Olawoyin,
- Alhaji Abubakar Imam
- Alhaji Abba Jiddun Gana
- M. Shehu Kakale Shuni
- Mr. Charles Sharp -Managing
- In attendance -Adamu Ciroma
- Ian Macgregor

Mr. Macgregor explained that as a result of the division of the share capital between the six Northern states, it was necessary for the shares to be transferred. He held share certificates from the Ministry of Finance Incorporated, Northern Nigeria, for 299,994 shares. Further he also held transfers duly sealed by the various Ministries of Finance Incorporated and therefore it was resolved that the following share certificates be issued and the company's seal be affixed to them in the presence of the required officials.

- Benue/Plateau 41999 14%
- North Central 41999 14%
- Kano 56999 19%
- North West 5699 19%
- Kwara 23999 8%
- North Eastern 77999 26%

Surprisingly the New Nigerian said nothing. Could this be because of the paper's editorial earlier in the year which urged that all probes be suspended to enable the government and the governed to concentrate on the war?

There was probably no way that

a huge exercise such as the Nigerian Civil War would not affect the nation's economy. To start with, the government announced a budget for the 1968/69 year in April. In his budget speech, Gowon acknowledged that "Funds required to crush the rebellion must be raised through contribution of fiscal and monetary policy which would leave the economy strong enough at the end of the war for the all-important task of reconstruction and development.

The extent of damage to the economy in the previous year was not encouraging. According to a report in the New Nigerian of December 12, the nation's deficit spending rose from £9 million in 1966 to £37 million in 1967. The budget for defence and security during the period rose from £17 million to £32 million and shows itself to be the cause of the deficit. Nevertheless the country did not go abroad to borrow money to finance the war.

Times were hard. Tax increases in the Western state were to lead to serious riots in Ibadan, Oyo and other Western towns. The Federal Government itself needed foreign assistance and thus negotiated a £50 million economic cooperation pact with the then European union even though Western nations were against the move. Similarly, the European community suspended ratification of the treaty with Nigeria on the basis of "suppression in Biafra". In an editorial titled "A ludicrous decision", the New Nigerian of October 3 said that "the Nigerian Government should better sit up and take note that it has not got a single friend in the whole of Western Europe".

These then were the major challenges of the nation in 1968. How they were met and the effects of the measures taken are assessed in the

following sections.

Nigeria entered the year 1969 dragging along a 17 month old civil war. It was perhaps the darkest year of the post-independence era. Everywhere, the level of dependency was on the rise as the Ojukwu-led rebels used foreign aid to hold up against the federal forces.

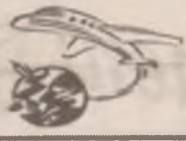
In his New Year broadcast published by the New Nigerian of January 1, General Yakubu Gowon himself sounded pessimistic.



Mallam Turi Muhammadu



Mr. Josiah S. Olawoyin



Consumer Guide



Today's Flights

Albarka Air Services
Abuja—Lagos: 8.30am; 10.00am;

1.00pm; 4.30pm
Lagos—Abuja 7.00am; 9.45am;

1.00pm; 3.00pm.
Abuja—Maid (1.30pm)
Abuja—Maid (4.30pm)
Maid—Abuja (7.30pm)

Chanchangi Airlines
Abuja—Lagos: 8.00am; 11.45am;

1.40pm; 3.00pm; 5.30pm
Kaduna—Lagos (8.30am)
Kaduna—Abuja—Lagos (12.40pm)
Lagos—Abuja; 7.15pm; 10.00am;

1.10pm; 3.30pm; 4.45pm.
Lagos—Abuja—Kaduna (10.00am)
Lagos—Kaduna (5.00pm)

Nigeria Airways
Abj—Lagos: 8.30am
Abj—Lagos: 2.00pm; 3.30pm; 5.30pm.

Lag—Abj: 7.00am; 12.30pm
Lagos—Phc: 9.00am
Lagos—Enu—Phc: 4.00pm
Abuja—Yola: 3.30pm.
Yola—Abuja: 4.45pm

Eas Airlines
Abj—Jos 11.00am
Abj—Jos—Lagos—11.00am
Abj—Lag: 10.30am; 4.30pm
Lag—Abj: 7.15am; 9.30am; 2.45pm.

Bellview Airlines
Abj - Jos 11.00 am
1 p.m, 5.20 p.m
Lagos - Abuja 6-50 a.m, 11.15 a.m
Lagos - PHC 7.40 a.m, 3.15 a.m
PHC - Lagos 9 a.m, 5.05 p.m

Sosoliso Airlines
Lagos - Abuja 12:30 p.m
Lagos - Enugu 10 a.m, 4.30 p.m
Lagos - PHC 4.30 P.M
PHC - Lagos 8.30 a.m
Enugu - Lagos 7.30 a.m 11.30 a.m

Kabo Air
Lagos - Kaduna 10.00 a.m
Lagos - Kano 10 a.m, 2p.m
Jos - Lagos 8.30 a.m
Kano - Lagos 7.30 a.m, 12 p.m, 4p.m

ADC Airlines
Abuja - Lagos 8.30 a.m, 4.40 p.m
Lagos - Abuja 7 a.m, 3.15p.m
Lagos - Calabar 10.30 a.m, 12.15 p.m

Plaiting or weaving? You must have noticed it in town. Perhaps, plaiting reminds you of the village or weaving conjures African-American images on your mind, but both are in the metropolis here and visibly so.

If, therefore, you see women, especially ladies, with exotic hair-styles, they are neither visiting from the village, nor are they tourists from across the Atlantic; they have simply been to the plaiters/weavers.

And since every woman with a sense of trendy styles is more or less turning her back on the salons, these plaiters-cum-weavers are having a field day. And why not? Afterall, isn't it chic to carry a "million braids" on your head or millennially "in" to flaunt your latent beauty with a classic Bob Marley hairstyle?

So who are these plaiters/weavers and where do they ply their trade?

They are in Wuse Market, Berger Junction, the shopping complexes in Areas 1, 3, 10 etc. Without shops, they operate under the shelter of trees, make-shift canopies and in the open air.

Not surprisingly, they are at the mercy of the elements, and have to move their customers about from time to time. But they remain undaunted.

Their younger and pampered sisters may be fighting and haranguing us for women liberation, but these plaiters/weavers, who are on the mature side, are allowing their hands to give them liberation from poverty and want.

They may be too simple to have read Shakespeare, but all the same, they sub-

Plaiting or weaving? Let Abuja women do it for you

Hairstyles

By Simon Imobo-Tswam

scribe to his dictum that every bondman/woman bears in his/her hands the power to cancel his/her captivity.

And irrespective of cultural or religious differences, one thing binds these women together i.e. the struggle for survival. Ibo, Yoruba, Tiv, Idoma, Edo, Gwari, Jukun etc. have joined forces in a common fight against unemployment. Afterall, poverty has no tribal marks.

Mrs. Comfort Okorie is from Abia state. She has put in 20-years in this weaving/plaiting business. she tells you readily: "I want to beautify women. Art is not only painting or drawing; weaving

is also an art. So I chose this humble way to practice my art; to beautify women, to express myself."

Mrs. Okorie is not altogether uninformed. So why can't she get a shop and run a proper hair-salon? Her answer is apt, not only her colleagues, but for millions of other Nigerians abandoned on the other side of the divide: "I don't have money to pay for a shop."

Listen to her: "Shop or no shop, I bring out the 'woman' in my clients. Sometimes, I suggest styles that match their colour, hair-type or occasion. I am happy when

women come here drab, but leave with radiance."

Mrs. Victoria Pam is from Jos, Plateau State, and she has spent six years in the business. Asked why she chose weaving for a means of livelihood, she replies: "It's a simple trade. You don't need anything other than skilled fingers, and a desire to bring out a woman's personality through an expressive hairstyle. So I use my fingers to feed my family."

And there is Victoria Emmanuel from Benue state. She is married to a retired civil servant and her daily income is her seven-member family's mainstay. So what is her daily income? "Sometimes N2,000

sometimes N500, and sometimes, nothing. It's God who is helping us," she replies cheerily. "Student love to look beautiful, but they bargain too much," so Mrs. Emmanuel prefers home-services for society women. "We are beautifiers, so women should appreciate beyond 'thank you' or madam God, go bless you."

Mrs. Judith Nuhu is clocking 16 years in the weaving business and she declares: "I learnt weaving as a child in Taraba State. It's now in my blood - I can hardly do anything else. I enable spinsters to marry by making them beautiful. Salons give general service, we personalise it. And since we use no chemicals, we give our clients no side-effects at all."

But the oldest woman amongst them is Mama Margareth from Okene, Kogi state, and she is the most experienced. She has been weaving for the past 25 years. She has done business in Zaria, Jos and Abuja, besides Ilorin and Lokoja. And not surprisingly, no hair-style is new to her. Amongst her specialties are; threading, mering, twisting, Bob Marley, Shaba, orobo-kibo, baby face, love-come-down and a million braids.

It takes 25 years to be a general or a police commissioner in Nigeria and we know their standing in naira and kobo.

So is Mama Margaret as rich? "No, I no even build house. Even self, I no get okada. I train our nine children with my husband. My chief aim na to make women fine. Young girls wey no marry, I dey change their face with my hand. Woman wey her husband don dey tire for am, I dey givam new look".

The chairlady of the Wuse Market Weavers' Association, Mrs. Helen Achuku, an Idoma, from Benue state, has this appeal to the government.

"We are in business to support the established hair-salons. We want to beautify our women so that they will look lovely. We give them the authentic African touch. And we want government to give us a place where we can stay and serve our numerous customers who include students, workers and big women in society."

If the number of women, ladies and young girls, *Consumer Guide* saw trooping in for one hairstyle or the other is anything to go by, then weaving or hair-plaiting is the in'thing. Now. And what more, women who come to plait or weave enjoy allied services of pedicurists or manicurists.



The women beautifying their kin via plaiting and weaving.

Why we patronise them

It lasts longer

-Charity Usar (student)

I like weaving my hair. There are other reasons, like my hair falling off or turning yellow, but the main reason why I weave my hair is financial. Weaving lasts longer than perming or jerry curls. So I worry my brother less for money.

I want to be natural

Salons are tight places. And sometimes, chemicals ruin your hair, but these women operate in open environments. There is fresh air and relaxation. Besides, I crave the natural look which salons can't give me. These women give you the real thing, they beautify you; in fact, they are better than the salon people.

I feel cool

-Joyce Wayo (worker)

Dryers sometimes give headaches and a wrong relaxer can ruin you hair. But weaving rather preserves your hair. And then, these are our mothers, so we should support them. How much do they even charge? Some of them are training their children with their meagre incomes. So if we don't come here, we will be encouraging them to beg.

Salons can't give me Bob Marley

Salons can't give me the Bob Marley style, but these women can. They give personalised services. And they are like our mothers or aunties, so they take time to beautify us. And besides the fresh air and relaxed atmosphere, they counsel us on life - how to be good, how to be wise and how to avoid the pitfalls of life. And come to think if it, they should know. In fact, I've not been to the salon for



Miss Justina Okoobah



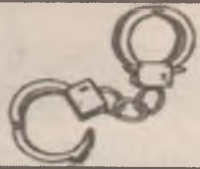
Miss Cynthia Anyaso

I love the look

I frequent this place. It's a kind of a retreat for me. I sit here and while they are making my hair, I watch people and traffic pass. And before I know it, am looking different. I am a creative person and love the creative look, so I vary my hairstyles.



unidentified lady



Crime & Punishment



Fake UNICEF official remanded in prison

A 44 year old woman who allegedly posed as an official of the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF) and in the process obtained favours and funds from several unsuspecting local government chairmen in the country has been remanded in prison custody on the orders of an Abuja chief magistrate court.

Mrs. Abike Bukola Sonukan, who the police claimed was of no fixed address appeared before an Abuja chief magistrate court

By Uwem Umo

on charges of criminal conspiracy, impersonation and cheating contrary to sections 97, 132 and 322 of the penal code.

The accused person according to the prosecuting police officer, Mr. John Ude, had impersonated as a UNICEF official from Lagos and approached some local government chairmen for some official transactions and in the process demanded and received various sums of money amounting to

N405,000.

The local government which allegedly fell victim of the woman's antics, include some in Oyo, Benue, Niger, Edo, Imo and Nasarawa States.

However, the woman ran out of luck on April 3, this year, when she allegedly approached one Dr. Bashir A. Darma of the Katsina State Ministry of Health, Katsina, for some official transactions on behalf of UNICEF but could not convince the man who sensed that the lady was a fraud and subsequently

alerted the police who arrested her immediately.

When the First Information Report (FIR) was read out to her, she pleaded not guilty to the charge while her counsel, Mr. Festus Alika, made an oral application for her bail but was vehemently opposed by the prosecution.

In his ruling on the bail application, presiding magistrate, Mr. Mohammed Kolo, said it would be dangerous to admit the woman on bail adding that the oral application by her counsel was not backed by any affidavit and ordered the woman remanded in prison custody and adjourned the matter to June 14, 2001 for further mention.

Police smash armed robbery gang

The Benue State police has smashed a 12-man armed robbery gang that gave the inhabitants of Makurdi sleepless nights in recent times.

Mr. Cyprian Onophorojire, the state police commissioner, disclosed this when parading the robbers before newsmen at the state command headquarters in Makurdi.

He said the arrested robbers have made useful statements linking them with some robbery operations against some prominent indigenes of the state in which valuable property and cash was lost.

Three of the gang members were arrested at North Bank area of Makurdi while in a robbery operation in which one Edward Iye was killed.

Three others were arrested while trying to rob at the House of Assembly quarters and Ankpa areas after an exchange of gun shots with the police.

The commissioner used the occasion to also warn

political thugs not to use party platforms as a cover to cause crisis or disturb public



Gov. Akume

peace.

Meanwhile, those arrested in connection with the recent political crisis in Otukpo, Vandeikya and Ushongo have been charged to court.

For lack of merit, an Abuja high court has struck out a suit filed by a former Miss Abuja, Franca Ubah, against the organisers of the annual "Miss Abuja" beauty pageant, Options Leisure Services.

The ex-beauty queen had in her suit, prayed the court to grant her an injunction, restraining Options Leisure Services and Mrs. Elizabeth Malpass, owner of the Miss Abuja Franchise from holding any beauty pageants by the name Miss Abuja, pending the determination of the substantive suit.

Former Miss Abuja loses case

By Henry Omuu

She also sought an order to stop the reigning Miss Abuja, Josephine Michael, from parading herself as Miss Abuja.

In its ruling, the high court presided over by Justice Monica Mensen, ruled that the relief sought by Miss Ubah were not in harmony with the relief in the substantive case and as such, the application must fail for lack of merit.

Said Justice Mensen, "there is no relationship

between the reliefs sought in the main suit and that of the interlocutory injunction.

"The essence, therefore, of the grant of an injunction, is to protect the existing legal right of a person from unlawful invasion by another. The applicant has not shown that she has a legal right to be Miss Abuja in perpetuity," the judge observed.

Meanwhile, the organisers of the Miss Abuja pageant have accused the ex-beauty queen of engaging in activities unbecoming of a beauty queen.

Spokesperson for Option Leisure Services, Mrs. Elizabeth Malpass, alleged that Miss Ubah during her reign by-passed the organisers and without their knowledge engaged in a fund-raising drive through "Gloria Trust Fund" established by her.

According to her, "as a reigning Miss Abuja, anything she (Ubah) does must be under the office of Miss Abuja. But she has raised substantial amount of money which cannot be accounted for, whereas such funds were meant for charity purposes under the rules guiding the beauty pageant," the spokesperson added.

Furthermore, she accused Miss Ubah of betrayal in her desperate bid to hijack the Miss Abuja pageant from Options Leisure Services through her Gloria Trust Fund. "until she was informed by the corporate Affairs Commission that Miss Abuja is a Franchise owned by us".

Couple faces murder charge

A couple has been charged for an alleged murder of their 10-year-old house girl, Blessing Okereke, whose corpse they deposited at the state hospital mortuary Ilaro, Ogun State without a formal report to the police.

Mr. And Mrs. Jacob

From Bose Busari, in Lagos

Njoku were said to have beaten the girl to a state of coma a fortnight ago at Akiniku quarters in Ilaro. They, however, thought that they could cover up their crime by depositing her corpse at the hospital mortuary after her death on

the third day.

However, as God would have it, nemesis caught up with them when the police got to know about the incidence and the duo were arrested.

The state hospital authority have been ordered the requisite coroner forms duly served on the hospital for post mortem examinations.

Suspect to appear in court for trying to defraud CBN

The special fraud unit of the Nigeria Police will on April 30 charge a suspect to court for allegedly demanding N5 million from the CBN under false pretences.

Mr. Ade Ajakaiye, Commissioner of Police for the unit, disclosed this in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) yesterday in Lagos.

Ajakaiye alleged that the suspect (name withheld) had, in a letter, informed the director of security services at the CBN of a syndicate which specialised in printing and selling fake 20, 50 and 100 naira notes.

The commissioner added, however, that the suspect, who claimed to be the chairman/chief executive officer of a private investigations company, demanded the amount before he would disclose the identities of the fraudsters.

Ajakaiye, describing the demand as curious and appalling stressed: "I will

leave nothing out in stemming the menace of these fraudsters which has become deeply rooted in the country".

He said it was regrettable that "the suspect has ever since consistently refused to lead detectives to the hideout of this purported syndicate, which would have helped to solve part of the excess liquidity problem. Rather, he insisted on a ransom".

The commissioner said that in view of the increase in the number of scam letters to the CBN, it was obvious that the suspect's information and his claim to the chairmanship of a security outfit were false, alleging that he was only out to make money.

Man bags six months for attempted fraud

By Uwem Umo

A 35-year old man who travelled all the way from Lagos to Abuja in order to defraud a lawyer has landed himself in Kuje prison, courtesy of an Abuja magistrate court.

Mr. Isreal Emiloju in company of an accomplice, now at large according to the police, had arrived Abuja on April 6, 2001 and headed for suite 29, Area 7 corner shop, Abuja, office of one Barrister Idowu Ilesanmin where they had attempted to swindle the lawyer through an advance fee fraud deal which went awry.

However, the accused person, thinking that he might be given an option of fine, miscalculated the mood

of the presiding magistrate Mr. Bala Haruna, when he pleaded guilty to the two count charge



Mr. Smith, B. Haruna

of criminal conspiracy and attempt to commit an offence contrary to sections 97 and 95 of the penal code.

Following the guilty plea by the accused of No.4 Tijani street, Iyana Ipaja, Lagos, the prosecutor, Inspector Patrick Emaikwu urged the court to try him summarily under section 157(1) of the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC).

The accused person, however, pleaded for leniency but the magistrate in his judgement said the man should be kept away from the society following rampant cases of fraud and other violent crimes and sentenced him to six months in prison



Mr. Joseph Sanusi, CBN Gov.

Abuja News

FG to try nature cures on AIDS

As the HIV/AIDS scourge continues to ravage the country, the federal government has concluded plans to commence a clinical observational study of herbal medicine developed by some traditional medicine experts for the cure of the dreaded disease.

This development was contained in a letter signed by the director-general of the National Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD), Prof. Charles Wambebe.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) quotes Prof. Wambebe as saying in the letter that: "I am pleased to inform you that the protocol for verification and study of various claims for the cure of

HIV/AIDS has been completed."

Wambebe's letter, which was addressed to the Director-General of the National HIV/AIDS and Allied Diseases Eradication Forum in Lagos, Chief B. A. Idowu, stated that Dr. Okanni has also been appointed to serve as the principal investigator, who will form a research team for the study.

He further said that the National Association of Living with HIV/AIDS had been asked to recruit volunteers, willing to participate in the trial test.

The director-general, however, said that the approval of the ethics committee of University of Lagos Teaching Hospital (LUTH) was required before the com-

mencement of the study, noting: "Upon the approval of LUTH's ethics committee, NIPRD will provide the resources and facilities for the clinical study to be conducted.

He stated that the chief



President Obasanjo

executive of Winners Diagnostic Centre, Abuja, Mr. Jacob Abdullahi, Dr. Amana, Lagos and Arc. Solomon Balosibina in Abuja would be contacted to discuss the modalities for the drug supplies needed for the study.

NAN reports that Wambebe has already accepted to serve as the chairman of the investigation committee in respect of the second national traditional alternative medicine workshop and exhibition, which will be held in Abuja from April 19 to May 20, 2001.

NAN learnt that the workshop was convened by the African Natural Medicine Exhibitors Organisation to showcase their products and discuss various claims for the cure and treatment of HIV/AIDS in the country.

The residents of the Gwagwa in the FCT have called on the federal government to come to their aid and provide the area with potable water as Gwagwa River, their only source of water is no longer fit for human consumption.

Residents who spoke to *Daily Trust* implored government to take immediate action as any delay might lead to outbreak of water-borne diseases.

Mr. Urzi Oke, who has stayed in Gwagwa for over five years now said, "the area council had never had a good source of water. We have always depended on the river. It is now full of bacteria, spirogyra, and part of the river is now a refuse dump". Mr. Oke further explained that touts and other people in that area now defecate in the river besides washing or bath-

Gwagwa residents cry out for water

By Halima Yakubu



Mrs. Esther Audu AMAC chairperson

ing in it.

Madam Esther Samuel, who runs a restaurant by the side of the river and uses it for cooking said she can't afford to buy water for her cooking but fetches water from the river to cook for her customers.

Most of the bakeries, canteens, restaurants, hotels and even the pure water sellers use the river for their businesses.

Most residents said the situation requires emergency measures to be taken as their lives are really in danger, Mallam Adamu opined that "even the water some of us buy, nobody knows the source? And then how many of us in Gwagwa can keep on buying a jerry can of water for 30 naira".

Motorists express mixed reactions to voluntary washing of windscreens

By Austine Odo

Motorists in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, have expressed mixed reactions to the washing of car windscreens by youths at the city's major junctions.

In several junctions across the city, the youths engage in the washing of windscreens of vehicles held up by traffic lights. The job which is usually done very fast is without invitation, and payment is at the discretion of the vehicle owners who decide to pay any amount convenient for them.

It is common in several city junctions, including those in Area 1, Area 11, Berger, Apo, Asokoro by Lower House, AYA, and Chicken House by Alawi filling station in Wuse II, among others.

While some vehicle owners appreciate the services of these youths, some would rather not have it. In fact, to some, it is a irksome.

"Sometimes I am not in the mood for these things," said Mr. Johnson Aba, a banker. "You get held up by traffic lights and suddenly someone jumps at your windscreen, washing it."

Though Mr. Aba understands the determination of such voluntary service workers, he simply does not like it. His feelings are shared by Hajija Hadiza Bello, a housewife who said she is sometimes scared by the closeness of the youths to her car.

"I get really scared. Sometimes you can't say. Someone may use that opportunity to do something else. I feel if I need a car wash, I know where to go," she said.

Mr. Silas Onu, a driver, prefers that the boys have a particular location for car wash so that those interested in washing their windscreens could go there.

A member of the Federal Road Safety Corps who spoke on condition of anonymity condemned the practice, saying it leads to traffic problems. He advised the boys to try to find something else to do than disrupting traffic on the highways.

But Alhaji Adamu Usman, a trader, disagrees with him. He said society should appreciate the fact these boys are struggling to make a living, no matter how despicable. According to him, it is better to struggle in this way than to steal.

Mr. Anthony Iwegbu, a school teacher, also feels the boys have a right to earn a living the way they choose. He feels it is understandable for people to learn to survive the hard way. One of the boys, Amadi Ibe, told *Daily Trust* that it was not compulsory for people to pay for their services. "It is not compulsory to wash, not compulsory to pay, if we come near your car and you don't like it, just let us know and we leave," he said.



Minister of Transport, Mr. Ojo Madueke and FCT Minister, Engr. Mohammed Abba-Gana at the birthday party for Queen Elizabeth II in Abuja . . . recently. Pix: Felix Onigbinde

NSITF justifies upward review of contributions

The Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) reviewed contributions payable by members to 10 percent from 7.5 percent in January to enhance benefits payable to members on retirement, its administrative manager, Alhaji Ibrahim Dogo, has said in Abuja.

He said at a one-day interactive forum between the NSITF and the Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA) that the increase was also necessitated by a short-term unemployment benefit programme to be introduced by the fund next year.

The NSITF, he stressed, depended on contributions by employees and employers in the private sector to execute its programmes.

"NSITF has been



Alh. Musa Gwadabe, Labour & Productivity Minister

empowered by a decree to review its rates of contribution as dictated by circumstances, so, the present rate is liable to changes in the future," he stressed.

In his own remarks, deputy investment manager of the fund, Mr. Ade Lolomari, said that the increment would help the NSITF to improve on its investment portfolio and activities. He said that the fund received a total

dividend income of more than N120 million and a capital gain of N220 million last year.

"By the end of the year

2000, the market capitalization of the fund's quoted equity investment was estimated at N2.18 billion," he told the forum.

Two feared dead as tanker, pick-up collide

By Austine Odo

The driver and another occupant of a Toyota pick-up van were feared dead yesterday when their vehicle which was trying to overtake on Okada, ran into a petrol tanker at the Banex Plaza Junction along Berger-Kubwa road.

The incident, which took place at about 7:00pm, attracted the attention of other road users and pedestrians who pulled the two men out of the squeezed wreck. They were immediately rushed to the hospital, amid fears over their chances of survival.

A policeman who was seen taking measurements at the scene told *Daily Trust* that

he could not confirm any deaths but that the two critically injured men were already in hospital.

The Tanker, with registration number KNAX 410 NSR, was heading towards Kubwa while the pick-up was on its way to the city-centre.

Witnesses at the scene said the accident could have been avoided had the pick-up driver been a little more patient. The tanker driver did not receive any serious injuries. The Okada, which was being overtaken, left the scene immediately.

Abuja News

Royal father calls for peace in FCT

The Oba of Yoruba in Abuja, Oba Olusegun Salau, has called on his subjects in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), to be peaceful and avoid acts capable of destroying public peace.

Oba Salau made this known during the weekend in Abuja at the occasion of conferment of chieftaincy titles on illustrious sons and daughters of Yoruba origin in Abuja.

He pointed out that the titles are being conferred on them in recognition of their activities and contributions, particularly the moral and open support given to the Yoruba chieftaincy institution in Abuja.

Salau, disclosed further that there are some elements that called themselves Yoruba Community Council of Northern States Abuja chapter, he pointed out that the Yoruba communities are not at loggerheads with the group, because the sky is big enough for many birds to fly without touching themselves,

By Emmanuel Ande

but what is needed most is peace.

"We have experienced attempts by some individuals to hijack the concept of the Yoruba a community for the purpose of actualising their own selfish interests thereby bastardising the original native of the forum," he stated.

He therefore, called on the security agents in FCT to take note and check the excesses of these group because they are a nuisance and are also



Engr. Abba-Gana

causing trouble in the unity city.

"The greatness of a people is neither measured by strength or force of arms but by the ability to carry even the weakling along," he stated.

The Oba also appealed to the minister of FCT, Alh. Mohammed Abba-Gana to apportion a piece of land to the Yoruba community for the development of Yoruba Hall to be christened "Oduduwa House".

He also called on the recipients of the chieftaincy titles to join him in the task of harnessing unity among Yorubas in Abuja.

No fewer than 18 distinguished sons of Yoruba origin were conferred with chieftaincy titles, among whom are; the 2nd vice-chairman of NUJ Abuja Council, Chief Dayo Lawal, who bagged the title of "Atayese of Yoruba" in Abuja, Hon. (Chief) Alli Balogun, chairman, House Committee on Science and Technology, bagged the title of "Bashorun of Yoruba" in Abuja.

Boy, 17, escapes death in police quarters

A 17-year-old boy, identified simply as Uchenna, escaped being beaten to death at block 9 of the police quarters in Wuse Zone 6 on Friday, for allegedly stealing N2,000 belonging to a neighbour.

The incident which took place at about 1:00pm, started from the Royal Carpet bus stop at the city-centre very close to the quarters, where Uchenna was reported to have connived with other pick-pockets to steal the

money from the owner's pocket. Luck ran out on him, as he was identified and dragged to the quarters, along with one of his accomplices, by the owner of the money and some of his friends.

The bleeding Uchenna was however rescued by a police inspector who was home on break. The inspector (names withheld), appealed for calm from the irate mob. He warned them to avoid taking the law into their own hands. It took him al-

most an hour to rescue the profusely bleeding Uchenna and his friend.

The inspector was overheard telling the angry mob, which compressed wives, children and relatives of policemen, to always hand over such people to law enforcement agents instead of applying gurgle justice. "We have been seeing this kind of mess from these miscreants, at least this would be a lesson to others," said a woman.

Father disinherits own children

Alhaji Ahmed Usman, a businessman in Gwagwalada area council of the FCT, has disowned his three sons for allegedly robbing him of 150,000 naira.

The children, Mahmood Usman (20), Abubakar Usman, (18), both school dropouts, and the youngest, Habib Usman a JSS Two pupil, allegedly committed the offence last week at the family residence in Gwagwalada.

Alhaji Usman told *Daily Trust* that he could no longer cope with his children's stealing habits saying "they have been stealing for a very long time, smoking Indian hemp, and to worsen the situation, they are also raping small girls in the neighbourhood".

Alhaji Usman added that he felt no loss at and as his decision to disinherit them has brought him joy and peace of mind.

By Halima Yakubu

He further stated that he would rather be childless than continue to harbour criminals, adding, "but in my case, I thank God that I have two

girls. I will train them and, if Allah wills, they will go to any length that a son can go."

Neighbours told *Daily Trust* that the disinherited showed no sign of remorse, but rather went away happily.

NDE women coordinator commended

The first woman coordinator for the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), FCT, Haj. Alawiyya Fatima Kuliya-Umar has been described as a shining example to the Nigerian womenfolk.

This was contained in a signed commendation and congratulatory message to the new NDE-FCT Coordinator by the Chairman Senate Committee on the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Senator Khairat Abdul-Razak, in Abuja.

The Senator, who is a member of the Senate Com-

mittee on Women Affairs, stated this while congratulating and rejoicing with the coordinator on a deserved appointment, "her choice among others is a manifestation of Hajiya Kuliya-Umar's proven integrity, dedication and honesty" the lawmaker stressed.

The legislator, who is also the Gimbiyar Ushafa and Kwali therefore wished the new coordinator, God's guidance in her assignment and better service to the unemployed people of the Federal Capital Territory.

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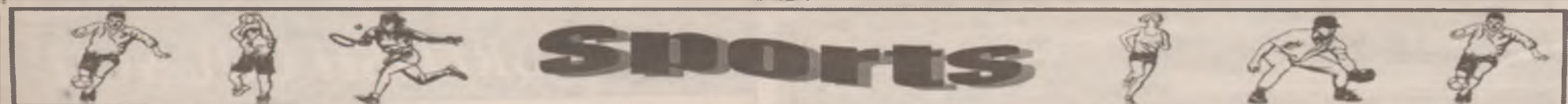
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Jordan makes fresh hints of comeback next season

Michael Jordan has given another strong hint that he could be back playing in the NBA next season.

The 38-year-old said in an interview on NBC television during Saturday's playoff coverage that he still feels the competitive urge.

Jordan, part-owner and president of the Washington Wizards, said his return would be a certainty if his former Olympic teammate Charles Barkley could get his own weight down to 260 pounds (105 kg) so they could make a comeback together.

Barkley has been tipping the scales at over 300 pounds (121 kg) since retiring from the game at the end of last season.

Jordan, 10-times NBA scoring champion and five-times Most Valuable Player, has been pushing himself hard in pick-up games and workouts.

"It's definitely a challenge," Jordan said about considering a return. "I'm not coming back for money, I'm not coming back for the glory. I think I left the game with that, but the challenge is what I truly love."

Jordan provided a fairy tale end to his fabled career in the 1998 NBA finals when he hit his final shot to give the Bulls a title-clinching win over the Utah Jazz.

In the NBC interview, which was taped on Friday, Jordan said he began playing pick-up games to battle a weight problem.

He said his weight has

come down from 242 pounds (98 kg) to about 220 (86 kg), slightly above his one-time playing weight of 212 (86 kg).

Jordan said only recently he was '99.9 percent' sure he would not return to the court and admitted in the interview that it was still a longshot.

"Mentally, I can reduce that because mentally I'd like to get my skills back," said Jordan, who led the Chicago Bulls to six titles.

"I'm not convinced as of right now that I can find those

skills," Jordan admitted.

Jordan would not put a timetable on a comeback decision, and would not even say if it would be the Wizards he would play for should he return.

The high-flying Jordan has left the NBA and returned in triumph before. He retired in 1993 to play baseball in the Chicago White Sox's minor league system but came back two years later and led the Bulls to three more NBA championships.



Jordan

Chelsea aim to keep strike duo

Chelsea have underlined their determination to hold onto strikers Gianfranco Zola and Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink.

Zola has the option of leaving the club this summer to return to his native Italy, with no final decision expected until the end of the season.

Record signing Hasselbaink has, meanwhile, regularly been linked with moves to other clubs as speculation persists that Chelsea intend to sell him despite his 20 goals so far this season.

However, managing director Colin Hutchinson declared: "We want to keep Jimmy. He is the first Chelsea player to score 20 goals in a season since Kerry Dixon 11 years ago."

Hutchinson also dismissed reports that Chelsea had agreed a pre-contract

with Barcelona striker Patrick Kluivert.

"It's nonsense to say we have a pre-contract. He's not able to sign one of those until next January."

Hutchinson, who insists Chelsea are not interested in signing 'Pep' Guardiola from the Nou Camp due to his age and injury record, also played down links with Manchester United striker Dwight Yorke.

"There has been speculation on the back of United's interest in Ruud van Nistelrooy, but we've shown no interest in Dwight Yorke and United have given no indication that he will be leaving," he added.

"Why don't we go for David Beckham and Ryan Giggs as well?"

Zola is another matter, however, with Hutchinson re-confirming the club's desire to persuade the 34-year-old Italian to spend one final

season at Stamford Bridge.

He had to be persuaded into staying this season, with Chelsea promising to let him go this summer for a "nominal fee" if he still wants to leave.

He declared that money "is not an issue", revealing it is actually the education of Zola's two children in an English rather than Italian culture which is the striker's chief concern.

Roma hit winning form again

Serie A leaders AS Roma returned to form by beating Udinese 3-1 while third-placed Lazio kept up their title chase with a 2-1 win over Vicenza on Sunday.

Goals from Vincenzo Montella, Damiano Tomassi and Hidetoshi Nakata ensured victory for Roma, who had taken just one point from their previous two games.

The win put Roma seven

AC Milan chief says no deal with Terim

AC Milan vice-president, Adriano Galliani has denied rumours that Turkish coach, Faith Terim has signed an agreement with the club.

"I read that Terim could have signed a contract with us and is scouting players for us in South America. I continue to deny this even if no one believes me," Galliani told the daily Gazzetta dello Sport.

Galliani said caretaker managers Cesare Maldini and Mauro Tassotti could stay in charge of the team, though he added that Terim would be a candidate should Milan decide to change coaches at the end of the season.

Terim, who led Galatasaray to their UEFA Cup triumph last season, has been linked with the Milan post since quitting Fiorentina in February.

"Terim is an excellent coach and he could even be brought to Milan. But if the two coaches we have at the moment do well, as we hope and above all believe in, they

have a great chance to continue here," Galliani said.

Asked what criteria Milan would use to judge whether Maldini and Tassotti were doing well, Galliani, who effectively runs the club on behalf of Silvio Berlusconi, dodged the issue of champions league qualification.

"Good is good. If it doesn't go well then Terim is a candidate," he said.

Maldini and Tassotti took control of the Milan team for the rest of this season when Alberto Zaccheroni was sacked in March following the club's failure to reach the champions league quarter-finals.



Terim

points ahead of second-placed Juventus, who face Parma later on Sunday.

Argentines Diego Simeone and Hernan Crespo each scored to put Lazio 2-0 ahead before Brazilian Jeda cut the deficit. Lazio are not level on 55 points with

Juventus.

AC Milan needed a last-minute goal from Georgian Kakha Kaladze to earn a 3-3 draw at Lecce, while Perugia also left it late to grab a 2-2 draw with Atlanta, South Korean Jung Wan Ahn getting a last-gasp equaliser.

SCOREBOARD

Summaries of Italian first division matches on Sunday:

Bologna: 4 - Giuseppe Signori 13, 54pen, Tomas Locatelli 50, Julio Cruz 85

Bari: 2 - Paolo Poggi 6, Yksel Osmanovski 76

Lazio: 2 - Diego Simeone 35, Hernan Crespo 85

Vicenza: 1 - Jeda 89

Lecce: 3 - Cristiano Lucarelli 35pen, Davor Vugrinec 46, Alberto Savino 67

AC Milan: 3 - Oliver Bierhoff 37, Andriy Shevchenko 41, Kakha Kaladze 90.

Perugia: 2 - Giovanni Tedesco 34, Jung Hwahn Ahn 90

Atlanta 2 - Nicola Ventola 25, Cristiano Doni 70pen.

Udinese: 1 - Roberto Sosa 78

As Roma: 3 - Vincenzo Montella 39, Damiano Tommasi 45, Hidetoshi Nakata 66.

Verona 0

Reggina 3 - Davide Dionigi 19, Francesco Gzsa 42, Jose Mamede 90

Played Saturday:

Napoli 1 - Nicola Amoroso 2

Brescia 1 - Robert Baggio 90

Halftime: 1-0; Attendance: 45,000

Inter Milan 4 - Christian Vieri 11, 40pen, Stephane Dalmat 43, Hakan Sukur 57

Fiorentina 2 - Mauro Bressan 64, Enrico Chiesa 79

Summaries of German first division soccer matched played on Sunday:

SC Freiburg 5 - Vladimir But 15, 39, Adel Sellimi 30, Zoubaier Baya 37, Lewan Kobiaschwili 42.

Kaiserslautern 2 - Youri Djorkaeff 50, Jorgen Pettersson 69.

TSV 1860 Munich 2 - Martin Max 12, Markus Bierle 56

VfB Stuttgart 1 - Krassimir Balakove 28pen

Eintracht Frankfurt 0

Bayern Munich 2 - Mehmet Schol 22, Michael Tarnat 90

Hansa Rostock 2 - Sven Benken 24, Slawomir Majak 48

Cologne 1 - Markus Kurth 73

Energie Cottbus 1 - Franklin 57

Spvgg Unterhaching 0

Werder Bremen 2 - Ailton 42, Claudio Pizarro 84

Vfl Wolfsburg 3 - Jonathan Akpoborie 29, Alexander Schnoor 44, Zoltan Sebeszen 58

Bayer Leverkusen 1 - ulf Kirsten 45

Hamburg SV 1 - Stig Tofting 41

Schalke 04 3 - Joerg Boehne 56, Marco van Hoogdalem 79, Emile Mpenza 86

Hertha Berlin 1 - Sebastian Deisler 34

Played on Friday:

Borussia Dortmund 5 - Lars Ricken 18 Joerg Heinrich 29 Giuseppe Reina 58, 65 Miroslav Stevic 89pen.

Vfl Bochum 0



Recalled... Marcelinho Carioca

Rivaldo axed by Brazil

Brazil have dropped Rivaldo for the World Cup qualifier against Peru as foreign-based players pay the price for the recent defeat by Ecuador.

Coach Emerson Leao, who included seven uncapped players in the squad for Wednesday's match in Sao Paulo, said many of Brazil's overseas players were at their "maximum limit" after a long European season.

Rivaldo has been heavily criticised at home over his poor form for his country and was substituted in the 1-0 World Cup qualifying defeat in Ecuador.

The Barcelona star has also admitted that he has become tired of the constant criticism.

Arsenal full-back Silvinho is among other players dropped while Real Madrid's Roberto Carlos is again left out.

AC Milan defender Roque Junior and AS Roma defender Emerson Ferreira are unavailable after picking up second yellow cards against Ecuador.

"You can easily sweep a problem under the carpet and end up in the same old routine," said Leao.

"Sometimes you can help a player by dropping him temporarily, provisionally or permanently."

"We spoke to Rivaldo in Quito and in Barcelona. He is at the maximum limit of games."

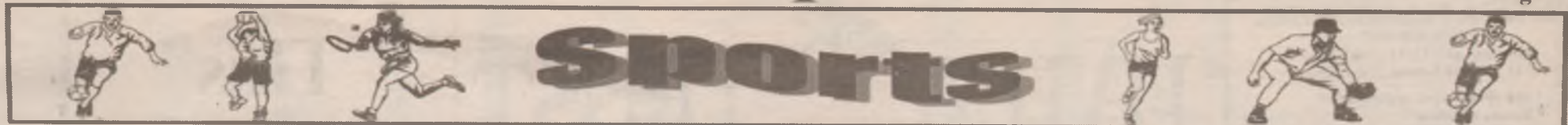
The newcomers to the squad are left-back Leo, right-back Alessandro, midfielders Leomar, Mineiro, Robert and Ewerthon and striker Washington.

Leao said the door remained open for all unselected players to return in the future, including Rivaldo.

"He is a top player, a former world player of the year."

Brazil have dropped to third in the South American group after last month's defeat in Ecuador, their third loss in 11 outings.

Only the top four in the 10-team group qualify directly for the World Cup finals in Japan and South Korea next year.



Soccer fans react to Eagles flop in Sierra Leone

Soccer fans in Abuja and Lagos have expressed their disappointment over the result of the Super Eagles in Saturday's World Cup qualifier against the Leone Stars of Sierra Leone in Freetown, describing it as "a bad omen for Nigeria."

The Super Eagles lost 0-1, thereby jeopardizing their chances of qualifying for the Korea/Japan 2002.

In an interview with soccer fans in Abuja and Lagos, immediately after the match which was monitored through radio commentary, the fans said that the Super Eagles had disgraced the country because of their inability to defeat their opponents as promised.

The fans seen in groups near bars and hotels in the metropolis, from where they monitored the game, told NAN that over-dependence on professionals for international soccer matches, had cost the country the 2002 World Cup ticket.

The fans, mostly youth and traders within the city, called for the immediate disbandment of the Super Eagles, adding "the boys are old, rich and bigheaded and cannot offer much to the country's football development."

Chief Ayo Akinola, one of the soccer fans, said that until the Federal Government intervenes to overhaul the NFA, defeat for the country in international competitions would continue.

Akinola alleged that the football house was not interested in developing young talents.

He said that the NFA has failed to compel Bonfrere to develop the domestic football and local talents, as indicated in their contract agreement.

"Now, what will NFA give as reasons for not securing the ticket for the Japan/Korea 2002, having spent heavily on the invitation of the foreign-based players who could not bring their professionalism to bear in our

qualification matches, what is Dominic Oneya going to tell Nigerians now?" he asked.

Another fan, a civil servant who sought anonymity blamed what he termed "poor performance" of the team in their outing against Leone Stars, on the misunderstanding between Bonfrere and the NFA.

"It is possible that Bonfrere lost concentration during the period of his crucial assignment due to the frosty relationship between him and the NFA Secretary-General, Tijjani Yusuf," he added.

A female football analyst, Agnes Abdu, said that the problem with football in the country was not with the quality of players but with the administrators and preparations.

Abdu called on government to stop their "fire-brigade approach," adding that a refocusing would enhance better performance in the country's soccer competitions in the future.

She noted that the dependence on the professionals in international competitions had not yielded desired results, adding that the players had done badly in their previous FIFA World Cup matches.

Meanwhile, in Lagos, sports followers have said that the loss did not come as a surprise, considering that Nigeria had lost to another lowly rated country - Liberia.

A soccer lover who pleaded anonymity, said that Nigeria barely managed to hold Ghana to a goalless draw, adding "the painful aspect is that, virtually the same players who brought us glory in the mid to late nineties, are now suffering such humiliating defeat".

"The message I believe is clear. This boys are aging and need to be replaced without delay," he said and urged the NFA and the coaching crew to put their acts together for a better performance in future.

A senior editor with the

News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), Mr. Goddy Ikeh, in his reaction urged Nigerians not to lose hope, saying "if we win the remaining matches, we can still go to Korea/Japan 2002."

"The loss to Sierra Leone should not make us write off the team," he said, adding "I believe today in Africa Nigeria has the best crop of players."

He said that what is happening to the team is a picture of what is happening to the entire country, adding that all that the team needs is a competent technical support and a team spirit that is needed for such competition.

Super Eagles had played five matches, lost two, drew one and won two, placing third with 7 points.

Akintunde retains Milo tennis title

Kuburat Akintunde, a 14-year-old senior student of Community High School, Eripa, Osun state, has defended her girls singles title at the Nestle Milo Annual Tennis Clinic and Tournament which ended in Lagos on Saturday.

Akintunde, who will be ineligible to compete next year because of age, defeated her classmate 13-year-old Kehinde Amusan 7-5, to retain the title she won last year.

"It is a pity I will not be able to feature in the programme next year to win the title for the third time, all the same, I owe my success to our coach who brought us for the programme," Akintunde told NAN after her success.

Amusan, the runner-up, said she was participating in the programme for the first time, adding that she hopes to grab the title as from next year.

She said that their success was due to the standard tennis court in their school where they train. The age 11-14 boys singles event title was awarded to Emmanuel Dickson who was leading 3-1 against Adeniyi Adedeji before the match was stopped by a drizzle.

Dickson, 13, a junior student of Zamani College, Kaduna, told NAN that he was a member of creating opportunities foundation (CO) a Kaduna-based tennis academy, run by Bart Van der Griten, a Dutch.

Twelve-year-old Adedeji, a senior student of King Ado High School, Lagos, said that he was unhappy that for the second year running, he has been unable to grab the title. Last year, he lost 7-5 to Tunji Gbadamosi.

"I'm undaunted, however, I will be back next year to grab the title," Adedeji boasted.

The 7-10 boys event title of the programme was won by 10-year-old George Livingstone, a primary six student of Duro Oyedoyin Primary School, Orile, who beat 11-year-old Pius Asada, a junior student of Jubril Martin High School Iponri, 3-2.

Blessing Samuel, 10, a junior student of Army Barracks Secondary School, defeated Damola Kalejaye, 8, a primary three pupil of Periodot Nursery and Primary School, Amuwo Odofin 5-2, to win the 7-10 girls



Super Eagles forward, Nwankwo Kanu attempts to outwit a Sierra Leonian defender in the first leg of World Cup qualifier... in Lagos

The fathers event was won by former national player, Kunle Oyebanji, who beat Odey Ogrinya 5-3, while the mothers title was retained by a teenage

guardian, Miss Kemi Odeye who beat former national player, Mrs. Elizabeth Onazi 5-1.

Over 500 children participated in the two-week in the

two-week programme. A second one-week clinic was running concurrently in Ibadan for the first time.

Obasanjo opens NUGA

President Olusegun Obasanjo on Saturday declared open the 18th edition of the Nigerian Universities Games (NUGA) at the newly constructed ultra-modern stadium complex of the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria.

Speaking at the occasion, Obasanjo charged participants at the games to make friends and work for the unity of the country.

He enjoined them to show discipline and sportsmanship as the games progresses, urging them to emulate those sportsmen and women who had made successes of their lives through sports.

The president, who was represented by the Minister of Education, Prof. A.B. Borishade assured that the Federal Government would continue to pursue policies that would encourage every Nigerian to realize his/her potentials in sports and other endeavours.

Earlier, the Minister of Sports and Social Development, Mr. Ishaya Mark Aku, had charged university administrators in the country to introduce curricula that will accord sports greater priority in the nation's educational system.

He stressed the need for new academic calendars that would allow mass participation of students in sporting activities without disrupting their academic activities.

The vice-chancellor of ABU, Prof. Mahadi Abdullahi, in his speech earlier, said he hoped that the 18th NUGA Games would not only raise the level of interaction between Nigerian students but would also promote national unity.

"We want the ABU Millennium Game 2001, to be devoid of acrimony, so that we can strengthen the idea of

and national unity," he said.

Abdullahi thanked all those who contributed toward ensur-

ing that ABU host the games and enjoined participants to demonstrate brotherhood and understanding.

Facilities, perception hamper sports - NIPOGA boss

Mrs. Felicia Odugbesan, Chairman, Board of Nigeria Polytechnic Games (NIPOGA), has identified lack of adequate facilities and perception by stakeholders as factors militating against sports development in the country.

Mrs. Odugbesan, who is also the Rector, Yaba College of Technology (YabaTech), pointed this out during the official launching of Yaba 2001 NIPOGA Games mascot, investiture of NIPGA patrons, and the launching of the N120 million sports facilities development fund, held over the weekend in Lagos.

She said that both factors had limited the success of the last 11 editions of the games, adding that unless urgent measures were taken by both government and individuals, the 12th edition of the games to be hosted by Yaba Tech between May 16 and May 26 may also go the way of the preceding editions.

Odugbesan said that the polytechnic was faced with serious constraints, adding that insufficient funds was the most serious of such constraints.

She listed the constraints as the completion of the institution's ultra-modern sports center and laying of tartan tracks estimated at 55 million naira, a multi-purpose sports hall estimated at 40 million naira.

Others are the construction of a modern squash court estimated at 20 million naira, the provision of light for various courts, the entire sports complex in addition to provision of



Ishaya Mark Aku, Sports Minister at 5 million naira.

She commended the Federal Government for its 5 million naira grant to the institution for the hosting and Liberty Bank Plc., the official bankers of the current games for its 4 million naira.

A total of nine distinguished Nigerians were named patrons of NIPOGA at the investiture held at the Sheraton Hotel, Ikeja.

They include, retired Lt.-Gen. Theophilus Danjuma, the Defence Minister, governors Lucky Igbinedion (Edo), James Ibori (Delta), Abubakar Auazu (Kogi), and Adamu Muazu (Bauchi).

Others are former president, Gen. Ibrahim Babangida, Chief Molade Okoya-Thomas, Chairman CFAO, Chief Dokun Abidoye, President, Youth Sports Federation of Nigeria (YSFON) and Chief Hope Hariman.

The mascot of the games, a giant ball in a man's shape holding a ball was launched...



Suleiman Mohammed of Abuja in action during the World TB tournament... in Kaduna. Pix Joe Oroya

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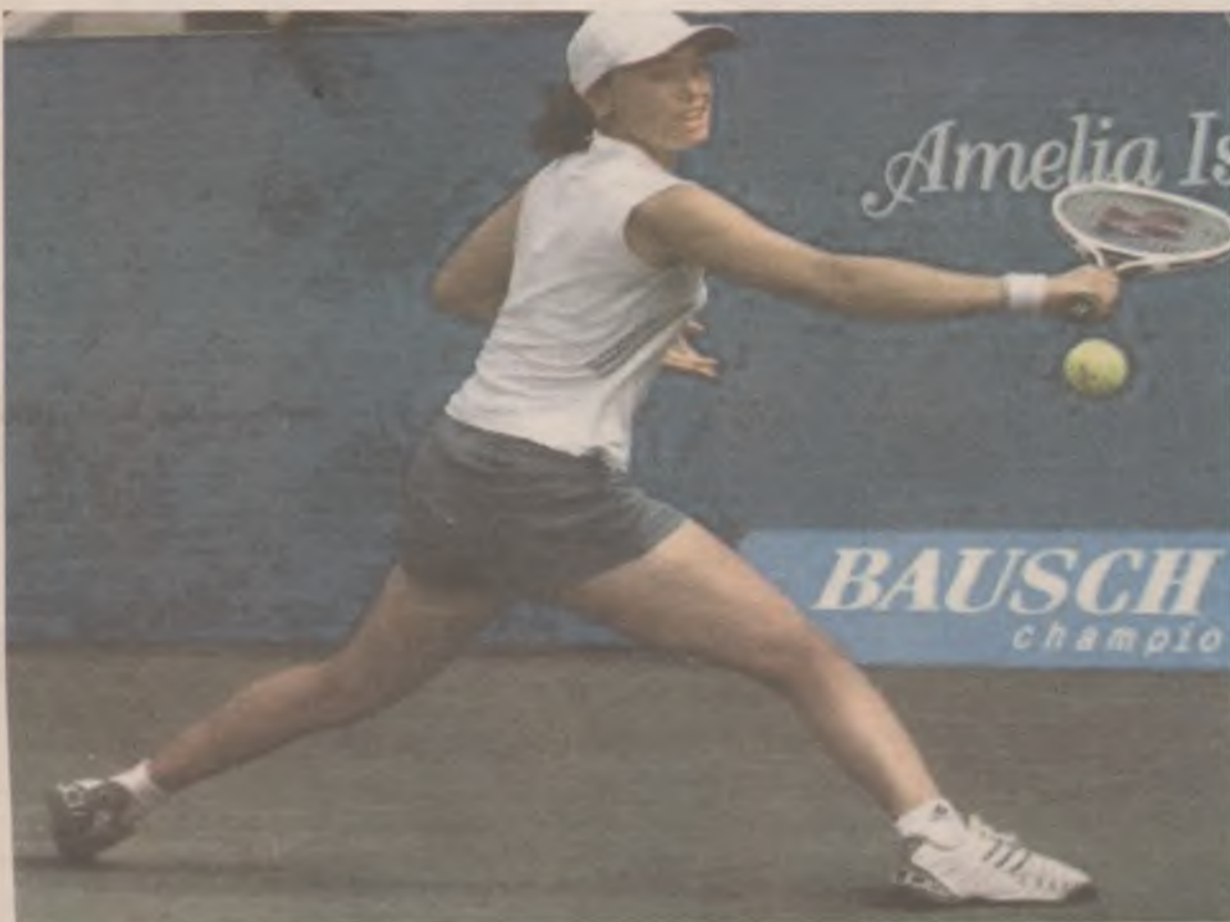
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DAILY TRUST



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Number-one seed Martina Hingis of Switzerland reaches for a shot during her third-round match against Henrieta Nagyova at the Bausch & Lomb Championships ... recently

NFA call emergency meeting over World Cup fate

An emergency meeting has been scheduled for Thursday to discuss Nigeria's remaining 2002 World Cup qualifying matches and the fate of Dutch technical adviser, Johannes Bonfrere.

"The meeting is necessary given the dangerous position we're occupying on the table in our group," Nigeria Football Association Chairman, Dominic Oneya told newsmen on the team's arrival from Freetown.

The 0-1 defeat by lowly Leone Stars of Sierra Leone at the weekend had dealt a serious blow to Super Eagles chances of qualifying for next year's World Cup finals in Japan and South Korea.

The panic meeting, Trustports learnt, will focus on resolving the lingering problems that had bedeviled Nigeria's build-up to the World Cup qualifier in Freetown as well as discuss the steps to be taken over

By Ismaila Umaru Lere

Bonfrere, who promised to resign if the Eagles lost to Leone Stars.

The meeting which is expected to hold at the Glass House, Abuja, would also chart a new strategy for redeeming the country's hopes of hoisting her flag at the Mundial for the third

consecutive time.

It will be recalled that Nigeria's preparation for the World Cup game was over-shadowed by public row between Bonfrere and the NFA.

Nigeria now languishes in third place, five points adrift group leaders Liberia, who defeated Sudan 2-0 in Monrovia on Sunday.



Oneya

Professor Nomau's travails, written & illustrated by Bulama Mustapha



SHAP SHOT

Van Nistelrooy

PSV Eindhoven striker, Ruud van Nistelrooy completed his protracted transfer to Manchester United Monday when he joined the English champions for British record 19 million pounds.

United had agreed to buy him for 18.5 million pounds 12 months ago but the transfer collapsed when Van Nistelrooy failed a medical test



Lewis

Hasim Rahman seems likely to make Lennox Lewis wait a year for a re-match, according to the new world heavyweight champion's minders.

"I believe we are going to look to have one voluntary defence. After that, if Lennox wants it, that's fine with us," Rahman's co-manager Stan Hoffman was quoted as saying on the BBC website on Monday.

London marathon

A British man in his early 30s died on Sunday after collapsing at the finish line during the London marathon, race director, David Bedford said on Monday. Bedford told a news conference the man's family had requested that no further details be released.

Serra Ferrer

Serra Ferrer's future as Barcelona coach looked in increasing doubt on Monday following the club's humiliating 3-1 defeat to Osasuna.

Barcelona finished Sunday's game against relation-threatened Osasuna with just eight men on the field, following the sendings-off of Simao Sabrosa, Ivan de la Pena and Sergi.



Kuerten

Gustavo Kuerthen, last year's top player, won the first major clay court tournament of 2001 in Monte Carlo on Sunday but says he has no chance of beating Andre Agassi to the end-of-year number one spot.

Kuerten moved up to second in the champions race on Monday. The champions race includes only tournaments played this year.