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Onigbinde, Ojugbana sweat for S-G post
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Igbos threaten to leave Kano

Members of Igbo Community in Kano State have announced their plan to leave the state in protest over the murder of an Igbo lorry driver, even as the state police command disclosed that his suspected killers have been charged to court.

Mr. Uche Nwama Ochukpue was allegedly murdered by suspected Islamic fundamentalists at Yan Lemo Market, in Kano on December 10, after he

JOS KILLINGS Group indicts FG

By Simon Imobo-Tswam

The Nigerian government could have averted the mass killings of Nigerians in the sectarian violence which rocked Jos, the Plateau State capital, in September, an international rights organization, Human Rights Watch, said in its latest report released today.

The Rights Watch estimated that no fewer than 1000 people lost their lives in the six-day clashes between Muslims and Christians. In addition, it said thousands of houses were destroyed and business premises looted.

In the 25-page report, entitled "Jos: City torn apart" and based on eye-witness testimonies gathered during a visit to Jos in October 2001, Human Rights Watch called on the Federal Government to conduct thorough and impartial investigations into the September massacres, and bring all those behind it to justice.

"Government authorities and security forces failed to take action that could have saved hundreds of lives. The

Contd. on Pg 2

From Jamilah Nuhu Musa, in Kano

allegedly drove his vehicle over a copy of the Holy Quran.

The incident generated reactions from both the Igbo community and police authorities in Kano, with the former threatening to leave the state and the latter

assuring people of adequate security.

Announcing their plan in a letter addressed to President Olusegun Obasanjo dated December 12, 2001, the leaders of Igbo Community Association said: "We Igbos in Kano have no choice but to accept to leave Kano State to save

our lives."

The letter, signed by Chiefs Boniface Ibekwe and O.K. Aka, President-General and Secretary-General, respectively of the association, read in part: "The hostility directed at us in the state is progressively more virulent as the years go by notwithstanding all our

efforts to reassure our hosts of our goodwill and obvious preference of peaceful co-existence for the pursuit of our livelihood.

"Now, therefore, we call on the Federal Government to intervene in this calamitous situation to oversee our orderly evacuation from Kano and possible relocation as well as negotiating payment to us for our property in the state."

Contd. on Pg 2



Gov Rabiu Kwankwaso

FAILED CONTRACT PTF owes me N5.8m, says Senator Aluko

By Uwem Umo

Senator Daniel Gbenga Aluko, representing Ekiti Central in the Senate, has denied allegations that his company, Alsteg and Midlands Limited, did not execute the borehole contract awarded it by the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF) in 1998.

Rather, he said it is PTF that owes his company over N5.8 million being the difference between work done and the advance payment received.

Speaking to the *Daily Trust* yesterday, Senator Aluko maintained that his company executed 64 percent of the project, representing N27.5 million.

Reacting to PTF allegations that the contract to drill some boreholes in certain

communities in Ondo State at the cost of about N24.7 was not done, Senator Aluko replied, "We have submitted to the PTF over 100 copies of documents related to the project showing site by site progress of work, and a duly certified copy of

Contd. on Pg 2



Senator Gbenga Aluko



The Emir of Zazzau, Alhaji Shehu Idris (middle) flanked by the Gombe State Governor, Alhaji Abubakar Habu Hashidu (left) and his Deputy, Barrister Joshua Lidani, during the wedding Fatihah of the Emir's daughter in Zaria... recently.

Wada Nas declares for APP • Eyes chairmanship

By Sani Babadoko

Former Minister of Special Duties during the Abacha administration, Alhaji Wada Nas, has confirmed speculations that he will join the All Peoples Party (APP) and may run for its chairmanship seat.



Alhaji Wada Nas

When the former minister left office in 1998 he said he was finished with partisan politics but he told the *Daily Trust* in a telephone interview from Kaduna, yesterday, that "I am going into full time practical politics as I did before."

Asked to confirm speculations that he would join the APP he said, "it can not be untrue." When pressed further to say whether he was also gunning for its chairmanship position, Alhaji Wada said, "wherever I find myself, and whatever assignment I am given I will do my best and be dedicated to the cause I set for myself."

Speculations have been rife that the former minister will contest the chairmanship of the APP along with the incumbent, Alhaji Yusuf Ali and Dr. Lema Jibrillu, who

Contd. on Pg 2

ELECTORAL LAW: Go to court, Okadigbo urges Nigerians

Former Senate President, Dr. Chuba Okadigbo, has said that the evolution of the Electoral Law 2001 is the manifestation of the fever of the second term and pleaded for caution "before it converts into a terminal cancer."

He asked all groups opposed to it to seek remedy at the law courts.

Addressing the press on the occasion of his 60th birthday in Abuja, yesterday, Dr. Okadigbo said, "today Nigeria and Nigerians are afflicted by a dangerous fever, the fever of the second term, effective Y2003."

He said it has gripped the electors and the elected, local government chairmen and councillors, National and State legislators, Presi-

dent and Vice-President, governors and deputy governors adding, "before it

Contd. on Pg 2



Dr. Chuba Okadigbo

NEWS



Bauchi State Governor, Alhaji Ahmadu A. Muazu, explaining a point to the state Commissioner for Health, Prof. Iiyasu Muhammed, at the recent immunization exercise in Bauchi.

Gombe awards N60m road contract

Gombe State has awarded a N60 million contract for the construction of the Kaltongo road to end at Shongon Local Government Area to A.R.C. Nigeria Limited.

Briefing newsmen on the outcome of the weekly state executive council meeting in Gombe, last Thursday, the Commissioner for Information, Culture and Social Development, Alhaji Garba Jiji Gadam, said that the award of the contract followed the state government's commitment to diversify its projects to all the constituencies in the state.

The commissioner explained that the Kaltongo road to Pandi, Laffa which ended at Shongon, was greatly affected by erosion for long, and so the state government felt that the idea of the road construction would be tackled.

He said that after an extensive deliberations at the council meeting, the state government had decided to award the construction of the eight-kilometre road project to A.R.C. Nigeria Limited.

The commissioner pointed out that the construction of the road would start soon and the project would also be

completed within eight weeks.

The commissioner further revealed that the

construction of the Kaltongo to Nalafida road has been executed and is now ready for commissioning.

of the commissioner, condemned the incident that led to the killing of Uche, vowing that "the police will leave no stone unturned to bring the perpetrators to book."

He said that the suspected killers of Uche had already been charged to court over the incident.

The command gave the names of the suspects as: Auwalu Ibrahim (22); Auwalu Muazu (20), Suleiman Musa (20) (all of Yan Lemo quarters) and Shehu Hamza (18) of Maikalwa quarters.

It further said that "contrary to rumours going round, none of them have been released. They are still in custody and have so far made very useful statement to the police, and have been charged to court for murder. And more are being looked for."

The statement, signed by the command spokesman, DSP Kabiru Shehu, on behalf

Jos killings *Contd from Pg 1*

government did not take explicit threats by both Muslim and Christian groups seriously. Their warnings were effectively ignored," the rights group alleged.

Mr. Peter Takirambudde, Executive Director of the Africa Division of Human Rights Watch, urged government to take urgent remedial and preventive measures to safeguard the lives and properties of the people.

His words: "The Nigerian government can't just sit back and watch this happen. It has a responsibility to maintain peace.

"There were clear signals that trouble was brewing in Jos but these signals were ignored," the group said and advised that effective government action is needed

if the violence in Jos, and in hot spots across the country, is not to flare up again and cause the loss of thousands of more lives.

During its visit to the Plateau State capital last October, Human Rights Watch researchers interviewed both Muslim and Christian survivors of the violence in addition to human rights activists, religious leaders, opinion moulders, students and academics amongst others.

The report describes the background to the violent clashes, highlighting clear warning signals of organizations had made representations to the state government as well as to police and military authorities on the impending violence.

Igbos *Contd from Pg 1*

of the commissioner, condemned the incident that led to the killing of Uche, vowing that "the police will leave no stone unturned to bring the perpetrators to book."

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Failed contract *Contd from Pg 1*

the consultants certificate indicating the value of work done to date as N27,555,154.90.

"Our General Manager, Mr. Emmanuel Ofuya has met with the PTF officials on at least three occasions and we can confirm that the officials are pretty well convinced as to the fact that we did not perform at zero level.

"We did not get paid any additional N4 million as claimed in the original letter of the solicitors to the bank. We are in fact due for payment of N5,865,416.6 being the difference between work done as confirmed by the consultants and advanced payment received, which we intend to claim forthwith," he added.

Explaining further on why the PTF cannot take his company or himself to court,

War against ghost workers reduces Adamawa salary bill by N4m

The war against 'ghost workers' waged by the Adamawa State government has yielded N4 million from its December salary bill, Governor Boni Haruna has said.

Haruna made the disclosure yesterday in Yola, when permanent secretaries in the state paid him a *sallah* homage, stressing that if all hands were on deck to block all leakages, government would be saved a lot of resources.

He noted with dismay, the non-remittance of the Value Added Tax (VAT) and other taxes to government coffers, pointing out that a machinery would soon be put in place to check such frauds.

Haruna assured the permanent secretaries that their security in service was guaranteed, inasmuch as they sustained their loyalty

to his administration.

He said government would look into the complaints on the inadequacy of allocations for running offices, as well as the issue of employment of new staff.

Earlier, the leader of the delegation and the state Head of Service, Alhaji Bappa Hamman, had pledged their support, loyalty and cooperation to the state government.

Similarly, Haruna has urged the judiciary not to compromise its position, as it remains the only security of the commonman.

He gave the advice when a delegation led by the state Chief Judge, Justice Bamare Bansi, paid him *Sallah* homage.

In a similar development, the governor also called on the State House of

Assembly to continue with the cordial working relationship between the legislative and the executive arms of government.

He said that if given the opportunity to serve the state for a second term, he would love to work with the same legislators, because of their maturity, support and cooperation.



Gov Boni Haruna

Wada Nas *Contd from Pg 1*

was the party's presidential aspirant before its botched convention in Kaduna in 1998 when the party aligned with the AD and paired Umaru Shinkafi with Chief Olu Falae on its presidential ticket.

Dr. Jibrillu has been a founding member of the APP and lost its chairmanship to Alhaji Yusuf while Alhaji Wada is a long time associate of Alhaji Shinkafi.

The speculations also claimed that Alhaji Wada had been contacted by one of the APP governors to contest the chairmanship of the party but answered that he was studying the situation.

While giving the reasons for his decision to join the APP, Wada Nas said with the

outcome of the electoral law, what the best politicians in the yet to be registered associations could do to challenge President Obasanjo and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) was to team up under the APP.

"If we want a change of government in this country, if this Electoral Law is allowed to go as it is, the best option is for everybody to rally round the APP so that the party will be formidable and be able to confront Obasanjo and the PDP," he declared.

He said the Electoral Law was a big blow to democracy and warned that if the situation is not handled with care, "that will be the end of democracy in Nigeria."

Electoral Law *Contd from Pg 1*

converts into a terminal cancer of our Fourth Republic, this fever must be urgently arrested."

Dr. Okadigbo said the process of the evolution of the Electoral Bill into Electoral Act 2001 was trite citing sections 7 and 8 along with item 22 in Part 1 of the exclusive list in the 1999 constitution which he said does not allow for the elongation or reduction, even by one minute, the tenure of the current local government chairmen and councillors.

The former Senate President then urged governors, civil rights activists and other interest groups opposed to the Electoral Law to seek remedy through the courts.

He also urged the National Assembly to revisit the issue as a matter of urgency and called on all

The former special duties minister said Nigerians who elected the president and the lawmakers have shown their desire for more political parties so that they can have genuine alternatives but added "dictatorship is slowly emerging."

He said the current *Tarzarche* fever showed that we have not learnt anything from the past. According to him, what the PDP and President Obasanjo has demonstrated in the Electoral Law is that, "they want to rig the election because Obasanjo knows that he has not delivered and knows that in a free and fair contest, no one will elect him nor the PDP."

Nigerians to place the nation above personal, group or ethnic interests.

Speaking on the raging controversy over "indigenes" and "settlers," Dr. Okadigbo who is the Senate Committee Chairman on Communal Clashes said he will dedicate his remaining tenure at the Senate to making the provisions of the fundamental objectives and directive principles in the constitution justiceable and not left as mere moral precepts.

Also at the occasion, a Chuba Okadigbo Foundation was launched with the objective of providing educational assistance to the less privileged, enhancement of charitable programmes and sports development among the youths.

NEWS

Okadigbo lambasts Adelaja over ex-Biafran soldiers

Angered by comments made by the Minister of State for Defence (Navy), Mrs Modupe Adelaja, that ex-Biafran soldiers were not entitled to any retirement benefits, former Senate President, Senator Chuba Okadigbo, yesterday castigated the minister for making such pronouncements which he

By Henry Omu
described as reckless. Speaking at a press conference in Abuja to mark his birthday, Senator Okadigbo said that the re-introduction of Biafra as the focal point of national discourse was diversionary and fraudulent.

He alleged that the issue of ex-Biafran soldiers was brought to the front burner of national politics "to divert attention from the Electoral Act and boost anti-Igbo sentiments across the country."

Mrs Adelaja had last week said that former Biafran soldiers would not be paid any retirement benefits by government, because such soldiers did not belong to the Nigerian army.

But Senator Okadigbo faulted the minister's assertion, saying that some Biafran soldiers were formerly men of the Nigerian

Army before the civil war. Moreover, he said, President Obasanjo had granted pardon to all ex-Biafran soldiers, and that they deserved to be paid retirement benefits. "By bringing the Biafran issue back on stream, this minister was rubbing salt on injury. All these without any

defensible or logical cause, and in defiance of years of our labour to establish and consolidate our handshake across the Niger," he stated. Okadigbo also lambasted the minister over her alleged reference to ex-Biafran soldiers as traitors, describing such comment as "criminal

and actionable in a law court." He, however, warned that *Ndigbo* would resist attempts by anyone to again make them scapegoats for any failings of Nigeria. "Let it be known to all that *Ndigbo* are fully aware of a plot to scapegoat them again,

by fanning anti-Igbo embers, these being impish diversions from the burning national issues. "Such dirty tricks and empty tantrums cannot wash anymore, and their perpetrators shall no longer pass unnoticed," the Senator said.



Mrs. Modupe Adelaja

FG to sink 43,000 boreholes next year

The Federal Government will sink 43,000 boreholes in rural areas across the country next year, the Minister of Water Resources, Alhaji Muktari Shagari, has said.

Speaking to *Daily Trust* in Abuja, the minister said that this would give an average of 25 boreholes per local government area in the country.

He, however, said that government's desire to achieve this objective lies with the National Assembly, as the proposal is contained in the year 2002 Appropriation Bill currently pending before the lawmakers.

Shagari, who is also the chairman of Forum of African Ministers of Water Resources, also called on the private sector to invest in the provision of water to the teeming population.

The minister also advocated the adoption of a liberal legal framework that would enhance private sector participation in water supply ventures.

According to him, an improved legislative environment will go a long way towards enticing both the local and foreign investors in the country in particular, and Africa in general, pointing out that "the African continent is a vast potential market and largely untapped."

On provision of portable water in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, the minister said the role of his ministry is to provide "raw water" for the ministry of the FCT for onward distribution to consumers.

"What we are doing as a ministry is to make raw water

By Tashikalmah Hallah
available to the FCT, and that is why we are constructing the N43bn Gurara dam project, to which we transfer water for a distance of 75 kilometres to Usuma dam," he said.

"It is up to the FCT to now take the raw water, refine it and distribute it to the consumers," he added.

The minister reiterated that the Gurara water transfer project would be completed by 2003, and that, once completed, the FCT and her environs will not experience water shortage.

ELECTORAL LAW Group heads to court

The Transition Monitoring Group (TMG), a coalition of civil society organisations, has vowed to take legal action over the new electoral law, even as another group, the National Association of Seadogs, warned against "gangsterism" in handling the issue.

The law, recently signed by President Obasanjo, has been generating reactions from the public, especially over the clause which bars automatic participation of political associations in the national election and the one that extends the tenure of local government councils from three to four years.

The TMG is particularly worried with the barring of political associations from instant participation in national election, describing the move as "a plot" by the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to institute a one-party dictatorship in the country.

The National Chairman of the group, Barrister Festus Okoye, told *Daily Trust* in Kaduna that the group would use every legal and political means to fight such an imposition.

From Ibrahim Dan Halilu, in Kaduna and Jamilah Nuhu Musa, in Kano

"By our own sophistication, I believe the PDP should be well-advised that the era of military dictatorship in Nigeria is over, and Nigerians cannot replace military dictatorship with a one-party dictatorship," Barrister Okoye proclaimed.

The Kaduna-based legal practitioner, who accused the principal officers of the National Assembly of connivance in imposing the electoral law on Nigerians, stated that the existing political parties had no right "to insist that new parties must go through some nursery rhymes before they can

qualify as full-fledged political parties."

Dismissing claims that the judiciary was constrained in adjudicating over political issues since June 12 election annulment, Okoye maintained that the present democratic atmosphere makes it imperative for the TMG to pursue legal option in seeking for the abrogation of the new electoral law as it affects participation of new parties.

The human rights activist stressed that the TMG would prove before the law that the clause was inserted without the consent of Nigerians "except the president and some principal officers of the National Assembly."

He dismissed the claim by the chairman of the Senate

committee on Information, Jonathan Zwingina, that the president was a chief lawmaker, arguing that section 315 of the constitution only conferred lawmaking functions to the president in relation to existing laws not those that had just been made by the National Assembly.

On its part, the National Association of Seadogs (NAS) warned all those who are dissatisfied with the new electoral law to refrain from resorting to "gangsterism" in expressing their opposition to the law.

In a press statement issued in Kano by its chairman in the state, Mr. Tim Amola Akpareva, the association advised them to seek legal redress over the issue.

...Lawmaker urges review

The National Assembly has been urged to review its position on the newly signed electoral law to allow for the registration of new political parties.

The Chairman, Committee on Home Affairs and Culture in the Lagos State House of Assembly, Hon. Ogunbamgbose Hontarnyon, who said this in

From Bose Musari, in Lagos

an exclusive interview with *Daily Trust*, said the sudden change in the constitution on which the current office holders took oath of office is against the principles of democracy.

He said that the foreclosure on new political parties as the electoral bill suggests is anything but democratic.

Hon Hontarnyon maintained that any interference in local government matters by the National Assembly is a breach of the 1999 Constitution.

The local government chairmen and councillors, he said, were elected for a three-year tenure, and they were sworn-in to do that.

"Why not let them stay

for three years, and if you must change the number of years to four, then it can start with successive local government office holders," he said.

He said that the National Assembly is toying with the life span of the nascent democracy by interfering in local government affairs.

According to him, the establishment of the States Independent Electoral Commission by law is enough proof to show that local government affairs are wholly under the jurisdiction of the state.

"The states should be left to handle local government issues. National Assembly's interference is wrong. We should stop things that will derail the focus of the young democracy," he added.

ASUU kicks against privatisation

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has sharply criticised the on-going privatisation programme, describing it as an attempt to re-colonise the country.

In a communiqué issued at the end of its National Executive Council (NEC) meeting held at the University of Calabar and signed by thirty-seven university dons, the union, led by Dr. Oladipo Fashina, said privatisation amounted to selling Nigeria to its former colonisers.

ASUU said it was amazed by the level of Obasanjo's criticism of the privatisation programme during the Abdulsalami Abubakar regime, and his current pursuit of the programme.

"When General Olusegun Obasanjo opposed the plans by the Abdulsalami Abubakar regime to privatise the enterprises, Nigerians thought that the opposition was based on the same patri-

From Yinka Oladoyinbo, in Ibadan
otic principle," ASUU said.

"We have now found out that, in fact, the opposition was simply mounted because the General positioned himself to preside over the whole-sale hand-over and sale of our people's assets to international forces of domination and re-colonisation," ASUU lamented.

Expressing concern over the recent sale of NITEL to a foreign consortium, Investors International Limited (IIL) of London, the university lecturers maintained that the exercise was "a clear confirmation of our fears about the dangers that privatisation pose for the welfare and sovereignty of the Nigerian people."

ASUU also expressed regret over what it called the give-away price at which NITEL was sold to the IIL, arguing that the \$1.3 billion offered for it was a paltry

sum, considering its assets and pool of highly skilled human resources.

ASUU further alleged that NITEL was sold in order to please the interest of certain prominent individuals in the country. "We are also aware that NITEL was sold at such a give away price because of the interests that were lined up to take over the organisation," they alleged.

"The sale of NITEL and the ongoing rush to privatise NIGERDOCK and other assets of the Nigerian people under questionable circumstances indicate that our people cannot expect economic or social justice under a regime of privatisation," ASUU maintained.

The university teachers insisted that valuable property built by the Nigerian people were being sold to Europeans and Americans, with few Nigerians fronting for them.

Abdulsalami leads poll monitors in Zambia

Former Head of State, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, will lead a 35-member delegation of observers from the Carter Centre to monitor general elections in Zambia later this month, the organisation has said.

Abubakar and his delegation are scheduled to arrive in Zambia on December 21, a statement from the Carter centre said.

"These elections will be a critical step in Zambia's

democratisation, which has faced challenges in the years since the 1991 elections," former US President, Jimmy Carter, said in the statement.

The team will also include former Benin president Nicéphore Soglo and former Tanzanian prime minister, Joseph Warioba, it said.

The Carter Centre on Friday released a pre-election report on Zambia that expressed concern about voter apathy and misuse of state resources in the campaigns.

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GOODWILL MESSAGE TO THE SENATE PRESIDENT

I, **SENATOR ABUBAKAR DANSO SODANGI**, representing Nasarawa West Constituency of Nasarawa State, on behalf of my family and the people of my Constituency heartily **CONGRATULATE** the Distinguished President of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, **Chief Anyim Pius Anyim** on his conferment and investiture with the national honour of **GRAND COMMANDER OF THE NIGER (GCON)**.



CHIEF ANYIM PIUS ANYIM (GCON)

Senate, President, Federal Republic of Nigeria



DISTINGUISHED SENATOR ABUBAKAR DANSO SODANGI

Nasarawa West Constituency, Nasarawa State

This honour is no doubt richly deserved and is a further manifestation of your immense service and contributions to the growth of the Senate as an institution and the sustenance of our nascent democracy in general.

Wishing you many more years of dedicated service to our dear country.

SANNU ABOKINA!

SENATOR ABUBAKAR DANSO SODANGI

Chairman, Senate Committee on FCT.

Dan Malikin Nasarawa and Jarman Lere.

Opinion

The North and Atiku: Another view

By M. B. Sabo

No political personality in the present dispensation has been subjected to undue bashing from the elites of his constituency as the Vice President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar. How ironical, even the most pampered Oodua descendants have, for tactical and pragmatic considerations, given breathing space to their own. After all, he is their son. I commend their novel spirit.

In an article, "The North and Atiku", carried in *Crystal* newsmagazine edition of October 2001, Abubakar Jaka, a public commentator made some scathing comments vis-à-vis Alhaji Atiku Abubakar's 'un-Northern' role in this dispensation. This is in spite of the generous limitations imposed on the number two man by our system, i.e. our presidential constitution. Nigeria's political landscape today is unfortunately littered with strained relations between chief executives and their deputies at state level. In this respect Jigawa, Lagos, Abia and a few other states are not enviable case studies. I personally commend Atiku's loyalty to his boss and their cordial relationship.

Jika's mordant criticism of the VP is an attempt to join a tribe of Atiku bashers. In my opinion, neither the VP nor the agitators of "marginalisation" have the faintest idea of the marginalised life. For any discussion of Northern marginalisation to be meaningful, it must be

concretely analysed from the material viewpoint, vis-à-vis the material condition of our people or the hue and cry of marginalisation will be seen as another political, economic or selfish agenda. After all, is marginalisation of Northerners a recent development or preceded even the VP's time. Obasanjo's administration is accused of marginalising Northerners while the VP stands helplessly by. Hear Jika's confusion when he said, "I personally do not see any conflict of interest between Obasanjo and the North except the prodding by the Yoruba media for him to stand up to the North so as to prove he is not any one's plaything". If it is true that there is no conflict between Obasanjo and the North, why single out Atiku for crucifixion?

I guess the most vicious accusation against the vice president is the allegation of balkanising the North. He is accused of doing that by simply identifying with the northeast. Remember Reception 2000, the conference on the state of education in the North, sensitisation workshops on privatisation for northern states etc. Were all these northeast affairs? Can mere political party (PDP) rallies balkanise the North? Jika knows that if the North were to break, it will be as a result of its internal contradictions. No matter how much we romanticise with

the North, recent events (banditry, religious, ethnic and sectional violence) are not good indicators of a cohesive and strong North. Similarly, to caution us as informed citizens not to bore our readers with fanatical eulogy of the North. After all Jika himself admitted that the North, today is hardly anything but "a geographical North". The truth is that other essential building blocks that will make the North a strong bloc are fast falling apart.

It is true that the vice president came to power as a product of power shift, but it is an uninformed judgement to terminate the issue there. To be fair to the VP, one may ask, is he without political credentials or antecedents? Was he a political greenhorn? Hasn't his political profile grown since the SDP days? Why is PDM (Atiku's group) still the strongest faction within the PDP? No doubt Atiku's political network and contacts have tremendously worked towards the success of the PDP government in power today. Going by this antecedent, it is uncharitable to say that the North "donated" Atiku to be vice president.

I hardly resist the temptation of reading Jika's articles on the pages of newspapers, but they sadly remind one of his inglorious self-serving romance with a military administration in Borno State in the 1980s. Sadly this antecedent has made me highly suspicious of the substance or even

ideological perspective of Jika's write-ups. In the midst of military misrule, accompanied by recklessness and pillage of our resources, he was busy laundering the image of a military administration on rampage. This in no small measure rudely affected our collective psyche and sensibility as indigenes of Borno State. Well, at the end Jika was indemnified for his efforts.

The poor lecturer (I think a graduate assistant then) was appointed as an executive director with the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria. He was later moved to Peoples Bank of Nigeria (PBN). These juicy appointments were the dividends of being a military image-maker.

The vice president's aides should please note that Jika is a "de-marginalised" Northerner already used to the dividends of the system and feels uncomfortable being left in the cooler for too long. Kindly recommend to your boss to create an office of special adviser on Northern marginalisation and if Jika suits that office, why not. He will be an asset as an image-maker to the vice president who needs a horde of them to survive Nigeria's stormy political waters. Lest I forget, this credibility thing, my good Lord, is a scarce commodity in Nigeria. May Allah bless our souls, ameen.

M. B. Sabo is of the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria, Gombe, Gombe State.

Adamawa State: Is Boni Haruna the 'messiah'?

By Zaccaeus Isa Tarfa

Adamawa State is now 25, as it was created from the defunct North Eastern State in 1976. It was then known as Gongola State. It has witnessed series of political, economic and social stages of government be it military or civilian. It started with Brigadier R. A. Mohammed down to Col. A. G. Hussaini, with only three rulers regimes intervening i.e. Barde, Bamanga and Saleh Michika. Today it has Mr. Boni Haruna in the saddle as an executive governor.

The political metamorphosis that occurred during the recent gubernatorial election in the state and the eventual emergence of Mr. Boni Haruna as the executive civilian governor of Adamawa was an act of God (as destiny will have it that Alhaji Atiku Abubakar will not lead the state in the capacity of a governor). Mr. Boni Haruna was the deputy to be of Atiku; today he has, legally and by popular mandate become, the governor of Adamawa State (so the Supreme Court of Justice decided). The question many citizens of Adamawa State will like an answer to is, is Boni Haruna up to the task of governing Adamawa State? Is he the expected 'messiah' that could bring the state out of its bondage and present predicaments? Is Boni Haruna thoroughly conversant with the political, economic and social trends of the state? Adamawa State is endowed with a lot of resources, its problem has always been the neglect it suffers from those at the helm of its affairs coupled with their zeal to loot rather than develop it. The state lacks infrastructures that could enhance its development by willing investors. Therein lay enormous resources which need to be harnessed and developed; it has all potentialities that could make it a field of tourism. However, little or no efforts are geared towards the provision of social amenities. The state cannot boast of functional water supply, it has not got an effective inter-state commuter transport service; there is no state owned hotel, for the moment. The federal government has been supplementing medical services, since there is no general hospital in the state capital. The educational system is noting to write home about (which is evident in the poor results we always have). The only industry owned by the state, the Mubi Burnt Brick, has

packed up, and there are no effective vocational training centres for the teeming youths who are busy roaming our streets, gradually graduating into armed robbers.

It will be wise of Governor Boni if he can capitalise on his personal relationship with Vice President Atiku, exploring all possibilities of industrialising the state through Atiku's foreign business partners.

You should be able to design, implement and develop programmes for the rural dwellers; the grassroots downtrodden masses should feel the dividends of democracy through social and economic infrastructures to be provided such as rural feeder roads and hospitals. Enough has been done for Jimeta urban area; the recent contracts awarded for the electrification of some villages in the state are steps in the right direction.

Democracy has it that you owe the citizens of Adamawa State a duty to perform; immaterial that you inherited the large political camp of Atiku Abubakar, Adamawa State has tribes with divergent political bearings, your ability to carry along with you these various tribes will be a political plus for you, the ability of your administration to bring together adherent of all religions in the state will be a plus for you. (At this juncture, praise should go to our father the Lamido of Adamawa). If however, for selfish and political sentiments you fail to do so, history will not forgive you, which makes your tenure a failure.

Finally, Your Excellency, the hope is high amongst your peace-loving citizens that you may be the 'messiah' to take Adamawa State to the heights; that you and your cabinet will not loot our treasury, that your programmes will be for the people especially the rural populace, that when you will one day leave after your tenure, we will accept your relevance to the political terrain of Adamawa State.

Comrade Zaccaeus Isa Tarfa is of No. 3 Birma Usman Road, Garkida, Adamawa State.

Niger State youth and self-reliance

By Suleiman Mohammed Ibrahim

I was reluctant to research for this write-up, for the simple reason that some people might erroneously believe that coming from an unemployed youth, it may look like I am playing the role of a sycophant. But one thing is certain, whatever is said here is the truth about the youth and self-reliance in Niger State.

Self-reliance under Hajiya Zainab Kure, the wife of the executive governor of Niger State, is no doubt one of the laudable programmes initiated in the state to alleviate one of the endemic societal problems Nigerlites and Nigerians have been battling with in recent time.

The Abdulsalam Abubakar Youth Centre which is the meeting point of the youth empowerment scheme (YES) in Niger State, is a top state solid foundation for genuine economic growth and self-reliance. Unlike in the past when secondary school leavers and products of other tertiary institutions in Nigeria were sure of white-collar jobs soon after completion of their educational career, today it is a different story.

For one, the vacancies on the ground are no longer sufficient to accommodate all the job seekers in the state. Secondly, even those lucky to be engaged somewhere most of them in the low-income cadre are retrenched in the name of rationalization without considering their sources of livelihood - God forgive us.

Moreover, in the past, students after completion of their studies, wasted no time before gaining employment and many were sure of where to work at their final year. There were opportunities for work either with local, state and federal government. No sooner does a school leaver finish his education than he or she was sure of where to work.

With the increased annual graduation of students from institutions of higher learning, shortages of employment opportunities, coupled with economic hardships, dangers of armed robbery, unemployment, arson, chaos, teenage prostitution, political unrest and related societal ills stared the nation at face.

The Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), a programme carefully designed by Hajiya Zainab Kure also to create job opportunities for the youths and make them self-reliant, no doubt bailed out the ugly situation needing urgent solution. The scheme has no doubt recorded appreciable success. For one, it has successfully inculcated into the minds of the youth of Niger State the importance of self-reliance and the duties of citizenship.

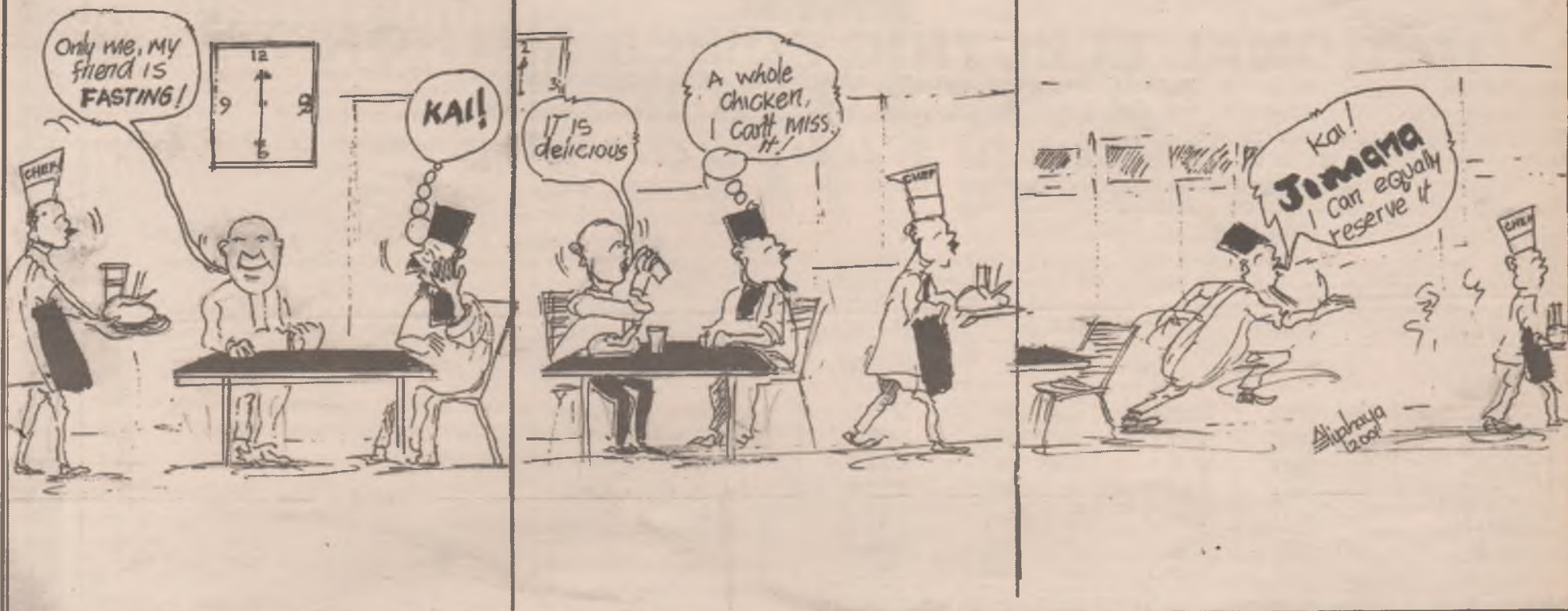
Many youths who benefited from the scheme are now happy and prosperous photographers, shoe makers, tailors, knitters, vulcanisers, computer operators and other vocations, and are daily contribute their own quota towards the desired economic growth of the state.

Moreover, the laudable scheme has successfully started to make visible impact on not only the direct beneficiaries of its programmes but the entire people of Niger State. The truth of this statement cannot be contested. Rescuing the unemployed therefore ultimately means saving the entire society in which they live.

Furthermore, the effects of empowering our youths in Nigeria have already taken roots in Niger State. Empowering them has also given them a purpose in life, and the will to achieve their goals. It has kept them from abusing themselves with drugs, violence or promiscuity. Also it has introduced them to the beauty of our nation and has given them pride in helping their fellow Nigerians. At this juncture, posterity will not forgive me if, I should complete this write-up without appealing to Nigerian youth to remain steadfast in the pursuit of peace. They should support the government. They should eschew bitterness, hatred and violence. They should forget the past and look into the future with hope and courage. Surely, time and honesty will vindicate them.

Suleiman Mohammed Ibrahim is of S. W. 106B, Hospital Road, Minna, Niger State.

FASTING PERIOD



YOUR LETTERS

Adieu Hajiya Gambo Sawaba

In fact, life is truly a stage where each and everyone of us is a player at his/her own time, but, what matters most is the course we are able to muster in it. This serves as the legacy we are leaving behind bearing in mind that posterity will not spare any of us for either our deeds or misdeeds.

When Hajiya Gambo Laraba Sawaba answered the call to eternity on 14th October, 2001, the surface of the earth shook and the heavens trembled. The earth shook for it recognised a great loss and the heavens trembled for welcoming a new inhabitant who spent her life as a saint, who lived and died for mankind. Who suffered greatly for fighting the cause she so much

cherished. Honestly, my heart was saddened, my eyes paled and my whole system was dis-comforted hearing the sad news of the death of a human rights activist, of a women emancipation and liberation fighter, of a lone ranger (regarding her gender). I could not but cry and shed hot tears for this noble woman, mother, grandmother and philanthropist who lived purposefully to get freedom for those in bondage, who despite her little level of education surpassed most professors and renowned scholars in achievements. Her death at this crucial time of our democracy has really created a very big vacuum. At a time when our governors and Speakers of

Houses of Assembly are at loggerheads with the Senate over an issue that needs patriotism devoid of selfish ulterior motives. What a pity! What disturbs me presently is that no single woman of note in this Northern region where she hails from has been following her footsteps. This honestly

poses a challenge to the women folk at least to keep Gambo Laraba Sawaba's flag flying. Gambo Laraba Sawaba, adieu, may your soul rest in peace and be blessed by Allah (SWT), (Amin). We'll forever remember you. **Mukaila G. Adeyemi, NIPOST headquarters, Bauchi.**

Leave Prince Audu alone

When Prince Abubakar Audu was elected as the executive governor of Kogi State, what was paramount in his mind was the transformation of the entire state into a role model for other states of the federation. Since the issue of this electoral bill gathered momentum and snowballed into controver-

sies, thus plunging the whole country into charged and heated political debate, the National Assembly members now claim victory over perceived opponents. The people of Kogi State have vowed to remain with Prince Abubakar Audu to ensure he returns to Lord Lugard House come 2003. We the good people of Kogi State after associating with the laudable programmes of Prince Audu are determined to go into battlefield for him blindly. The governor has made it clear and reminded those who are after his seat to come down from their high pedestal to test their political acceptability with him, rather than hiding behind proxies to oust him from power. President Olusegun Obasanjo has said loud and clear that Kogi State is the most peaceful state in the whole country, and this was made possible by the dynamic and exemplary handling of the state by Prince Abubakar Audu, because if there is no peace, there is no development or progress. We are living witnesses to the cheap blackmail, personal vendetta and character assassination of some influential people in the society who happen to come from the state popularly called "Abuja Politician" by inciting the public through print and electronic media to smear the good work of Governor Audu. The people of Kogi State both within and outside the state should ignore this "Abuja Politician" and join hands with the government to ensure rapid development of the entire state. **Bala Nayashi Lokoja, No. 1 Edward Lane, Lokoja.**

When Jos 'sneezes' Nigeria catches cold

Jos the capital of plateau state is a tourist haven with beautiful landscapes and the most favourable weather in Nigeria. This city is a melting point of various endeavours. It is a beehive of political activities and has been so since the 1950's. It was at the Jos SDP convention that Chief M. K. O. Abiola emerged as the

party's flag bearer. It was also in this historic city that the present president emerged as PDP's flag bearer. Those conversant with Nigeria's football in the 70s will readily recall the performance of the Mighty Jets FC - a team conceived and bred in Jos made up of the likes of Isma'ila Mabo, Sule Kekere, Sam Garba Okoye, Layi Olagbemiro, Bayo, Lawandi, Aloysius. Atuegbu etc. all of them Jos 'boys' who see themselves first as Nigerians and brothers to one another. Peaceful co-existence has been with the people who despite their diversity have no other desire than to see Jos rise and rise. Now this togetherness, this brotherliness has been desecrated by certain elements who, going by their history have not even contributed to the growth of the city but who are today championing the cause of their ethnic groups and calling others non-indigenes. Jos remained the most peaceful city in Nigeria devoid of the usual tribal sentiments and religious intolerance found in many cities. Today that peaceful nature is destroyed by none other than those calling others names and asking them to leave in the name of ethnic chauvinism and religious bigotry. Our children went to

school together, played together, and even inter-married, yet when the chips are down it is always the Hausa/Fulani that bear the brunt. It is now crystal-clear that whereas we live with those people in oneness, and harmony, they bear grievous grudges against us and have always been envious of our resources which we earned through our sweat and hard work. Government must not just set up committees to look into issues whose white paper will be put in the dustbin. No! The perpetrators of this heinous act must be brought to justice. We have been patient enough and can no longer fold our arms and love those who hate us. **Kabiru Isah Gwarzo, 15A Ali Akilu Road, Sokoto.**

Re: Lamido: America's lackey?

Chance favours the prepared mind, is what exactly came into my mind when Alhaji Sule Lamido was appointed the minister of foreign affairs, after he was defeated in the gubernatorial race in Jigawa State. With the slightest doubt obviously because of the current wave of u-turn in the democratic arena in Nigeria, I see in Lamido a strong man and a rallying point for youth like myself who are determined to politically liberate the common man. However, I surely know that Lamido falls short when compared not only to his mentor the late Mallam Aminu Kano who I believe could lay down his life for his principles, but even to his co-commentor Alhaji Abubakar Rimi who many people

despised for some mixed reasons. For whatever reason, Rimi will not play the role of a messenger. History must have been cruel to Lamido for making him a minister in the present government in which the president is seen to have transformed from a statesman and pan-Africanist to a CIA heavyweight. His naivety in politics at the centre contributed to his entanglement in the current global struggle between the two leading civilisations. Unlike Lamido, Bolaji Akinyemi was very much conscious of his constituency even in the period of the military dictatorship where outright order is given. Akinyemi being a Christian from the south must have perfectly calculated how much it will cost him to

regain his personality if he is identified with OIC controversy which the Christian south viewed as an attempt to Islamise the nation. On the other hand, Lamido never considered his constituency in his quest to serve his master and the US. It is important to make it clear that the declaration of the nation's support was never an outcome of class ethno-regional and geo-political configuration in the country. There is no doubt that Lamido has betrayed his constituency and therefore owes us an apology or else should be given a room at Ota farm to live after his time expires by 2003. **Lawan A Sani, Ministry of science & Technology, Dutse, Jigawa State.**

Carrot politics

The recent and sudden carpet crossing of our so-called eminent politicians in Katsina exposes their true colour to every discerning individual. Quest for power, wealth and position now prevail over politics of ideology. It's a pity. **Haruna Nagogo, Union Bank of Nigeria plc, Bank Road, Kano.**



NEPA

NATIONAL ELECTRIC POWER AUTHORITY

PRESS RELEASE

NEPA Weekly Situation Report (37)

OUR BULLETIN FOR WEEK NO.37:
(02/12/2001 TO 08/12/2001)

1. PEAK DAILY GENERATION FOR THE PREVIOUS AND CURRENT WEEKS

PREVIOUS WEEK (25/11/2001 TO 01/12/2001)			CURRENT WEEK (02/12/2001 TO 08/12/2001)	
DAY	DATE	GEN(MW)	DATE	GEN(MW)
Sunday	25/11/2001	2299.3	02/12/2001	2539.8
Monday	26/11/2001	2525.1	03/12/2001	2615.6
Tuesday	27/11/2001	2742.9	04/12/2001	2713.1
Wednesday	28/11/2001	2709.3	05/12/2001	2738.04
Thursday	29/11/2001	2499.3	06/12/2001	2743.44
Friday	30/11/2001	2526.7	07/12/2001	2662.12
Saturday	01/12/2001	2571.0	08/12/2001	2579.9

2. PROJECTED AVERAGE PEAK GENERATION FOR THE PREVIOUS AND CURRENT WEEKS

PREVIOUS WEEK (ACTUAL) (02/12/2001 TO 08/12/2001)	CURRENT WEEK (FORECAST) (09/12/2001 TO 15/12/2001)
2656.01MW	3000MW

3. PEAK WEEKLY GENERATION FROM EACH POWER STATION IN THE PREVIOUS AND CURRENT WEEKS

STATION	PREVIOUS WEEK (ACTUAL) (25/11/2001 TO 01/12/2001)	CURRENT WEEK (FORECAST) (02/12/2001 TO 08/12/2001)
KAINJI	203 MW	250 MW
JEBBA	264 MW	270 MW
SHIRORO	600 MW	450 MW
EGBIN	1143 MW	1200 MW
SAPELE ST	121 MW	130 MW
SAPELE GT	44 MW	50 MW
AFAM	65 MW	70 MW
AFAM(V)	0 MW	80 MW
DELTA	396 MW	400 MW
IJORA	0 MW	17 MW
CALABAR	2 MW	2 MW
A.E.S	233.6 MW	240 MW
EPP1 (Aggreko)	14.08 MW	15.0 MW
EPP2 (Geometric)	13.36 MW	15.0 MW
TOTAL	3099.04 MW	3189 MW

4. PROJECTED AVERAGE DAILY GENERATION FROM EACH POWER STATION IN THE PREVIOUS AND CURRENT WEEKS

STATION	PREVIOUS WEEK (ACTUAL) (02/12/2001 TO 08/12/2001)	CURRENT WEEK (FORECAST) (09/12/2001 TO 15/12/2001)
KAINJI	202 MW	250 MW
JEBBA	238 MW	270 MW
SHIRORO	408 MW	450 MW
EGBIN	1143 MW	1200 MW
SAPELE ST	119 MW	130 MW
SAPELE GT	42 MW	50 MW
AFAM	10 MW	70 MW
AFAM(V)	0 MW	80 MW
DELTA	388 MW	400 MW
IJORA	0 MW	17 MW
CALABAR	2 MW	2 MW
A.E.S	163.3 MW	240 MW
EPP 1 (Aggreko)	14.08 MW	15.0 MW
EPP 2 (Geometric)	14.36 MW	15.0 MW
AVERAGE TOTAL	2742.9 MW	3189 MW

5. AVERAGE ESTIMATED DAILY NATIONAL DEMAND FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER, 2001 = 3600 MW

REMARKS

More machines are expected from Afam, Delta and Kainji Power Stations during the week. Generation is therefore expected to improve.

ENERGY SAVING

BELOW ARE SOME USEFUL TIPS ON HOW YOU CAN SAVE ENERGY, 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 recommend 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 temperature is 350 degrees).
- Making sure you do not use oversized water heaters. 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.

Next, we serve you the power demand and energy consumption of some domestic appliances:

APPLIANCE	TYPE	RATING	POWER DEMAND IN KILOWATT (KW)	RATED CURRENT IN AMPERS (AMPS)	NO. OF HRS. TO CONSUME ONE UNIT OF ELECTRICITY (i.e. 1 KWH)
Water - heater	50 litre	1200watt	1.2	5.2	0.8
	100litre	2500watt	2.5	11	0.4
Cooker (4-plate With oven)	Small	6000watt	6.0	26	0.2
	Regular	8000watt	8.0	34	1.2
	Large	10500watt	10.5	45	0.1
Single-plate Cooker	Portable	1800watt	1.8	7.7	0.6
Fan	Table	0.08HP	0.06	0.25	1.7
	Standing	0.1HP	0.7	0.3	1.4
	Ceiling	0.3HP	0.2	0.9	4.5
Air-Conditioner	Small	1.5HP	1.1	4.7	1
	Medium	2HP	1.5	6.5	0.7
Refrigerator	Small	0.2HP	0.15	0.6	7
	Medium	0.25HP	0.19	0.8	5
	Large	0.3HP	0.22	0.9	4.5
Television- (Black & White)		200watt	0.2	0.9	5
Television (Colour)		300 watt	0.3	1.3	3

- 1000watt=1Kilowatt (1KW)
- 1 HP = 0.746 Kilowatt
- 1KWH = One unit of electricity = 1KW x 1 HR. i.e. 1 Kilowatt used for 1hour.

Finally, we appeal to all our esteemed customers and all good Nigerians to endeavour to report faults promptly wherever and whenever they occur. There are faults sections and complaints centres in all our 56 district offices spread across the country. Only such prompt reports can enable us attend to faults promptly to make life a lot easier for you.

We thank you for your understanding and patience.

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

Management

NAN

NEWS AGENCY OF NIGERIA
Africa's leading News Agency

The Management and Staff of the
News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)
heartily

Congratulate

our Managing Director
Malam Wada Abdullahi Maida

On the conferment on you of the
National Honour of the Officer of
the **Order of Niger (OON)**
We rejoice with you and wish you
long life in the service of the Nation.



MALAM WADA ABDULLAHI MAIDA

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA & THE MIDDLE EAST

Israel, US react coldly to Arafat's speech

Israel and the United States responded coldly to Palestinian President, Yasser Arafat's call for an end to suicide bombings and armed attacks on Israelis.

The European Union took a more optimistic line, saying Arafat's speech to the Palestinian people on Sunday — made under strong international pressure — appeared to open a new window of opportunity for ending some 15 months of



Yasser Arafat

Israeli-Palestinian violence.

"I today reiterate (a call for) the complete and immediate cessation of all military activities. I renew the call to completely halt any activities, especially suicide attacks which we have condemned and always condemned," Arafat said.

"We will punish all planners and executors... and we will hunt down the violators firmly," he said on Palestinian television, reissuing a call for a cease-fire.

But Arafat, his voice firm and gaze steady, also demanded the government of Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon stop its "brutal war" against the Palestinian Authority.

He did not formally declare an end to the Palestinian agitation for independence as some Israeli media reports had predicted, but repeated a call to Israel to

resume peace negotiations — which it has said it will not hold under fire.

The initial reaction from Israel, which has retaliated for recent suicide bombings and shooting attacks with air raids and roundups of militants, reflected the wait-and-see attitude it has often adopted to pledges of truce by Arafat in the past.

"It's not the speech that's important, but what he does on the ground," Israeli Foreign Minister, Shimon Peres, told reporters.

The White House said Arafat's speech held "constructive words, but what's important is that they be followed up by concrete action."

Sharon, who cut ties with Arafat and declared him irrelevant after 10 Israelis were killed in an attack on their bus near a Jewish settlement in the West Bank last Wednesday, ignored the speech in an address of his own in Tel Aviv about an hour later.

Palestinian police shut down militants' offices

The Palestinian Authority said it has shut down more than 30 offices with connections to two militant Islamist groups responsible for numerous recent attacks on Israel.

The move came as Israeli security forces continued operations against suspected militants across the Palestinian territories.

Palestinian radio said the closures were made on Yasser Arafat's orders.

Israel has been demanding the actual arrest of suspects but Palestinian officials say this is not feasible while Israeli operations continue.

Palestinian police said on Sunday that 33 offices connected to the Hamas and Islamic Jihad groups had been closed over two days.

Sixteen offices were closed in the Gaza Strip and the rest in the West Bank, with police padlocking doors and painting prohibition orders.

One office in Nablus had functioned as a press bureau for both of the groups, while others were charities or health care centres.

"The security services in all parts of the homeland will today continue to close the political and media offices of both Hamas and Islamic Jihad," Palestinian radio said on Sunday afternoon.

The radio reminded listeners that the Palestinian leadership had declared a state of emergency the previous week "out of concern for the Palestinian people's higher national interests".

Israeli officials have

previously cast doubt on Mr. Arafat's efforts to restrain the militants, whose suicide attacks have killed scores of people in recent months.

Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, described a wave of much-publicised arrests as a "sham".

The Israeli security forces themselves have arrested dozens of suspected militants in recent days, entering Palestinian areas with tanks backed by helicopter gunships.

UN medics tackle Ebola in Gabon

International medical experts sent to a remote jungle area of northern Gabon are searching for victims of an Ebola outbreak that has already claimed 12 lives.

A statement from the World Health Organisation said the 14-strong team of international and Gabonese medics were "actively tracing suspected cases and contacts".

They have set up an isolation unit in the town of Mekambo and have launched an education programme for local village communities.

Four villages have been put under quarantine. But there is concern that the deadly virus will spread, as health workers say they are unable to stop villagers travelling in and out of the area.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said 50 Red Cross volunteers from Gabon were also working to contain the outbreak.

This is the first known outbreak since 224 people

died of it in Uganda last year.

There is no known cure for Ebola, a haemorrhagic fever, and between 50% and 90% of its victims bleed to death within days.

Early diagnosis is difficult because victims suffer symptoms similar to flu.

The outbreak is in the remote north-eastern province of Ogooue Ivindo, where Ebola killed 45 people in 1996-97.

The Ebola alarm was raised after medical teams discovered an unusually large number of dead primates in the region.

The first human death was recorded on December 2 in Ekata, near the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The DR Congo government has denied reports that the virus is also the source of an epidemic there.

A total of 28 people have died in this outbreak, although DR Congo health officials say the fever is unlikely to be Ebola, as had been earlier feared, but rather a similar haemorrhagic fever.

UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE

ABEOKUTA, NIGERIA



INVITATION TO TENDER

A. CONSTRUCTION OF STUDENTS HOSTEL B. RESEARCH AND EXTENSION BUILDING

Tenders are invited from contractors registered with the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta for the projects listed above.

Interested contractors are required to collect tender documents from the PHYSICAL PLANNING UNIT after paying a non-refundable fee as follows:

Project	Building Contractor	Services Contractor (Mechanical/Electrical)
Students Hostel	N20,000.00	N10,000.00
Research and Extension Building	N50,000.00	N10,000.00

Payment should be by certified bank draft from a reputable Nigerian Bank in favour of University of Agriculture, Abeokuta with a receipt obtained from the University Bursary.

Tenders will not be accepted unless submitted on the prescribed form of tender.

The completed tender forms together with the priced Bill of Quantities must be deposited in the Tender Box in the Office of the Registrar, University of Agriculture, Abeokuta on or before 12.00 noon of Wednesday, January 23, 2002.

The Tender is to be wax-sealed in two envelopes. The inner envelope should be marked as follows:

"SECRET" - "TENDER for the CONSTRUCTION OF STUDENTS HOSTEL"

"SECRET" - "TENDER for the CONSTRUCTION OF RESEARCH AND EXTENSION BUILDING".

There should be no indication of the tender's name on any of the envelopes.

In pricing and tendering, please note that the fluctuation clause is not applicable.

The materials advance payment required should be stated with the list of materials to be purchased with the money. It is pertinent to visit the site and any clarification on the tender documents cleared with the consultants.

The form titled "List of Government and Commercial Buildings/Services Contracts" requires that you submit the list of all contracts on which you are presently engaged. This must be completed and returned with your tender. If you are not presently engaged on any contracts, the form must be completed, showing "NIL" return.

The form titled "Details of Tenderer" must be completed and returned with your tender stating clearly the name, address and nationality of each of the Director(s) of the Company. All Drawings and Bills MUST be returned with the tenders.

The Tenders Board (or the appropriate competent body) reserves the right to accept or reject any tender whether wholly or in part and is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender.

The completed tender must also be accompanied by the photocopy of the last 3-year tax clearance certificate (Company and Director(s)); evidence of registration with the Federal or State Central Registration Board and a photocopy of UNAAB receipt of the non-refundable tender fee. The Company's registration with the University must be updated accordingly.

The tender shall remain open for acceptance as specified in paragraph four (4) above.

Signed

A. AYORINDE
REGISTRAR.

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

World Report

Paris hotel fire kills four

Four people have died in a hotel fire in the centre of Paris.

Sixteen others were hurt, at least one seriously, said police.

The blaze broke out in the Hotel du Palais, in the Place du Chatelet near the Louvre museum, at around 0300 (0200GMT).

Police said the possibility of arson is being investigated.

Some of the dead and injured may be tourists, said fire brigade spokesman, Captain Laurent Vibert.

"It is a popular hotel with tourists and it seems that there may well have been foreigners among the victims," he said.

He said guests had tried to flee the flames by running to the roof.

One report said the man being held had a history of carrying out arson attacks.

About 30 fire appliances and 150 firefighters fought the flames.

Police said he was detained after running from the hotel as the blaze started.



A young Muslim girl in holiday clothing waits for her family to pray at the Jamia Masjid, or Grand Mosque, during Eid-el-Fitr in New Delhi, India ... yesterday.

Japan hosts confab on child sex trade

A major international conference on the multi-billion-dollar global child sex trade has opened in the Japanese city of Yokohama.

More than 3,000 delegates from 137 countries are attending the four-day

conference, the second of its kind.

They will evaluate progress since the inaugural meeting five years ago in Stockholm, where delegates agreed to create national plans of action and build a database of offenders and children at risk.

Governments have been working on strategies to tighten their laws against child prostitution, child pornography and the trafficking of minors.

The role of new technology - both in facilitating and policing the child sex trade - will be under scrutiny at the conference.

BBC correspondent who attended the Stockholm conference, said one real achievement has been changes to the law in certain countries to allow abusers to be prosecuted at home for crimes committed against children abroad.

But the illicit trade is flourishing worldwide, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) said.

A UNICEF report

released last week said about one million children worldwide are sold into sex every year.

It called on every government to adopt and enforce laws against the sale of children, child prostitution and pornographic material involving children.

In the Philippines alone there are an estimated 100,000 child prostitutes - five times the number there were 15 years ago.

UNICEF Executive Director, Carol Bellamy, quoted by the Associated Press news agency, said that in South-East Asia and West Africa "governments are taking these issues more seriously because there has been more public attention".

But solutions would be difficult to find because the problems and numbers of children involved varied greatly from country to country, she said.

UNICEF estimates that about one-third of sex workers in the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, are between 12 and 17 years old. And there are believed to be almost 500,000 under-age prostitutes in India alone.

Portuguese PM to resign after defeat

Portuguese Prime Minister, Antonio Guterres, has said he will tender his resignation, admitting that his ruling Socialist Party has lost the municipal elections.

"This defeat is my defeat," he told a news conference.

President Jorge Sampaio, also a socialist, is expected to accept the prime minister's resignation.

However, a BBC correspondent in Lisbon says it is not clear if the centre-left Socialist Party will elect a new leader to become prime minister or if the president will call an early general election.

Mr. Guterres's resignation announcement came as the Socialist Party lost control of the country's two biggest cities - Lisbon and Oporto - to a centre-right coalition.

The socialists also suffered defeats in other strongholds as voters made their dissatisfaction with the government clear.

A leading Portuguese sociologist, Antonio Barreto, termed the results a big defeat for the government and the Socialist Party.

Towns lost include Coimbra, where allegations of corruption forced the socialist mayor to step down last year, crippling the campaign of his would-be socialist successor.

Jose Manuel Durao Barroso, president of the opposition Social Democratic

Party, said the results showed there was no longer any confidence in the Socialist Party.

"Our country voted for change and voted on the future," he said.

"I asked the country to send a signal for change and this signal was sent."

Plane crash kills 16 in Colombia

Fourteen Colombian passengers and two crew members were killed when a small, twin-engine airplane crashed into a mountain on Sunday, killing everyone on board, authorities said.

The Czech-made Let 410 airplane crashed just five minutes after take-off from the city of Medellin. An official at charter operator Heliandes, which owned the plane, blamed the accident on heavy rains.

"We found the plane on a hill near the city of Medellin. There are no survivors. Unfortunately, everyone on board died," the Heliandes official, who asked not to be named, told Reuters in a telephone interview.

UK police threaten protests over pay

Police officers are threatening to stage protests against the government's plans to change their pay and conditions.

Senior officials from the Police Federation are holding an emergency meeting to discuss the proposals made by Home Secretary David Blunkett.

All 43 forces in England and Wales will be represented at the gathering - an indication of the widening gap between the police and the government's position.

Mr. Blunkett's

proposals include cuts in overtime payments, sick pay and allowances.

Police would be expected to work more flexibly but could receive special bonuses.

The police have been given a deadline of December 27 to agree to the plans which are being discussed at the Police Negotiating Board.

But federation officials are angry about the "unrealistic" deadline and said the measures would result in most officers being worse off.

The meeting will draw up a strategy to gather support against the reforms.

ODD WORLD

'Substitute your surnames and earn N2.08m'

In a move that raises corporate branding to new levels, a North American tyre maker is offering \$16,000 (about N2.08m) to people willing to alter their family name and embrace the company's Dunlop-Tyre moniker as their own.

"This has never been done before," said Jane Wilcox, a spokeswoman with the tyre company. The firm has mailed 1,000 information packages to families with the name Dunlop across Canada.

To win a portion of the \$16,000 offer, a Dunlop must legally change his or her name to "Dunlop-Tyre" at a cost of some \$125 (N16,250) which the company will reimburse.

If 50 people sign up, each gets \$315 (N40,950). But a sole signatory would hit a \$16,000 jackpot.

"I think it's a bit ridiculous," said Toronto-area Lisa Dunlop, who heard about the offer from a Reuters correspondent. "I guess anybody would do anything for a dollar, but I'm not one of them."

Man sues toll operators over N2,483 charge

A Canadian lawyer launched a class action suit against the operators of one of the world's first electronic toll highways on Wednesday after being charged a \$19.10 (about N2,483) late fee on a balance of 12 Canadian cents.

Richard Prendiville, a lawyer based in Waterloo, Ontario, is attempting to force the highway's operators and the Ontario provincial government to refund all of the late penalties charged to users of Highway 407, north of Toronto, since it opened on June 7, 1997.

The suit alleges the penalty qualifies as interest, and substantially exceeds the maximum annual "criminal rate" of interest in Canada, set at 60 per cent.

Lawyers representing Prendiville said in a statement that the late payment policy "borders on highway robbery, and the tacit continuing approval of the province of Ontario in this policy is unconscionable."

Sharks to spend two months feasting on whale

Swimmers and surfers were warned Thursday to stay clear of a popular Australian beach while sharks feasted on an 80-ton whale carcass.

Authorities said it could take the sharks up to two months to chew up the 24-meter whale, which was too big to move.

"We're lucky it isn't a full-grown blue whale, then it could weigh as much as 200 tonnes, Nigel Higgs of Conservation of Land Management of Western Australia, a government body, told Reuters.

The carcass washed up on the northern end of Contos beach in the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park 350 km south west of Perth, Higgs said.

It was unclear how the whale had died but there were no signs of injury, Higgs said.

"There will be sharks around for some time to feed on the body as it decomposes," he said. "It will take about two months for the sharks and other fish to eat it."

"It won't be safe to swim, but it might be good for fishing - although it might smell a bit," he added.

The beach is typically packed with surfers, although low waves over the last several days have kept most enthusiasts out of the water.

Behold! World's biggest chocolate nougat bar

Ten cooks have spent four days mixing a ton of almonds, chocolate and sugar to produce the world's biggest nougat bar, the organizers claimed Friday.

Nougat, or turrón, is a traditional Spanish Christmas sweet and the 30-foot-long bar prepared by turrón-maker Virginias on show in the Port Aventura theme park in Catalonia is big enough to serve 100,000 people.

Half will be offered to customers in the theme park's restaurants and the other half will be given to the people of the nearby town of Reus, the organizers said.

... Life has just started for our man



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(Director General, Bureau of Public Enterprises)

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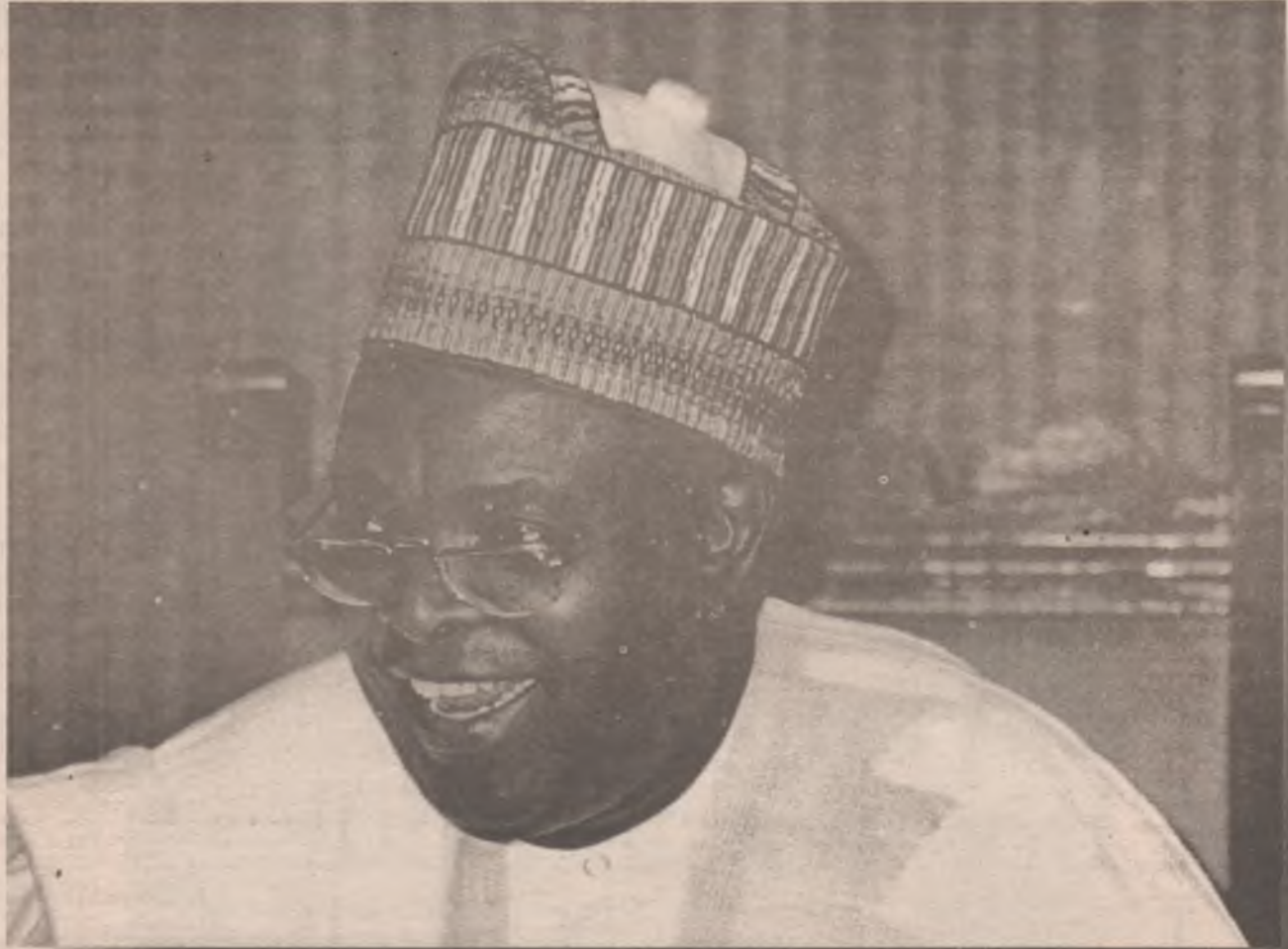
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“No person was ever honoured
for what he received.
Honour has been the reward
for what he gave”

Calvin Coolidge

A notable philanthropist, farmer, businessman and former Chairman of NICON, Dr. Hassan Adamu, Wakilin Adamawa is today being conferred with the “Commander of the Order of the Niger” (CON), by the President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo.

The Board, Management and Staff of NICON congratulate our former chairman for this well-deserved honour.

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BUSINESS DAY

Company reports from NSE

Interlinked Technologies Plc: Unaudited results for the first quarter ended 30th September 2001 show a turnover of N25.0 million as against N5.9 million in the comparable period of 2000. Profit after tax stood at N1.4 million compared with a loss of N1.9 million in 2000.

Interlinked Technologies Plc: Audited results for the year ended 30th June 2001 show a turnover of N78.4 million as against N19.1 million 2000. Profit after tax stood at N7.3 million compared with a loss of N13.5 million in 2000. The directors are recommending a dividend of 4 kobo per share.

Avon Crowncaps & Containers (Nig) Plc: Unaudited results for the half-year ended 30th September 2001 show a turnover of N1.5 billion as against N1.2 billion in the corresponding period of 2000. Profit after tax stood at N32.3 million compared with N60.1 million in 2000.

Nigerian Breweries Plc: Unaudited results for the third quarter ended 30th September 2001 show a turnover of N20.2 billion as against N12.2 billion in the corresponding period of 2000. Profit after tax and extra-ordinary items stood at N4.8 billion compared with N2.9 billion in 2000.

UTC Nigeria Plc: Unaudited results of the third quarter ended 30th September 2001 show a turnover of N1.0 billion as against N826 million in the comparable period of 2000. Profit after tax stood at N102 million compared with N31 million in 2000.

Morison Industries Plc: Unaudited results for the third quarter ended 30th September 2001 show a turnover of N89.1 million compared with N74.5 million in the comparable period of 2000. Profit after tax and extra-ordinary items stood at N16.3 million as against N4.3 million 2000.

Academy Press Plc: Unaudited results for the half-year ended 30th September 2001 show a turnover of N239.2 million as against N187.1 million in the corresponding period of 2000. Profit after tax stood at N5.6 million compared with a loss of N18.9 million in 2000.

AIICO Insurance Plc: Unaudited results for the third quarter ended 30th September 2001 show gross income of N1.5 billion as against N1.2 billion in the comparable period of 2000. Profit after tax stood at N70.7 million compared with N90.1 million in 2000.



United Bank of Africa (UBA) Plc last week hosted its 4th Law Lecture in Lagos. Picture shows Malam Abba Kyari, Managing Director & Chief Executive, United Bank for Africa Plc (l) discussing with Justice Kayode Eso, former Supreme Court Judge and Guest Speaker at the Bank's 4th Law Lecture Series.

Investors shun CBN treasury bills

The treasury bills sales plunged from the height of N35 billion previous week to N13.3 billion last week.

This development was not a surprise to economic experts and operators in the money market who had posited that the rise in sales around the end of November was as a result of the disbursements of GSM licence monies and excess oil proceeds to the states by the federal government.

Market indicators as can be seen from the performance of the bills depict that the excess liquidity situation is more stable than was the case in recent weeks.

Of the N13.3 billion recorded last week, N1.5 billion came through the secondary market while the

**Sales drop to N13bn*

From Bright Ewulu, in Lagos

sum of N11.8 billion was disposed via the primary market.

The performance of the secondary market took a new turn since the maturity date was 14 days as against the 21 days maturity previous week.

Against this backdrop therefore, investors prefer the primary market bills which had a 91 days maturity date.

The true yield of 21 per cent however remained unchanged with the secondary market bills which still stands at 19.6 per cent.

CBN repaid a total amount of N6 billion and had

a net sales of N4.5 billion as regards to secondary market. And for its counterpart repaid a total sum of N9.2 billion and made a net sales of N2.6 billion.

The bill that was on offer at the primary market during the transactions was N60.9 billion.

CBN expands scope of money transfer

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has expanded the scope of international inward money transfer operators in the country, as their customers can now receive their transfers in cash, travellers cheque etc.

The apex bank made this known through a statement signed by the Director, Trade and Exchange Department, Mrs. O. A. Demuren.

According to her, operators of the international inward money transfer like Western Union, Moneygram, Vigo and others you can now receive their transfer in cash (USD, STGE etc) and travellers' cheques (TC's).

Demuren disclosed that the Nigerian public can also access their transfers by direct lodgement into their

ordinary domiciliary account and sale to the receiving bank for naira equivalent at prevailing CBN Inter-Bank-Foreign Exchange Market



Joseph Sanusi, CBN Boss.

(IFEM).

However, the beneficiaries, according to the new directive by the CBN can only receive payment in the above named options after due presentation of appropriate identification.

It would be recalled that the CBN recently issued a directive stating that Bureau de Change operators in the country would now be allowed to participate in the IFEM.

According to sources, the move by the apex bank was to make foreign exchange and travellers cheques more accessible to the generality of the people.

Analyst believe that with this new policy on the forex market that the illegal activities being witnessed currently will subside.

Trading drops at stock exchange

**Records N705m turnover*

Turnover of 54.9 million shares worth N705.7 million was recorded last week in 7227 deals, compared with 218.9 million shares valued at N1.2 billion traded in 6122 deals on the exchange previous week.

The transactions last week were only in the Equities Sector as the Federal Government Development Stocks Sector and the Industrial Loans/Preference Stocks Sector were inactive.

Trading in the equities sector was highest (measured by volume) in the banking subsector, which accounted for 25.4 million shares worth N237.8 million.

The conglomerates subsector followed on the week's activity chart with a turnover of 6.5 million shares worth N110.7 million.

Last week, the Domestic/Industrial Products Subsector led followed by the Banking Subsector on the activity chart.

Price Movement: The Nigerian Stock Exchange All-Share Index dropped by 0.48 per cent to close the week at 10832.52. The index fell by 2.55 per cent last week.

WAPCO Plc led the week's price gainers, as it gained 180 kobo to close at N21.90 per share followed by Mobil Oil Nigeria Plc with an increase in share price of 140 kobo to close at N64.90. Other price gainers

in the top ten bracket are: Texaco Nigeria Plc, Totalfinaelf (100 kobo apiece); UBA Plc (94 kobo); Uniliver Nigeria Plc (40 kobo); PZ Industries Plc (39 kobo); Cadbury Nigeria Plc (29 kobo); FSB Int. Bank Plc (15 kobo); Van Leer Containers Plc and Omegabank (13 kobo apiece).

Union Dicon Salt Plc led on the price loser's chart, losing 445 kobo to close at N16.00. Other price losers in the top ten bracket include: Unipetrol Nigeria Plc (400 kobo); Ashakacem (239 kobo); Julius Berger (225 kobo); Guinness (135 kobo); Agip Nigeria Plc (105 kobo); B.O.C. Gases (92 kobo); Nestle Nigeria Plc (89 kobo); Nigerian Bottling Plc and First Bank of Nigeria Plc (65 kobo apiece); R. T. Briscoe (35 kobo).



Ndi Okereke-Onyiuke, NSE DG.

Sanusi inaugurates committee on SMEs investment scheme

**65 banks contribute N5.8bn*

banks contribute N5.8 billion to the scheme.

The committee will oversee the utilisation of the 10 per cent profit before tax of banks for equity investment in small and medium industries (SMEs).

This committee was set up by President Olusegun Obasanjo as a sub-committee of the Presidential Consultative Committee (PCC) on the revitalisation of the economy.

According to a statement signed by Tony Ede, Head of Corporate Affairs of the apex bank, the ten men committee made up of representatives of the CBN, banks, the organised private sector and the government will use CBN's Development Finance Department as its secretariat.

Ede stated that the CBN governor in his speech at the occasion disclosed that the bankers' committee's sub-committee on SMIEIS headed by the Managing Director of Oceanic Bank, Mrs. Cecilia Ibru "has completed work and circulated a list of moribund industries obtained from

NIDB, NEXIM, NBCI and NERFUND to all banks for consideration and start-off of the scheme.

Sanusi revealed that so far, 65 banks have contributed the sum of N5.8 billion for equity investment under the scheme.

He said any noticeable delay in the start-off of the programme was due to the fact that banks are awaiting the registration of subsidiary companies by Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) before investing in the industry or enterprise of their choice.

Said he: "Already, Resort Securities and Trust Limited had set up a venture capital company to manage the funds pooled from 15 banks, another venture capital company, SME limited has been incorporated by African Capital Alliance specifically for SMIEIS funds."

In his remarks, Chairman of the Advisory Committee and Director of Development Finance Department of CBN, Alhaji Ibrahim G. Garba assured the nation that the committee will perform its duties effectively.

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of Nigeria to heartily congratulate our Chairman*



AMBASSADOR YAHAYA KWANDE

on his conferment today, of the national honour of the
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by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo.

May you ever continue to lead the way for us to follow!



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This honour is a clear recognition of
 your hardwork, intelligence and honesty
 and we wish you God's guidance
 and blessings

once more, **Congratulations**

Mallam Nasir Ahmad el-Rufai (FNIS) **OFR**

Director General, Bureau of Public Enterprise

Signed:
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NEWS

Three injured in police, Hisba clash

Three Hisba members were injured at the weekend in a scuffle with some police personnel in Kano.



Mr. Musiliu Smith

From Jamilah Nuhu Musa, in Kano

The incident, which occurred in Kabuga Quarters in the ancient city, followed an attempt by the police to stop the Hisba members from burning alcoholic drinks being conveyed to Gwarzo in three trucks.

Speaking to pressmen on the issue, the chairman of Independent Committee for Sharia Implementation (ICS), Ustaz Abubakar Rabo, maintained that Hisba members were performing their role as mandated by the state government following its adoption of the Sharia legal system.

Ustaz Abubakar added, however, that only the con-

tents of such vehicles were supposed to be burnt and not the vehicles.

He disclosed that the three trucks, with their alcoholic consignments, are now in the custody of Hisba awaiting destruction.

The Hisba chairman alerted that there could be more of such scuffles in future "if the police continue to harass Hisba members who are also law enforcement agents as people might interpret police actions as anti-Sharia."

The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Kabiru Shehu (DSP), told newsmen that two of such vehicles were in police custody but claimed ignorance of injury to the Hisba members.

Lagos High Court of Justice at the weekend admitted former African Petroleum (AP) Managing Director, Alhaji Umar Abba Gana, to a N2 million bail from Ikoyi Prison where he was detained.

Her lordship, Justice Grace Onyeabo, also ordered Alhaji Abba Gana to provide two sureties in like sum and to deposit his

Ex-Unipetrol boss gets bail

From Bamgboye Adelanwa, in Lagos

international passport with the court.

Alhaji Umar Abba Gana (48), Mr. Bala Mohammed Borodo (48) and Mr. Andrien Ekhaitor Gbingie (45) were charged before a Tinubu Magistrate Court in Lagos with conspiracy

and stealing N70 million property of African Petroleum Plc.

The offence was said to have been committed in Lagos last year with one G. Ofotokun now at large.

Following their arraignment, the trial magistrate had ordered them to be remanded in prison custody.

Bagaji-Agada community protests merger with Keffi

The people of Bagaji-Agada district in Karu Local Government of Nasarawa State have protested the proposed merger of the district with Keffi local government area by the state's Boundary Adjustment Committee.

In a memo to the committee on boundary adjustment exercise set up by the state government, leaders of Bagaji-Agada urged the committee not to remove them from Karu local government council.

In the memo, signed by over 200 community leaders from Bagaji, Gora, Gunduma, Agada and Gidan Zakara and made available to *Daily Trust* yesterday, the community alleged that some influential people from Keffi Emirate Council sponsored the move to excise them from Karu and place them in Keffi, to promote their selfish expansionist ambition.

The committee, they said should "disregard any signature(s) made for and on behalf of Bagaji-Agada district supporting the move to merge us with Keffi as all

By Kevin Ebele Adinnu

were done out of mere ignorance and misdirection of purpose by our friends and relations from Keffi."

They, however, welcomed the proposed creation of Karshi local government area out of the present Karu local government area, adding that they want to be in the new local government rather than be merge to with Keffi.

"We therefore state categorically that we will want to be independent and to be identified with the proposed Karshi local government which we have all laboured and prayed for," the letter said.

It will be recalled that the Nasarawa State government had earlier set up a Committee on the creation of new local government councils in the state.

In one of the committee's sitting in Lafia, the Emirate Council of Keffi had requested that a boundary adjustment be carried out to include Bagaji-Agada and Keffi Shanu Betti districts in

the emirate council.

The chairman of the committee on local government creation dismissed the request, saying boundary adjustment was not part of its terms of reference.

Bagaji-Agada leaders said they, along with other communities in Karu local government area requested for the creation of Karshi or Uke local government which have been clamouring for.

However, the state government set up another committee on boundary adjustment, which Bagaji leaders interpret to be, targeted against them to actualise the demands of the Keffi Emirate Council.



Gov Abdullahi Adamu



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The Liaison Officer,
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Requests for application forms should be accompanied with the prescribed amount with applicants name and address boldly written at the back of Draft marked "PGDC".

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Completed application forms should be returned on or before January 13, 2002 to:

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P.M.B. 1004,
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Tel: 732272, 732306, 732300, 732304,

NEWS

Briefs Jos

A fertilizer blending factory with the capacity to produce about 60 metric tonnes of various brands of fertilizer was recently commissioned in Bokkos Local Government Area of Plateau State by President Olusegun Obasanjo. During the occasion, the president commended the state government for establishing the factory, saying, "it would help a great deal in complementing the efforts of the Federal Government in achieving food security."

Lagos

Seven Up Bottling Company Plc over the weekend bestowed long service awards on 253 of its staff nationwide. While those who have served the company for 25 years got N15,000.00 and 12 cartoons of company products each, those who have served for 20 years got N10,000 double door refrigerator, 10 crates of company's products each.

Those in the 15 years category, in addition to the certificate, received N7,500, 14 colour television sets, and 8 crates of company's products each and those who have put in 10 years of service received N5,000 cash, Radio Cassette players and six crates of company's products.

Kano

The Commissioner for Works, Housing and Transport, Engineer Mansur Ahmad, has been conferred with the fellow of the Nigerian Society of Engineers.

Minna

A new caretaker committee to run the affairs of the Agricultural and Allied Workers Union of Nigeria, Upper Niger River Basin Chapter, has been constituted. Its reconstitution took place recently in Minna at a congress meeting of the branch following a vote of no confidence passed on the former executive council which had overstayed their tenure in office.

Abeokuta

Christian leaders in Lagos State have warned of an impending bloodbath should government continue with what they called "its discriminatory demolishing of churches. The leaders under the aegis of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) gave the warning at the weekend during a protest march organised by the group to Alausa, the seat of Lagos State government.



Mr. Musiliu Smith

Bizman arraigned in court over forgery

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, in Lagos

A Lagos-based businessman, Chief Innocent Ekeiwu, has been arraigned before a Lagos Chief Magistrate Court for allegedly forging letter headed papers of the Senate.

The suspect was arrested following a tip-off by officials of the American

Embassy in Lagos. According to Prosecuting Police Officer (PPO), DSP Ukaobesi Eluwa, from Alagbon Close Force Criminal Investigation Department, (CID), the suspect on or about November 30, this year, in Lagos, was found in possession of letters written on the letter headed papers of Senate Committee on Financial Mat-

ters, dated November 15, 2001. Other incriminating documents found on the accused include Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) letter headed papers dated September 3, 2001, a Federal Ministry of Finance funds transfer letter.

The accused was also alleged to have allowed the use of his premises in printing all the said letters in an attempt to fraudulently obtain money from unsuspecting individuals. Contrary to section 509 of the criminal code vol. II cap 32 laws of Lagos State of Nigeria

able under section 467 of the criminal code."

When the charge was read out to the accused in English language, he pleaded not guilty. Before adjourning further hearing till January 28, 2002, Chief Magistrate Ayo Odugbesen released the accused on bail in the sum of N250,000 with one surety.

In a related development, 61-year-old Paul Ibadan, who allegedly attempted to collect N285,700 with a forged, leaflet of Omega Bank Plc No. 00583783, has been released on a bail of N.5m.

The suspect was nabbed at the premises of Omega Bank Plc., Engineering Close, Victoria Island, Lagos, on December 5, 2001 at about 4:00 p.m. He was alleged to have conspired with others now on the run, to steal the said amount.

According to police prosecutor, Albert Ebotha, the accused forged the cheque purporting same to have been genuinely issued by the bank. The accused pleaded not guilty and further hearing has been fixed for February 11, 2002

Board collects N200m from intending pilgrims

From Jamilah Nuhu Musa, in Kano

Over N200 million has been collected from more than 3,000 intending pilgrims in Kano for the year 2002.

The Executive Secretary of the Kano State Pilgrims Welfare Board, Alhaji Laminu Rabi, disclosed at the Tourist Camp at the weekend when he announced the 2002 hajj fares for Kano pilgrims.

The executive secretary stated that the over 6,000 seats allocated to Kano pilgrims were not enough and hence the board has applied for more seats.

He also disclosed that the board has appealed to the Federal Government to approve relief on both royalty and exchange rate for intending pilgrims

Alhaji Laminu said the appeal became necessary, as unlike previously intending pilgrims for year 2002 hajj will not benefit from any Federal Government relief. This, he stated, has made intending pilgrims to pay N38,000 more this year. While equally

appealing to the state government to give intending pilgrims some subsidy, the executive secretary urged depositors to endeavour to complete payment before the expiration of the dead-

line. In his own speech, the chairman of the occasion, Sheikh Karibullah Nasir Kabara, advised intending pilgrims to be law-abiding in the holy land, so as not to bring the name of Allah and the country into disrepute.

Christians seek redress in Sharia courts

From Kabir Dogon Daji, in Sokoto

Christians in Sokoto State have now resorted to seeking redress in Sharia courts instead of the conventional courts.

Speaking to *Daily Trust* in Sokoto at the weekend, in an exclusive interview, the Sharia court II judge, Mallam Bawa Buhari Tambuwal, disclosed that his court has received many petitions from Christians with cases against Muslims.

Throwing light on the development, the judge said "we don't discriminate. We deal with each case

brought before us according to its merits as stipulated in the Holy Qur'an, because we have the conviction that whatever we do the Almighty God would ask us in the hereafter." Mallam Bawa further maintained that his court would continue to "offer justice to whoever deserves it without fear or favour."

Revealing that the court, within the week received four applications from Christians, the Sharia judge said, various dates have been fixed for hearing.

Daily Trust learnt that two of the applications are from one Mr. Olugbenga Omolaja of West African Portland Cement, Ewekoro in Ogun State vs a Muslim faithful (names withheld) for criminal breach of trust and one Venisi Nelson of the Usman Danfodio University Sokoto VS Salisu Abdullahi and Aminu Bello for theft.

In another development, the Sharia Court II, presided over by Malam Bawa Buhari Tambuwal, last week ordered the council chairman of Dange Local Government, Sheikh Alhaji Abubakar Kakale Shuni, to immediately refund an undisclosed amount of money to Alhaji Abdullahi or face prosecution.



Gov Bafarawa

NEPA moves to recover N900m debt

From Terna Doki, in Makurdi

The National Electric Power Authority (NEPA), Makurdi district, has planned to recover the over N900 million owed the corporation by consumers in the district.

In a chat with *Daily Trust* in Makurdi, the Benue State capital, at the weekend, NEPA's Public Affairs Manager, Mr. Uche Oranye, said since the overhead disconnection of power supply to its debtors has not solved the problem, NEPA has decided to fall back to the old method of disconnecting directly from the transformers serving heavily indebted areas, pointing out that "reconnection will not be effected until every customer has paid to the last kobo."

On whether it is reasonable to punish every-

body as some people in the heavily indebted areas may have paid their bills, Mr. Oranye said "the authority has been pushed to the wall." According to him, NEPA has vainly tried every method of getting the involvement of consumers themselves through the consumers' forum.

In a related development, the Public Affairs Manager, has explain that the interrupted power supply being experienced in Makurdi district was as a result of load shedding and pleaded with customers to exercise patience as the problem would soon be solved.

NTA 2 CHANNEL 5
Victoria Island, Lagos
Your reachout station
PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

TIME	TUESDAY
6.00-6.30	Aerobics
6.30-7.00	Peri. The Globe/Cartoon
7.00-7.05	News
7.05-7.30	Reports
7.30-8.00	Traffic Watch
8.00-8.30	Humour on Ice
8.30-9.00	Fashion & Beauty
9.00-9.30	The Investigator
9.30-10.00	
10.00-10.10	
10.10-10.30	NBA Action
10.30-10.45	
10.45-11.00	
11.00-12.00	One on One
12.00-12.30	Out all Night
12.30-1.00	Sounds of Africa
1.00-1.30	Ships & Ports(sp) Live
1.30-2.00	You & the Constitution (N/R)
2.00-2.15	News of the Hour(N)
2.15-2.30	50 Minutes
2.30-3.00	Derrick
3.00-3.30	Derrick
3.30-4.00	News Update
4.00-4.30	Spiderman
4.30-5.00	Telefest Variety(N)
5.00-5.30	Cosmetic 1/2 Hour(sp)
5.30-6.00	Business Today(sp)
6.00-6.30	Speak Out(N)
6.30-7.00	News at Seven
7.00-7.30	Malaria Hotline(sp)
7.30-8.00	Izozo(N)
8.00-8.30	Fact File(N)
8.30-9.00	NetworkNews
9.00-10.00	Oge(B)
10.00-10.30	NTA
10.30-11.00	Tuesday Live
11.00-11.30	Newscape
11.30-12.00	Local Movies
12.00-12.30	Local Movies
12.30-1.00	Local Movies
1.00-1.30	NBA Action
1.30-2.00	
2.00-2.30	
2.30-3.00	Ramadan Diet
3.00-4.30	Live
4.30-5.00	
5.00-6.00	

INSIDE POLITICS

What are the projects you have influenced in your senatorial district?

Well, since we came into office two years ago; I tried to ensure that social projects which affect the lives of individuals in my constituency are provided, I represent Zamfara West senatorial district, which comprises Maradun, Bakura, Talata Mafara Gumi, Bukkuyum and Anka, and so far so good. We have been able to make sure that some major roads which cut across the state have been adequately rehabilitated. For instance, the road from Mayanchi to Anka and Daki Takudu is now under construction and about 75 per cent of it had been completed and the work had been done to our satisfaction.

Secondly, I tried to influence the Federal Ministry of Education, to put two additional Federal Government Colleges in my zone, and we now have one in Anka town. And in the year 2001 budget, I tried to compel the executive, and for that reason, there are quite a number of social projects to be executed in my constituency e.g water bore holes, rehabilitation of the famous Bakolori dam which is situated in Maradon local government, which is also the liveware of Maradun itself, Bakura and Talata Mafara people. Quite substantial amount of money to the tune of N250 million had been earmarked for the provision of bore holes and rehabilitation of the dam itself. Our hope is to convert the system from the sprinkler (which is technically complicated to our people to simple canals which require no mechanisation or repairs. If this is done, it will boost agricultural production in the state. Some work had already been completed. About 12 bore holes are going to be constructed or have already started being constructed in various locations. At least each of the local governments in my constituency will benefit from these boreholes. The rehabilitation of the Bakolori dam will also start, though it should be noted that we have some constraints, being from the opposition party we have to make efforts to bring federal projects to our constituency. However, despite all the obstacles, we have been able to get some in this zone.

We don't know if you can influence the federal government to bring water

Our debts are fraudulent - Senator Anka

Alhaji Yusha'u Mohammed Anka is a senator representing Zamfara West Senatorial District and Chairman, Senate Committee on Local and Foreign Debts. He spoke with our Zamfara State correspondent, Salisu Zakari Maradun, on some issues affecting the country politically and economically. Excerpts:

from Bakolori dam to Gusau town as it experiences water shortage

Well, this is a joint venture project between federal and state governments because of its enormous cost, the state government can't bear the burden. However, during the recent visit of Mr. President, he made a pledge that federal government would make substantial contribution towards extending water from Bakolori to Gusau town. So I believe early next year this project is likely to commence, and if it is completed, the present water shortage in Gusau town would be a thing of the past.

There has been a series of crises in Zamfara State which had led to the lose of lives and property, how can these crises be avoided in future

Well, in my own humble opinion, I think the major cause of these crises have to do with political intolerance. This had exposed the immaturity of our political body in the state. We still take politics as a game in which there has to be a winner and looser, and if by the grace of God one has emerged winner, it is always impossible to accept the will of God. If you do otherwise you are not only fighting that particular individual, but the Almighty God who put him on that seat. So, that was what the other party (PDP) did not seem to appreciate and I think unless they do that and accept the will of Allah they would continue to be in crisis. However, I know as much as you do, the federal government has set up a powerful committee, which is headed by the emir of Gwandu, which has been sitting for a quite along time, and I understand that they have completed their assignment and submitted their reports to the Federal Government. I have not seen the report, but I understand that they did a very thorough job, which if implemented, there would be peace, stability and tranquillity in the state. Zamfara people are known to be hardworking and a peaceful community

and it is trying to disunite the state and its people. I hope they will change their minds and accept the will of Allah

honest opinion, I can say Obasanjo's administration is a failure, it has not lived up to expectation of average



Anka and live peacefully with one another.

The work on Mayanchi - Anka-Daki-Takwas road which had since started and initiated by you had suddenly stopped, and we were made to understand that the contractor handling the project had started evacuating his equipment may we know what happened?

Ah, I am not aware of this, but they have some problems of getting their payment. You know the year is coming to an end, so there is one or two payments that they have not received. I think they should be patient since we are coming with a new budget. Provision has been made last year for the construction of this road and this year too, I believe a large sum of money has been provided to complete the job. So I will discuss with the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing to ensure that the payment is effected as soon as possible, so that the contractor can resume work at the site.

At what cost is the work?
Well, I am not very sure of the exact cost, but it is in the region of a billions.

What would be your comment on Obasanjo's administration. Would you say it had scored a pass mark?

Well, if you want my

Nigerians who elected us into office, they have high expectations of democracy dividends, but for two years now such dividends are nowhere in sight. The Obasanjo administration ought to sit up to ensure that it provides basic social amenities to the people of this country. The level of poverty is still high. Over 75 per cent of the people of this country are still living in abject poverty. Unemployment is visible everywhere in every state this problem is causing rampant crises here and there because people are looking for jobs, they have no money, no food and if they go to hospital there is no medicine and they have to be charged exorbitantly for drugs and medical facilities which they could not afford because they have no jobs through which they can get money and therefore have no income. Since the beginning of this administration, not a single foreign company came to Nigeria to invest, and ever the existing ones have since closed their business for one reason or the other. So there is the need for this government to look into these economic problems of our nation. The government seems to be giving too much to the World Bank and the IMF as if they are the ones that elected them into office. In my humble opinion, the interests of Nigerians should be the first priority of this

a lot of relief and benefits to average Nigerians.

May we know how the Abacha looted fund are being used, because Nigerians are yet to see or be informed about the fund?

Well, the funds have been partly utilised in the 2001 budget, but the executive are not forthcoming to tell us the exact amount that have so far been recovered, both internally and externally. We are still pressing for them to do so. Mind you my committee is not responsible for recovering the said looted funds. The federal government thought if their prerogative to go about recovering these funds but proper account of it has never been released to the National Assembly.

Would you comment on the current controversial local government elections?

Well, it is very unfortunate that we find ourselves in this electoral bill crisis. As a senator and a stakeholder in this administration I would not like anything that will endanger our democracy. The advise I want to give to my colleagues is that there are now two schools of thought, i.e. the governors and the National Assembly. The 1999 constitution gave each of these arms of government some jurisdiction with regard to the electoral bill. The governors on one hand have jurisdiction to determine the tenure of office of local government chairmen, and on the other hand, the National Assembly has been vested with the power to determine when the election is going to take place.

So you can see each one has strong arguments. So my advised and appeal to my colleagues is just to have dialogue so that this issue can amicably be resolved, because the way I see it is that if we continue with this crisis, we are inviting the military to come back. Right now the labour union is saying that if the governors conduct elections next year, they would boycott and destroy the election, if you have been in Nigeria these are the types of symptoms that invite the military. So, in my humble opinion we should do all within our powers to have dialogue and compromise here and there so that this issue can be resolved maturely, because it is not anybody's hope or interest to bring the military back into power in this country.

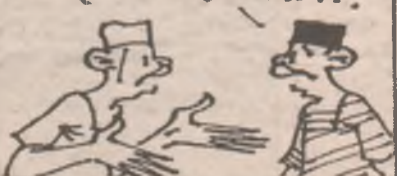
RIGHT WAY

Sponsored by TMG/UNEAD Nigeria Project

IF THE PEOPLE OF GRA GRA VILLAGE REFUSE TO VACATE OUR LAND, LET'S ATTACK THEM!



VIOLENCE DOESN'T PAY CHIEF... LET'S SETTLE THE MATTER THROUGH DIALOGUE.



REMEMBER, THIS OUR TOWN IS SO BLESSED. IT'S A LAND FLOWING WITH MILK AND HONEY.



WE SHOULDN'T TURN IT INTO A LAND FLOWING WITH BLOOD AND SKELETONS!



A Well Deserved Honour to a Worthy Friend



Today, your hard work, Dedication, Perseverance and Exemplary Service to a Great Nation is being accorded a worthy honour as President, Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR bestows on you the prestigious award of "Officer of the Order of the Niger, OON".

May this historic award bring you more joy, greater success and achievements for the rest of your life.

Please accept our congratulations.

"Committee of Friends, Maiduguri"

Shettima Mohammed Bulama, MBA, FCA, FCCA, FCIB, FNIM, OON

This space is for sale



Edited by Kevin Ebele Adinnu

Water shortage in Abuja

Ministry absolves self

By Tashikalmah Hallah

As satellite towns in Abuja groan under the continuous water shortages, the Federal Ministry of Water Resources has absolved itself of any blame.

Minister of Water Resources, Alhaji Muktari Shehu Shagari, in an interview with *Abuja Trust* last week, explained that his ministry was not responsible for the provision of portable water to the FCT.

Shagari said the attention of his ministry had been drawn to the expectation that it was its responsibility to distribute water to the neighbourhood.

He explained that the ministry's mandate was to provide "raw water" to the FCT and other states while it is the responsibility of the states to distribute to the people.

"The issue of water problem in the FCT, you have to understand that it is not the duty of Federal Ministry of Water Resources to treat water, and also provide pipes and so on and for forth," he said.

"To have good water in the FCT, it is the responsibility of the ministry of the FCT. What we are

doing as a ministry is to make raw water available, and that is why we are constructing the N43 billion Gurara Dam, which will transfer water from a distance of 75 km to Usuma Dam," he added.

The minister explained that Gurara Water Treatment project, being undertaken by an Italian construction Company SALINI, would be completed by the year 2003, when it is expected to serve the FCT and its environs with uninterrupted "water

AMAC chairman flays proliferation of driving schools

The chairman of the Abuja Municipal Area Council, Mrs. Esther Audu has called on the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) to take over the training of drivers in the FCT following the proliferation of driving schools in the city.

The chairman who was addressing the sector commander of the FRSC, Mr. Aliyu Danjuma Gambo on a courtesy call to her office, to commiserate with the council on the fire outbreak that gutted the new Wuse market, expressed discomfort at

supply for the next 50 years."

He explained that the project would provide an irrigation scheme; hydro-electric project and for fishing, adding, "it's a multi-purpose dam, it can also be used for tourism development."

Alhaji Shagari, however, explained that he is disturbed by the level of water shortage in the FCT, and had consulted the president who in turn called all the stakeholders for the optimum provision of solution.

By Ikenna Emeka Okpani

crowding of road junctions by hawkers and beggars who disrupt traffic.

Mrs Audu attributed the spate of accidents in the metropolis to reckless driving warning against the use of cell phones while on the steering.

According to her, the number of deaths due to accidents on FCT road this year was alarming, calling on the FRSC to do something about it.

The sector commander, earlier in his speech, had told

President Obasanjo has commended the chairman of Abaji Area Council, Hon. Hassan Sokodobo over what he described as his people-oriented projects.

The president made this remark during his recent tour of the Federal Capital Territory. He expressed satisfaction with the water and rural electrification projects and the cottage industry embarked upon by the Area Council.

Said the president: "I am impressed with the kind of projects you have embarked upon in the Area Council. I am particularly happy with the Town Hall which you

Obasanjo commends Abaji Council chairman

By Yakubu Ozohu-Suleiman

said was constructed on popular demand with a meagre amount of N18 million."

The president who was impressed by the council's effort further asked the FCT Minister, Engr. Muhammed Abba-Gana on whether or not his ministry contributed financially to the Town Hall project.

In his response, the minister however replied that his ministry did not

contribute to the funding of the Town Hall project saying, "The project was conceived and executed by the Area Council."

The president commissioned the Town Hall and some other projects within the Area Council.



President Obasanjo.

NASARAWA STATE WATER BOARD COMMERCIALIZATION OF SERVICES

The Nasarawa State Water Board intends to commercialize some aspects of its operations with a view to bring about overall service improvement at optimal operational costs.

2. Accordingly, applications are invited from interested private operators to engage in Bill devliery and revenue collection on behalf of the Board in Keffi, Akwanga and Lafia on pilot basis.

3. Such operators shall submit pre-qualification documents indicating the following:

- a) Corporate Names and address in full
- b) Year of incorporation
- c) Experience in handling similar jobs, with dates. Particular experience with water agencies will be an added advantage
- d) Names and qualification of staff of the organisation which will be deployed to the project.

Interested operators may also contact the Board for further briefing to enable them develop and submit a detailed programme of action that will meet the stated objective.

4. 3 bound copies of the pre-qualification data should be submitted along with the application in a sealed envelop marked, 'PSP' at the top. The submission should be addressed to General Manager, Nasarawa State Water Board, P.M.B. 015, Lafia, Nasarawa State.

5. A non-refundable fee of N10,000.00 should accompany each application.

6. All submissions should reach the above address, on or before 28th January, 2002.

Signed
D.A. ABISABO
AG. GENERAL MANAGER



Pupils of Delight International Nursery Primary School, Piwoyi, with their Head Teacher, Mallam Hamed Jubril during the school's awareness march on education around Piwoyi village, located off Airport Road, Abuja last week. It is the only nursery school in Piwoyi.

Abuja Trust

Features

Ozubulu sons in Abuja bid year farewell

Every December, various community associations in the Federal Capital Territory mark the end of the year with colourful social activities. Kevin Ebele Adinnu of Abuja Trust participated in one of such celebrations and reports.

The dying days of any year never go unheralded in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). For this purpose, folks in Abuja, as elsewhere, even as they swim in the stream of hardship, manufacture events to happily bid the year farewell and pump up hopes for the coming year.

For those who can afford it, five star hotels provided veritable venues of memorable enjoyment. The funfair in such places provide opportunities for people to clink glasses, make new friends and meet old ones, showcase their latest cars, and nibble at choice dishes.

Merriment, like water, is everybody's commodity. Since the beginning of this month, all the satellite towns in the Federal Capital Territory have been agog with unprecedented traffic of men and vehicle every Sunday.

Most of these people are guests or members of uncountable community associations that also decided to end the year in their own style, unperturbed by the mythical dividends of democracy.

Penultimate Sunday, the usually 15-minute drive to Karmo took yours sincerely about two hours – half driven, half trekked – to honour an end of year celebration of a community association based in Abuja here. Even, a high profile guest had to abandon his car and his driver to grace the end of year celebration of Ozubulu Youths Club (OYC), an assembly of young men from Ozubulu in Anambra State.

The melange of music, mainly traditional and the *joie de vivre* that suffused the visage of the members who meet only once in every month to contribute to development projects back home more than made up for the hurly burly on the road.

The day's programme started with a well-attended visit to Victory Motherless Babies Home, Idu, where the association presented a bag of

rice to the home as their contribution to its upkeep.

The Chairman of the youth's organisation, Mr. Anthony Chukwuneka (Amuluonyenaego), while presenting the gift on behalf of the members informed the home that it was the tradition of the organisation to always share its happiness with other people especially the motherless and fatherless in our society.

In her reply, the nurse in charge, Mrs. Paulina Okoronkwo, thanked the youths and urged other associations in the territory to emulate this gesture as the home is run from such philanthropy.

The home, Abuja Trust gathered, hosts 37 motherless babies presently.

Back to the venue, an open air shaded with canopies, music rent the air. Those who could dance pounded the ground sending dust skywards as though bearing messages of thank you to God.

Amidst eating and drinking, the chairman of the organisation, Mr. Chukwuneka reeled out the achievements of the OYC to include contribution of resources towards the rehabilitation of roads, back home in Ozubulu, promotion of cultural activities in the village, and formation of OYC Football Club, that now participate in the annual football competitions in the village every December among other things.

He called on the patrons of the club – distinguished sons of Ozubulu – Chief Innocent Anumba, Chief Raphael Uzochukwu and Chief Emeka Ukachukwu (Ukawood) – not to waver in their support of the organisation towards achieving their other targets which include influencing the citing of federal, state and local government infrastructure like industries, power supply, water supply, communication system, health centre and financial institutions in their home town, Ozubulu.

“Though we have independently acquired some

property like chairs, canopies and tables and have kept the unity and love amongst us, we still need to seek the support and advice of our elders,” he added.

The wining and dining continued punctuated with

performances of various dancing groups that added colour to the celebration.

Suddenly, darkness descended and enveloped the place and it was time to meander through the ceaseless traffic jam homeward bound.



Ozubulu sons at the motherless babies home in Idu.



Dinning and winning at the venue of the celebration in Karmo.

The day's programme started with a well-attended visit to Victory Motherless Babies Home, Idu, where the association presented a bag of rice to the home as their contribution to its upkeep.



**KEANA LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL
NASARAWA STATE**

**CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE TO THE OSANA OF KEANA,
OSANA OTAKI AGBO II, ON THE OCCASION OF
CONFERNMENT WITH THE NIGERIAN NATIONAL HONOUR
OF THE ORDER OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC, (OFR)**



OSANA OTAKI AGBO II (OFR)

On behalf of the entire sons and daughters of Keana Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, I most heartily congratulates His Royal Highness, the Osana of Keana, Osana Otaki Agbo II, on the momentous occasion of your conferment with the Nigerian National Honour of the **Officer of the Order of the Federal Republic, OFR** by Mr. President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR on December, 18th 2001 at Abuja.

Abaga-Edu, we deeply rejoice with Your Royal Highness on this Noble achievement which is an honour to the entire State.

I wish to seize this opportunity to register our profound appreciation to the President and Commander-In-Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo (GCFR) for the great honour accorded our Royal Father. Our gratitude also goes to His Excellency, the First Executive Governor of Nasarawa State, Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu (*Sarkin Yakin Keffi & Keana*)

May God bless you all abundantly.

SIGNED

JIBRIL SABO KEANA (WAKILIN KEANA)
*Chairman, Keana Local Government,
Nasarawa State.*

*LONG LIVE THE OSANA OF KEANA!
LONG LIVE KEANA LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL!!
LONG LIVE NASARAWA STATE!!!
LONG LIVE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA!!!!*

A great nation honours
a great man!



Alhaji Muhammad Imam Yahaya (OFR)
Chairman/Chief Executive, NUB International Bank Ltd.

We rejoice with you as the government of Nigeria confers on you the National Honours Award of Officer of the Federal Republic (OFR).

May the future bring more success and honour your way.

Congratulations

I Alh. M. D. Zurmi & Family



Briefs

Rules to get that 'slim-line'

Eat three small meals daily

It is important to mention that many who are overweight feel that if they reduce their meals to one or two a day, they may lose weight. It is a proven fact that you can easily in one meal of high calorie foods, take in as much as 1,000 calories without feeling over-stuffed. It is a very important thing then, to reduce the size of the meals to some degree; for even if you eat some bulky foods, such as low calorie green vegetables and thereby keep the volume intake up, you still need to reduce the sizes of the stomach itself. Really shrink the stomach so that you can be satisfied with less than you are used to. Drink water between meals and not at meals.

Never take a big meal

The second rule follows the first inevitably. If you have lost weight over a week or two, you must never allow yourself to feel that you now deserve a reward, and so be tempted to eat a big high calorie meal with a lot of sweets, fats, starch, tasty gravy or spiced sauce. If you do, the whole system will feel so satisfied with that big meal it will want to have another one the next day also. It will be very difficult to cut down the craving for still another hearty meal. Try hard to form the habit of eating only regular small meals, and after three or four days the stomach will not crave for big meals and you will find the hunger has disappeared.

Have plenty of vitamins

Following this rule will help you to keep up the volume of your food intake, for it will mean eating plenty of vegetables (especially green leaves and roots) also fresh fruit salads (avoid dried fruits and highly sweet fruit such as grapes, or starchy fruits such as Bananas choose such fruits as citrus fruits, apples, pears, plums and berries.

In high calorie concentrated food we often get insignificant amounts of vitamins and minerals. Maybe our extra appetite is created by refined canned foods and concentrates like sugar, fats, white flour, sweets and cakes. These have a high calorie count, but they are called empty calories because they don't contain a corresponding value in vitamins and minerals.

Chew your food thoroughly

If you choose to eat some raw fruits and vegetables, you have to chew them well. It is a good idea to eat them as a dish, for in chewing you use up a lot of saliva from the glands of the mouth; you also get tired from masticating and soon feel you have had enough. The intake of calories, however, is still very low. Try therefore, to eat food that needs chewing, such as crispbread or crackers, raw fruits and vegetables, baked potatoes in their skins, bran, etc. Masticate slowly and thoroughly so that you get tired of eating before you have consumed too much.

Never eat between meals

This seems to be a very difficult one because it is very easy to find an excuse to take a glass of milk, an apple or a piece of toast with coffee, (cream and sugar too, if you should like it), but these snacks are really dangerous as you can easily take 200 or 300 calories without realising it. If you cannot get your meal at the regular time (which is important) the only thing you should allow yourself to take is a glass of fruit juice. This will carry you over to the next meal.

Please stay away from preparing menus, talking about, mulling, and looking at food, because it is very easy to fall into temptation if you have anything to do with it. For a housewife this seems nearly impossible. If at all possible, the one who needs reducing should be released from preparing meals for the whole family. Such a person should not be in the profession of food preparation, because overweight is really a professional illness in many cases.

Culled from a Guide to Family Health

3 million Nigerians live with diabetes

By Ikenna Emeka Okpani

An estimated 3 million Nigerians are now living with diabetes as a result of their lifestyle and nutrition.

In a press briefing to mark this year's World Diabetes Day held in Abuja last week, the Minister of Health, Prof. Alphonsus Nwosu, warned Nigerians to be mindful of the increasing prevalence of the disease.

"The World Health Organisation has warned that it is fast becoming a pandemic - i.e an epidemic of global proportions. It is estimated that over 150 million people in the world today suffer from diabetes and that by the year 2025, this figure would have risen to 300 million.

Here in Nigeria, the number of cases of diabetes has increased from 0.5 million in the 1970's to the present 3

million," he said.

Prof. Nwosu pointed out that the trend was unfortunate when considered along with the fact that we are still growing under the yoke of



Prof ABC Nwosu, Min. of Health

infectious diseases such as malaria, cholera, typhoid and HIV/AIDS.

The minister stated that people who have diabetes could easily be attacked by cardiovascular diseases like heart attack, stroke and gangrene of the lower limbs.

Such cardiovascular diseases, Prof. Nwosu observed are already the commonest cause of death in industrialised countries both among diabetics and in the general population.

On the effort being made by government to solve the problem of scarcity and high cost of drugs, the minister stated that his ministry was currently looking into means of making them more accessible and affordable.

In her contribution at the occasion, the Director of Public Health in the Ministry

Dr. (Mrs) Edugue Abebe, said the Diabetic Association of Nigeria is establishing drug shops where original drugs will be sold to Diabetics patients.

This, she said was to forestall the sale of fake Insulin to patients which often led to their untimely death.

She affirmed that some of the fake drugs destroyed in Lagos by the Minister included fake Insulin.

According to her, it costs about N4,000 naira to manage diabetes in a month. She stated that the high cost of Insulin was as a result of its treatment as a glassware during importation.

The World Diabetes Day is set aside for educating the general public about the causes, symptoms, signs, treatment and prevention of the disease.

Menstrual cycle affects chest pain

By Merrit McKinney

In women who have not begun menopause, fluctuations in estrogen levels during the menstrual cycle may affect heart-related chest pain, according to the results of a small study.

In a group of premenopausal women with a type of chest pain called variant angina, chest pain occurred less frequently when levels of estrogen were highest, Japanese researchers report.

Although coronary artery disease is the number-one killer of both men and women, it gets a later start in women, striking an average of at least 10 years later than in men. And though the first sign of trouble in men is often a heart attack, women are more likely to first develop angina.

Since women's cardiovascular risk begins to climb after menopause, when estrogen levels plummet, the hormone has been thought to play a protective role.

Study findings published in the December 4th issue of the journal *Annals of Internal Medicine* seem to support that idea.

In the study, Dr. Hiroaki Kawano, of Kumamoto University, and colleagues followed 10 premenopausal women with variant angina. Angina is often precipitated by physical exertion, but variant angina occurs when a person is at rest, and is caused by spasms that narrow heart arteries, and impede blood flow to the heart.

Over the course of each woman's menstrual cycle, the researchers kept track of levels of estrogen and other hormones. They also tested the women's blood vessels by measuring how well the brachial artery in the arm widened in response to increased blood flow.

Episodes of chest pain were most frequent at the time of menstruation, when estrogen levels were lowest and blood vessels were least

responsive. Chest pain occurred least often around

the time of ovulation, when estrogen levels and blood-vessel responsiveness peaked. Since estrogen is known to

relax smooth muscle, it is possible that the hormone has a similar effect on the lining of blood vessels, making them more responsive to increased blood flow, according to the researchers.

New light on sterilisation technology

By Albert Evans

ULTRAVIOLET light at a particular frequency kills bacteria and is widely used in sterilisation processes, particularly those associated with air, water and food products.

And a new ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system devised by JenAct, a United Kingdom company, recently won an award at the Innovations 2000 competition held in southern England.

JanAct's enterprising technology is based on microwaves that energise a UV-light-emitting electrode-less bulb which can function as low, medium or high-pressure bulbs.

The absence of electrodes extends the bulb's life indefinitely and frees designers from the restrictions imposed on them when constructing conventional bulbs.

JenAct's business development manager Ray Stansfield is pictured testing the prototype factory air duct

embodying the technology.

The novel disinfection system meets the practical implications and the exacting specifications demanded by European directives-Limiting levels of air pollution in factories and office blocks-with efficiency and low cost.

The technology offers low-pressure wavelengths at about 10 times the power of conventional systems. By controlling power and volume, JenAct can produce similar UV outputs to low-pressure lamps (high in germicidal UV) from microwave-powered lamps, running at powers of up to 800 watts.

Conventionally, UV light is generated with germicidal bulbs, that are very similar to strip lights in appearance, or with higher power bulbs using electrodes. The fluorescent-tube approach is reasonable efficient in germicidal UV (about 30 per

cent) but can only operate at low power, typically 50 to 70 watts.

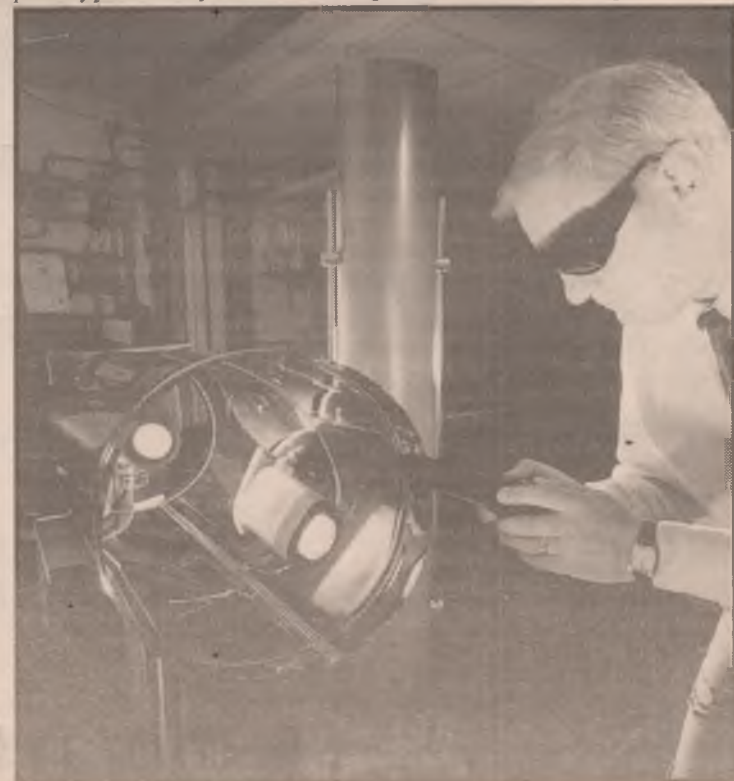
Arc lamps operate at high power (more than 1,000 watts) but also at higher internal pressures, resulting in the generation of heat and a drop in germicidal UV to about five to seven per cent.

These bulbs nearly always have to be cylindrical in shape and have to allow clear passage between their electrodes. Consideration has to be made of the effect of the internal plasma materials on the internal electrodes. Electrodes break down over the life of a bulb and cause UV output to fail.

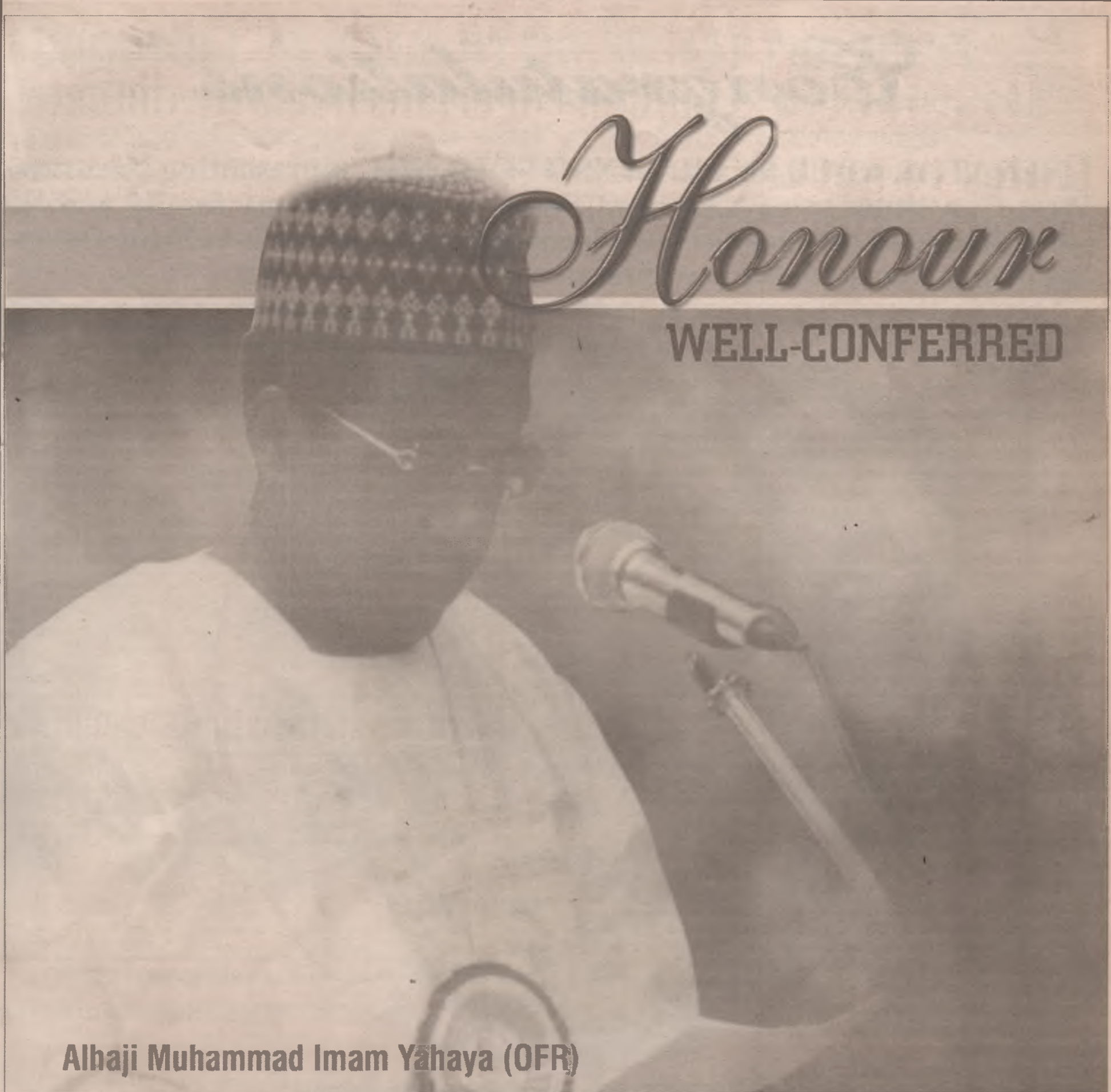
JenAct, based in southern England, is working with nearby University of Southampton to further the development of the new UV sterilisation technology. It has also financed a project at the university to investigate bulb-fill possibilities and output characteristics with a variety of fill elements.

It has devised a process by which bulbs can be energised by microwaves outside a conventional microwave oven, enabling online application. The Hg plasma emission spectrum is high in germicidal UV (254nm). In tests, five-log bacterial resolution of levels of common germs has been achieved in three seconds.

JenAct's product won second prize at Innovations 2000, an annual UK showcase for individual inventors and businesses that have developed ideas and products from the high-tech industrial category to low-tech domestic. The winners shared the 40,000 pounds sterling prize and many entrants discovered that the event was a springboard to commercial success.



A scientist works in a laboratory using Ultra-Violet light



Honour

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Alhaji Muhammad Imam Yahaya (OFR)

The Board, Management and Staff of **NUB International Bank Ltd.** congratulate our indefatigable Chairman/Chief Executive on the conferment on him of the National

Honours Award of Officer of the Federal Republic (OFR) by the government of Nigeria.

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Wishing you greater achievements in the future.



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BRANCHES NATIONWIDE

Congratulations

I, SENATOR ABUBAKAR DANSO SODANGI, representing Nasarawa West Constituency of Nasarawa State, on behalf of my family and the good people of my constituency heartily CONGRATULATE the following proud sons of Nasarawa State:



Distinguished Senator Abubakar Danso Sodangi
Nasarawa West Constituency, Nasarawa State

1. Group Captain Usman Jibrin (Rtd.) (CON)
2. Alhaji H. Z. Akwanga (OON)
3. Alhaji Hassan Ahmed (MFR)

on the conferment and their investiture with National honours by the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obsanjo (GCFR).

Your being honoured is no doubt in recognition of your contributions to the development of our young State in particular and our nation in general, which by extension is an honour to all sons and daughters of Nasarawa State.

I pray Almighty Allah will continue to guide and protect you for many more years of dedicated service to our people.

SANNUN KU MAZAN KWARAI!!!

SENATOR ABUBAKAR DANSO SODANGI

Chairman, Senate Committee on FCT.

Dan Malikin Nasarawa and Jarma Lere.

CONGRATULATIONS



AMBASSADOR HASSAN ADAMU *Wakili Adamawa*
CON, D.Sc., D Litt., LL.D, DBA

The Management and Staff of **Nigerian Industrial Complex Amalgamation (NICA)** congratulate and felicitate with **Ambassador Hassan Adamu, Wakili Adamawa**, on his conferment with the national honour of the **Commander of the Order of Niger (CON)** by the Federal Government of Nigeria.

May Almighty Allah continue to bless you in your pursuits.

NIGERIAN INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX AMALGAMATION
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WHO THE CAP FITS ...



AMBASSADOR HASSAN ADAMU, CON
D.Sc., D Litt., LL.D, DBA
Wakili Adamawa

The Board, Management and Staff of **AREWA YEAST MANUFACTURING COMPANY LTD** heartily congratulate and felicitate with **Ambassador Hassan Adamu, Wakili Adamawa** on his conferment with the National Honour of **Commander of the Order of the Niger (CON)** by the Federal Government of Nigeria.

This honour is a true acknowledgement of your invaluable contributions to the cause of the nation and humanity in general.

May Almighty Allah continue to guide and guard you in your selfless contributions to mankind.

SIGNED:
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A WELL-DESERVED HONOUR



AMBASSADOR DR. HASSAN ADAMU,
Wakili Adamawa
CON, D.Sc., D Litt., LL.D, DBA



ALHAJI ABDUL-RAHMAN SHUAIBU
Talban Mubi

On behalf of my family, I wish to congratulate **Ambassador Hassan Adamu, Wakili Adamawa** on his conferment with the National Honour of **Commander of the Order of the Niger (CON)** by the Federal Government. *I wish you many more years of fruitful service to the nation and the generality of mankind.*

ALHAJI ABDUL-RAHMAN SHUAIBU
Talban Mubi.

FELICITATION



AMBASSADOR DR. HASSAN ADAMU, *Wakili Adamawa*
CON., D.Sc., D Litt., LL.D, DBA

The Management and the entire Staff of **BAGALE MOTELS LTD.**, heartily felicitate with **Ambassador Hassan Adamu, Wakili Adamawa** on his conferment with the national honour of the **Commander of the Order of the Niger (CON)** by the Federal Government.

This honour is indeed a true reflection of your distinguished contributions to the nation and the human race.

May Almighty Allah continue to protect you as you move from honour to honour.

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Jimeta-Yola,
Adamawa State.



SPORTS



Valencia's Argentine player Fabian Ayala (left) dives with Deportivo de la Coruna's Juan Carlos Valeron during a Spanish league soccer match in La Coruna. Deportivo won the match 1-0.

Onigbinde, Ojugbana sweat for S-G post

By Patrick Andrew

Former Trinidad and Tobago chief sweat merchant, Chief Festins Onigbinde and HOD, proleague, Charles Ojugbana, are the front runners for the plumb job of the NFA Secretary-General.

The duo, along with six others, are to converge in Abuja today to convince a panel constituted by the Sports Ministry of their individual competence and suitability for the job of NFA scribe.

Though Sport Minister, Ishaya Mark Aku, is said to be favourably disposed to one of the candidates, Alhaji Aliu Musa, the ministry has nonetheless gone ahead to organise the interview to fill vacancies created sequel to the radical personnel and administrative reorganisation of the NFA.

Team manager of Julius Berger and former national team player, Taiwo Ogunjobi, Babangida Tukur and the Pla-

teau State Director of Sports will also sweat it out before the panel.

Acting NFA scribe, Mr. Patick Okpomo had denied the rumour making the round that government was favourably disposed to the FCT Assistant Director, Alim Musa, who headed the marketing committee of Nigeria '99.

Chief Onigbinde, who led the Super Eagles to silver in the Nations Cup in 1984 and Ojugbana whose administrative competence were attested to by their performances in Trinidad and Tobago and as head of proleague and international departments parade records that would be hard to discard.

Going by Aku's declaration that the best would be considered for the job, the candidates irrespective of their swelling records would have to demonstrate more than expressive competence

and documented proposals to tilt reasonable favour to themselves.

Mr. Okpomo was even quoted as saying that that government would call for another round of interviews should today's exercise failed to produce a credible candidate for the job.

Besides, the SG job, other positions including the technical director, marketing, PRO, female and national competitions one also up for grab.

Coach Kashimawo Laloko who was the last but

two head of the technical department would join five others to seek a return to the job.

In all, 36 candidates are to attend the written and oral interview that would usher in a new set of leadership of the NFA secretariat.

Tijani Ahmed Yusuf was eased out as the NFA scribe squelched to alleged administrative ineptitude and government's decision to make the NFA more private sector focus and financially independent.

Anyim Cup to be held annually

The Senate President's Cup tournament will be sustained as an annual grassroots soccer fiesta, the donor, Chief Anyim Pius Anyim, has assured.

The Senate President gave the assurance when he presented the trophy to Enugu State which defeated Niger State 1-0 in the final decided at the Old Parade

Ground, Abuja, last Sunday.

Chief Anyim, who was highly elated with the hype the tournament generated throughout the federation, observed that the grassroots fiesta justified the belief that sports was a unifying force in the country.

The Senate President expressed satisfaction with the response of youths to the tournament, noting that he was fulfilled by the accomplishment of his tournament and, therefore, would endeavour to sustain the fiesta as an annual event.

Chief Anyim, who called on youths to eschew all forms of social vices but embark on worthwhile ventures especially those that would engender national unity, said whatever amount and efforts invested in the tournament was justified.

The senate president cup final which was watched by several Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) members was highly contested with both team being balance in all departments.

However, the Niger State squad had shown slight edge in the offensive with sporadic move that caused anxiety in the defence quartet of their opponents. But the later regrouped, refashioned their engine room thereby overwhelming the Nigerite midway into the first half.

Consequently, the Enugu

Athens behind schedule

Organisers of the 2004 Athens Olympics are due to unveil their mascot for the Summer Games next month.

Athens, the traditional home of the Olympics, are still late for their important dates. The Greeks dragged their feet in setting up their organisation in the first few years after winning the right to stage the Games in an IOC vote in 1997.

Denis Oswald, the IOC's Chief Coordinator for the Games, said Athens was still racing against time to get ready to stage the Games after a meeting with Chief Organiser, Gianna Angelopoulus at Olympic headquarters last week.

"The delays that have been accumulated (at the start) are still existing," Oswald said. "It is going to be race against the clock until the end."

Oswald remains confident that Athens can reach their goal and the IOC said last month that they were pleased with progress in recent months.

Last year the IOC showed the Greeks a yellow card and said the Games could be in danger if they failed to improve their organisation.

There was even speculation that the event could be taken away from Greece although it was extremely unlikely that the IOC would take that dramatic step.

Athens has made huge progress since but the IOC is still concerned with some much-delayed projects and worried about deadlines being met. Oswald visited the Greek capital last month to inspect construction, venue and transports preparations.

The former international rower, who heads the body representing all Super Olympic federations, said he was happy to see building taking place at the Olympic village.

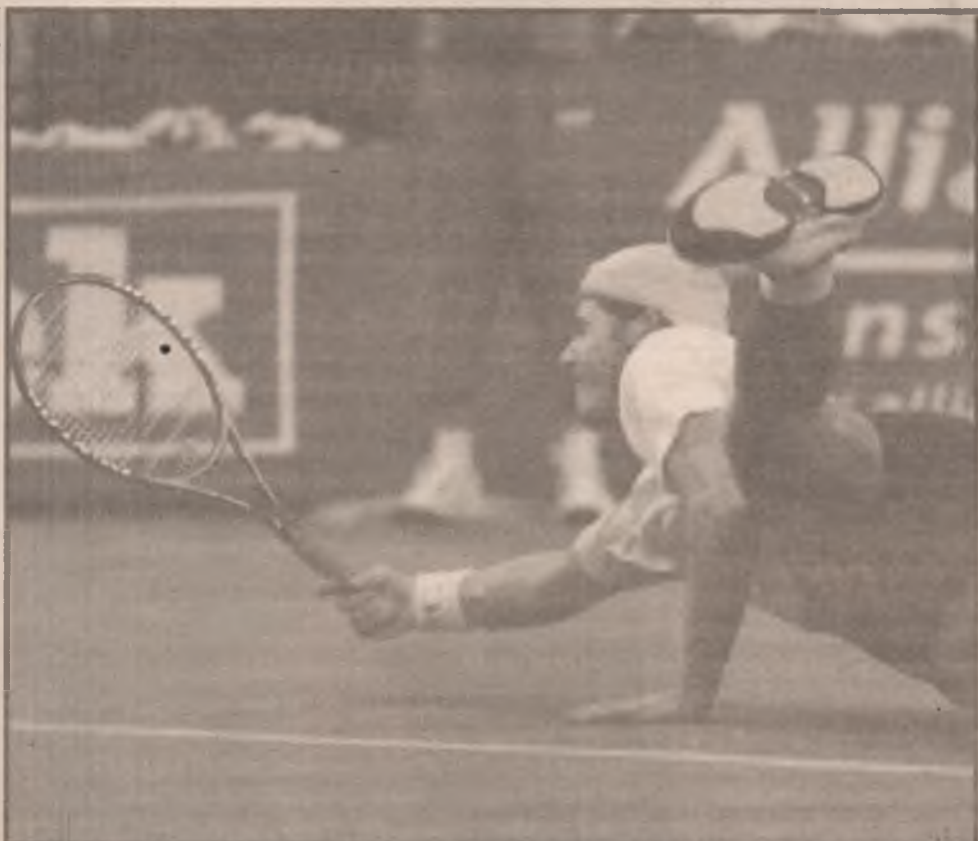
But he said there was still problems to be solved in the key area of accommodation.

Angelopoulos is well aware that the Greeks have to keep up to their schedule. She talks often about the Athens trains being "back on track" but needing to "keep up the speed."

She said in an IOC statement issued on Tuesday: "Keeping in mind that we do not have a single day to waste, all so us involved in the Olympic preparation must further accelerate our efforts," he said.

UEFA Fourth round fixtures

AC Milan	Vs	Road JC Kerbrade
Lille	Vs	Borussia Dortmund
Valencia	Vs	Servette
PSV Eindhoven	Vs	Leeds Utd
Olympique Lyon	Vs	Slovan Liberec
Hapoel Tel-Aviv	Vs	Parma
Inter Milan	Vs	AEK Athens
Rangers	Vs	Feyenoord



German Tommy Haas dives for the ball in the final of the Tennis Masters Series tournament in the Hanns Martin Schleyer indoor arena in Stuttgart, southern Germany. Haas defeated May Mirnyi of Belarus 6-2, 6-2.

lads who relied on the fast breaks from the right wing and a strong midfield build-up, compelled their Niger State opponent to recoil into their shelf.

With the sustained pressure, the Enugu boys took the lead in the 44th minute when Kyrian Chukwu blasted home a beautiful lop in one of the several goal mouth scrabbles.

On resumption of the second half, Niger State took the battle to their opponents but tried as they did, they failed to break the defence wall created by Udeh Magnus, Umunna Precious, Nwalusi Bosa and tight engine room that makes mince meat of Adamu Sunday's yeoman effort to level up for them.

It remained a ding-dong



Chief Anyim

Figo is world best

Real Madrid's Luis Figo has been named FIFA 2001 World Player of the Year.

Figo, the 2000 European Footballer of the Year, fended off competition from Manchester United's David Beckham and Real team-mate, Raul, to win the award.

Portuguese midfielder Figo has enjoyed an outstanding year for both club and country.

He scored three goals in Real's first four games in the Champions League and helped Portugal remain unbeaten as they qualified for the 2002 World Cup.

Figo said: "It is a privilege to receive this award.

"I am lucky to win today. "And I would like to thank my team-mates for helping me achieve this," he said.

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TUESDAY COLUMN

Man of the Year

By Ujudud Shariff

EDITORIAL

Redress the anomalies in the 2002 budget

The N780 billion Year 2002 budget presented to the National Assembly by President Olusegun Obasanjo early last month was aimed at alleviating poverty by fostering the opportunities for job creation; achieving high economic growth rate through better mobilisation and prudent use of economic resources; building a strong economy by encouraging private sector participation through economic reform programmes, and ensuring good governance by transforming development administration into a service and result-oriented system.

Ironically, however, the Federal Government's prioritisation of programmes through sectoral allocation of funds contradict some of its broad policy objectives. It is unimaginable how the government can eradicate poverty by allocating a pittance of N3.87 billion to the agricultural sector which employs over 70 percent of the entire nation's labour force, and contributes the most to the country's Gross National Product (GNP).

Apparently in response to the persistent public outcries against this lopsidedness, or, perhaps through an afterthought, the president announced on Tuesday, December 11, 2001 that the government will increase budgetary allocations to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to enable it tackle the rising trend of poverty, especially in the rural areas.

The fact still remains that it was a careless oversight on the part of the government to downplay such an important sector even when it is devoting huge sums to some sectors that could easily be wished away without much harm.

For instance, the defence sector alone will gulp about N50 billion from the proposals; while the government is committing N15 billion to sports, N10 billion to the controversial national identity card project and N13.59 billion to internal affairs programmes. This, at the expense of sectors almost as important as agriculture such as education (N17.7 billion); health (N4.9 billion); solid minerals development (N2.7 billion); and science and technology (N3.7 billion).

These are a far cry from what obtained previously. Last year for example, a single parastatal of the Ministry of Education, the National Universities Commission (NUC) was allocated over N17 billion in both the main and supplementary 2001 budgets. But now the government has allocated only N17.7 billion to the entire ministry, including all its parastatals.

The solid minerals development sector could contribute tremendously to our drive towards diversifying our economy and overall development of the nation. The Minister of Solid Mineral Development, Mr. Godwin Kanu Agabi, has said that Nigeria has 40 different solid mineral deposits "in commercial quantities". But these deposits remain largely untapped due to poor funding of the sector. According to the minister, over N30 billion is required to rehabilitate some of the dormant mining companies in the country. Ironically, however, the Federal Government is committing only N2.7 billion to solid minerals development this year.

The Federal Government, and especially the National Assembly which is currently debating the Year 2002 budget proposals, still have an opportunity to redress these and several other anomalies in the budget, to achieve the country's overall goal of national development.

With only a few days to the end of this year of our Lord 2001, it will not be too much out of place if we take stock of what happened in the course of the year and pay tribute to the men and women who contributed most positively to make our lives much better at both local, national and international levels.

This exercise, or if you like, ritual, has become an annual global journalistic enterprise. For whatever it is worth, this would afford us the opportunity to take a dispassionate look at the out-going year, identify both its heroes and villains and pass our judgement.

Therefore, looking at 2001 in Nigeria as it gradually bids us farewell, one cannot but feel highly betrayed and disillusioned. It is one year that began on high hopes but regrettably ends on despair. It is one of those years in our chequered history that can also be described as wasted: so much resources, goodwill and opportunities to make Nigeria the great country it was destined to be and make life a little better for Nigerians were squandered.

The year began with the passage of the budget by the National Assembly in record time and with only minor amendments. The two Chambers unanimously agreed to approve the Appropriation Bill almost as presented by the President in the spirit of reconciliation. This was against the background that the preceding year was marked by a lot of acrimony leading to the change of Senate leadership at the instance of the Presidency. The House of Representatives was also not spared of this presidential onslaught as desperate efforts were made to remove the Speaker, Alhaji Ghali Umar Na'Abba. He was only saved by providence as even millions of naira were allegedly offered to unseat him. In fact, exhibits in the form of about N4 million were tendered on the floor of the House and on national television alleging that bribes were offered by the Presidency. The irony of it all was that this happened only a few months after the enactment of a brand new law to fight corruption. To the best of my recollection, no one was indicted on this serious crime not to talk of being prosecuted. If you ask me, I will categorically tell you that it is only in Nigeria that this national scandal could be committed with such overwhelming evidence and nothing would happen.

Billions of naira were appropriated in the 2001 Appropriation Act to transform the society and take democratic dividends to the doorsteps of the masses (remember how Professor Jerry Gana eulogised this budget and its promises?). But with only a few days to the end of the year, what is your own personal assessment of the performance of the budget? I think there will not be any controversy if one describes the implementation of this budget as a gross failure. Across the board everybody was complaining including ministers who did not receive cash backing to their approved projects. Our Distinguished Senators and Honourable Members bitterly complain how they were short-changed by the President in refusing to honour a deal they struck to spend N500 Million in each Senatorial District when they approved his request to buy him a brand new presidential jet!

The economy is still in the woods with poverty mercilessly ravaging the nation in spite of the Poverty Alleviation Programme. Serious economic sabotage is also being perpetrated by banks and other financial institutions in foreign exchange administration such that it is virtually only in Nigeria that the American dollar is getting stronger every day.

At the political front, this year is ending on a very sad note with the enactment of the Electoral Act which from all intents and purposes has created a big wall in the desire to expand the political space and level the playing field through the registration of new political parties. By introducing obnoxious provisions and conditionalities, the new political associations cannot contest elections in 2003. If the federal government was actually sincere, the Local Government elections should be held at least six months before the national elections so that any association that qualifies can participate. Similarly, if one looks at the ethno-religious crises that took place and the number of lives lost and the whole carnage and brigandage, this year can qualify to be called a year of disaster. The year is also ending with bringing out to the forefront the anger and frustrations of President Obasanjo over the lack of visible progress in the polity. Unfortunately, Baba Iyabo is venting his anger at the wrong people like Professor Sam Aluko and ASUU by calling them names and using very un-presidential language. Mr. President should re-direct his anger at his unproductive cabinet and at himself. Let him overhaul the cabinet and inject younger professionals into the system. The eternal logic still remains that what you sow is what you harvest.

With this short preamble, let us begin the onerous task of identifying the heroes, heroines and villains of the year. At the national level few names deserve to be mentioned. At the economic front, we must salute Mallam Nasir El-Rufa'i for faithfully implementing the privatisation programme. The issue is not whether we agree with the policy itself. The fact of the matter is that of all the Federal Government's policies, this is the only programme that we can say is being implemented faithfully. The young man

has brought dynamism, focus and fresh air into governance with serious commitment and professionalism.

At the political realm, we must salute Justice Chukwudifu Oputa and members of his Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission for showing us the other side of our national history through all those revelations during the public hearings. These revelations were as earthshaking as they were pathetic. You certainly would remember how General Oladipo Diya ridiculed himself and was thoroughly exposed. You will also remember the testimony and cross-examinations of our one and only Chief Yomi Tokoya on the other side of the scale. The public hearings were soothing, entertaining, enlightening and therapeutic.

In this political category, we must also salute Alhaji Mohammed Abubakar Rimi for daring the Lion of Aso Rock and holding the tiger by the tail, as James Hardy Chase would have put it. The courage and resilience he is showing in pursuing his intentions to contest the presidential elections in 2003 is worthy of commendation.

Mention must also be made of Alhaji Shehu Kwatalo, the former deputy governor of Jigawa State for getting out of the kitchen when it became too hot. By resigning his appointment in the midst of serious disagreement with his governor, he has done something un-Nigerian. We salute him and urge other deputy governors having serious unreconcilable differences with their governors to take this path of honour. In this context, I will hazard a guess that nobody is going to resign from NEPA for disappointing the President and Nigerians to end power outages by the end of this year. Though there have been some improvements, it is not commensurate with the billions of naira spent on the sector. In short, for NEPA it is not yet uhuru.

Another Nigerian who attracted our attention is Ganiyu Adams, the Commander-in-Chief of the Oodua Peoples Congress I. This young carpenter not only eluded the police for several months in spite of his being declared wanted, he was in just a matter of weeks off the hook of all criminal charges. This is notwithstanding the fact that the police had levelled several heinous charges against him including the murder of hundreds of innocent people. Thanks to a bastardised and tribal judiciary, Adams is a freeman while General Bamaiyi and Co are languishing for two years in jail and refused bail. This is Nigeria for you. Different justice for different folks.

At the international level, two nominees will surely make the list of the Man of the Year award while September 11 will surely fetch the Event-of-the-Year award. No matter how you look at it, Osama bin Laden has not only changed this year's history. He might also in the long run make positive impact on world history. This is based on the assumption that you accept what Washington said he is. That is to say, he is the brains behind the tragic suicide attacks in New York and Washington on September 11, 2001. His significance is that not only is he instrumental in causing the global war against terrorism, his actions on September 11 were instrumental in opening the eyes of Washington and Britain to the inevitability of the creation of the state of Palestine. For the first time, Washington is talking about the creation of an independent state of Palestine side by side with Israel!

Osama bin Laden is both a hero and a villain of some sort. While he is presented to the world by Western governments and their media as the devil incarnate he is being hailed as a hero in his native Middle East and the Third World. For daring Uncle Sam in his bedroom and shattering his myth of invincibility, Osama, like the holocaust to the Jews, will never be forgotten by the Americans and the events he engineered on September 11.

Another hero of September 11 is President George Bush. As they say in elementary physics, actions and reactions are equal and opposite. For mobilising world opinion and raising an international coalition to pursue the alleged perpetrators of September 11 and wage war against international terrorism, President Bush has certainly secured a chapter for himself in contemporary world history.

In conclusion, we can only end this discourse by praying that though 2002 will be carrying too much liability from 2001, it will be a much more prosperous and peaceful year. Unfortunately, from all the signs and symptoms, next year is pregnant with so many uncertainties, fears and upheavals. HAPPY NEW YEAR.

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