

TSM

The Sunday Magazine

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The Day laughter died

Mistakes that took
**John
Chukwu's
life**

Exclusive

How SDP rally
nearly flopped



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● John Chukwu...gone

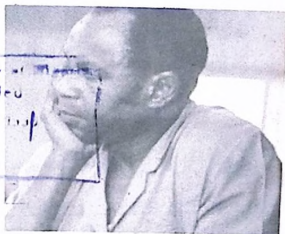
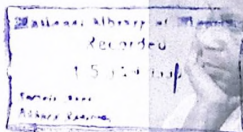


● Bash Ali...in the too

Cover Design: FEMI AWOKOYA
FELIX EDIALE



● Akonobi... day of reckoning?



● David-West...oily matters

A letter from the Editor -in-Chief

ast Monday, Nigeria lost its most talented comedian, John Chukwu, J.C, as he was fondly called, was a man of delightful humour, whose lassy ethnic jokes was for years a regular course at state occasions, social gatherings and the night clubs.

His illness, first mooled by entertainment reporters, had been clouded in somewhat mysterious if not confusing signals.

The surprising announcement of his death shocked the entertainment industry and left many wondering if more could not have been done to save this great talent.

The cover story by Mubo Okosun and Zik Okator takes a positive look at something to remember J.C for: his special style of humour.

In Oil and Energy this week, the news is not about sky-rocketing oil prices but the trial of ex-oil minister Professor Tam David-West who for a week has been grilled by a Special Tribunal set up to look into a case against him. Chudi Okoye captures the atmosphere at the tribunal.

Finally, a close-up on a new rave in town: a book that attempts to reverse all known theories about women. It's written by Chinweizu, author of "The West and the rest of us" and a *Vanguard* columnist "The Chinweizu observatory." Many think it outrageous. We welcome your comments on this bundle that is bound to keep us screaming and laughing for some time to come.

Chris

TSM

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a Lagos street in which the President's son, Mohammed, was involved. Drama? Yes, drama indeed. For if it was not drama, how could wrong be celebrated in such fashion and for such a clapping audience!

But if you ask me, I think it is high time the "high and mighties" of this theatre of a society pasted their name tags on their automobiles and chests so as to enable us "low and mean" folks give them cause to belt out "a full

throaty laugh" — even when they are in the wrong.

Charles Obi
School of Post Graduate Studies,
Uniport,

WHAT dramatic effect did you want to achieve with your story on the President's son? Or do you lack news? I know the way to the theatre, and you know, there are several here.

Ken Ene
School of Post Graduate Studies
Uniport

WAEC's time-table for failure

Lately, there have been numerous write-ups in the press on the present horrible performance of students in examinations conducted by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC). One factor which has escaped the attention of experts, analysts and writers is the present structure of the examination time-table for the GCE examination. The time-table is now such that all papers of a subject must be taken in one day no matter how many there are or how vast the subject is. This leaves no room for proper preparation.

Next time we talk of the causes of poor performance in GCE exams we

should remember this point. Candidates are no magicians.

Amby Nwachukwu, Lagos

Health Column

It will be very much appreciated if you please introduce a column for health features by medical practitioners in your magazine.

Nnachimere Uzo
School of Health Technology
Aba

Editor's Note: We already have a health column on trial run. It will be made regular very soon.

Re: IBB's son in traffic drama

I refer to the above story carried in Vol. 2, No. 22, October 14, 1990 edition of TSM regarding a traffic incident on

VOICES

Should Nigeria give jobs to the refugees from Liberia?



Ada Anne Madu
Editorial Assistant

Temporary jobs may be okay to ease their immediate problems, especially the Liberians whose life belongings are trapped in their devastated country. If the Nigerians among the refugees are qualified, they should be offered employment because no one must be made to suffer for a crisis they did not cause.



Olaya Ogbonnia
Businessman

What! When we have over a million jobless people already crying for daily bread! No, if the government makes such an overture under whatever pretext, it means vacancies existed all this while and that government is just being stark wicked. Temporary or permanent, no work for them. We could however grant them soft loans to start small trades but not at the expense of Nigerians.



Nkechi Orji
Unemployed

I would feel cheated. I am a Nigerian citizen and I have been looking for a job for quite some time. What impression would we be giving the world about the unemployment situation in our country if we start doling out jobs to refugees? Joblessness here is really worse than war. Let them take up menial jobs like Nigerians are doing overseas.



Chidi Oguamanam
Company Executive

If we consider the way they came to Nigeria, I think we should be our brother's keeper only to an extent. There are Nigerian graduates who have no jobs and nobody should complicate things any further. We could however offer them temporary jobs with the proviso that when peace returns to Liberia they should waste no time in going back.

Compiled by Sunday Ojetabi

Why did the songbird cry so late?



By Ely Obasi

The little table which stood in the centre of the dance floor looked like a lie. There was something so incredulous about it, something that jugged at the corners of the mind, something that kept nagging this life is a lie, do not believe it.

A lonely notebook looked stranded on top of that table. Its only companions, the vase of artificial flowers, and the little ballpoint pen with which the emotions of crying minds were being poured out on that notebook.

The feelings that I read in that book as I signed in as the 320th person were so real, so touching, so heart breaking. They were the bleeding of souls that had been touched by one of the most remarkable men who passed through here. Even then it was still unbelievable, as all sudden deaths are, that John Chukwu had become a stone, dead cadaver.

The emptiness was there to defeat this disbelief. *Klass Night Club* was a hollowness where death had been and vanguarded.

Over the usual high decibels of vibrant night-after-noon music, a gripping silence had crashed in and subdued. And as it standing over this silence, the slow, ghoulish din of air conditioners. A gripping cold held the stripped dance floor, held the abandoned studded bars. Even the television screens which had known only the glit wiggling bodies, displayed a bland grey. Death stood at those screens, served empty bottles at the bar, did the ghost's intangible dance on the dance floor.

You couldn't tell whether the goose pimples on you came from the cold, or the quiet, or this crushing reality.

Upstairs, brother to the departed impresario, sat with Chris Ogwu, high-flying sports editor of *The Guardian*, and tried very hard to look cheerful. His life had crashed against inevitability, his actions now appeared in complexity with the cold fingers of death. But the truth, nothing more could be

done

Ruby Dooby, the cream tempered lady who runs the 24-hour Bendel restaurant of that name almost opposite *Klass* sat with them, arms clasped over her breasts and couldn't figure out the whole thing.

Ruby had been JC's friend. As had been so many million others. When she had heard months ago that the man was ill, she tried repeatedly to

Death stood with her ugly mask in the corner and laughed at all of us: at Babangida, at Abiola, at all of us who might have been able to chip in just a tiny little bit. Death waited until the flurry of arrangements was almost done with. Death claimed John Chukwu into her bleak bottomless bosom.

go pay a visit. Each time she ran against a protective brick wall erected by family members.

Family had had sterling intentions. The belief was that he would pull through. So to deflect attention, the false story was leaked to a mass appeal magazine that John Chukwu had been flown to Germany. But the sick man was in no Germany. The sick

chambers of Olumba Olumbo Obu held him in embrace, in the usual abracadabra of spiritual healing.

In this choice of media to break the news of his state, in this strenuous but unnecessary effort to shield him, his case worsened, and slowly the good man who had put laughter in the hearts of so many slid to the edge of his grave.

The situation was bound to get out of hand. Where upon a scramble for help. University of Calabar Teaching Hospital, Lagos University Teaching Hospital, Moshood K. Abiola. And then somehow and finally Ibrahim Babangida.

That was when genuine things started to happen. The President himself dug into the charity bag for which he is very well known. Abiola started to invoke the stupendous international network in his armful. Cables and currencies started to flash. But

Death stood with her ugly mask in the corner and laughed at all of us at Babangida, at Abiola, at all of us who might have been able to chip in just a tiny little bit. Death waited until the flurry of arrangements was almost done with. Death claimed John Chukwu into her bleak bottomless bosom.

And all we were left with were the memory and the acrimony and the finger pointing.

As we all sat that sorrow-blasted midnight the pictures came reeling past our minds' eyes, like a film of torture.

One picture frame came and stood over my eyes, refusing to move on, refusing to be forgotten.

The picture was that of an afternoon just after *TSM* started up. A Mercedes Benz drew up. JC and a handful of friends stepped out to offer words of encouragement to us.

The picture was that of the moment he departed a smile on his face the words: *TSM-is-gonna-be-a-huge-success-on-his-lips*.

But tonight new words rang in the ears. The songbird, sang a little too late.

Parties snub government offices

Snag in transition spirit as the two parties prefer to be housed by influential chieftains

The question then to ask is why did the parties "reject" the Force Road temporary accommodation.

First, the NRC after the Abuja convention, moved its secretariat first to the presidential suite of the L'Hotel Eko Meridien in Victoria Island, which Doyin Okupe, its publicity secretary, once told **TSM** was "paid for by contributions from certain individuals, to a more spacious, opulent building in the elitist Maroko extension of Victoria Island which was said to have been donated to the party by an affluent member.

For the SDP, the secretariat of the party has been holed up in the second floor of 11, Ademola Close, Ikoyi, since the Abuja convention. The office also houses Joint Participants Company Limited owned by party chairman, Baba Gana Kingibe, with Yomi Ede, another SDP party chieftain.

However it would be recalled that the NRC chief, Humphrey Nwosu, when giving out over half a billion naira government grant to the parties stated that N67.5 million each is to be used by the parties "partly for furnishing, partly as reserves and partly for other campaign expenses for the December 1990 local government election."

But the parties still believe that the office space at Force Road is "inadequate." David Iornem, SDP national spokesman recently told **TSM** that "they gave us only one room, not the whole floor and that obviously is not enough for us."

SDP he said, is already negotiating a property in Ikoyi for leasing as the temporary secretariat. "We must have a place that will serve as our Lagos national secretariat Liaison office even after our movement to Abuja," Iornem added.

And Doyin Okupe, the NRC spokesman, insisted that "we were never invited to take up accommodation anywhere." He added that no provision was made to accommodate the party headquarters in Lagos.

But at the Onikan head office of the



The rejected stone

National Electoral Commission (NEC) which is now fully in charge of the political parties after the dissolution of the political Transition Committee, its spokesman, Tony Iredia, believes the "complaint is a ruse."

After demanding for proofs that political parties use individual property as their head offices, Iredia told **TSM** to "publish whatever information you have."

As a university don told **TSM**, "the failure to get a temporary secretariat for the parties is the beginning of their freedom from the grip of government." It could also be the beginning of keeping the parties in the pockets of the much-lampooned "moneybags," a newbreed politician cautioned.



Politics & Policy

By Yusuph Olaniyonu

The magnificent building on 2, Force Road, Onikan, Lagos stood towering above other neighbouring buildings. But its significance is not in its imposing look. Nor is it in the fact that it harbours two ministries, Water Resources, and Youth and Sports. But its relevance is in the transition to civil rule.

The building was where the two grassroots democratic parties, National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) were born before the Abuja convention in July. And heretofore their elected officials are expected to take up the administrative batons from the government appointed officers. This is supposed to last till the completion of their headquarters under construction in Abuja.

But **TSM** investigation has shown that the first and second floors of the building reserved for the parties only have their tags on. The magnificence bears the names of the parties as the occupants of the floors. The doors to the various offices bear the tags of the officers who are supposed to occupy these rooms. But up till press time last week, all these rooms were devoid of their occupants.

TSM enquiries in the area showed "that the political parties do not reside here. In fact, they do not seem to be interested in making use of this place."

NRC

The Eagle nearly didn't land

By Plus Utomi Ekpel

he National Republican Convention couldn't have chosen a better venue to start off their campaign — The Ahmadu Bello Stadium Kaduna. The campaign couldn't have attracted a better who-is-who in NRC. It was like a roll call. The Iwuanyawus, the Gomwalks, the Abba Dabos, the Umaru Shinkafis, the Igbinedons and the Lema Jibrils among others.

Mouncing the rostrum to a thunderous ovation, NRC chairman, Tom Ikimi, transformed into a real politician. Speaking on top of his voice, throwing hands up, down, right, left for emphasis, and flashing disarming smiles now and then, he sought to convince Nigerians as to why they must embrace NRC.

Picking a worrying spot, Ikimi told supporters that an NRC government would stamp out poverty. More than that, he promised the eradication of diseases, free and fair enterprise, food for all, free education and medical care, and now, wait for this, "full employment and social security". And yes, encourage agricultural and industrial revolution.

As he reeled out all these, people

cheered and clapped. And to think that such a wonderful speech, full of promises would have been marred by poor crowd control and the disorganised manner in which some party officials came on!

Security men had a terrible time controlling the crowd which was bent on taking over the soap box. As security officials pushed them, they surged forward as if the podium was the only suitable place to stay and listen.

Some party officials were no better. They were as disorganised as the crowd. They look over the imposing platform and it was a tug-of-war persuading them to leave the platform and make way for Ikimi to deliver his wonderful campaign speech.

A second republic government candidate who pleaded anonymity was so disgusted with what he termed the "disorganised manner" in which some party officials behaved that he told TSM, "This arrangement did not live up to its expectation. In fact, I am not going to attend the Abuja rally. If such could happen in Kaduna, you can imagine what will happen in Abuja! That Abuja campaign rally has been held last Sunday.

For NRC, the Kaduna rally was a first time out. And it was quite an experience they have learnt from.



Plateau NRC boss Helen Gomwalk ... in Kaduna

SDP

Police permit palava

By Yusuph Olaniyonu

ast Saturday as early as 7.00 a.m., party stalwarts of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) were all gathered at the Talawa Balewa Square venue of the party's launch-

ing of its national campaign for the December 8 LGA election. It was a day of dancing, chanting party slogans, praise singing in favour of party chieftains and pledging of loyalty to the party's cause.

But amidst the fanfare, pomp and pageantry that heralded the beginning and end of the rally, there was a fact concealed from the knowledge of the party supporters. And issues surrounding the fact could have prevented the political rally from holding first, before September 21 this year, and organising political campaigns or rallies

was illegal as ban on all political activities was on. But as the chairman of the National Electoral Commission (NEC), Humphrey Nwosu, a professor of political science, declared while presenting certificates of registration to the two parties, from that day they are free to organize political campaigns and rallies in accordance with the electoral decrees and guidelines.

Also, there is an electoral provision demanding that organisers of any public procession would seek and get police permit before convening it. And herein the confusion that nearly impeded the TBS rally set in.

Keeping in line with all electoral provisions as contained in Decrees ND 25 of 1987, and numbers 9.15 and 27 of 1989, David Iorem, the publicity and organising secretary of the SDP approached the Lagos State police



Kingbe at the rally that nearly wasn't

demand for a permit to hold the rally.

But on the first visit Saminu Daura, the Lagos state police chief, quoting certain legal provisions, declined any knowledge of the list of ban on political campaigns.

Daura later directed the SDP spokesman to the Force Headquarters on Moloney street. But at Kam Saleem House, the officers Iomem contacted pleaded ignorance about the headquarters' involvement in organising political rallies. Iomem later returned to Ikeja. Following his persistence, Daura demanded for a written note from both the Federal Military government and the NEC.

From the Federal Government's side, Iomem and other party chiefs' claims got no listening ears as key government officials used government neutrality to steer clear of political issues. NEC was also said to be helpless as it possesses no power to guarantee security at the venue of the rally.

Midday Friday, efforts of various party chiefs to clarify issues on the clearance came to nought. And at this point, the "Social Democrats" started thinking of cancelling the event.

But according to a source close to the party "we found it very difficult to believe that lack of understanding on the parts of different government agencies would ruin a campaign we have spent so much money, time and energy to organise". So, the SDP resorted to black mail.

"If NRC could hold their rally without similar problem in Kaduna, any effort to jeopardise the Lagos rally will derail the entire transition programme", they argued. Also, they made it clear that with all the money spent on the campaign, it would give a false impression to gullible members of the public that the government favours the opposition.

And the argument sprung the magic late on Friday evening, the police permit got to 11, Ademola Close secretariat of the party. And the obstruction was averted.

A party chieftain who spoke to TSM said "all is now history as we have successfully carried out our march to victory in the elections of the Third Republic democracy".

QUOTE

"WE resorted to open balloting because of how Nigerians had abused secret balloting. You cannot forge human beings and put them in the ballot box."

— NEC Chairman, Humphrey Nwosu defending the controversial open ballot system.

Flag Staff on Marina

Flag Staff House, Ikoyi traditional abode of Nigerian Army Chiefs witnessed a change of signboards ... but not of occupants

By Comfort Obi

The change of sign boards was unannounced. And unexplained. But not so the appointments. When the appointments were made almost two months ago, it was with fanfare — just when the anxiety of a waiting nation was going to burst.

But not so the other things that went with the appointments. For example, official quarters.

Residents of the posh Second Avenue, Ikoyi must have noticed that the traditional abode of the Chief of Army Staff now sports a new sign board. Hitherto, the very spacious and tear some compound had a big sign board "Flag Staff House". And this compound has had the privilege of housing Nigeria's Army Chiefs.

But not Salihu Ibrahim, a Lt General and current Chief of Army Staff. The sign, "Flag Staff House," which indicates the abode of the Army chief all over the World has changed places. It has meandered its way to Marina. And in place of "Flag Staff House" at Second Avenue is "Defence House". Its occupant and former Army boss, Sanni Abacha, stays put as "Defence Minister".

Now, this government building in Marina boasts of another VIP in the name of Salihu Ibrahim. Army Chief. The house Ibrahim is now occupying which has been renamed Flag Staff House was the same house occupied by Joseph Wayas Senate President during the Second Republic.

Ever since Wayas' forced exit from the house, there has been no permanent occupant. It has, instead, served as the Federal Government Guest House, particularly, for visiting Heads of State. When Dauda Jawara, the Gambian leader visited, he stayed there. Ibrahim is the next permanent occupant after Wayas.

By occupying this house in Marina, Ibrahim has scored two turfs. He becomes the first Chief of Army Staff who did not live at Second Avenue, the traditional abode of all of his predecessors, as well as the first to live in Marina.

Speculations have been rife as to why Ibrahim did not go to Second Avenue. While some people hinted that the former Chief of Army Staff was not

very disposed to changing residence, TSM went to the Army to find out why.

G1 Chigbu, a Major and next in command to Fred Chijuka, a Colonel, and Army spokesman, told TSM that there was no story behind the movement of the sign boards. He said "In the army, there is no permanent residence. You know it is difficult to find houses, suitable houses, in Lagos. And nobody can tell a General to move that way. It is not easy. The speculations are wrong. There is no story at all. The place where the Army boss is living now is very comfortable. Very good place and it is equally owned by the Federal Government. Joseph Wayas as Senate President lived there. And most of the visiting Heads of State stay there. So you cannot say anything about the house". He, however, ac-



Sanni Abacha



Salihu Ibrahim

cepted that all other Army Bosses lived at Second Avenue, Ikoyi.

Asked where the former Minister for Defence lived and why the new Minister for Defence didn't go there to live, Chigbu said, "You know of course that after General Baki's removal as Minister for Defence, the President himself held the position for about ten months. Within those ten months the official house of the Minister for Defence must have been allocated to another top military officer".

Chigbu said he didn't know who was occupying the house now but TSM investigation shows it is Muhammadu Gamba, former Inspector General of Police and the National Co-ordinator of Internal Security.

Like Chigbu said, there is no permanent residence in the Army. So, here's welcoming Flag Staff House to Marina and Defence House to Second Avenue.

By Comfort Obi

A Burning Issue

*No stranger to scandal in high places,
Anambra State braces up once
more for a taste of the old dish*

But for the petitions that got him worrying, Herbert Eze a Lt. Col. and military governor of Anambra State may not have bothered this particular day. It was a beautiful Friday afternoon on October 5, 1990. The governor just came back from one of those tiring familiarization tours when he stumbled on something odd.

Somebody was making a bonfire within the Governor's office. And, of course, that's not the best place for bonfires. And thinking about the affairs of the state or, shall we say, the state of affairs, smoke spoils the busy alluring air of government house. Eze didn't like the smoke. Nor the smell. And with his retinue of security and protocol officers, he went to find out what was cooking.

He didn't need to look far. There, burning some papers were Luke Okonkwo, ex-Principal Secretary to the governor and a couple of his staff, well, messengers.

Ordinarily, the governor wouldn't have bothered, but Okonkwo had just that day, been removed from the coveted post of Principal Secretary to the governor, a position he had been occupying since 1987.

Eze bent down, picked one of the pieces being burnt, looked at it and quickly called in video recorders to get a good recording of the event. He made no statement. He answered no questions. He simply walked away into his cosy office. And things started happening.

Okonkwo was quickly invited by security agents for a chat. So were the messengers. You know how a chat with security agents are. He was drilled. Interrogated. And an investigation began.

Nobody knows for how long Okonkwo stayed in the hands of security agents but the number of days vary. While some sources in Enugu swear he was the guest of the SSS for more than one day, a source at SSS told TSM, "he was not here for more than 24 hours".

The version SSS told TSM tallies with a "forced" publication in the Enugu-based *Satellite Newspapers* of October 11, 1990. *Satellite* had on October 9, published a front page story that Okonkwo was in detention as a guest of the SSS. The SSS reacted. And swooped on the newly born — again paper. According to a highly reliable source, the SSS was mad: that *Satellite* published that Okonkwo was detained for days.

SSS told *Satellite* that Okonkwo was not detained for more than 24 hours and that "The SSS had no right to de-

tain anybody for more than 24 hours". *Satellite* published the SSS retinal in its edition of October 11.

The same controversy surrounds the nature of treatment given to Okonkwo while he was a guest of SSS. Most journalists in Enugu and a few other people said Okonkwo was given the full "SSS treatment". And that the messengers detained along with him were given same treatment and thoroughly drilled.

The question however is: What exactly were being burnt? A source close to the SSS told TSM that Okonkwo said they were pieces of irrelevant papers. Mostly applications for employment. One source at government house Enugu also told us "a messenger said what were being burnt were pieces of papers. They were given the papers to throw away but they felt they were many and decided to burn them instead".

Questions again are: if they were pieces of irrelevant papers given to the messengers to throw away which they decided to burn, why was Okonkwo there on the spot? Why did the governor call out movie cameras to make a video recording of the burning if after he picked one of the papers, he found out it was irrelevant. And why did the case go to the SSS and the police?

Conrad Bosah, Press Secretary to the Anambra State governor told TSM casually, "the matter is still being investigated. It is not something one can talk about now. The governor won't discuss it".

But not all those spoken to by TSM were as diplomatic or as casual as Bosah. One of the sources swore that what were being burnt were actually papers stamped "Top Secret". And that it was because the governor picked one of those papers that he called out video people for documentation.

The Okonkwo episode has generated a lot of interest in Anambra State. This, especially, as Okonkwo happens to be a cousin of the ex-governor of Anambra State, Robert Akonobi. And more especially as the allegation is that Okonkwo was even more influential than Akonobi during his tenure.

And questions are being asked about the circumstances surrounding his removal as the Principal Secretary to the Anambra State governor

- Probe underway into strange burning of official papers
- Principal secretary fired
- Ex-Governor's cousin arrested
- Akonobi under X-ray



Eze ... what's cooking?

Okonkwo was employed by Akonobi in 1987 if Akonobi thought he was doing the state a favour by bringing Okonkwo who, says to anybody who wants to hear that he has enviable credentials, then, he was mistaken. From the day he was appointed to the day he was removed from his post, several people tell his appointment was wrong. They say he is Akonobi's cousin. Okonkwo confirmed the relationship to TSM about three months ago but asked, "So what?"

While many people think that his removal had something to do with the series of petitions written against the

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"25 YEARS OF CONSISTENT QUALITY PRODUCTS
AND SUPERB MARKETING"

Akonobi administration of which he was a principal character, others think it is routine for the governor to choose whoever he wanted as his principal secretary

Okonkwo was succeeded by Onyema Ochecha who, until his appointment was the chairman of Idemili Local Government Area.

Ever since his removal that October 5, several people think that Government House Enugu would have a new lease of life.

All efforts by TSM to see Okonkwo who has been asked to vacate his official quarters proved abortive. But somebody who identified himself as his wife said, "he wouldn't even talk if he was in. All those things are mere labrations. My husband wouldn't burn any important document I can vouch for him".

Many people wouldn't go as far as the wife vouching for him, that is An Enugu based businessman (name withheld) who claims he has a good knowledge of what has been going on since that October 5 incident told TSM, "Okonkwo is brilliant. No doubt about that. He is equally intelligent. No doubt about that. But he has questions to answer about what happened on October 5".

He claims, and quite authoritatively too, that the SSS had submitted their first report on the October 5 incident to the Governor but that the report was not comprehensive. Or, rather, to the satisfaction of the governor. Therefore, he said, "The governor asked them to make recommendations. That is what we are waiting for."

As is expected, the October 5 incident has again focussed attention on the Akonobi administration. And, all sorts of stories, most of them unflattering, are being banded about. Like the exact number of houses he bought or built, like why some people call the state "Akonobi Brothers and Sisters" ABS (Incidentally that's the acronym of the state's radio station, ABS). Like some contracts which they argue were questionable. And they are quick to show one such house — true or false.

A taxi driver eagerly showed TSM some of the plots around the Presidential Hotel and thought nothing about giving the addresses and exact locations of some more.

Another taxi driver who claimed he was from Nimo, Akonobi's wife's town, told TSM how some people went and burgled a glass house completed there within a space of two years. According to the driver, all the furniture were removed. And as if that was not enough, they removed the engines of some cars and dropped a message that "we would be back".

If the taxi drivers and some other people have been content with gos-

sips and the pointing out of houses to strangers, not so the petitions reported to the media houses. Writing in *The Broom* Newspapers of October 21 — 27, 1990, in the letters to the Editor column, a man who identified himself as Geoffrey Okolo and who gave his address as Ontisha — Owerri Road, Okija Anambra State asked "why is



Akonobi... tongues are wagging

Akonobi tree?". — He asked the Babangida administration to "show a presidential concern on Akonobi's record in Anambra State. The people are interested in following the matter to its logical conclusion".

As if the letter wasn't enough, *The Broom* also came out in the same edition with a screaming front page headline, "Akonobi, wife and former secretary, Okonkwo, to face tribunal?" The screaming headline was backed-up by a rather weak story on why it is being suspected that the three would face a tribunal. The paper simply noted the petitions it alleged flooded Government House as soon as Akonobi was removed as governor

and the October 5 incident!

If *The Broom* came out with a weak report, the *National Concord* of October 22 did not in the issue, Christian Onoh, controversial three-month governor of Anambra State during the second republic and a sworn enemy of the ex-governor asked Ibrahim Babangida, President, to institute a judicial probe into the Akonobi administration in Anambra State. Onoh said it "is by instituting the probe that the name of the President and the Army in general will be redeemed". He told *National Concord*, "I have full documents to back up my call for a judicial probe".

Not surprisingly, the story making the rounds in Anambra State is that the documents allegedly being burnt in the government house on that October 5, were those concerning a lot of allegations being made against the Akonobi regime.

While TSM was not able to get at Akonobi who has been reassigned to pure military matters in Niger State, it got at his wife, May, who is now the Deputy Director of the INSWC in Anambra State. She wouldn't talk except, "our hands are clean. We leave everything to God".

Neither would the police nor the SSS confirm anything officially to TSM.

Until the Anambra State government makes an official statement, the state seems to be sitting on a time bomb, which is worsened by rumours and speculations which are openly discussed. Just like a hotelier said to nobody in particular in his cosy restaurant, "have you heard? The governor is going to change members of his cabinet this week. Lagos has given him the go ahead order!" These open speculations seem to reduce serious issues to nothingness!

SNAPSHOT

Taxing hurdles for candidates

Many of the candidates who have won the primary elections in the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC) may alterai not contest in the local government elections come December 8.

This is because a stiff screening exercise will still be carried out by the National Electoral Commission on their eligibility to contest the election. Speaking to reporters recently, NEC boss, Humphrey Nwosu, stated that the candidates will have to prove they are responsible citizens through evidence of regular tax payment, and satisfying educational requirements among others.

But that will not be all. For local councils whose contestants are still engaged in unresolved legal battle up to the election day, there may be no election particularly where

it concerned the two parties. Nwosu would however not explain what would happen where only one of the parties fails to present candidate for the election: "Where it is only one party, we will know what exactly will be done."

However, for those whose worry over the efficacy of the open ballot system hinges on inadequacy of security measures, Nwosu has a big respite. NEC has recruited an additional 440,000 "polling orderlies" who will supplement efforts of the police, War Against Indiscipline (WARI) brigade and Youth Corps members at ensuring orderliness at the 220,000 polling stations across the federation.

Police commands all over the federation are expected to commence training of the orderlies before the end of this month.

The Wages of Singh

As neighbouring Pakistan reels from last Wednesday's controversial elections, Indian premier, V.P. Singh's political career is put on the line by his restive kinsmen.

By Mackson Onyejekwe

The violent clashes that have bedevilled India for the past ten weeks, following the controversial job quota policy of the Prime Minister, Vishwanath Pratap Singh, have taken a different dimension. And this jeopardises his position in the country and the dream of using the Hindus to consolidate his prospects in next year's election. The sudden twist in the political fortunes of 58-year-old Singh, who had steeled himself over the increasing death of protesters, came with the unexpected arrest of Mr Lal Krishna Advani, an ultra-fundamentalist Hindu. His arrest at the northern state of Bihar is intended to thwart his planned march to, and demolition of mosque so as to replace it with a temple. As things stand now, fate of Singh is somewhat tied to the freedom or bondage of Advani.

In the past one week, over 60 persons have died and some hundreds wounded in a spate of sectarian clashes that have both compounded and overlaken the original carnage and vandalism that erupted in India since Aug. 7, when the Prime Minister announced that some jobs would be reserved for the lower caste Indian population of Hindus who, though more than half of India's 830 million population, occupy negligible number of positions in the government and public sector. From the southern city of Bombay to the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, police reports indicate that the continued clashes of Hindus and Moslems as they celebrate their religious festivals testify that a disastrous confrontation was obvious between the two groups unless the government strikes a compromise between them over the temple land of Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh.

The ultra-fundamentalist Hindus, backed by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which keeps Singh's minority coalition in power, had said it would start building a temple on Ayodhya at Uttar Pradesh, close to the muslim site of



Singh ... suffering for sins of predecessors

worship. According to them, centuries ago, muslim Moghul rulers demolished their temples, the only structure on the spot, which is the birth place of their deity, Ram, leaving over 1,000 killed. Though Mulayam Singh Yadav, the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh and a member of Singh's Janata Dal Party (JDP) has vowed to halt the construction of the temple until a court decides over the land, it would appear that the political crisis in India has become too hydra-headed to be settled without many casualties.

Whether the arrest of Advani would stall or strengthen the intention of the ultra-fundamentalist Hindus, is not clear.

But the prospects of compromise before October 30, political analysts contend, has been stultified by the pre-emptive abduction of the Hindu fundamentalist Advani, whose kith and kin are the back-bone of Singh's minority government. Already, the BJP is threatening to withdraw its support for the government. "A letter of with-



QUOTELINES

"TELL George Bush to get off the golf course and out of his fishing boat and come here in the desert to take a look at what we're doing..."

— US Army Private Brett Thompson on duty in Saudi Arabia

"WE have fun in the White House — probably too much"

— John Sununu, the US President's Chief of Staff on life at the top

"THERE is a discussion in my country about a new name for the USSR. At the same time, Philip Morris is sending us billions of cigarettes. So some people suggest our new name should be 'Marlboro Country'"

— Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennady Gerasimov

"LIBERIANS are suffering and he (Sawyer) should be among them. If he doesn't come home soon, I'm going to appoint a new head of the interim government."

— Rebel leader Charles Taylor asking the ECOMOG-backed interim President Amos Sawyer to move back to Liberia and feel the heat

"THERE is an armed struggle in this country that has nurtured the culture of violence."

— South African Zulu leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi on Black-on-Black violence

drawal of support for the government, addressed to the President, Mr. Ramaswamy Venkataraman, is to be submitted to the government," a spokesman of the party has said. And since the BJP has the majority of seats in the parliament, the withdrawal of support could well be a vote of no confidence, for which the president would have the mandate to dissolve Singh's cabinet.

Political analysis however believe that the on-going blood-bath is a part in the current flux of violent protests and riots in India. The trouble, they say, spilled from Singh's August 7, announcement of an increase by 27 per cent of the jobs reserved for the lower-caste Hindus, which was earlier 22.5 per cent. By the policy, 49.5 per cent of public jobs would be out of bounds to the upper castes. Some parliamentarians and members of the public argue that the lower caste already had enough but Singh said that the disadvantaged communities comprise 52 per cent of the 830 million Indian population but had only 12.5 per cent job representation, which he argued was not good enough. Students and middle class workers hit the streets wreaking havoc all over India. Police intervention with live and rubber bullets, tear-gas and truncheon had since worsened the situation. Singh however maintains that his government would not retract the policy whatever the criticisms and the casualties. And the Hindus have vowed not to allow the government.

Though the situation in India has been tragic, the reactions of the people, students and politicians have been rather dramatic, with suicide and self-immolation suddenly becoming fashionable.

Rajib Goswami, 18-year-old male student literally blazed the trail in Delhi when he cut open his stomach yanked out and cut to pieces his entrails before he died. A girl, Narindar Kaur, 15, plucked out her own eyes, put them on her suicide note as "present for Singh", then hanged herself. Sajit Singh Chauhan, 20, poured fuel on himself, lit a match and burnt himself to death. Behal Jagal, a 12-year-old boy, plunged to death from the top of a lower and Kusum Hira an 18-year-old girl jumped into the sea. At Himalayan town, a 13-year-old boy also set himself ablaze and a 17-year-old girl drank poison. In the Delhi area, a boy and his girlfriend died together but in a more stylish manner. The boy, 23, poured kerosine on himself, the girlfriend set him ablaze while the boy used scissors to slash her to death in the presence excited spectators.

The police say over 27 more persons



V.P. Singh with President Venkataraman...resignation underway?

have successfully killed themselves by self-blazing, drinking poison, drowning or jumping to death, while about 14 attempts were unsuccessful, as the persons were either rescued before their attempts or revived by doctors after the attempts.

Over 160 persons are feared dead since the rampage began. The wounded are said to be in thousands.

A new development has emerged in the deaths as police reports indicate that there is now organised killing of those who fail to blaze, poison, drown, slash or jump to death. Later this week, the police reported that about 120—150 extreme leftists were on their way by train to the south Indian city of Hyderabad, with about 10—15 Maoists in the train, alleged to have boarded after locking five of the six doors of the carriage. Midway, they poured kerosine on the carriage, pulled the chain to stop the train, set it ablaze, and jumped out, telling the passengers to come out all through one small central door that allows one person to pass at a time. Over 82 were reported dead and others, terribly burnt.

The parliamentarians have also shown enough courage for self-immolation. Mr. Vasant Sathe, the opposition leader is fasting to death, to persuade Singh to change the policy. In a letter to the speaker, Rabi Ray, Sathe accused Singh's minority government of insensitivity and asked him to resign. Mr. Lal, the 76-year-old deputy premier and peasant leader has resigned, refusing to collect his money nor feed anybody in his family. "I cannot support the government that is in-

sensitive to the cries of dying children", he says.

Caste quota in the Indian labour structure was introduced by Britain 60 years ago and it has since remained a touchy issue in that country. The strategic position of the Hindus in the power structure of India has equally made the issue a serious political one, as the group is the single, most populous group in the country, with a number over half of India's estimated 830 million population.

Traditionally, Hindus are categorised into four groups: the Brahmans (priests), soldiers, farmers and the Untouchables who include street sweepers and other odd job-men. Given their political significance, as part of the electorate, Singh, by the policy of job quota, is believed to have created a strong political base among the Hindus, more than any other Prime Minister. But the arrest of Advani has terribly threatened this support.

Meanwhile, to quell the widespread violence in his country, Singh has proposed that 40 per cent of the seats in the parliament be reserved for the poor. But the concession has not had an impact as members of the upper caste still mobilise students and workers to go on rampaging, with the effigies of Singh being burnt at public places.

Political analysts are apprehensive about the fate of Singh's administration. Many people however fear that the current Hindu-Muslim dimension to the job quota turmoil in India might mark the beginning of the end of Singh's political career.

Arise men! And topple your women!

Chinweizu's newest book *Anatomy of Female Power* confirms his reputation as an unrepentant iconoclast.

From his own account, Chinweizu says many women have slipped into and out of his life, many have attempted to marry him but failed. He has survived their crafty intrigues, learnt quite a few things about their weapons of domination, and feels duty-bound to tell his fellow menfolk how to break loose from the gridlocks of the female's long, well-lacquered fingers. It is an incitement for male rebellion against the female age-old domination, by a man who thinks he should know.

Chinweizu has written a dangerous, poisonous book. For all men. Because all have been confused, abused and misused by women.

It is to female power what that one-seventh of an iceberg which is visible above the water is to the six-sevenths which lies below the water line.

Man tells so that he can satisfy the needs, or sustain the love of some women. Therefore "if the natural goal of male power is to pay a tribute to women, then all male power is tributary to female power; thus, contrary to appearances, woman is boss, the overall boss of the world."

Women secure absolute control over men with what Chinweizu identifies as five cardinal pillars: control of the kitchen, control of the cradle, control of the womb, man's psychological immaturity relative to the woman, and

What does female power consist of? How does she wield it? How does the male react to it? How should the male react to it? Chinweizu tells you!

He agrees that men are the ones occupying the commanding heights of society's structures. They sit on the throne but women wield the real power behind the throne. Man rules the world, but woman rules the man, therefore female power is supreme. "However great male power may be,

By Ochereome Nnanna

When people read this corker of a book, they wouldn't know whether to cry or laugh. They would probably do both

depending on how deeply it hits them. Women who read along the lines would thank Chinweizu for helping them beat the female drum to the hearing of the men, for owing up to the long established fact that women are the ultimate rulers of the world. But those who read between the lines would discover a scathing attack on the very essence of womanhood by a self-proclaimed masculinist. They will then dismiss it as the work of a thoroughly sadistic misogynist who wants to attract undeserved attention to himself.

The men would more likely call him a saboteur, a male sell-out who, in an effort to prove a point, stacked all the advantages of the inter-gender relationship on the female side, thus reducing the male to a brainless robot who depends entirely on the female for all actions he takes or does not take. On the other hand, Chinweizu's muck-raking treatise would set some men thinking again on their position in the family.

From now on, anytime a woman says "I love you," some men will start wondering "which arm or leg is this lovely shark after?"



A couple on their wedding day, soon the woman will become the boss.

"man's tendency to be deranged by his own excited penis." He supports it with a quote

1st woman The way to a man's heart is through his belly.

2nd woman Aren't you aiming a few inches too high?

Nature endows man with a sexual attitude that is rather too complex for him to handle, while most women can do without sex for quite sometime without complaining. The man also craves for an heir to succeed him. For these reasons he needs the woman. So far no problems. He and the woman must contribute equally to procreation, but as soon as the contribution is done, the woman monopolises the products which is now securely stowed away in her womb. She can do whatever she likes with it, and at best, the man can only beg and suggest.

When the child is born, the woman is psychologically and physically equipped to nurse it, cradle it. "Whatever trains a child in its first five years shapes it for life." The woman now teaches the boys heroism and self-sacrifice. She teaches the girls self-worship or narcissism. When they grow up, the girl will worship herself and the boy will worship the girl and serve her, even to the point of sacrificing his life to preserve hers.

The woman, exercising her mother power, trains the girl to be the mistress of her future husband, while she trains the boy to be the future slave of his wife. The Fulanis and Kenya's Maasais even flog their boys to please the girls they must wed!

Girls mature earlier than boys, so that a man of 60 years can still be regarded as the bride contemporary of a 15 year old girl. "Men are boys," that is why women can rule their husbands so easily.

Wrote he "It is also said that when his penis stands up a man's brain takes French leave. Which is why a woman who wants to rule a man first gets his penis to stand up and salute her."

Hunger is also noted as the greatest weapon of torture ever invented. A giant or hero can be reduced to a grovelling whimpering beggar if food is denied him for longer than he can bear. Therefore, the woman controls, and jealously guards the kitchen to keep the men coming to eat out of her hands, even when he exclusively wins the bread.

How, when, did the woman win all these pillars to herself? According to Chinweizu, it all began in the Garden of Eden when the first woman, Eve, plotted the first, most famous and irreversible coup in human history against Adam, occasioning the Fall of

Man. "In quietly annexing the cradle and in seizing control of the kitchen during the original division of labour (in Eden). Even ensured that a man and all his possessions are a woman's to dispose of."

Man's servitude to the woman continues throughout life. His mother brings him into the world, and prepares him for more servitude under his wife. On reaching puberty, the complex hormones in his groin nudge him into courtship with a woman who then snares him into marriage as a husband, a capacity in which he would serve for the rest of his life.

Men who believe that they are stronger than women are only oiling their egos, because there are women who are stronger than men, too. *Women feign weakness to lure men into slaving the more for them.*

Having identified the woman's weapons of domination and enslavement, Chinweizu then advises any man who values his honour to free himself from the yoke of the woman by staying away from marriage. Then, he won't need to depend on her cooings to satisfy his hunger. If he can find a woman who will accept procreation without marriage, then the man must insist on taking part in the nursing programme - change diapers, feed the baby, bathe it - play the role

Chinweizu ... wisely stays single

mothers play. That way, the child will grow up to know only of equality of the sexes.

The male must insist on sharing the tough jobs of society - coal mining, defence of the country against external aggression, etc. with women. While women are being allowed to become top executives and decision-makers in society, they should also feel happy to do all the hard and dirty jobs men do. Men should also realise that it does not serve their interest to allow pollution of the environment with sexual stimulants that will increase his craving for female body. He should insist that female circumcision be banned so that both will stand on equal grounds in the crave for sex.

It is also not in the men's interest to fight, maim and kill each other just to secure monopoly of a woman's affections or womb, for, by so doing, the man is selling himself in slavery to the woman. Above all, men should insist on not having to pay a substantial part of their life earnings simply because they have declared themselves free from a woman's slavery or marriage.

Chinweizu seems to have re-ignited the fuse for the war of the sexes to resume. He has thrown a keg of gasoline on a smouldering heap of sulfur, and like the psychotic arsonist, is standing by to watch with ecstasy the conflagration that will sprout therefrom.



In an ideal world, everyone would receive salary increases, promotions and other job rewards based strictly on merit. But in real life, the most important factors can be the special initiative you display and the relationship you develop with your boss. If the two of you are a good "fit," you are more likely to enjoy your job and advance in your career.

Here are five suggestions that can help you achieve that fit:

1. Determine your boss's goals. Your mission is to help your boss accomplish his or her true objectives. But what are they? Sometimes the answer is straightforward. Sometimes you have to dig a little deeper.

Reggie, a sales representative for a textile company, was proud of his record. Several times he explained to his boss, Sarah, how hard he had worked to persuade a clothing manufacturer to buy goods from his company. But Sarah would only nod with faint approval.

Finally Reggie confronted her. "We're in the business to sell textiles, aren't we?" he asked. "Don't you like my customers?"

Sarah levelled with him. "Reggie, you're concentrating on the small manufacturer who costs us too much to supply. Focus on the big customers who can order 3000 yards at a time."

Reggie got the message, and now turns over minor customers to a jobber. He receives a small commission. But more important, he is helping Sarah reach her objective of landing the major customers.

2. Support your boss. You can express loyalty in many ways without being a sycophant. Ramsey, an assistant to a vice president for international marketing, got a rush assignment to prepare flip charts based on his boss's notes. While drawing up the charts, he noticed his boss had written "As the U.S. dollar strengthens, exports will increase." Ramsey knew the opposite was true and notified his boss that he had corrected the error.

The boss thanked Ramsey for catching his slip. And he appreciated Ramsey's efforts even more when the next day's presentation went without a glitch.

3. Help your boss succeed. When you are pursuing your own ambitions, it is easy to forget the primary reason you were hired: your boss thought you could contribute to his or her success.

Beth, an assistant manager with a chain of appliance stores, discovered the value of this strategy. She and her boss, Monica, agreed that if they could increase the size of their store, busi-

HOW to Impress Your Boss

*A good working
relationship can enrich
you both*

ness could double. But Monica had not been able to convince management that expansion would pay a suitable return.

At the next regional meeting, a home-office executive asked Beth how she liked her job. "It's nice working for a store that's on the upswing," she answered. "I like Monica's attitude. Most managers would grumble about having to squeeze all the merchandise and the customers into such little space. Last week, we were practically selling TVs off the truck. If we had more room, many of those customers might

Support your boss



have browsed around more. But we do the best with what we have."

Within weeks, an additional wing was planned for Monica's store. As projected, sales soon increased, and Monica rewarded Beth with an outstanding performance evaluation.

4. Solve problems. An important way to get a head is to help your boss solve thorny problems.

Cal worked as a university registrar's assistant. His boss, Roger, was responsible for a registration system that students and faculty considered disastrous. Students were frequently billed for classes they hadn't taken. Many classes were overcrowded, while others were so small they faced cancellation. Assuming Roger was under pressure to improve the system, Cal volunteered to head up a task force to develop a new one. His boss happily agreed and the team produced a vastly improved system.

When Roger became the registrar in an organizational shuffle, Cal was promoted to associate registrar. Roger gave him high praise for the system he had developed and successfully implemented.

5. Reward your boss. Many managers complain that a major part of their job is praising others, yet they receive few compliments themselves. You can help satisfy this need. If your boss schedules a training course to fit your vacation plans, write a note of appreciation. If your boss closes a major sale, you might remark, "I'm very impressed. I'd like to learn how you were able to pull off such an important deal."

A reward that can have a big payoff is to praise your boss to top management. Avoid nebulous flattery such as labelling your boss "an inspirational leader." A compliment should be specific and make sense to executives.

Sean, a hospital administrator, was asked at a board meeting how he enjoyed working at the hospital. "Things are going well," he replied. "My boss, Dr. Jacobs, really knows how to manage. He is concerned that we keep the hospital bed filled and that we stay within budget. Yet he's sensitive to people's feelings. I once saw him personally intervene when a patient was the victim of an ethnic slur."

Later Dr. Jacobs commended to Sean. "It's good to know that you and I have compatible management styles. Let me know if there's anything I can do to help you."

Cultivating a good relationship with the higher-ups doesn't just benefit you. As you move up the ladder of success, you also are helping your boss and your company do a better job.

Culled from Reader's Digest

The old woman appears slightly taller and darker than her son, Jack Yakubu Gowon who, so far, is Nigeria's longest serving number one citizen, having resided in Dodan Barracks for nine good years

Yet there was nothing palatial about her abode in Wusasa, Zaria. Living at the back of the main house which is being rebuilt, following its burning in 1987 during the religious riots, the simplicity of the woman and ordinariness of the setting was outstanding. For starters, the house appeared to have been built with mud which was later plastered and painted. It was very much in consonance with a preponderance of the houses in that area. The sitting room was pretty small, choked with a big colour television, a replacement of the one destroyed during the riots, a standing fan and a refrigerator.

Saraya Gowon was dressed in a flowery wrapper and blouse with an indigo blue background. Once she knew she had a guest, she called for a scarf to place on her lush grey hair.

With her nephew, Jan Anthony, acting as our interpreter, she said she was happier in those days when Gowon was head of state. As she put it, she felt very proud of him and his achievement. But she would not want him to be head of state again.

Mama Gowon, as she is fondly called by friends and neighbours, believes that all that happened and did not happen to her son were in accordance with the will of God. "There was nothing extraordinary at the time of his birth," she said. She actually tried to discourage him from joining the army because her first son, Ibrahim, died in Burma while fighting the Second World War for the Allied Powers having been conscripted by the British colonial masters.

But then, Yakubu had insisted. And his father had supported him. So she had to give in, she explained. Now, she said, she understands better that "men are born to go to war, so whoever wants to join the army, let him go ahead."

Mama Gowon is still an active woman. She goes to her farm regularly to supervise the people who cultivate her millet, corn, groundnuts and yam for her. She also sweeps the floor of her home whenever she feels she needs to exercise herself.

A devout Christian, she told TSM that she keeps praying for peace and harmony in the country and for understanding among its different people

"Nigeria will be good again"

— Saraya Gowon



Gowon — Mummy's pet

When asked what she thought of the last coup attempt, she just laughed, displaying very white set of teeth, further set off by her jet black complexion. When pressurized, she said she didn't know about the coup. Why was this so one wondered. Was it because she was no longer interested in Nigeria? She explained that it was because the 9 o'clock news was not usually clear in Wusasa and so she didn't

hear about it on time

What of the coup that saw her son out of power? She said "when I heard about that coup, they told me they've already overthrown him. So that's all. Commenting on the first executive president Shehu Shagari, she said "he is a good man. He didn't fight anybody. I thank him for allowing my son back in Nigeria." As for President Ibrahim Babangida, she said, "what can I say? They're all fine. IBB is in power now and he hasn't done me anything so what can I say? I am enjoying his regime, that's all."

And the rural women's fair. Did she attend it in Lagos earlier in the year? She laughed and said "I'm very old now, so I hardly travel or go anywhere."

Her advice for Nigerian Women. They should live in peace with their husbands. They should take care of their homes and families so that the young ones can grow with good behaviour. If Nigerians say they don't want a woman president, the women should not worry. If they can take care of their families, that would be good.

As for our poor economy, she said "what can we do? We should have patience. One day, Nigeria will be good and everybody will enjoy himself. What goes up must come down, she philosophised.

Much as Mama Gowon easily opened up to a reporter, she cringed frantically from the camera. "Her reason? She's 'too old to have camera bulbs flashing in her face.' Nothing would persuade her to let her photograph be taken. And yet, she couldn't lend us any one she had taken before the camera-phobia set in? Why was this so? "I lost all my pictures when the house was burnt."

Mama Gowon talked of the religious crisis of 1987 with utmost reluctance. Recalling the incident, she said, "when they (the rioters) came, I was reading. I asked what brought them and they said they wanted to burn the house. I asked them to leave it alone but they refused. They poured petrol on it, set it on fire with Daniel (another of her sons) in it. They came in here and broke my television set. They started destroying things. I got very angry so I took a stick and started beating them, fortunately Daniel escaped and they didn't set this part of the house on fire. But I prayed to God to forgive them because they did not know what they were doing. After all we will all die and leave these earthly things behind." Apart from her pictures, she also lost foodstuff, clothes, beddings and a lot of household property to the fire.



A fruitful journey

It has been a rough, but fruitful journey for directors of Civil Liberties Organisation — Olisa Agbakoba and Mike Ozekehoma. Somehow, they brushed aside the memories of incessant squabbles at the law courts, tortuous trips to jail to fete their friends and well-wishers

two Saturdays ago. For them, three years has been one long road to adulthood. They are now older, wiser, and better poised to take on more heart-rending cases.

Here, Agbakoba and Ozekehoma in casual outfits set the tone of the ceremony.

EVENTS:

ALL roads lead to Odi Museum on Tuesday, 6th November, 1980. 'A

journey thru' the Savannah' is the latest offering at the meeting place for art connoisseurs, royalty, politicians and diplomats. Mike Ozekehoma is the artist with the winning oil paintings. Exhibition kicks off at 9 a.m. every day. Akpabi Aaka, Abubakar Rimi, will be on hand to add their own styles as Chairman and Special Guest of Honour respectively.



THE best thing about being 40 is that you no longer nurse the worries of the youths. You are already established in your career, made the numbers of kids you want, changed homes until you found a comfortable one.

Ibidun Oshodi recently celebrated her 40th year on earth. Hubby, Layi, Executive Director Layi Securities Organisation in Lagos, kids and friends surprised her with a treat.

A dreamy fair

HOPE you are saving your best bucks for this week-long fair. It will take place on Allen Avenue, Opebi and Toyin Streets in Ikeja, Lagos. Emeka Obasi, President of Cameo Ventures has promised you a basket load of fun.

Exquisite fashion, bargains, stars, music, raffle draws where you can snag up wonderful gifts. Obasi who says he has always been a trader, even when he was a journalist, is now putting those inherent skills to play.

The second week of December is the date, so why not delay your seasonal shopping until then?



Women

WHO says politics is an all male affair? At the campaign trails surged into action two Saturdays ago, the women were there. Not as Chairman of Women's wings or token women. But as bona-fide members of their parties.

Bose Osinowo, Chairman of NRC Lagos State.

Compiled by Mulisa Okesun

The lead

ARGUABLY the leader in the printing business, Academy Press recently celebrated its 25th year anniversary. There was a lecture, a dinner cum award night.





Leisure treat

Picture this wonderful outing for your kids: A visit to the historical town of Badagry, a chance to walk through the lawns of ASCON, a meeting with one of the most-reverred traditional leaders in the country.

Top all these with a bumper lunch. Interested? Why not get to know Tokunbo Ekukinam, Chief Executive of Vision Tours. She is putting the package together for kids next Saturday in Lagos. All for N20.00

The Jennifer connection

ONly a fearless hostess would organise an outing on a Monday. But this hostess did, and got away with it.

The simple card read: "Join me for a quiet evening of dance, drinks and dinner" But it turned out to be a carnival of sorts. There was fiery music, swinging hips, seductive damsels, and the usual retinue of nightbirds.

Jennifer Madike, the birthday girl actually ruffled in her figure-hugging creamy number. And that haircut fitted her like a cap. As she glided from table to table to receive pecks and hugs from friends, it was obvious it had been fun for her too.

Despite their busy schedules, the Kut brothers, Olikoye and Beko — Minister of Health and radical doctor respectively let their hairs down at the party. Shehu Musa, chairman of National Population Commission played his usual role. He was the Chairman. Fidelis Oyukhilome, NDLEA boss, locked up his drug barons for the night to carouse with friends. For the record, Madike is her nephew. You should have seen him in his white and black affair. Real jazzi!

Media celebrities included Sani Ibrahim and spouse, Harriet Lawrence, Guardian's Features Editor, Moji Damisa, Climax Editor,



EVENTS:

His Royal Highness Oba Adedapo Tejuosho, Oba of Oke-Ona recently conferred chieftaincy titles on three worthy citizens. They are Victoria Temakloe Taiwo, Eddy Taiwo S.A., Jimoh. They are now to be known as Otun Mariwaju, Otun Alaturae and Laderin of Oke-Ona respectively.

Joings - On

Ely Obasi, TSM's Executive Editor. Here, Jennifer Madike, thanks Shehu Musa and Ken Caleb Olumese for a job well done.

an excited child. Sarah Jubril
calate and affable best. From
from Ibadan to Ilorin, from
women to watch out for in

bet & Sunday Ojelasi

Mrs. Sijuwade and Mr. D.C.U.



MILESTONES

RETURNED For third time prime minister Mohamad of Malaysia in a general election with a comfortable two-thirds majority His 10-member multi-racial National Front coalition took 127 of the 180 parliamentary seats

ARRESTED: More than 200 aliens in Kenya as the country launched a campaign to expel foreign refugees. Kenyan president Daniel Arab Moi ordered the expulsion of all refugees allegedly involved in political or criminal activities in the country

BROKEN: By Kenya diplomatic relations with Norway and ordered the Scandinavian country's ambassador to Kenya, Niels Dahl, to leave Nairobi within seven days

BARRED: In Iraq drivers with Kuwait licence plates from getting petrol as rationing starts unless they re-register their vehicles. Iraqi oil minister also said foreigners in Iraq would have to prove they had a valid reason for having cars if they wanted petrol coupons

ORGANISED: By the Nigerian Optometric Association a vision screening exercise as part of the activities to mark this year's conference The theme of this year's conference was "Optometry and Road Safety"

SUPPORTED: By the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki, the open ballot system The Sultan said the exemption from voting granted traditional rulers and others holding sensitive positions partly influenced his change of heart

DONATED: By the Rivers State School-land Authority foodstuffs estimated at N3 000 000 to indigenes of the state who were evacuated from Liberia The evacuees are being accommodated at the Port Harcourt civic centre hostel pending their re-integration

WARNED The South African government by Nelson Mandela that there would be a return to violence if the country's new constitution does not ensure voting rights for all blacks Mandela, deputy president of the ANC told a large crowd in the forecourt of Sydney's Opera House that the ANC has promised there would be no armed struggle while the government of FW De Klerk continued with its reform policies

APPROVED By the executive secretary of the National Universities Commission NUC the establishment by individuals of universities provided they meet the minimum academic standards formulated by the commission

JAILED: In Zaire an editor critical of the government Mr Essolomwa Nkyo S.A. Lunganga, who edits *Elima* had been charged with publishing articles

that the government found to be "injurious, inflammatory and intended to incite breaches of discipline"

BIRTHDAYS



Nzenbe, birthday cheers

● 52 on Friday is Francis Arthur Nzenbe, Chief Philanthropist and politician Chief Nzenbe who is the author of *NIGERIA: Another Hope Betrayed* and *NIGERIA: Turning Point* among others, holds the Traditional titles of Ogbuagu Osiji, Damanze and Oyimba of Oguata, Imo State

● 47 on Saturday is Rear-Admiral Godwin Ndubuisi Kanu, naval officer and former member of the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) 1985-1989 He is a recipient of the award Best midshipman (1st Class)

● Birthday cheers to Chris Anyanwu, TSM's Chief Executive/Publisher Her special day comes up tomorrow 29th October, 1990

● 51 on Monday is Tim Kingsley Onuoha, administrator, management consultant He is a member of many management bodies among which are Nigerian Institute of Management and Centre for Entrepreneurial Management He is the author of the books *The Manufacturing Business*, and *How to run a profitable business without bank loan*

● 60 last Friday was Mrs SO Ogun, an educationist. A graduate of Boston University, she is the wife of Mr DO Ogun, a retired pioneer Director of Standards Organisation of Nigeria

● 50 on Wednesday is Abudukadir Ahmed, accountant, banker, administrator and Governor Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN He is an associate and fellow of Chartered Association of Certified Accountants as well as a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria

"THE closed door and the sealed lips are prerequisites to tyranny."

— Frank L. Stanton

"RESISTANCE to tyrants is obedience to God."

— Thomas Jefferson

"WE should wage war not to win war, but win peace."

— Paul Hoffman

"ALL that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing"

Edmund Burke

"TRUTH is bitter and like surgery cuts hurt"

— Anonymous

"FAME is a sickle food upon a shifting plate."

— Emily Dickinson

"PRETENSION almost always over does the original and hence exposes itself"

Hosea Ballou

"CONSCIENCE is God's presence in man"

Emmanuel Swedenborg

"IF there is anything we wish to change in a child, we should first examine it and see whether it is not something that could better be changed in ourselves."

— CG Jung

Opportunity's favourite disguise is trouble.

— Frank Tyger

It takes as much courage to have tried and failed as it does to have tried and succeeded

— Anne Morrow Lindbergh

"THE moment you're borne you're done for"

— Arnold Bennett

"OUR birth is nothing but our death begun, as tapers waste the moment they take fire."

— Edward Young

"NOTHING is so firmly believed as that which we least know"

— Michael de Montaigne

"HE to whom the present is the only thing present knows nothing of the age in which he lives."

— Oscar Wilde

Compiled by Amanze Obi

Trapped in buckpassing

Who should fund the commercialization of research results? Government says private investors. Private investors say government. Meanwhile the researcher suffers.

novations. Everyone thrilled about the leaps local technology seemed to have made. Many even plunked down money to buy these products which showed to be far less expensive than imported ones. But James could not sell. What he had there, he explained, were only prototypes. He said he hasn't gone into commercial production yet, because no one seems ready to finance such a project.

James says he has been to many banks, but none paid the scantiest attention. Reason: he can't provide required collaterals. Banks which seemed amenable waved forbidding interest rates in his face. He has coaxed

up to many companies, but these ones sent him scurrying with their scandalous equity proposals. And both the Bendel State and Federal governments, on whose shoulders James has gone crying, have not as much as made a wink at him.

There are many in James Agboroto's slicky shoes right across the country. The exhibition in Lagos revealed great strides made by local agents in the development of indigenous process technologies, in design and fabrication of simple machinery and equipment, in harnessing of local raw materials. These are due to the dogged questings of not only self-funded individuals but also of many research institutes on government's payroll. Like James, hardly any of

By Chudi Okoye

The whole world appears to be crashing down on James Agboroto. All the lofty dreams he has harboured are hurtling right down to his

walkweaned feet.

James is a 34-year-old Bendelite with an immensely creative mind. For several years now he has given himself completely over to one consuming engagement: localising foreign inventions. For several years James toiled and laboured. He risked life and limb to his dependants' discomfiture, to lend extra spin to the nation's wheel of technology.

A couple of years ago, James' labour began to pay off. The man has invented local formulars for a wide range of electrically-powered domestic appliances. His inventory of 'already-produced' is eye-popping: harmless electric water heater, shower heater, plastic electric kettle, electric kitchen lighter, electric poultry incubator, and even a hand-held grain planter. The beauty of it all is that, unlike the esoteric couches of Ivy League science, his formulars are steeped in the simple logic of local idiom.

At the Science and Technology Exhibition rounded off last weekend in Lagos, throngs of visitors swarmed James' stand to see what he had on display. Everyone marvelled at the dexterity which had gone into his in-



Gordian Ezekue with Adewale Kolawole at the meeting

these has been able to commercialize their research findings

At a meeting of researchers and investors arranged as part of the science exhibition this problem came up for examination. The meeting, meant as a first step towards resolving the problem, ended up in a mild controversy. Science and Technology Minister, Gordian Ezekwe, was present and he took the first shot. For Ezekwe, everything boils down to investors' apathy to local technology. This apathy, he feels, issues from the lack of communication between investors and inventors in the past. Says the minister: "There has been a wide communication gap between investors and researchers... Investors had been unaware of the efforts and achievements of local research workers". And so he winds up with the optimism that now both have come together, things will look up. Ezekwe had kicked the ball right into investors' court

They're to blame too

Sometimes though, researchers can be part of the problem. Consider the case of Sonia Ojo. Long ago Sonia, MD of Aloyen Plastic Manufacturing Company Ltd, had written to the Raw Materials Research and Development Council, RMRDC, asking into the possibility of locally obtaining melamine from urea. Melamine is a raw material used in producing unbreakable plastic. RMRDC replied in the affirmative. However, subsequent attempts by Sonia to consult the council on the subject came unglued. Suddenly, she says, all the important persons of the council began avoiding her. No one would see her. No one was ever on seat. TSM wanted to know why. "Because I'm not a moneybag", cries Sonia. "All these councils, they only provide service to people who can pay highly".

Or the case of FIRO's Soy-Ogi. Olajide Kola Ojo, director of the institute, told TSM that for 20 years now the product has lain around without being commercialized, in spite of its obvious nutritional and economic benefits. TSM tried to find out why, and it turned out that equipment needed to mass-produce Soy-Ogi had to be imported, and nobody was willing to put down the kind of money needed. The project had been stymied by a succession of forex-related problems: unobtainable import license, and later high interest rates and low value of the naira. It was only recently that FIRO began thinking of building the needed equipment locally.

Sometimes, the problem can be sheer lack of interest in commercialis-

But no sooner had the minister finished than he saw dissenting hands wagging in the air. The managing director of NIDB, Ibrahim Aliyu, through a representative, relays that arguments like the minister's make too much light of a complicated situation. Nigerian investors, Aliyu says, are quite 'aware of research findings gathering dust' around the country. The real issue, he reckons, is not so much the lack of awareness — or even the quality of research results — as the "gestation of the investments involved".

According to the NIDB chief executive, Nigerian investors consider investment in science and technology too risky, because it has "no promise of early financial returns on investments". He says though investors recognise the vast potentials of commercializing research findings, they simply can't be persuaded to veer off the beaten track of more familiar invest-

ment. Much the same thing applies to banks. When it comes down to brass tacks, says the MD, "commercial and merchant banks are in business simply to make money. They are therefore like private industrialists with regard to risk aversion".

The only other door, adds Aliyu, which ought to have been open to researchers, is that of development banks. These banks, in addition to the profit motivation are usually guided

ing Cosmas Okoli, a staff of the Rehabilitation Centre of the Ministry of Culture and Social Welfare, has developed two immensely useful aids for handicapped persons. One is an easy-fit-in calliper, a device for supporting weak-limbed people which enables them change shoes without tears. The other is a hand-controlled mobiliser which enables disabled people drive even a manual vehicle with hands alone. Cosmas however has never tried to commercialize these products, though he's been producing since as far back as 1983.

How about Nnenna Nwokocho, a 1987 graduate of the Federal University of Technology, Owerri? Nnenna found that local maize is as good a raw material for malt drinks as imported barley. She has taken her discovery to brewers of malt drinks, but they didn't offer anything encouraging. Nnenna has done virtually nothing else besides. Banks? Never been to them. NERFUND? Never heard of it. Now, get the picture?

Nnenna Nwokocho



No where to go Agbomrofo

by goals of national development. But even here, there is little hope. Aliyu discloses that development banks no longer get concessionary funds from government. He adds that with privatisation plans poked at their faces, they too have to imbibe the commercial orientation to stay afloat.

These 'honest' admissions by a banker so highly-placed were bound to make hairs brittle. They did. An Idris Yakubu from Continental Merchant Bank hops to the microphone and says far from the picture presented, banks do feel committed to the development of science and technology. As evidence, he points to his own bank which has a unit dealing with such matters. Another fellow from Financial

Merchant Bank gets up and claims as much for his bank. And so came the succession of dissent. But it wasn't all a cascade of self-defence. One Ferni Oshodi, who is the president of FOA Consultants, comes forth and butts banks for their inordinate profligating.

How can a responsible banker publicly say banks can do nothing to assist in the country's technological advancement? he queries. "Are banks here only to reap short-term profits?"

Such was the outrage. But the NIDB chairman was unperturbed. NIDB, he says, has a whole department, not just a unit, handling research and development issues. But what's the use, Aliyu asks, with interest rates as high as 28 per cent? Which researcher, he wants to know, can borrow at that rate and break even? What researchers need, says the MD, is equity funding, not loans. And even so, he adds, only a publicly-funded venture capital fund can have any hope of succeeding. Aliyu tells listeners that the whole question of providing credit for the

commercialization of research results can gather effect only if government plays a promotional role. He says government can do this by providing concessional loan funds for banks, especially development banks, to set up venture capital. Aside from this, he concludes, nothing else holds out much hope. This put the ball right back in government's court.

But government itself isn't ready to play. It believes the initiative should be taken by private sectors and researchers. The most appropriate technologies for a nation, argues Science Minister Ezekwe, "can only be profitably developed when its researchers and entrepreneurs work together." Government, he told TSM afterwards, can only come in for a supportive role: "while government helps by developing the capital base of the economy, the private sector should invest in the same base, even much more than government."

His director general, E.E. Okon, agrees. In a developing world such

as Nigeria, he says, government agencies should only act as "broker" of inventions and innovations, and leave the actual financing to private investors. It was with that in mind, he recalls, that in 1987 government set up the National Science and Technology Fund. NSTF merely provides "seed money" for researchers to further their research and effect "limited production." At this stage, that is the beginning of actual commercialization, the DG says "entrepreneurs and manufacturers should take over." Which is government's way of hurling the ball right back at private investors.

James Agbonroto sat through the meeting listening as the arguments swung back and forth. At the end of it all, he grasped nothing by way of concrete commitment, he heard nothing to comfort him for years of toiling and sweating. And so when the science exhibition wound up last weekend, he hurriedly packed his bag and headed back to Bendel, from whence he came.

By Ademola Adedoyin

Ace consumer page columnist, Dupe Singerr is breaking new grounds. The lady pen pusher has finally turned a hobby into a source of livelihood. Her passion for turning otherwise ordinary object into an unbelievable piece of astounding beauty has at last drawn out the writer's flair for business.

Come November 1, Dupy Dupy Soft Furnishings on Adeniyi Jones, Ikeja will be "informally" opened to the public. And you can say the lady has joined the ever growing class of women on the rise. It won't be a wrong submission.

Dupy Dupy is about soft furnishings and soft furnishing is about putting little things together to create elegant and cosy effect in the living room, in the bedroom and indeed in the whole apartment. The whole idea is that if you cannot afford a whopping N50,000 to give your abode that exquisite, classy look, a sum as little (?) as N5,000 or less could still achieve an incredible result.

Soft furnishing, to be sure, is not exactly the same thing as interior decoration. There is a very thin line between the two. So thin that it would be almost a blur to the casual watcher. While the interior decorator's emphasis is on such hard core furnishing like bed, dining set, upholstery and what have you, the soft furnisher insists that the beauty created by the interior

Dupe Singerr sings beauty tune

From writing to
Furnishing

decorator can be made more alluring by little touches here and there.

And these are the services Dupy Dupy is set to render to its customers. Putting a touch of panache in people's homes at moderate cost is a task it is setting for itself. And the lady is already consumed by this passion. She lives it, she breathes it. Wherever she goes, the mother of a new baby has her products. — home decorating effects such as decorated bags, flower vase, dining table accessories and so on. And she would not hesitate to tell anyone who cares to listen that "I have flair for it. I never learnt anything professionally. I just discovered one day I could do it. This soft furnishing thing is what I believe Nigerians will embrace with time." Some optimism.

With her products affordable to the average Nigerian, Dupe believes they are bound to go places. "Usually they are not expensive" she reiterated up-length time. "these are little things that make the home very beautiful. A little decorated basket placed in the right place, a little flower vase placed in the right place, colour combinations

and so on. With puffs alone, the home can look really great."

As this woman goes into the turpsy world of business, you begin to wonder what becomes of her popular consumer column. You need not lose sleep over that. Said her "I am not going to stop writing. I won't be a complete person if I stop. I will be back very soon."

Certainly she would need time to nurture the babies on her lap the toddler and the business that is. And we eagerly await her return.

Dupe Singerr





Observations at David-West's trial

An emotional ex-minister ..., and a face you couldn't read

By Chudi Okoye

For a man who had gone through so much grind in the past few weeks, Tam David-West appeared in pretty fine fettle that morning. He exchanged pleasantries with everyone, and even occasionally threw in a joke or a jibe. In a banter with TSM before the day's proceedings began, he joked about our publisher whom he said was "Energy Correspondent Number One, when he was minister. To an SSS operative who brought rubber bands he requested for David-West said "Thanks. This is the greatest present

you have given me". And when asked if he would take his oath on the Koran or ... he quipped, "I wish I could, but I am a Christian". He would carry this further during break time, when he warned somebody to watch his ways or "St. Peter will not be there to open the gates of heaven" for him.

In spite of these attempts to make bold however, there was no doubt that the beleaguered professor was torn by inward stress. By nature, David-West seems rather a hyperative fellow going by his quick motion and rapid tongue. Nonetheless there were tell-tale signs that weeks of being under



David-West docked: a mixed bag of gallantry and emotion



The tribunal troika: what lies ahead for David-West?

The hammer of law had taken their toll on him. For instance, throughout the proceedings of last Tuesday, he appeared jumpy and was constantly casting his eyes about, often towards the exit door which stood behind him. Indeed, Mr. Justice Bello Gusau, chairman of the Special Military Tribunal, noticed this and told him to try to restrain himself. But David-West said people's movements distracted him. Again, at different moments during the trial, TSM saw him tapping nervously, looking pensive, yawning, blowing his nose, scratching his jaw, wiping his face — now with his hanky, now with tissue or just with his bare hand. Each time he held any document, TSM noticed that his hands were shaking. Sometimes, he would begin to do something and later change his mind, like pulling on his glasses and taking them off immediately after. Under cross-examination by his own lawyer, he appeared rather uneasy, and even jumbled his words. He repeated sentences, mispronounced words was ungrammatical, and even bungled it sometimes when his leading counsel, Tunde Olojo, asked him to read a document aloud — intact. In one particular case, Olojo had to help him complete the reading.

These were however, merely evidences of emotional disturbance, and not necessarily of guilt, as other observations would suggest. When he was being sworn to oath to begin his defence following the tribunal's ruling that he had a case to answer, David-West ended with a rather grave "and nothing but the truth". When the charges against him were re-read

and he was reminded that he had pleaded not guilty, the proli replied "absolutely not guilty". And whenever he referred to his role as minister he never failed to chip in. "I as a minister but now the accused", and that in an emotional voice. He said that about three times. He so wanted to be believed that he kept saying "My Lord, I am on oath". It always sounded as if he was swearing vehemently. At break time, someone offered him a seat to ease off, but David-West turned him down. "I will not sit", he swore, "even if it is six hours I'll stand, I'm happier standing".

In spite of Tam David West's emotionalism, however the proceedings went on pretty casually. David-West's counsel, Tunde Olojo, showed himself to be a master of courtroom witicism. He brought this to great play, often putting prosecution lawyer Kolapo Adebale on the defensive. Samples. While checking through some documents tendered as exhibit, Olojo rather consciously puts himself in the prosecutor's view. "I want (him) to have his able eyes on me," he explains to the judge. At a point, the prosecutor says in regard to a document tendered in evidence by Olojo "I observe it is photocopy, but I'll save my learned friend the trouble of travelling to New York to get the original". But Olojo will not be bested. "Yes", he acknowledges, "so that we don't cause further economic adversity". A prosecution lawyer moves over to Olojo's side to make way for another person (the room is cramped), but Olojo jokingly pushes him away. To tribunal chairman Bello Gusau who wonders

if they are no longer colleagues, Olojo says "We're colleagues very good ones. But he has taken a position. I don't want him to compromise his position." And as the tribunal winds up for the day Justice Gusau reminds Olojo that his client should remember he is on oath and not do anything unlawful. When he has finished reeling off dos and don'ts, Olojo quickly acknowledges but adds under his breath "he can only react to situations like a human being".

Casual as it all was though, there was something curious about the tribunal members. There are three of them, Justice Bello, a spare, good-humoured but potentially explosive individual, a naval officer, O.P. Ayeni, a Navy Commander looking youthful, but highly assertive, and A.B. Gankan, a Lieutenant Colonel, who is simply impervious. Last Tuesday TSM observed that the naval officer and Justice Bello had achieved a rather high degree of understanding. They were always exchanging whispers, sharing jokes or simply looking at each other in silent communication. For instance, when Bello decided to close the day's proceedings, it only took an exchange of looks with the naval officer for the decision to be made. Curiously in all of this, the army officer was completely left out. Perhaps because he did not seem to care. The man looks tough, never smiles, never talks, never looks elsewhere except at the accused and is given to making copious notes. What is he writing? What does he think about? Why is his face so hard?

In that inscrutable face may lie Tam David-West's fate.



Arty stuff

The joke is on us

As John Chukwu the finest entertainer dies of a complex illness in drab surroundings.

By Mubo Okosun & Zik Okafor

The first rays of sunlight broke through the clouds. Lagosians trooped in large numbers to the various bus-stops. They clambered on rickety 'molue' buses, others waited for the usual free rides

Car-owners firmly wound up their cars and zoomed to work. Street vendors hugged their allotted spaces and started to arrange their wares.

It was 6.15 am, Monday, 22nd October, 1990. John Uzodinma Chukwu had just breathed his last at Jayeola Clinic, Pedro area of Palmgrove, Lagos. Bringing to an end his tortuous battle with inellective radiculopathy. Only two days before, his family knew death had already claimed him. Their effervescent brother was now tepid. Gone were the exuberant jokes. He could not even talk, and when he did, he was incoherent. He had emaciated terribly. His smooth skin had been ravaged by ugly bed-sores. He urinated and passed faeces like a VVF patient!

He kept his eyes closed most of the time because of the depth of his pain. But, when he opened them he would flash what could be misconstrued as a smile. Like the proverbial entertainer, he still tried gallantly to keep up the act.

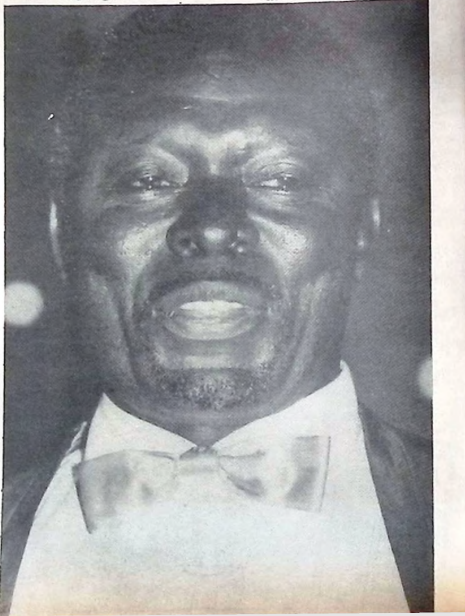
On Sunday, 21st October, John

Not a laughing matter

Chukwu's body was stone cold. Alms titleless. He made no movements. Or, his heart kept up his link with the world. His family members, meanwhile, knew only a miracle could reverse the ugly spectacle. They knew it was becoming too late.

It was probably this hope for a spiritual solution that complicated the illness. When he complained of shooting pains on Monday, 7th May, 1990, it was a while before he received first-rate medical treatment. Some members of the Committee of friends organised a lavish burial for him next Friday, are now blaming his family for his death.

They especially wonder why a world-class show-biz impresario should be allowed to waste away like that. A close associate of his from Makin, in Anambra State told **TSM** that he blames Ben, John's younger brother, for keeping the illness secret. "Why did they say that he had been flown abroad when in fact he was at Nigena? Why didn't they go around asking for help from influential people?" he further queried. In his defence, Ben argued that he



IF BABIES COULD TALK,
THEY'D ASK FOR THE BEST

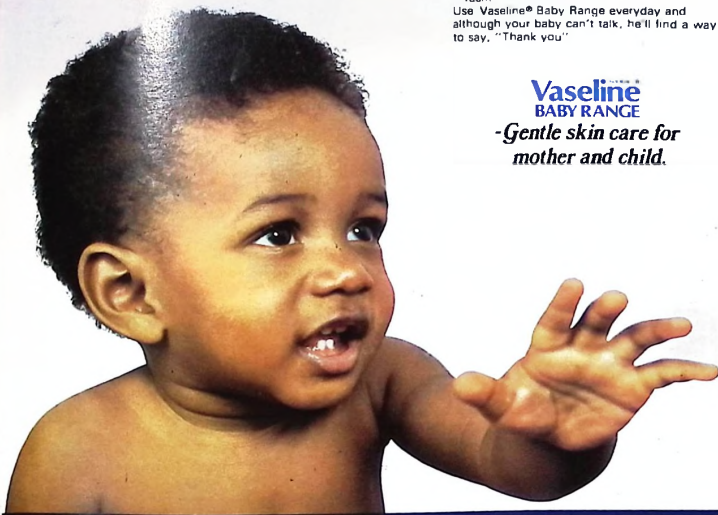


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brother's illness initially stunned and confused him, that he didn't know what to do. But, he now regrets some of his inactions at the time. Inside his flat, there was a pervading sense of doom. There were about fourteen people cramped in the sitting room, and they made no attempt at civility. They hung their drooped heads, their unkempt hair bore sombre faces. Eyes were bloodshot like those of dope-addicts.

Before John Chukwu's eldest son hung limply in a corner like a rag doll. At 22, he is an economics undergraduate in one of the universities. The only visible difference between him and his late father could be his height. Instead of John Chukwu's lean, rangy frame, he cuts the pose of a stocky boxer. But, he sports a loose tongue too. He also appears to have come to terms with his father's death. As he starkly noted to *TSM*, "It is true my father is dead. But I have a second father. Ben is my father. There is no difference between him and my dad."

His other son, Andy, is still living with his estranged wife, Dupe. Despite his runaway success in show-biz, John Chukwu stumbled through his two attempts at marriage. His first marriage to Veronica was fiery and tempestuous, culminating in her walking out on him. His second attempt was equally disastrous with counter charges of sexual impropriety levelled against one another.

But behind the microphone, John Chukwu left all those marital worries behind him. He was a compelling comedian. He was a witty disc-jockey. It was as if he carried in his briefcase whacky anecdotes that he would unleash at the slightest provocation. On television and radio, he would be remembered for his alib tongue and slapstick humour. His one-hour television programme in the '70s, *Bar Beach* show, is still unvalued. He also shaped his radio show *Bandwagon* into a must for radio buffs.

His vintage jokes at official functions will also be missed, whether dishing out ethnic jokes or stories, or sending up the colonialist JC as he was fondly called was a bundle of delight. The mother tongue policy could have found favour with him as he conversed fluently in Yoruba, Hausa, Isha, and Igbo his (original tongue) with a smattering of Etk. He also dabbled into Chinese, French, Queen's English and American lingo.

At the last PMAN's Award Night in Lagos, John Chukwu was teamed up with an evergreen of the tube - Julie Coker. Together, they licked the ribs of many people with their ribald jokes. They staged a special entrance in a manual carriage. To think that the nation has lost him for good. No more lols? No more lustiness? Just the lifeless



Ben Chukwu... his illness stunned me
body of JC, the man of humour

Before his death, he had become 'born again' in the trend of most celebrities. He even talked about founding a church, and his possession of special curative powers. This probably explains why he died without writing a will. In the words of Eddy Jay Omodiagbe, the sole administrator of *Klass Nite Club*, "He did not write a will because he never for once thought that he would die."

He also assured his younger brother that 'he will live'. Sources claim that dying interstate is likely to affect the fortunes of his companies - Jackie Jay Engineering Works Ltd, Sand Pack Nigeria Ltd, John Chukwu Associates and the club. Before his death, there were talks of disagreements over funds.

Mind-boggling debts have been incurred by the family during the course

of his illness. Friends have been asked to settle the N250,000 bill he piled up, in the various spiritual homes and clinics he was treated while alive.

Ironically, his larger than life posture failed him when he needed it most. If it was possible to delay death, he could have enjoyed a world class medical treatment at various hospitals in England, courtesy of the President, Ibrahim Babangida, and MKO Abioja.

Other lesser known people had in the past benefited from the philanthropy of rich Nigerians. The list includes Becky Musa, Aishat, and the process of raising funds for acid victim Charity Agbaraku is on.

Maybe his family and the nation of mourners should find solace in John Chukwu's attitudes to life. In an interview he granted *Lagos Life* in 1987, he said, "Life is one big joke. Nothing is so dark that one cannot find a silver lining hiding someplace in between."

His Early Days

He almost became a policeman, but the allure of entertainment was too strong

John Chukwu's boisterous nature as an adult was a far cry from his austere childhood. As a first child in a family of fourteen, he courted poverty and deprivation at an early age. But he was determined to break the yoke of hunger and helplessness. His uncle, with whom he lived in Nsukka, Anambra State, was a strict disciplinarian. According to JC, he flogged, kicked, slapped to drive his point home everytime.

He however found solace in reading and dramatic shows. It was then that an English tutor, Mr Wilson, told him about his talent in entertainment. JC pooch-pooched the idea of him being a future John Wayne or James Brown. At the time, the show-biz industry had not blossomed into a booming one that it is now. John, even toyed with the idea of becoming a policeman instead of an actor. He applied, passed, but was never called up for enlistment. If he had been recruited his humour might have dwarted by his police uniform.

He later drifted into library work at Government Teacher's College, King's College all in Lagos, before his break into broadcasting. One of those early friends, Ray Mike Nwachukwu spoke to TSM. Today, he is the President of Arrem Programmes. But in 1966, he was a student hoping to gain admission into a university. He met him in his father's student house.

According to Nwachukwu, John Chukwu then lived in a modest apartment in Akobi Crescent, Surulere, a middle class suburb in Lagos. He was also fast developing interest in guitar, and he would regale friends with fine tunes most evenings. Both later discovered, they shared common interests in music, since Nwachukwu played the piano too.

While Chukwu looked after books at King's College, he started to accompany his new friend to the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) for audition. His first attempts were rebuffed, until he clinched a part in 'Aknash Show' produced by Akinwanda



The two JCs... Julie Coker and John Chukwu

Oshin. Still, JC accompanied him to the studio until he confessed one day, "Ole boy, man don dey get interest for this drama o."

Nwachukwu claimed that he introduced him to the producer who told him to mimick an Indian. Because JC didn't know any Indian name at the time, his friend toisted *Taj Bahadur*, his first dramatic role on him. After acting as his springboard to fame, John Chukwu needed little prompting in his new profession. He took to it like a duck to water.

Both friends later tread their hands at publishing a musical magazine called *Beat Fare*. But the civil war aborted the dream. While Nwachukwu went to the East to stay with his parents, his friends stayed behind in Lagos. Chukwu was detained for one month like most Igbo indigenes during the war. In a philosophical letter he wrote while in detention to his friend, John Chukwu expressed his belief in freedom. In living. He assured him then that he would come out alive and beat death.

After a short stint in prison, he set up an exotic restaurant with an Indian name in 1969. Shehzadee lasti became a favourite haunt of young people in the arts. This later endeared him to selling up his own night club - *Klass* in 1985. Like a wandering Jew who has found a promised land, Chukwu worked tirelessly to turn the club into one of the best in the country.

From there, he clinched other TV slots where he featured special shows from his club. He also presented a rare collection of highlife tunes in a series entitled "*Highlife heritage*." There were also talks of a chat show, where he would do what he loves doing best - talking, singing, jiving, sounding off, holding court, until the chilly hands plucked him away at 47.

JC in the eyes of friends

"A FREE, detribalised mind, and multi-talented man has died prematurely."
— Tom Borha, President, Committee of Friends

"THE end of a saga, and a commander in the entertainment battlefield."
— Ayibola Shitta-Bey, De-Roof Club

"A VACUUM has been created. How do we fill it? That guy will be missed for a long while."
Jerry Anazia, Ozone Night Club

"JC has done enough to survive the juddering of history..."
— Peter Igho, Top Producer

"A WONDERFUL, kind and understanding genius has gone."
Ken Caleb Olumese, Nitoshit Gvnar

"AN institution."
— Ibrahim Alfa, Retired Chief of Air Staff
Ken Caleb Olumhese... a kind genius



The promises of a new day are hilarious, indeed overwhelming. It brings in its wake a gust of zeal — a phenomenon which explains man's overweening urge to forge ahead in the face of seemingly intractable odds. But dawn is a trickster, for when it comes cascading, it wears a wide range of masks that many are left gaping in wonder and amazement. But man repudiates despair. It is this refusal to be caught napping that buoys people up to face the challenges of a new day with gusto and bravado.

The Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA) must be beaming with hope of a new day as it tinkers once more with history this week. The association will meet on Wednesday October 31 and Saturday November 3, at the University of Ibadan rehearse its annual ritual for the 10th time. This year's conference is a double-take. Apart from the usual conference, there is a special session for bonafide members of the association to air their views on the operations of ANA for the past 10 years.

ANA's toins must be properly girded given the fact that its last year's meet at the University of Calabar was a monumental failure. For many, the Calabar get-together was no more than a jamboree trip to Oku Iboku and Obudu. But one is full of hope for the Ibadan outing as it promises to be a radical departure from the past ones. ANA has in fact lined up an array of interesting programmes. This includes the Festival of Life which will, among other things, feature poetry reading and a carnival of dances. There will also be a forum for writers on the pains and pleasures of creative writing as well as the publishers/writers dialogue. And there is of course an award night where prizes would be dished out to patrons of the arts, deserving art critics, and editors.

This year's conference promises to

U

nfinished agenda for ANA

The fags smoken, the rainclaws gather as the children of Muse square

be significant in more ways than one. Most remarkable is that ANA has gone further afield. It has spread its tentacles to incorporate writers whose works cannot be described as creative. According to Bode Sowande, the association's spokesman, the aim is to expand the frontiers of ANA. In line with this new development a non-creative writer Olusegun Obasanjo

up to new challenges.

(rtd) General, former head of state, is its guest speaker. Other speakers include Emeka Odumegwu-Ojukwu, Ikemba Nnewi, Akinola Aguda, an eminent jurist Bola Ige, former civilian governor of Oyo State. With this new development ANA may be sticking out its neck to sit in judgement over who is a creative writer or who is not. This is an on-going argument whose major kernel lies in dismissing some works as sheer journalism and therefore do not qualify to be called literature. ANA has in its fold a large crop of critics of this mould. This definitely is going to be a new agenda for them.

But there is a more compelling one for ANA. In 1988, ANA met in Makurdi, Benue State to consider the knotty problem of the unpublished writer. ANA may have made giant strides in trying to solve this problem but the *Osofisan - ANA president*

issue can hardly be said to have been put paid to. This is where the publishers' writers' forum which is an integral part of this year's meet becomes very relevant. The problem of the unpublished writer is far from settled. It is only hoped that the established writers will

emerge out of their graceland and address this nagging issue. ANA's wide fangs should be made to incorporate these 'arrivants' who may never arrive if not properly taken care of.

Enter the Wonder kids

Probably they would be remembered in history as the first nursery school in Nigeria to produce an album. Inside Hall 2 of the National Theatre, the Ideal Nursery and Primary School's band called *"The Rising Stars Band"*, launched their debut album entitled *"Education"*.

The wonder kids as they were called, left no one in doubt that given encouragement, they were sure to leave an indelible mark on the sands of time. The LP made up of seven tracks, six in English and one in Igbo preached essentially morality. The seven girls and three boys between four and eight years of age sent the audience thinking deeply as they sang the track entitled *"DRUG"*.

Twenty nine-year old J.C. Nwoko, the school's proprietor and sponsor of the album was happy with the turn-out of people. In his words,

"I am very happy that people turned out to a good extent because the kids have really worked hard".

Some of the kids spoken to expressed their love for music but hope to take up careers in law, engineering, the armed forces and medicine.



TSM
Journalism
for the
1990s



STARDUST

Saw Omasan Buwa ex-most beautiful girl in Nigeria, at the first ever Barbings Saloon of the year contest dazzled the audience with those long and straight legs when she appeared on stage, smiles now and frowns next as she changes her movements. Good model. But she didn't fail, as usual, to tantalize the audience with her greatest asset from God. We dare say.

See what fame can cost a man? If you are searching for it, Alex Osifo-Omrigbo aka Talab Abass, the monstrous business magnate of Apples, will tell you the prizes. Costly prizes indeed. Heard he was at the City, Ajegunle, recently to see a mock cup of nations match, where he was mobbed by fans. Hm, a jungle reception. Leon't he almost fainted but his producer Zeb Ejira who performed first aid operation by pouring water on his shining head. Was told Abass later dashed into Apples bus losing his beautiful girl friend to the crowd. Well, in case you still want to be a star, better have your mobile first aid kit ready. Zeb Ejira may not be there.

Zeb Ejira celebrated his daughter's birthday recently. Gave his flat an immaculate white touch for the purpose. Sweet child. Lots to chew and drink. Caught his gentle madam roding to the music fine dancer. No wonder Zeb is more married to his bottles at Niteshift, than women. Keep dancing madam. With more rehearsals, the other woman will never arise. So be it.

Met God's gift to Niteshift, beautiful boy Segun Joseph the other night. Asked why he's called Joseph D Carpenter. That's my job. I'm a carpenter, he said. Glamorous carpenter eh? Haven't seen those weird baggy shorts recently. Hoping they have not suffered terrible blows from nails and hammers.



Aikhomu...so smart

Sighted cool guy, model and models agent, Charles Omalghe drinking swan water endlessly at the club. Nobody has said he is poor, if that's what you think. The image maker of glamorous boys only wants to be different. After all a bottle of swan water costs N6 00 even though beer costs N15 00. More water to your stomach Char lie, we are together.



Jerry Ananza...set to host the world

Fresh from U.S. Shina Peters has once again picked up his 'paraphernalia' to begin the job he knows and enjoys most — music. According to our source, Shina decided to play at Ozone because of the many friends he met in the U.S who questioned him about ACE of clubs and its prop-

rietor.

He states emphatically that 10th of November is a date Shina Peters has set aside to 'give the world' the best of his live music performances inside Ozone.

HAVE you ever caught the Vice-President Augustus Aikhomu in suit? If you have not, then you have been missing out on a lot of fun. It seems that every time our dear Vice-President steps out in those dapper suits he goes on a cat-walk. Very smart, swanky and... he looks so so attractive!

Now that he's a bloody civilian like the rest of us, it's refreshing to note that he even looks better. More of those suits please!

Even Shina Peters would have been envious. He would have gone green at their agility and mastery of his dance steps. The Sunshine Sisters showed the stuff they were made of at a birthday party recently.

They bopped, swung their jigida laden hips, bumped their rushy behinds, leapt on tables, and commanded the likes of Olikoye Akansome-Huti, his spouse and Oyo Khilona Man did they swing? The minister ungot; too, while his wife played the cool one. Oyo Khilona showed that he is not only adept at catching drug pushers. His fancy suit did not restrict his movement in any way.

No wonder Shina sang *Omode njo, Ag balagba njo tjo Shina* (kids and adults dance ija Shina) Wander who will be booping next.

THE shrine is now wearing a new look. Thanks to Abanti Eda's recent birthday anniversary. The stinking toilets have now been deodorised, the cobwebs swept away. Even Fela says he is now free of worries. According to him, it's the first time in four years that he can snooze happily without harassment from government and law enforcement agents.

Maybe, that's what getting old is all about.



Sunshine Sisters...we like it hot



Omasan Buwa...Vital assets



Sporting

Bash

Ali hides in toilet!

... to avoid redeeming
a N5,000 pledge
made to Lagos SWAN

By Ochereome Nnanna

Having said that, Bash Ali, former world junior cruiserweight champion, concluded his speech — hereby

make a cash donation of N5,000 to the Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN).

An applause spearheaded by his bunch of henchmen, started but Ali was not yet done — as a bribe to

SWAN so that sports writers will no longer write negative news about me!"

His listeners' jaws dropped open in amazement and shock. Even his thugs were silenced. Soon murmurs of outrage started up. Emeka Odikpo, Lagos SWAN chairman, having recovered from the shock, got unsteadily to his feet and told Bash Ali:

"On behalf of Lagos SWAN, I assure you that we do not accept bribe, any donation made to SWAN must be without strings attached before we will accept it."

Cutting in, with a cunning smile on his rosy lips, Ali said:

"Okay, okay. It is not a bribe. I was only joking. On a serious note, I am making the donation. Where are your representatives? Let them follow me to my hotel after the briefing so as to collect the money."

That was on July 22, 1990, at a SWAN forum, usually organized for top sports personalities to rub minds with sportswriters on issues concerning activities in their areas of sport.

However, Bash Ali, who had requested to be invited, turned the seminar into a press briefing, at which he chose to relinquish his title so that he would be able to campaign in the world heavyweight class.

He came to the occasion dressed like film star — black suit on a red shirt, gold cuff links, gold ring on all his fingers, a cascade of gold necklaces and a pair of designer black, high heeled shoes.

He looked like a million dollars. Since he had, only in April, boasted to be worth over N100 million, few people doubted that he would pay the N5,000 unsolicited pledge. But, of course, Bash had a different ace up his sleeve.

Soon as a SWAN delegation of four officials got to Sheraton hotel where the boxer was holed up, Ali went into his room, rummaged around and came out to tell them sorry that the money he had on him was not up to N5,000 and gave them another date.

On the appointed date, the delegation returned to Sheraton, and were told by Ali's attendants that he was in the toilet and would come out shortly. It took two hours of waiting for Ali to come out of the toilet and when he did, he entered the lounge of his suite where his visitors waited brandishing a sheet of paper.

Pulling on one of his best salesmen, the boxer who has repeatedly voiced his ambition to be Nigeria's President, requested for a 90-day grace to pay up. He tendered the piece of paper on which he had written and signed an undertaking, a copy of which he gave to the delegation.

The 90 days expired on October 22, 1990. According to SWAN sources, the boxer has apparently vanished into thin air.

"We will never entertain this ridiculous again. This is the second time Bash Ali is playing football with us," the source said.

Steady Odega



Bash Ali: Where is he now?

tional sporting pool, like, for example, the Royal Armed Forces Football Club of Morocco.

But such a thing is anathema within the Nigerian military circles, says Mike Okwesa a naval Commodore and leader of the Nigerian team to the CISM world cup series.

Said Okwesa: "The danger in conceding partial or total funding to the private sector is that some of these money-bags are after some other things apart from sports development in the military. If you let it happen, they will also tell you how to spend the money, they will attach a lot of strings and compromise the independence and integrity of the armed forces."

He was, however, sure that Paul Hamilton, drafted to coach the Nigerian military footballers, would ride over Guinea in yesterday's match, precisely because they were able to pull a goalless draw in Conakry in the first leg.

Nigeria would then meet Kenneth Kaunda's armed forces in the Africa final to be played in Yaounde, Cameroon, next month.

Come, come, money-bags

Commodore Okwesa doesn't want your rotten money because he is the head of a military team. This other commodore doesn't want it (not the rotten type, though). Yinka Omololu, a surgeon and chairman of the Nigerian Squash Rackets Association (NSRA), in fact counts his association lucky because squash is one of the most patronised games by private sponsors.

After ruminating over the loaded squash calendar which has over an open national championships, Commodore Omololu changed his mind about attacking Anthony Ikazoboh, another Commodore (but this time at the Air Force who is now resting his dogs in retirement) for pursuing with zest, the privatization of all sports associations.

"People are unhappy over the Minister's policy because it is so sudden, but that is probably for the best. I know Nigerians very well. If you want to do it gradually, you won't be able to do it at all.

"Ikazoboh is only trying to bring a progressive system that has worked in all advanced societies. What it means for my own association is that, we can elect our own officers, appoint an energetic and competent executive secretary who can plan and run around for sponsorship by private individuals and companies. Squash has a lot of friends, so we see no cause for alarm. But I am sorry for some associations that aren't so lucky."

Such associations may include badminton, shooting, taekwondo, judo, wrestling and even boxing, whose only national open championships in a year are funded by government.

QUOTELINES

Gentlemen that's the end of the briefing. Anything you hear from now is off the record. You can now ask me what I will do when I'm retired.

— Commodore M E Okwesa who addressed a press conference last Tuesday at Boriny Camp before yesterday's match between Nigerian and Guinean armed forces soccer teams.

Commodore Okwesa: Taiwo, no chicken for these press men?

Major Taiwo: No chicken, sir!

Commodore Okwesa: Why?

Major Taiwo: The chicken ran away, sir!

tay
away,
money bags

The Nigerian military footballers are poor but as a result they are rich

By Ochereome Nnanna

If there is anything that has suddenly acquired an offensive reputation in the Nigerian armed forces, it is the word, moneybag. Ibrahim Babangida, the Commander-in-Chief himself believes that those who clutch bags of money are a source of poison not only to his administration, but also for the envisaged democracy of the Third Republic.

Willy-nilly, his boys in the armed forces who engage in sports also think that money-bags do no one any good. They were running around trying to put together a team that will be good enough to defeat their Guinean counterparts last week (in an International Sports Council World Cup qualifying match that was played yesterday at Onikan Stadium). They were complaining that the authorities are pinching penny in releasing funds for armed forces sports activities. Yet they would rather stay poor and starve than succumb to the evil temptations of moneybags who come in the guise of public-spirited philanthropists.

A source close to the Conseil International du Sports Militaire (CISM) Zone 6 Liaison Headquarters, Bonny camp Lagos disclosed to TSM Sporting that many renounced wealthy people in the society have approached the armed forces sports authorities, urging it to allow for private funding of the various sports groups within the military to enable them grow so that they can contribute meaningfully to the na-



Commodore Yinka Omololu.
Not afraid of money bags



Now champ, Omuta. Cold-blooded

By Ochereome Nnanna

Up Bedel! the woman screamed ecstatically, holding the glittering trophy high above her head. Her well-made-up face was bathed in perspiration as she fussed over the goodies neatly packaged in a Bagco polypropylene bag.

She sorted them out reverently and revealed a pair of tennis shoes, a junior tennis racket, two Dunlop tennis balls, shirts and shorts won by her son, Godwin Omuta.

But beside her, the new Bagco U-18 boys singles champion, Omuta, stood silently, like a graven image cast out of clay. There were no smiles of victory on his face, absolutely no expression of any sort.

Godwin Omuta, 17, is a tall, lanky boy. He has a calabash-shaped head, with ears pointing out at opposite directions, like the wings of a descending kite. One may add that his blood

is made of frozen haemoglobin.

What else can one say of a teenager who has just won his first national competition but seemed unimpressed by a crowd of fellow Bendelites jumping up and down, hugging themselves, picking up his hand (which dangled idly by his side) and shaking it, generally happy for him?

He came into the competition as the fifth seed but defeated the first seed, Ganiyu Adenekan of Lagos in straight sets of 6-3, 7-5. This was the climax of a string of victories he also scored over Lagos entrants — Gbanga Abiodun 6-0, 6-1, George Etaware 6-2, 6-4.

In none of those matches did he ever alter the deadpan expression on his face, or even raise his hand in victory. After beating Adenekan in the final within 65 minutes, he ignored the ovation that washed around the centre court of the National Stadium lawn tennis complex and went for his towel.

The champ who can't rejoice

Omuta's coaches have taught him how to win but not how to smile and celebrate!

After giving his sweating face and arms a brisk rub, he sat down on a chair and started fiddling with the laces of his shoes.

Why doesn't he celebrate, or at least smile? Does he hate victories, and if he does, why win at all? While he was busy trying to obey photographers' command to pose one way or the other, TSM Sporting put these questions to his coach and mother of the

Sunday Oriade



Stretched

Bendel side, Madam Vicky Oriato Casting an amused glance at the boy, coach Oriato said: "Of course he's happy. He is a very quiet boy." Coach Oriato seized the chance to beat her own drum and that of Bendel.

"When Nigeria started looking for another Ndaka Odzor, I told people not to worry. We will give you another Odzor. After all, he too, is from Bendel State. We have facilities in Bendel, as well as competent, experienced coaches. What we are looking for is sponsors to help groom the numerous talents that abound in Bendel.

"It is not easy for anyone to play tennis these days because of the cost of equipment. Look at rackets. A good tennis racket sells for N2,500, tennis shoes cost anything from N700! We want companies to keep up the faith and sponsor these children so that we will make a big impact in the tennis world".

This is the current clan call among tennis administrators. The chairman of the Nigerian Lawn Tennis Association, Kofii Fidelis, a colonel has already gone, beret in hand, to the Nigerian Bag Manufacturing Company, the Bagco U-18 sponsors, to consider taking up this challenge.

The marketing manager of the company, A.S. Ogunkoya, told TSM Sporting that Bagco has already started doing so, because Sule Ladipo a former Bagco champion, was assisted in his efforts to pursue his tennis career abroad when he applied. That was because he was found to be good

enough for the gesture. "We are ready to do more", he said, "but the player must show a lot of promise. We don't want to throw money into the Lagoon."

'The boys won't play with us'

My mummy says you should write 11 years plus', the little girl Doris Reuben told our reporter, with an air of shy anxiety.

She had put her age at 11 years, but her coach, Vicky Oriato, wanted the correct age on paper to avoid any further complication. "She will be 12 years in December", coach Oriato said.

Doris, and the Amadin sisters (Osaro 12, and Lilian 11,) as well as Ndali Ijomah, all U-12 players, are the only apparent hope of Nigeria ever breaking it big in the girls lawn tennis world, says Elizabeth Ekong, national tennis head coach.

"All our Under 18 girls are playing nonsense. I don't know why. They are given the same kind of coaching as the boys, but while the boys keep improving, the girls game is nothing to write home about. You need to have seen these little girls in action. They have the zeal, determination, speed, and talent that growing tennis players must have. They are just Under 12 but they were able to get to the quarter finals."

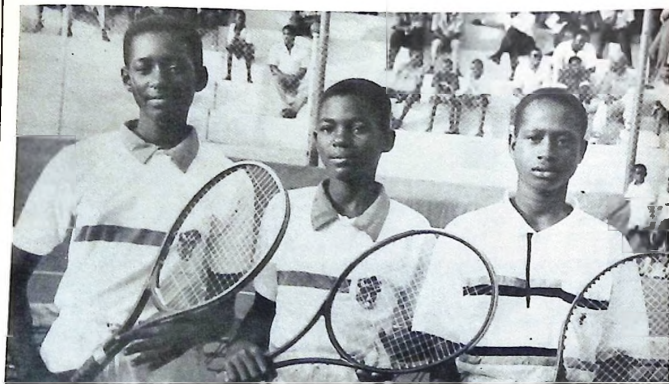
Who knows, if Lilian Amadin had arrived on time to avoid that walk-over by the eventual champion, Margri Olagundoye of Ondo State, she may have gone beyond the quarters, because Margaret's only fair points were her hindcourt power shots that often threw her opponents around the court, forcing them to miss return shots. But Olagundoye is not agile and has no technique.

Her opponent, Funmilayo Olopade, whom she beat 2-0 in the final, is fairly agile and shows flashes of technique, but her nerves are weak. She almost breaks into tears each time she loses a point. Why are the girls so bad?

The answer came from pretty Miss Omotayo Ibrahim, 17, who lost to Olopade in the semi-final of the girls singles. According to her, most of the girls are really new in the game. Her self, for instance, she started playing in 1988, and between then and now, she has taken part in only four national championships. It all boils down to lack of enough competitions and adequate exposure.

Since the boys are improving, why don't the girls consider sparring with them to gain a thing or two?

"We do sometimes," she said, "but only when the boys agree. The boys don't like playing with us because they, too, want to improve. We are doing our best. I practise everyday for at least one hour. We need more competitions. That's all."



The Amadin sisters, Lilian and Osaro, and Doris Reuben bright kids from Bendel

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RE
ACK



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