

DAILY TRUST

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Monday Column

Richard Umaru on:

What is good for the goose...

Pg. 5

I have done a lot for

PDP

-Simon Shango

Pg. 20



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FG invites ASUU for dialogue

By Suleiman Mohammed

The Federal Government has invited the National Executive members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) to a fresh dialogue as its nationwide strike enters the second week.

Minister of Education, Professor Babalola Borishade, in a letter addressed to the national president and members of ASUU, yesterday said dialogue was a better option than the current course of action.

"I enjoin you to reconsider in sympathy with your students, many of whom have lost good time to strikes of this nature in the past," he said, adding that besides the neglect, observable decline of the last fifteen years, cannot be solved in one day, "not even by one omnibus agreement."

Professor Borishade noted with dismay that despite explanations by government that some of the demands put forward are not easily tenable in a democratic setting, the union went ahead to embark on strike.

According to him, the issue of statutory allocation of 28% of federal and state budgets to education, provision of N115 billion as against the present N62 billion in the 2001 budget, as well as the reconstitution of ETF, NUC and JAMB governing councils and abrogation of certain acts all required legislative and constitutional considerations.

With respect to some of the provisions, he said government can neither sign for nor impose itself on the states without due consultation and consensus with the governors who are visitors to the state universities, "and from whose budgets any financial commitments will have to be met after due approval from their own states assemblies."

The minister noted that it was based on this that he entered into dialogue with ASUU national president. Dr.

contd. on pg 2

BOUNDARY CLASH

24 killed in Nasarawa, Plateau

No fewer than 3000 persons are believed to have fled their homes in four local government areas in Nasarawa and Plateau States, following an outbreak of communal clashes among people in the areas.

The police have confirmed 24 dead in the clashes.

...Bandits raid 10 villages, kill 6 in Adamawa

No fewer than six persons have been killed, eight others injured and several houses razed when a gang of armed bandits raided ten villages in Toungo Local Government

INEC can't register parties

The National Progressive Forum (NPF), an umbrella body of progressives said yesterday that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has no legal and constitutional powers to register new political parties in the country.

Speaking at the third national steering committee meeting of the forum held at

From Buhari Bello, Jos, with agency reports

They have also sealed Kwalla and Kundum, disallowing people from entering or leaving the villages to forestall further violence.

Daily Trust correspondent was among the people barred from entering the troubled area. The police

have however, not reported any arrests as at press time yesterday.

The Local Government Areas affected are Awe, Keana, and Doma in Nasarawa, and Quam Pam in Plateau State.

Daily Trust learnt that the latest outbreak of violence in

terror along the Nigeria/Cameroun border villages in the southern part of the state.

Governor Boni Haruna who visited the area, announced that 200 soldiers and an unspecified number of policemen had been deployed to the area to curb the menace of the bandits.

According to information made available to Daily Trust, the Nigerian soldiers had accordingly been redeployed into the surrounding forests where the bandits were suspected to be hiding.

The Governor decried the frequency of armed banditry from neighbouring countries saying that his government

Rather, he said new par-

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Adamu



Dariye

FG, states, LGs share N158bn allocation

By Osborne Adi Jnr

The Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC), has disbursed the sum of N158 billion among the three tiers of government as their March, 2001 allocation from the federation account.

contd. on pg 2



Former Head of State, Major General Muhammadu Buhari (rtd) with Governor Umar Musa Yar'Adua of Katsina State at the late General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Memorial Lecture in Abuja, Saturday. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje.

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NEWS

INEC *contd. from pg 1*

ties are allowed to emerge from the electoral process, adding that "the 1999 constitution guarantees freedom of association. The constitution doesn't give INEC the power to register parties."

"In a democracy, you don't register political parties, they emerge. And you let the people register them with their votes," Dr. Izougu said.

He commended the electoral bill sent to the National Assembly by INEC, and explained further that the registration of parties for the 2003 elections INEC "is unconstitutional. INEC is supposed to be a clearinghouse."

"There is nothing like registration. If we don't participate, there would be no election," the protem chair-

man added.

According to Dr. Izuogu, progressives hold the key to the emancipation of the lower class, saying the problems facing the nation since independence in 1960, have been the inability of progressives to rule the nation.

Former governor of Lagos State in the Second Republic, Alhaji Lateef Jakande, corroborated Dr. Izougu's position by stressing that according to section 222 of the 1999 constitution, "it's not within the competence of INEC to register or deregister any party."

"We only have to decide we are a party and we are a party," Jakande said adding that the fundamental human

rights of an individual as enshrined in the constitution supersedes any electoral guidelines of INEC.

Those present at yesterday's meeting were the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Alhaji Ghali Na'Abba, who sent a representative to deliver his speech, former Kaduna State Governor, Alhaji Balarabe Musa, elder statesman, Chief Anthony Enahoro, and Abia State Governor, Chief Orji Uzor Kalu both of whom sent representatives.

Others were former Edo State Governor, Dr. John Oyegun, his then Delta State counterpart, Chief Felix Ibru and Mrs. Sarah Jubril who represented Women in Nigeria (WIN) among others.

10 villages *contd. from pg 1*

alone had committed over three million naira for operations to contain them and that he was still willing to commit more resources until the area was rid of the bandits.

He pledged to execute developmental projects in the area to improve the lives of the people, adding that the Federal Government too had already designed many programmes for the rapid development of the area.

He however pleaded with them to cooperate with the government and security personnel and report any suspicious activities to the police.

The councillor representing the area, Malam Abdullahi Yerima told newsmen that the armed bandits shuttled between Nigeria and Cameroon, raiding villages and carting

away their belongings.

He said that in the villages they raided in Tounga area, they shot the men they sighted, raped women, stole their possessions and burnt down their houses.

He said that in Tafare village alone, about 30 houses were burnt by the invaders.

Toungo, the home of the national chairman of the Association of Local Government Chairmen of Nigeria (ALGON), Mr. Joseph Jella, is located near the Nigeria/Cameroon border in the southern part of Adamawa State.

Mr. Jella who spoke on the incident, expressed dismay over the increasing wave of banditry in the area and called for urgent assistance to help curb it.

The chairman admitted

that he was not around when the latest rounds of banditry took place.

Governor Haruna has been complaining about the activities of the bandits in many parts of the state, blaming it on the porous Nigeria/Cameroon border.

Last month, he urged the Federal Government to open discussions with the Cameroonian authorities with a view to tackling the problem.

Recently, the Nigeria Customs Service announced its plan to provide a surveillance aircraft to help the state in its fight against armed banditry.

The comptroller-general of the service, Alhaji Ahmed Aliyu Mustapha, said that his men would work with the police to provide the surveillance services.

24 killed *contd. from pg 1*

Quam Pam Local Government Area of Plateau State was between Tiv settlers and the Kwalla community.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that as at Friday, the death of four other persons and several injuries were confirmed in another clash between Tiv settlers and the Kwalla community in Kundum village of the local government area.

More than 40 houses and property valued at several millions of naira were also reported to have been destroyed, leading to mass exodus of people from the village.

A witness told NAN that the matter had been reported to the police and that the acting chairman of the council, the Divisional Police Officer

(DPO) and the secretary of the local government area had visited the area.

The police in a statement from its Public Relations Officer (PPRO) in the state, Mr. Aliyu Yusuf, said mobile policemen had been deployed to maintain law and order in the troubled area. He warned that any person or group caught disturbing the peace of the state would be made to face the wrath of the law.

Our correspondent traced the attack in Kundum village to December last year when unidentified persons allegedly murdered a Kwalla farmer and took away his property.

This was followed by similar attacks which prompted retaliation from Kwalla kinsfolk on those suspected to have masterminded the attacks on them. This was said to have resulted to the

deaths of several people and a large scale destruction of property.

The Plateau State police commissioner, Mr. Mohammed Abubakar, confirmed the killing of four people in the latest clash.

The development has resulted in a large scale movement of people from Awe, Keana and Doma local government areas in Nasarawa State to neighbouring communities in Benue State while hundreds of others are said to have taken refuge at the houses of their close friends for fear of reprisals.

Meanwhile, the Tiv Youths Organisation in Nasarawa State has appealed to the Federal Government to clearly demarcate the boundary between Nasarawa and Benue states to avoid the recurrence of violence in the area.

Indecent dressing: NASS may reject female corps members

Following complaints by some members and staff of the National Assembly over indecent dressing by some female staff and visitors, the National Assembly may request for the posting of only male National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members to the Assembly.

A reliable source at the Assembly to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) at the weekend in Abuja, that the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Alhaji Ghali Na'Abba, had already given his approval to the move.

The source said that the

speaker was equally worried about the frequent misunderstanding between some members of the House of Representatives and their wives over female corps members posted to their offices.

"He is always settling



Speaker Na'Abba

quarrels between some legislators and their wives because of these female corps members," he said.

The sources added "the recent circular about indecent dressing by women in the National Assembly was issued because of the female corps members, they are overdoing it."

NAN recalls that the clerk of the National Assembly, Alhaji Ibrahim Salim, in a circular dated Feb. 23, and tagged: "Mode of dressing of staff of the National Assembly," expressed displeasure with the dressing habits of some of the workers and visitors.

ASUU *contd. from pg 1*

Dipo Fashina and suggested the setting up of a high powered technical committee, comprising four ASUU nominees and four from government to determine the way forward.

However, he explained that Dr. Fashina refused to work along with the commit-

tee on university autonomy and other related matters, despite government's order to the NUC to source for N253.7 million being shortfall of ASUU/FG agreement of May, 1999 meant for payment of allowances to university staff.

While appealing to

ASUU members to be considerate, the minister said he had met with the Revenue Mobilisation, Fiscal and Allocation Commission and made a case for a stable funding of education, adding that a letter to that effect had been sent to all the state gov-

N158bn allocation *contd. from pg 1*

A breakdown of the allocation showed that the Federal Government got N76.488 billion, states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), got N53.545 billion, while local governments got N23.961 billion.

Special funds were collectively allocated N4.318 billion and distributed in the following manner: Ecological

Fund N3.113 billion, while N1.206 billion was credited to the Stabilisation and Residual Accounts.

Details of the allocation also showed that the state governments' share include N11.445 billion derivation fund to the Oil Producing states of Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta,

Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers.

According to the allocation, Abia had N160.343 million, Akwa-Ibom N2.523 billion; Bayelsa N2.082 billion; Cross-River, N264 million; Delta N3.434 billion; Edo, N66.391 million; Imo, N288.468 million; Ondo N807.444 million and Rivers, N2.082 billion.

ALLOCATION OF REVENUE FROM THE FEDERATION ACCOUNT AND VAT PROCEEDS

FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2001

1	2	3	4	5	6
S/NO	STATES	ALLOCATION	EXCESS CRUDE OIL SALES	VAT	TOTAL
		=N=	=N=	=N=	=N=
1	ABIA	645,023,357.57	423,582,599.23	83,154,327.05	1,151,760,283.86
2	ADAMAWA	622,090,329.85	423,733,264.77	67,783,235.90	1,113,606,830.52
3	AKWA IBOM	1,956,800,089.59	1,558,554,059.02	71,253,783.23	3,586,607,931.84
4	ANAMBRA	624,490,880.32	413,144,406.54	81,055,571.99	1,118,690,858.86
5	BAUCHI	664,909,632.64	441,830,309.10	75,829,099.83	1,182,569,041.57
6	BAYELSA	1,595,412,137.83	1,264,109,505.23	57,570,609.42	2,917,092,252.47
7	BENUE	705,955,401.85	483,661,631.62	75,931,215.89	1,265,548,249.35
8	BORNO	724,214,299.32	496,255,516.81	73,104,901.54	1,293,574,717.66
9	CROSS RIVER	571,189,111.52	411,434,695.68	65,779,568.84	1,048,403,376.04
10	DELTA	2,490,575,034.11	1,976,434,842.93	103,432,513.02	4,570,442,390.06
11	EBONYI	555,837,401.27	324,009,073.91	61,204,130.03	941,050,605.21
12	EDO	612,134,828.16	442,945,996.90	74,515,791.84	1,129,596,616.90
13	EKITI	482,557,175.10	337,233,719.87	60,581,720.85	880,372,615.82
14	ENUGU	578,354,963.03	359,810,079.76	73,206,840.30	1,011,371,883.09
15	GOMBE	509,932,885.07	331,857,017.61	64,469,103.01	906,259,005.69
16	IMO	750,391,908.35	517,971,677.18	74,126,740.24	1,342,490,325.76
17	JIGAWA	628,460,825.73	440,427,094.93	74,336,799.35	1,143,224,720.01
18	KADUNA	743,339,937.23	540,623,594.58	111,759,575.09	1,395,723,106.90
19	KANO	919,071,137.79	611,456,200.04	119,179,760.20	1,649,707,098.03
20	KATSINA	698,760,111.31	525,032,833.97	86,241,242.32	1,310,034,187.60
21	KEBBI	592,721,404.28	399,823,775.25	67,932,259.65	1,060,477,439.18
22	KOGI	626,414,919.95	406,270,028.37	68,350,730.04	1,101,035,678.36
23	KWARA	540,100,993.69	391,959,072.20	66,957,711.37	999,017,777.26
24	LAGOS	845,646,077.45	609,067,231.73	482,595,003.12	1,937,308,312.31
25	NASSARAWA	502,443,627.63	341,435,744.47	58,524,651.80	902,404,023.90
26	NIGER	670,321,420.70	483,823,130.75	73,290,820.15	1,227,435,371.61
27	OGUN	596,781,928.61	437,300,715.50	82,314,924.17	1,116,397,568.28
28	ONDO	1,017,092,055.19	750,334,653.62	69,785,702.65	1,837,212,411.46
29	OSUN	555,865,247.80	404,964,323.12	68,009,448.87	1,029,429,019.79
30	OYO	710,318,651.66	497,879,649.60	98,290,763.97	1,306,489,065.22
31	PLATEAU	577,533,834.34	393,822,406.54	73,323,934.93	1,044,680,175.80
32	RIVERS	1,766,842,861.52	1,378,162,935.18	104,769,572.11	3,249,775,368.81
33	SOKOTO	592,652,064.90	415,658,308.14	70,767,152.09	1,079,077,525.13
34	TARABA	577,273,248.06	400,657,171.72	60,975,813.22	1,038,906,233.00
35	YOBE	613,781,458.84	386,157,292.04	59,633,178.88	1,059,571,929.76
36	ZAMFARA	570,217,994.76	370,046,991.76	65,418,750.58	1,005,683,737.10
37	FCT-ABUJA	924,660,517.32	636,398,988.91	31,576,231.79	1,592,635,738.02
	SUB-TOTAL	29,360,169,754.32	21,027,870,538.58	3,157,623,179.34	53,545,663,472.24
38	FGN	44,752,702,476.60	30,787,751,002.57	947,286,953.80	76,487,740,432.97
39	LOCAL GOVTS	9,052,138,764.93	12,698,367,527.88	2,210,336,225.54	23,960,842,518.35
40	ECOLOGY	1,844,233,055.72	1,268,567,656.34	0.00	3,112,800,712.06
41	STAB/RESIDUAL	888,949,022.43	316,216,531.26	0.00	1,205,165,553.69
	GRAND TOTAL	85,898,193,074.00	66,098,773,256.63	6,315,246,358.68	158,312,212,689.31

NEWS

Adamawa First Lady introduces REAP

The wife of the Adamawa State Governor, Mrs. Zainab Boni Haruna, has introduced a new scheme aimed at improving the living condition of rural dwellers, destitutes and the disabled in the state.

The scheme, known as Rural Empowerment Acceleration Programme (REAP), will assist the identified groups to set up small scale businesses and provide them loan facilities.

According to Mrs. Haruna who spoke in Yola last week, the introduction of the scheme followed the needs assessment survey among the rural dwellers conducted by experts from the academia.

"After taking a hard look at the impoverished lives of our rural dwellers who are in the majority, I felt touched by the near-helpless predicament of our rural women, children, destitutes and the disabled."

"I therefore decided to come up with a programme that will address the plight of these marginalized, weaker members of the society," she said.

From Abdullahi Tasiu Abubakar, in Yola

Mrs Haruna said the scheme will focus attention on creating small scale enterprises for women and other disadvantaged groups and facilitate access to credit facilities and appropriate technology, training and skills development.

According to her, the first phase of the scheme will produce 500 beneficiaries from all the 21 local government areas of the state and the

number will increase in subsequent phases.

She said that the wife of the President, Mrs Stella Obasanjo, would launch the scheme, which requires assistance from individuals, governments and non-governmental organisations and international donor agencies, on April 11, 2001.

But she warned against exaggerated expectations from the people on the scheme.



Hajiya Binta Shehu Yar'Adua, wife of the late Major General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua (middle) flanked by her children, Mrs. Asia Shehu Yar'Adua (right) and Ibrahim Shehu Yar'Adua at the late Generals memorial lectures held at the Nicon Hilton Hotel, Abuja... Saturday.

Nigeria is at the brink of another energy crisis, as scientists have predicted that the Rivers Benue and Niger and the Lake Chad would be a history in the next 15 years if urgent steps are not taken to dredge them.

In an Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) submitted to the federal government, the scientists warned that the two Rivers and the lake would dry up within this period if the government continued the delay to dredge them.

Already, they said, Nigeria has started harvesting the

Scientists warn on Rivers Niger, Benue, Lake Chad

By Tashikmah Hallah

Niger, as the level of water has immensely dropped culminating in the current energy crisis inherent in the country.

The report however, vindicated the late General Sani Abacha, who through the defunct Petroleum (Special) Trust Fund (PTF) awarded the contract of dredging the River Niger to Julius Berger, but was objected by some communities living in the Niger Delta. It was subsequently cancelled by President Olusegun Obasanjo as soon as he assumed office in May 1999.

While groups in the Niger Delta were against the dredging alleging that the government did not take into cognisance the negative environmental impact on them, President Olusegun Obasanjo on the other hand cancelled the contract and constituted the Christopher Kolade panel to review all contracts awarded by the previous military regime.

But Alhaji Isa Yuguda, Minister of State for Transport while confirming the Scientist's report however

denied that the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo has cancelled the contracts to dredge the River Niger.

Alhaji Yuguda in an interview with *Daily Trust* over the weekend explained that the present administration on assuming office inherited numerous contracts awarded by the past military regime and was out to verify its (contract) importance to the nation.

According to him, the issue of the dredging of the River Niger and establishment of inland ports has been dear to the heart of the president, and there has never been a time the contract was cancelled.



Obasanjo

Gowon inaugurates three ACF committees

An advisory council for the Arewa Consultative Forum is to be inaugurated in Kaduna tomorrow.

Also to be inaugurated are its Board of Trustees and Central working committee slated for Wednesday and Thursday at the Arewa House, Kaduna.

A statement issued in Kaduna at the weekend by its acting secretary, Alhaji Inuwa Abdulkadir said the ACF chairman, board of patrons, Gen. Yakubu Gowon would perform the inauguration ceremonies and that former president, Alhaji Shehu Shagari and former military heads of state, Generals Muhammadu Buhari, Ibrahim Babangida and Abdulsalami Abubakar, all members of ACF board of patrons, are expected to witness the ceremonies.

Other special guests of honour expected are the Speaker, House of Representatives, Alhaji Ghali Umar Na'Abba, Deputy Senate President, Senator Ibrahim Nasir Mantu and the chairman, Conference of Northern

From Dare Oyewole, Kaduna

Senators, Senator Iya Abubakar as well as the Kaduna state governor, Alhaji Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi who is the chief host.

According to Alhaji Inuwa, the immediate aim of the forum, that of protecting the interest of the north, would not becloud its strong belief in one united Nigeria.

"The ACF, whatever might be its immediate objective, ultimately stands," he said.

Alhaji Inuwa said as a federation of between 300 - 500 ethnic groups, the ACF was a true reflection of the federal arrangement, adding: "it is our policy to protect and live by this commitment."

Daily Trust learnt that the advisory council of ACF consists of twenty people with a member from each state of the north and Abuja while the Board of Trustees and Central Working Committee have three and twelve persons (per state) respectively as well as representatives from Abuja.

The ACF came into exist-

ence on Monday, March 8, 2000 following a resolution of a committee of Northern Traditional Rulers and leaders of thought to combine several Northern organisations with the aim of identifying and protecting northern interest under a united Nigeria.



General Gowon (rtd)

consequences of the possible drying up of the River

West Africa calls extraordinary security summit

The 15-nation Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) will hold a summit in Nigeria on Wednesday to discuss regional security.

Foreign ministers of the group's 10-member special mediation committee met on Tuesday to prepare the summit in Abuja, said a statement from ECOWAS on Friday night.

"An extraordinary summit of ECOWAS heads of state and government to discuss political and security issues affecting the sub-region will take place on 11 April at ECOWAS secretariat," the statement said.

By Austine Odo, with agency reports

The statement made available to *Reuters* said the agenda would be topped by fighting in the volatile triangle where the borders of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone meet, as well as the political situation in Ivory Coast and Guinea Bissau.

ECOWAS heads of state would also review plans agreed by the bloc last December, to deploy a 1,700-strong regional force to try to end clashes involving rebels from Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone.

ECOWAS agreed to field troops from Nigeria, Niger

and Senegal in the troubled border area but has yet to muster the logistics support to go ahead.

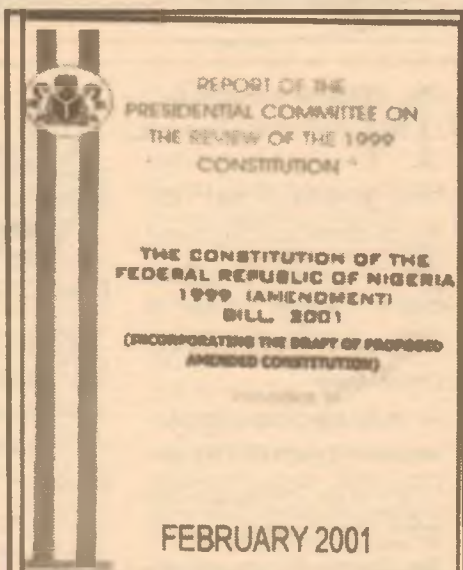
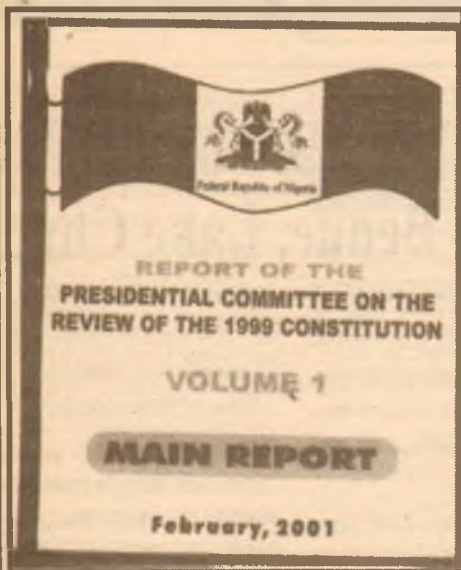
Reuters reports that the agenda also includes discussion of the UN security Council resolution on sanctions against Liberia as well as the situation in the Gambia River Basin, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau and Senegal.

The sanctions on Liberia, which has been accused of collaborating with rebels in neighbouring Sierra Leone since 1991, aim to halt the trade in so-called "blood diamonds" from Sierra Leone, which the United Nations says pass through Liberia and help fund the conflict.

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 WThe above named Organisation has applied for registration under the companies and Allied Matters Decree of 1990.
 The Trustees are:
 1. Alh Usman K. Tafida (Chairman)
 2. Alh Mohammed B. Umar (Secretary)
 3. Alh. Ahmed Umar Belel (Member)
 4. Alh. Alfa Umar Belel (Member)
 5. Hajija Habibatu Umar Belel (Member)
 6. Hajia Fadimatu (Innacharo) Belel (Member)
 Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar-General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Area 11, Garki, Abuja within 28 days of this publication.
 Signed:
BARRISTER SABO ABDULAZIZ

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW OF THE 1999 CONSTITUTION



The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo has directed that the Report of the Committee on the Review of the 1999 Constitution be made available to Nigerian public.

Interested members of the public can obtain copies of the Report from any of the addresses specified in this public notice.

The purpose of the public presentation is to allow Nigerians to study the Report, consider the proposed amendments to the 1999 Constitution and forward comments, observations, views and recommendations, if any, to Government.

To this end, this important Report is scheduled to be presented to the public as follows:

Date: Thursday, 12th April, 2001

Time: 11.00 a.m.

Venue: The Auditorium of the National Press Centre, Abuja.

Interested members of the general public and the mass media are hereby invited.

Addresses

- *Federal Ministry of Information & National Orientation, Radio House, Garki, Abuja.
- *Senior Special Assistant to the President on Constitution Matters, The Presidency, Abuja.
- *National Orientation Agency Offices in the States and Headquarters.
- *Federal Information Centres, in the various 8
- *-States of the Federation

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INFORMATION
AND NATIONAL ORIENTATION,
Radio House, Garki, Abuja

NEWS

Petrol price deregulation attributed to govt's short-sightedness

The deregulation of the oil sector currently being planned by the Federal Government has been described as "undemocratic, a total betrayal of people's trust and a manifestation of the short-sightedness of the Obasanjo administration."

The National President, Civil Leadership Association of Nigeria, Mr. Ayodele Thomas, made this assertion in Katsina last week.

He described the move as an avenue by government to accommodate the interests of a few economically empowered section of the Nigerian public so that they could hijack the entire oil sector and economically enslave Nigerians.

From Hassan A. Kanti,
Katsina

He said that although his organisation welcomed any initiative to stabilise the availability of petroleum products, any attempt to further worsen the already difficult condition of living would not be tolerated.

He added that government is aware of the causes of the persistent petroleum crisis and why it evades any solution.

"The instability in the availability and distribution of petroleum products is as a result of smuggling and diversion of the product, which are carried out by some powerful individuals and the unlawful allocations by government for political settlement,"

he said.

He therefore called on the president to wake up to his responsibilities by correcting these anomalies before introducing any deregulation option.

On resource control, Mr. Ayodele called on the Federal Government to assist the states in order to identify their natural resources, help to harness them and assist in the development of such potentials, "since the essence of any democratic process is to facilitate rapid development instead of referring the matter to the court."

He urged the Federal Government to initiate a proper democratic experiment that could take the nation through a genuine democracy.

Akume commends FG for flood relief

Benue State Governor, Mr. George Akume, has commended the Federal Government for assisting the State in flood control and provision of relief for flood victims.

Governor Akume who spoke in Makurdi last week while receiving relief materials from the National Emergency Management Agency for flood victims in Otukpo Local Government Area, thanked the Federal Government for its prompt responses to flood disasters in the state.

The governor who was represented by the Secretary to the State Government, Engr. Bartholomew Oche, urged the agency to work towards ensuring that other victims benefit from the gesture.

Governor Akume Directed the Ministry for Water Resources and environment to take proper stock of the materials and ensure that only real victims enjoy them.

Earlier, the leader of the team from the agency, Mr. Adeyanju Michael, said that other materials were on the

way to the State and expressed the hope that items supplied would be made available to real victims.



Gov. Akume

Senator unhappy with petroleum bill

The chairman, senate committee on public accounts, Senator Idris Abubakar, has expressed reservations on the petroleum regulatory agency bill recently sent to the senate by the executive.

Senator Abubakar has also bemoaned the Federal Government's continuous campaign to deregulate the down-stream sector of the petroleum industry, saying the campaign is unpopular among Nigerians.

Abubakar, in an interview with *Daily Trust*, explained that he was concerned about the bill because the president does not need the sanction of the National Assembly to set up the body.

According to him, the petroleum regulatory agency is

By Tashikalma Hallah

a body under the constitution vested on the president; "a power to delegate to ministries or any other body or authority, without any legislative approval."

He said the bill sent to the National Assembly, stated that the proposed agency will be answerable to no other person than the president, adding "it is bound to carry out the instructions of the president."

"In the schedule, you will find NNPC shall do this; Mosimi shall be brought in and its capacity shall be enhanced. Then in the second quarter of 2001 the refineries would be fully deregulated.

"So, if the bill is passed

by the National Assembly, as it is, then this schedule, this time table becomes a law, a person who would have privatised and deregulated in accordance with the schedule will be the National Assembly" he said

Consequently, he said if the president failed to privatise and deregulate the refineries within the second quarter, he has contravened the law and the constitution.

Senator Abubakar (APP) said that the PDP government has run short of ideas in the governance of this country and suggested that since the deregulation campaign has become unpopular, the government should resort to other methods in meeting up with the demands of Nigerians.

Kano NIPR gets new exco

The Kano State Chapter of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations has elected new executive members to run its affairs for the next two years.

According to a statement made available to *Daily Trust* in Kano on Friday, Mallam Abba Ado Dandago and Mallam Sule Ya'u Sule were

From Jamilah Musa, Kano

elected chairman and vice chairman of the Institute respectively.

Others are Usman Bello, Secretary, Madecnat Lawal Assistant Secretary, Mallam Sunusi Muhammed Treasurer, Auwalu Y. Hamza, Financial Secretary and

Mallam Sani Shehu Minjibir Public Relations Executive.

The statement signed by the Public Relations Executive of the Kano NIPR said Mallam Abubakar Shehu Minjibir, Baffa Nura Mohammed and Mrs Lantana Ahmed Onucheyo were elected as Ex-officio members.


DAILY TRUST
EDITORIAL

Higher Naira denominations and inflation

It is the level of the economy's productivity that determines the value of the Naira and not the introduction of a higher Naira denomination", so declared the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor, Joseph Sanusi, while allaying fears that the recent introduction of the N500 note will heat up the nation's economy and trigger an uncontrollable level of inflation.

The formal launching of the note by President Obasanjo last Wednesday and its circulation brings to three the number of high denominations of the Naira introduced by the CBN in less than two years. The apex bank had in November 1999, introduced N100, followed by N200 notes in November last year.

Defending its decision to introduce the high denomination currency into the economy, the CBN posited that this would not only help to reduce the level of wear-and-tear of the currencies because of the increasing difficulty in maintaining clean notes, it would also make them more manageable for business transactions. Also the difficulties encountered by the banking community in handling large quantity of Naira notes would ease.

The CBN argued further that the increasing cost of producing lower denominations of the Naira also necessitated the production of higher denominations of the currency. It is on record that the surge in the number of currency notes in circulation from about N1.75 billion in the early 1990s to about 6.75 billion in 1998 shot up the cost of printing the Naira from N2 billion to N9 billion.

The large sums and cumbersome quantities of small denominations of Naira exchanged in business transactions, in the absence of other forms of payment in the country like moneycard, also unduly attract the attention of armed robbers.

These could, therefore, make the CBN's arguments valid; and its efforts in responding to the needs of the economy are commendable.

The CBN's desire to ensure that the currencies in circulation are genuine, clean and manageable is to be praised but, there is still the need to address the fear of inflation which often attends the introduction of higher currencies in the country.

For example, experience has shown that whenever a higher denomination of the Naira is introduced, the exchange rates of other world currencies, particularly the British Pound Sterling appreciates, sometimes even overtaking the new currency note. And this obviously bounces back at the purchasing power of the new currency. This happened with the introduction of the N50 note in 1993; the N100 note in November, 1999, and lately the N200 note late last year. Now the British Pound Sterling fluctuates between N171 and N177, chasing the N200 note.

With the recent introduction of the N500 note into the Nigerian economy, only time will tell where the world currencies will stand against the Naira.

Again, it is pertinent to observe that every introduction of a higher denomination of the Naira leads to an onward rejection of some of the lower denominations. A typical case happened when the N50 note was introduced alongside the 50 kobo and one Naira coins. Indeed, these currencies appear to have ceased to be legal tender today. These Nigerian coins are now melted and exported as copper bars to other parts of the world.

Such a situation is certainly an invitation to inflation, because experience has also shown that the disappearance of any particular denomination of the nation's currency always leads to a surge in the prices of commodities sold at the rate of the particular currency. For example, goods and services provided for 50k and one Naira are now being provided for between N5 to N10 respectively.

This, therefore, makes it imperative for the CBN to initiate other measures that would curb the rapid devaluation of the Naira to achieve its objectives of introducing high denomination notes.

MONDAY COLUMN

What is good for the goose...

By: Richard Umaru

It is often said that old habits die-hard. In Nigerian political life, it would seem, old habits take a long time indeed to die. Having lived for such a long time under military dictatorships and having imbibed the military's command style of rule, even our "brand new" civilian political leadership is finding it extremely difficult to shorn it self of the military's old administrative style and 'commandist' tendencies.

Two years into our new civilian democracy, President Obasanjo -for one- is still to master the civilianised way of conducting business. Behaving as the "Supreme Commander" of yore, he ordered troops into Odi. The President also saw nothing wrong in personally flogging a police officer in public during a visit to Kogi state; or in personally directing last month the immediate dismissal of an NNPC depot chief without observing the laid down disciplinary process. The latest in the series of these arbitrary and unilateral actions has been the decision on the deregulation of the downstream sector of the petroleum industry, obviously, without prior consultations with the National Assembly or the Council of State.

But if the President is suffering from a military hang-over, he can take consolation in the fact that he is not alone in this plight. Many actors in the present political establishment are suffering from the same ailment. Or, how else does one explain the attempts by the Senate to foist on Nigerians a uniform (and unitarist) local government law against clear constitutional provisions, which place that responsibility clearly on the various State Houses of Assembly?

But, perhaps, the most unabashed recent attempt to empty the Nigerian project of its federalist essence is the carefully orchestrated campaign that has lately been mounted by well-placed personages against the constitutional provisions for State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs). This opposition has been voiced by party bigwigs, the INEC and other prominent civilian politicians both inside and outside the National Assembly?

The issue has, indeed become so controversial that last week's 2nd Consultative Meeting of the Governor's Forum could not ignore it. In a communiqué issued at the end of their meeting, the 36 governors warned that the 1999 Nigerian Constitution has made provisions for the constitution of State Independent Electoral Commissions and that they stood by those provisions. Their words: "we are worried by the situation in the country where some elements are trying to steer the nation towards the unitary form of government as against a true federal system that will give stability to our democratic

experiment".

The main grouse of those who oppose the establishment of State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) is the fear they have that these state electoral commissions would be easily subjected to the manipulations of political actors at the state levels, particularly the state governors. In truth, there may be legitimate grounds for such fears, as almost all incumbent Nigerian politicians would spare no effort in trying to ensure their re-elections. But then to argue, on account of such fears, that the State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) should be scrapped is to shoot one's self on the foot.

There are at least four grounds on which such an argument is untenable. First of all, the fact presently on the ground is that so far as the present Nigerian Constitution is concerned, the establishment of the State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) is not only legal, but even obligatory. By virtue of section 197 (1) and part II of the Third Schedule to the 1999 Constitution, the State Independent Electoral Commission is the only statutory body with the constitutional powers "to organise, undertake and supervise all elections to local government councils within the state". No electoral act can change this position not even the draft electoral act that is now before the National Assembly. What those who are opposed to these commissions should do, therefore, is to first of all try their luck at a constitutional review of the relevant sections of the 1999 Constitution.

But before they embark on this onerous exercise they may do well to tarry a while and re-examine the issue with a view to determining whether they would be doing themselves, or anyone else, any good in trying to eliminate disservice were they to succeed in doing away with State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs). For one thing, few would deny the fact that one of the main reasons why our politicians rarely accept electoral defeats in good faith is the fact that experience in contesting elections and failing to win is rather lacking. The democratic culture has not taking root because the cumulative experience of electoral contests, during which elections are lost and won, is still very rudimentary and discontinuous. One of the best ways of building up this democratic culture at the grassroots is to allow for the existence of electoral bodies and other democratic institutions at the state level. Initially, some of these institutions may mess things up and compromise themselves, but this is the only way democratic institution and the democratic culture can grow over time.

Then, there is the fact that in all federations, local affairs are always the preserve of the constituent units of a federation, which in our case, are the state governments. Elections to the local government councils are local issues par excellence. The administration and conduct of such elections should logically, therefore, be handled by state agencies - which in this case are rightfully the State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs). There can be no two ways about this in a truly federal set up.

However, what really knocks the bottom out of the arguments against the State Independent Electoral Commission (SIECs) is the untenability of suppositions that if the political establishment in the state would manipulate these state electoral Commissions. If this presumption is true then what guarantees are there that the same thing would not happen with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) at the centre. After all, sections 154(1), 154(3), 157(1) and particularly 158(I) which seek to guarantee the integrity and independence of the INEC at the centre are replicated almost verbatim (but with the requisite amendments) for the State Independent Electoral Commission in sections 198, 200(6), 201 (1) and 202.

Thus, if in spite of these safeguards people believe that the governor, of a state (or anyone else, for that matter) would still manipulate the State Independent Electoral Commission, then going by the same supposition it could be equally argued that the President is going to be in a position also to manipulate the INEC at the centre. Surely, one form of manipulation cannot be considered as better than another!

The point then is that if we are going to accept INEC at the centre in spite of the potential that exist for its being manipulated by the President, then we have really no options other than to also accept the State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) in spite of our fears that they might also be manipulated state governor.

After all, what is good for the goose should be considered equally good for the gander!

LETTER OF THE DAY

Re: Keep it up, Maina Waziri

At about 11.00 am last Friday, an over-joyed staff of mine drew my attention to your publication of Malam Yusuf Sanni Yassauta's letter.

The letter was poignant for THREE reasons.

First, it was ostensibly referring to me as it identified me with my late father's name. I may humbly add that he was a more distinguished and accomplished politician/community leader than I am.

Second, it was the first PUBLIC commendation of the onerous duty Mr. President deployed me to undertake. I was given N10.66 billion to pay PTF debts estimated at about N24 billion and with Allah's guidance and the WILL, I succeeded. I received the unparalleled cooperation of my bosses and colleagues to deliver ONE more divi-

dend of democracy to the sundry creditors of the defunct PTF.

Lastly, an hour after reading the publication, I received the letter appointing me as the national coordinator of the Poverty Eradication Programme. The seed of this appointment was GERMINATED by the assessment of my PTF assignment.

You can see how elated I am and how indebted I must be to you for this commendation. I thank you enormously because I doubt if *Daily Trust* is a PTF creditor. Ironically, Media Trust was paid its debt but my long-time friends over there have been very hesitant in granting the DEVIL HIS DUES! Na *gode*, and Allah's blessings.

Adamu Maina Waziri, Senior Special Assistant to the President, Employers/Organised Private Sector.

Opinion

World conference on racism: Why Nigeria must participate

By Sidi H. Ali

From August 31st to September 7th this year, the world conference on racism is to be hosted by South Africa on the sponsorship of the United Nations Organisation.

This conference on racism is not going to be on the stereotype of colour discrimination, it is going to be more than that.

It will look at various discriminatory attitudes that affect many sore points. This world conference on discrimination was originally billed to be held in Havana under Cuba's sponsorship but U.S.A. quickly delved in it to prevent third-world countries from taking full control. This action was to prevent anti-western communiques by third world countries who fly national flags as free nations, but who in reality are no more than colonies thanks to imperialist designs.

The socialist Republic of Cuba has always been in the forefront of the fight and exposure of imperialist nations led by the satanic U.S.A.

The conference offers an opportunity to air deep-seated grievances rarely heard on an international platform. Such fora have been used by groups in developing nations too, from China to Chile, to force, often hidden and extraordinarily sensitive issues into the discussion.

Beyond consideration of the North-South hemispheric divide as a color line, these issues include treatment of immigrants and asylum seekers in developed countries, the caste system in India, contemporary slavery in Africa as well as discrimi-

nation in Latin America and parts of the Caribbean against people of African descent.

Governments in some regions have been fighting consideration of any of these items. But human rights groups, often linking through the Internet, have gained more leverage than ever against the governments that have elbowed them out of the spot light in the past.

The aim, these human rights advocates say, is to demonstrate that racism is an international phenomenon that manifests itself in many forms. And they point to the comprehensive theme of the event-the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance-to buttress their argument. Two earlier meetings held in 1978 and 1983 were more narrowly focused.

"The last two conferences on racism were about foreign policy," said Gay J. McDougall, Executive Director of the International Human Rights LawGroup in Washington. "The first one was on decolonisation and the second one was on apartheid. But this one is in everybody's backyard, and there's a lot of nervousness about it."

McDougall is among those pressing for strong international action on the slave trade and, the legacy of colonialism on behalf of people of African descent all over the western hemisphere. But she has also backed calls to put the Indian caste system, which human rights groups say affects between 100 million and 200 million

people, on the conference agenda, over strong objection of the Indian government.

Smita Narula, who has been studying caste for Human Rights Watch in New York said that "for Asia, caste has become coterminous with race in as much as it defines the exclusion of a people based on their descent." But so far, she said, Asian governments have succeeded in keeping the issue out of conference documents.

Representatives of governments will begin a four-day meeting in Geneva on Tuesday to discuss the conference agenda and the content of documents to be issued in Durban. Some new issues have been assured a place in the conference, and battle lines have been drawn for others in four regional meetings in France, Senegal, Chile and Iran.

In Strasbourg, France, the issue of Europeans' treatment of Roma, or Gypsy, people was put on the agenda by governments themselves. In Santiago, Chile, strong lobbying by African-American groups gave new visibility to different discrimination in Latin America.

And in Dakar, Senegal, where delegates were very strongly in favour of reparations for the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the new president of Senegal, Abdoulaye Wade, cautioned the conference against looking only to history when examining Africa's problems. Ethnic intolerance and the continuation of slavery are still issues.

"The big story for me," said McDougall -who is also a member of the UN Committee on the Elimination of

Racial Discrimination and who also attended the Santiago meeting - "was the cross-regional discourse that was generated in a new way among African-descended communities throughout the hemisphere, the poorest of the poor."

When the meeting was over, she said, the topic of discrimination against black Latin Americans, which was not in the draft of the regional platform, had been added. "It was a recognition for the first time in a multilateral document in Latin America that racism was an issue of current salience," she said.

At the Teharau meeting, a group of Asian and Arab nations tried to place Zionism as racism but, due to Western objection, did not succeed.

But this time there is a need for all developing countries to see that Israel is put in the place it belongs on the side of racial discrimination as it has always practiced. Even in Israel, Jews of African and Arab origin are treated differently unlike their European counterparts.

The present occupation of Jerusalem by the Jews fully shows Israeli domination of Palestinian areas as "a new kind of apartheid, a crime against humanity, a form of genocide, and a serious threat to international peace and security."

But most controversial is an international movement to make concrete demands for reparations for the trans-Atlantic slave trade and for some form of compensation for centuries of colonialism.

Nigeria must participate fully.

Sidi H. Ali, is of plot 1101, Ogbomoshu Street, Area 8, Garki-Abuja

Re: OBJ, IBB and others

By Aminu Mohammed

Maverick politician, Arthur Nzeribe, in Nigerian politics is a household name beginning from 1993 when he floated the Association for Better Nigeria (ABN).

In fact, the name Nzeribe is synonymous with confusion, controversy, derailment and, most times, amusement. I read in one of the February editions of *Thisday* newspaper an article sponsored by Senator Arthur Nzeribe on the possible outcome of the 2003 presidential race and I thought one should be allowed to ask some fundamental questions on the issues the "distinguished" Senator raised.

The "distinguished" Senator classified the presidential aspirants of the 2003 race into three and gave reasons for doing so. First, is the OBJ factor which is classified as the incumbency factor which from all indications is already in the pipeline with posters of "double zero." pasted in every nook and cranny of Abuja and the South-west where the second term syndrome is spreading like fire.

According to the Senator, the President or OBJ has all state machineries needed by any aspirant or candidate to win an election. These machineries may include the INEC, the Police, the intimidation factor and, most importantly in any election in Africa, the funds.

Already, the former ABN boss has come out with yet another "laudable idea" for the President by canvassing support for him from all the three political parties to adopt him as a sole candidate, the Abacha-style.

Well, looking back at the five years of the Abacha-era when the word *tazarce* was coined to perpetuate power, the virus of *tazarce* has now eaten so deep into the hearts and heads of our leaders that all office-holders would not want to surrender power willingly.

We are all living witnesses of how some people, like Barnabas Gemade, Tony Anenih, Isa Mohammed and their compatriots, wanted to impose late General Sani Abacha on Nigerians and God, in His infinite Wisdom, destabilised their plans. Now, with people like Gemade and Anenih very close to President Obasanjo, it is not surprising to wake up one morning and hear a formal announcement that OBJ or double zero has declared for the 2003 race.

Methinks Senator Arthur Nzeribe is unfolding an agenda already tailored by Gemade and Anenih. And with the Senator saying not even Obasanjo can stop him from what he intends to do since it is constitutional, there are many more questions than answers in this grand scheme.

Though OBJ is yet to declare his intention for "tazarce", feelers from the Villa say he is already nursing a second-term ambition, which shows he believes in what the maverick senator is doing. With three "conspirators" Gemade, Anenih and Nzeribe plotting for Obasanjo, it would be very, very surprising if OBJ finally says no to a second term.

The second and probably the most influential aspirant according to Nzeribe is former military president, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, whose campaign posters are already circulating in the country, and several associations, likely to be his campaign machineries, have already begun underground schemings across the nation.

Well, in a situation where OBJ declares to run for a second term, an IBB come-back bid may be put on hold until 2007 for the Nigerian Maradona has repeatedly told his countrymen that he would not contest against Obasanjo.

While Senator Nzeribe confirmed that he is a good friend of Babangida, he also confessed that no one can tell you today whether the general is nursing a come-back bid in 2003. But political observers have already concluded findings and from their report card, an IBB come-back bid is very much in place and that "Maradona", as usual, is waiting for the right time to make a pronouncement.

An OBJ-IBB clash at the polls would be very competitive and amusing because both have the resources, effective instruments and the "Gobbels of our time" to run a good and effective campaign team for their success and otherwise failure.

However, before arguing on the possible outcome of an OBJ-IBB clash, the third option by Senator Nzeribe is the Igbo question. As an Igbo man, the "distinguished" Senator was rather blunt to his kinsmen that time has not come for an Igbo presidential clamour and advised the Igbo to come out of their isolation and join other Nigerians to elect either OBJ or IBB, who by his estimation, are the most credible candidates viable for the 2003 race.

The Igbos for now lack focus, unity and a cohesive voice to clamour for the prestigious seat in the country and would be better off by teaming up with the north to campaign for either IBB, Ghali, Shinkafi, Marwa or whoever the Arewa Consultative Forum picks to run against the Obasanjo-Atiku lacklustre administration.

Igbos have a genuine cause to fight for but they need the support of the north to actualise their dream as the south-west would only betray them as happened in the 60s. Their only dependable ally is, therefore, the north, which always determines the result of national elections.

I would support a genuine Igbo cause come 2007 for the Presidency and advocate for their emancipation by putting all suspicions aside since we are now 30 years far behind the civil war, which is the bane of the Igboman's plight in our polity.

Finally, having advised the Igbos to forget the 2003 race, Senator Arthur Nzeribe narrowed the 2003 race to OBJ and IBB. Now the question is how would a possible OBJ-IBB race be like? Are we likely to witness an OBJ-IBB contest in 2003? In the event OBJ and IBB decide to contest, how would the PDP accommodate such an arrangement? Maybe IBB is likely to decamp from PDP to APP or form a new party?

Going back to Nzeribe's issue, the Senator is an APP member and a very close friend of IBB but has now come out openly seeking for support from Nigerians to allow Obasanjo to continue. Could this be a ploy to discredit the APP and enable the PDP to get stronger or another Maradonic scheming from the senator to push IBB into APP to contest against OBJ?

Whatever the real motives are, the PDP has already warned the Senator to stay clear from their internal matter and work for his party. But then, Arthur Nzeribe is one man who wins election under any party any day, any time and anywhere. Should the APP decide to suspend him or dismiss him for anti-party activities, which is not likely, the PDP is his destination. Then who knows, a lot of water might have passed under the bridge by now.

In any case, Nigerians would want to see an OBJ-IBB clash for more exciting political campaigns, money politics and scheming.

Aminu Mohammed wrote in from Abuja.

Islamic retail market is a neglected sector

By Rakiya Ibrahim Sanusi

Islamic banking is without doubt an important financial system within the global financial scene. For Muslims, it is a question of conscience and religious obligation. For non-Muslims, its attractiveness lies in its ethical foundations and its potential for lucrative returns on investments. Services and products offered are becoming more sophisticated and geared towards the needs of the customer. The question is, "Which customer?"

Most Islamic financial institutions target the niche markets (comprising high net-worth individuals and corporate bodies), and by and large, neglect the retail sector - middle class and the low-income earners. The Majority of them impose a high minimum investment requirement thereby cutting out the retail market. According to statistics, there are approximately one billion Muslims in the world with roughly \$100 billion to invest, an amount growing by an estimated 15 per cent a year.

This market is generally untapped. For example, in the UK alone, there are 2-3 million Muslims, 350,000 Muslim households, 170,000 Muslim businesses, and 52,000 Muslim professionals. Yet despite these statistics, no Islamic bank has so far been established in the UK. Most UK-

based Islamic investment funds target Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, as those markets are more lucrative, ignoring the Muslim communities in which they are based. These Muslims have lots of savings and nowhere to invest them. Many find themselves patronizing conventional banks as they do not have much of a choice.

According to Professor Rodney Wilson: "London's role in serving the British Muslim community has been disappointing and after almost two decades of experience of Islamic financing, there are few retail products available."

He explains that the reason for this is that the Islamic financial community is not willing to take on promotional and marketing risks.

Public sector banks should open 'special windows for Islamic banking' to mobilise the vast resources lying idle with the community due to religious reasons which forbid Muslims to take interest on their savings. What the Islamic banks fail to realize or refuse to acknowledge is that this untapped US\$1 billion, if pooled, would create a viable and liquid market that will provide a credible alternative to the traditional debt markets, and give them an effective cash-management tool.

This liquidity would increase the profitability of the banks, investors and society at large. The Islamic banks need to ensure that high levels of capital are maintained to support their businesses thereby guaranteeing that their capital adequacy ratios remain high.

Islamic banking shares the fruits of economic activity generated by intermediation through savers and investors. There is still generally a lack of awareness of the alternatives that are Islamically acceptable. The onus, therefore, falls on Islamic banks to diversify, advertise their services and aggressively market this over neglected sector through good marketing techniques and research activities.

The ultimate goal of Islamic financial institutions is to be able to compete along side conventional banks and offer a full range of Shariah compliant products and services that are competitive and attractive. They must also meet the needs of the retail sector by providing Shariah compliant services like savings accounts, cheques, investment funds, home financing, Zakat payments etc.

According to David Cowan, a writer on Islamic finance, "banking success lies in 3 elements. Firstly, by safeguarding depositors money, not protected by a guaranteed

fund or financial insurers, but by bankers. Such safety will ensure the trust of one generation and gain the habit of the next. Secondly, funds and deposits must be invested safely with good returns and make enough money to pass on to the customer whilst retaining profit for the bank. Finally by keeping expenses low, investing in technology, good administration and delivery of services and products, the marriage of Islamic principles with modern commercial experience will ensure success of Islamic banking for the years to come."

Under the Shari'a, the bedrock of the Islamic faith, the fact that an Islamic financial institution undertakes or professes to be involved in Islamic banking and/or finance, has major responsibilities to shoulder. Islamic banking is essentially concerned with the redistribution of money in society. Apart from maximising their profits and ensuring that money is invested in sound and viable projects, Islamic banks have a social obligation to societies in which they operate. Likewise Muslims in those communities have a duty to back and support these financial institutions, as the Islamic economic system is an integral part of their faith.

Rakiya Ibrahim Sanusi, is of the Institute of Islamic Banking and Insurance, London.

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YOUR LETTERS

I wish to refer to a write-up by one I.B. Lawan, Kano, in the Daily Trust of 15/03/2001, where he called on the Kano State Government to lift the suspension it has imposed on film production in the state. I believe the ban was correct and should remain on these contemporary Hausa films and even Soyayya books.

These types of films are certainly a sardonic satire on our culture and hitherto

Re: Don't kill local film production

totally not suitable for consumption in any decent home. Supporters of the production of these films always argue that the business provides livelihood for some people and income for governments. The fact is that the films, mostly imitative of foreign cultures and costumes, contain violence and are in dearth of morals, and would,

therefore, continue to have adverse effects on the behaviour of our youth, and more, distract the children from their books at home.

Let us all be reminded by what a learned Ulama once said: "If life be considered under the metaphor of a business bargain, man, by merely attending to his material gains will lose. When he makes up, his days

account in the afternoon will show lose. It will only show profit if he has faith, leads a good life, and contributes to social welfare by directing and encouraging other people on the path of truth and constancy".

We parents must accept that there is no any gift from a father to his child more precious than good training or morals. Being the

custodians and guardians of our families, therefore, we should endeavour to give the best training to our children, and continue to remember that one day we shall all stand in front of our Lord and give account of our dealings with our wards.

Imagine the songs, romance, fights and other dirty acts teenagers and sundry view in these films. The

Prophet (PBUH) said: "I warn you very dearly of listening to music and songs, because, these deeds breed hypocrisy in the minds, just as water breeds seeds sowed in the ground...". I, therefore, strongly advise the producers of films to consider re-directing their intellect, energies and resources to other productive businesses and services to the society.

Engr. Tukur M. Lawal, P.O. Box 156, Bisije, Funtua, Katsina state.

Re: Hadeija emirate petitioned Oputa panel over Jigawa state

I read with happiness in one of the national dailies that Hadeija Emirate had petitioned Oputa panel over their composition in the present Jigawa state. In fact, it is a good step in the right direction.

However, the local government that originally demanded the creation of Jigawa state will be very much happy if the dream of Hadeija's is realized. In fact, Hadeija Emirate is the obstacle to the development of Dutse, the state capital.

Jigawa state was created

10 years ago but no meaningful development has been recorded as those who are in the position to do so are reluctant due to lack of patriotism. These people mostly from Hadeija local government are detrimental to the development of the state.

However, in the petition they filed at Oputa panel sitting in Kano, they alleged a gross violation of their fundamental human rights by the former Head of State, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, by "forcefully putting them under Jigawa

state".

I want to assure Hadeija wherever they are that history shall continue to remember IBB for siting state capitals in remote towns, the aim of which is to develop the rural areas.

I, therefore, view their petition as a welcome development. Also, I call on the Federal Government to please as a matter of urgency, relocate Hadeija Emirate to Yobe state because even Kano state may not welcome them.

In fact, Dutse is blessed with highly placed people

living in different parts of the world, but having no interest in its development. The so-called relocation of ministries and parastatals by the Turaki's government really shows how concerned Dutse indigenes are.

Dutse Emirate is too marginalised in terms of appointment and infrastructural development. It was disheartening to note that from the creation of Jigawa state to date, Dutse has never produced a Commissioner and the town is blessed with people of the calibre and po-

tentials.

Two sensitive offices were occupied by Hadeija Emirate- the Deputy Governor and the Secretary to the State Government. In fact, these two offices ought not have come from the same Emirate. The SSG supposed to emerge from Dutse.

I am calling on Oputa panel, therefore, to suggest to the Federal Government, the relocation of Hadeija to any state in the country.

Sunusi Tijjani Dutse, Federal Polytechnic Damaturu, Yobe State.

Deregulation is no answer

The deregulation of the prices of petroleum products to me, and I believe to majority of Nigerians, is coming at a wrong time. Moreover there is enough evidence to prove that the fuel scarcity we are witnessing in this country today has nothing to do with the price but years of neglect and corruption.

It is, therefore, advisable that the government should therefore, forget about deregulation for now and look into the following:

*Rehabilitate all the nation's refineries with a view to increasing the production capability of each of the refinery to at least 90%.

*Government should instead of demanding money for the purchase of presidential Jets, and Peugeot 409 cars for officials should push for priority projects such as construction of new refineries among others.

The government should stop dancing to the tune of the IMF, the World Bank and western imperialists and look into the demand of those electorates that put them in power.

The scarcity we are witnessing today will abate if the afore mentioned points are implemented to the letter.

Abubakar M. Tijjani, No. 99, Shehu Dharman Road, Maiduguri, Borno state.

Wake up, Gwarzo elite

Gwarzo Local Government is blessed with successful people in both public and private sectors. Yet these personalities have done little to develop the town, a town that is as old as the history of the northern region has no sufficient drinking water (not even to talk of potable water), no good road network as well as social infrastructure to boost the living standards of the indigenes.

The only Federal facility we enjoy is telephone but for more than two years now the people of Gwarzo have been cut off from the outside world. We cannot use our telephone handsets to dial anywhere within Gwarzo, not to talk of calling anywhere outside the town.

In the area of postal services, a piece of land that was a located for the purpose about 20 years ago still lies

abandoned.

In terms of industrialization, the whole of Gwarzo can boast of two small scale companies, one of which is owned by the Federal Government and the other by an indigene of another local government (Rogo), also within Kano state.

The youth who wanted to acquire the western education went through thorns to get educated as the so called elite from the area, turned their backs on them; and on completing their studies nobody among the elite will assist them in the area of employment.

In the area of Education the local government can, only boast of one secondary school (G.S.S. Gwarzo), which is more than 30 years old. Even here, our elite have never for once assisted the School with either laboratory facilities, or any form of as-

sistant.

It is rather shameful for the elite of Gwarzo, one of the popular and oldest towns in Kano state which has produced a minister, a Senator, a Representative and state assembly members as well as a commissioner in the state, a state chairman of the ruling party PDP and the local government chairman, himself a renowned figure, (all in the present administration) to have recorded such, poor state infrastructural development.

I challenge our elite to rise up to their responsibilities by forming themselves into a strong alliance with a view to developing the town. They should emulate the good example set by the People's Development Association (DUPDA) of Dutse in Jigawa State.

Abdullahi Sani Gwarzo, Kofar Kudu Gwarzo, Kano State.

Kudos to Kazaure local government chairman

I wish to commend the Chairman of Kazaure Local Government for his developmental programmes and policies in the local government. Before now, the level of development in Kazaure local government was nothing to write home about. But with the advent of the present administration in Kazaure local government under the dynamic leadership of SANTALI, it is now witnessing meaningful and reasonable development despite obvious odd of scarce resources. Of course, the level of development recorded in this local government so far shows the speedy transformation of the rural areas is possible.

The chairman has executed projects that have significant impact on the socio-economic lives of his people. The projects he initiated and embarked on are there for all to see. They are physical not media propaganda that has been the characteristics of our political office holders. The eastern part of Kazaure

local government that is from Kazaure town to Dabaga-Katsinawa-Yadiya -Tsedom-Dandi and Daba - Kurfi - U/Faru - Kachika - Ballam which were neglected by past administrations are currently receiving the attention of the chairman.

The chairman constructed clinics, local wells in every village of the local government as well as boreholes and feeder roads. The recent construction of Farun Daba-Dabaza-Katsinawa Road is the most laudable as it will go a long way in the speedy transformation of these areas.

Let me use this opportunity to appeal to the chairman to look at the possibility of reactivating the Uguwor Yarima Dam and extend the road from Katsinawa to Yadiya-Tsedau.

I pray for God guidance and more grease to your elbows. Isyaku Mohammed Yadiya, P.M.B. 88, Garki-Abuja.



NIGERIAN PORTS AUTHORITY

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT TO ALL REGISTERED DOCK LABOUR EMPLOYERS

The Nigerian Ports Authority hereby inform all registered Dock Labour Employers that the exercise for their consideration for appointments as Stevedoring Contractors will be carried out only after the forth-coming general election of the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria.

Furthermore, the Nigerian Ports Authority will in due course, duly advertise the commencement of such an exercise and stipulate appropriate requirements and conditions for any such appointments.

All registered Dock Labour Employers are by this advertisement advised to restrain themselves from making incessant inquiries from Nigerian Ports Authority as to when and how they are to be allocated berths or appointed as stevedoring contractors.

MANAGEMENT
NIGERIAN PORTS AUTHORITY

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

Foreign & Diplomatic

Is it not that the UN is as usual rather hesitant in this Guinea-Liberia unfolding crisis?

I would share your argument that when the issue is African, you tend to find UN's response a bit lacklustre. That kind of seriousness and promptness are lacking. But then, it all calls on us to examine ourselves. We have to look at ourselves and ask the question: What is wrong with us? Because most of these wars are simply senseless, simply avoidable. There is no way we can keep on precipitating crisis which are clearly avoidable and begin to complain when we don't get the kind of reaction we think we deserve. So, while I agree with the charge about a slow UN response to African crisis compared to elsewhere, we too need to appreciate that it is better to give ourselves the peace we end up looking for others such as the UN to secure for us.

Are we not heading for a situation where we end up picking up the bill in the Guinea-Liberia peace process?

What we are doing is under the umbrella of the UN. Nigeria, Senegal, Mali and Niger are contributing troops. Guinea has got preferences as to where to accept troops from. I think it would only take from Nigeria and Mali. Operations under UN are normally paid back but the participating countries must have combat ready troops -their needs, equipment. In ECOMOG, it was a Nigerian initiative to pre-empt violence on a sub-regional scale but the initiatives on Guinea-Liberia crisis are UN projects and the UN will pay.

ECOWAS doesn't appear keen on sanctions on Liberia compared to Cote D'Ivoire that was stopped from OAU meeting at Lome.

I think you are over-dramatising the situation. Liberia is an issue the region has been working hard to contain. But don't forget that besides ECOWAS, we are also members of other bodies. We are all in the UNO, which is now imposing sanctions on Liberia. The UN is not an abstract body. We are all there too.

Sanctions have serious consequences. We rather go by engaging Liberia for her to understand the consequences of the role she is playing as revealed UN enquiry into what they called Blood Diamond.

The Council of Foreign Ministers had meeting and they went and discussed with President Charles Taylor. Our Presidents have also been involved. So it has been a cycle of engagement and we have collectively agreed that the Security Council debates sanctions on Liberia, pass the resolution but warehouse it for a period of 60 days. Within this period, Liberia can be watched and assessed in terms of conformity. If she has stopped what she has been accused of doing, then the sanctions will not need to be effected. However, if the basis for the sanctions persists, then the sanctions will come on but then, ECOWAS leaders would be involved.

Does Nigeria have interest in Secretary-Generalship of the UN or are we for Mr. Annan?

The incumbent Secretary-General took over from Boutros Ghali who came in on the African slot. If we are going by this provision of two-

African Union is the way out (2) -Lamido

In the concluding part of this interview with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alhaji Sule Lamido, he throws light on Nigeria's involvement in Guinea, D-8 and the ECOWAS Community Parliament among other issues.



Lamido

term slot, then the idea of Nigeria having interest does not arise because we cannot have interest in something which is not there. It is still a continuation of the African slot.

Nobody should doubt our solidarity and support for Mr. Kofi Annan. He has been a symbol of the African excellence. He has done his job well. Africa is very proud of him. Nigeria remains supportive of him. He has been very concerned about Nigerian affairs. Our love and appreciation of Kofi Annan is not only transparent, it must be something he feels in his own blood.

We are certainly there in any promotion of his

"Nobody should doubt our solidarity and support for Mr. Kofi Annan. He has been a symbol of the African excellence. He has done his job well. Africa is very proud of him."

candidature for a second term.

Recently, you declared that the D-8 is not Islamic. But Professor Omo Gmoruyi has taken exception to that and said that you are confusing Nigerians. I don't know what you would say to that?

well, I don't intend joining issues with my Comrade and Party man. We were NPP members in the Second Republic. He went to the Centre for Democratic Studies. I don't know if he succeeded there. So we are wonderful friends. I read what he was saying in a newspaper essay where he was asking me to scan

the Internet or find out what the CNN had to say on D-8 and whether it is Islamic or not. Here, we don't ... rely on definitions given to us by the CNN or any other media for that matter.

Two, I think that religion in Nigeria is hardly discussed qualitatively. It is an issue discussed in close terms. So, to get into such questions as to whether our membership of a particular organisation means Islamisation or not is an unhealthy venture. Either way you answer, the other person will not agree with you because it is religion.

But suffice it to say that we in government

understand that we have a duty to Nigeria, responsibility to Nigerians, to govern Nigeria with all sincerity and under the provisions of our Constitution.

Whether you define it as Islamic or not, we know what we are into. The D-8 may have the preponderance of membership from Islamic countries, but it is not an Islamic outfit.

The D-8 is just like OPEC. Would you call OPEC an Islamic organisation? But OPEC is dominated by Muslim countries. At the last OPEC Summit in Venezuela, only our President and the host were Christians there. All the other leaders are Muslims. But Professor Omoruyi never said OPEC is an Islamic organisation or association.

So, I can only say that my Comrade has found the past time by which to be appearing in the newspapers, most times with untenable theses. We will continue to condone and tolerate him.

Some members of the executive arm of government criticised members of the National Assembly members for dual membership when the Assembly members participated in the ECOWAS Parliament recently. Can you clarify that issue, please? Then secondly...

Wait a moment. No secondly yet. Is that correct? That we in the Executive said that they have no right to join? How can we say that about a Union in which we took part, which is part of a sub-regional integrative process over which we are working hard to realize? So, there was never anything like that. The executive never said that. Did we?

(Intervention from the floor). It was Professor Bolaji Akinyemi, the former Foreign Affairs Minister who opined that it amounted to dual membership for the National Assembly members to join ECOWAS Parliament and that it is, to that extent, wrong. It is a private opinion from a private man.)

He is a private man enjoying the privileges of our democracy. (Laughter)

Nigerians are worried that we are always picking bills without getting reciprocal returns from our African brothers. What are the gains of our exertions all these years?

If you begin to put profit as the motive of your relations with human beings, then you have some problems.

Rather, we thank God that we are so endowed and we thank God that we have the compassion to be a country and people that think of others. And whatever we give, it is given with all the courtesy and modesty we can muster. Our intentions must be informed by that nobility; otherwise our generosity will not have meaning. It is not something to look at in terms of gains.

Bakassi, what is happening now?

It remains subjudice.

We want to know the situation now?

Go to The Hague.

Concluded



US Ambassador Howard Jeter (l) in a handshake with the Deputy Senate President, Alhaji Ibrahim Mantu at a reception for the former at the US embassy.



(L-R), Alhaji Umar Ghali Na'abba, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Lansana Kouyate, ECOWAS Executive Secretary, President Olusegun Obasanjo and Hon. Oumarou Sidikou, Interim Chairman of the Session at the first plenary session of the ECOWAS Parliament in Abuja, recently. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje.

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA & THE MIDDLE EAST

Saudi police raid gambling den

Police in Saudi Arabia have raided an illegal gambling den in the capital, Riyadh, that was electronically linked to a casino in Taiwan, according to the local media.

It seems that Saudi Arabia's strict laws against any form of gambling have not deterred everybody.

On Thursday, Colonel Abdulrahman Al-Sayegh, of the Saudi interior ministry, was quoted in the daily Arab News as saying three Indians had been arrested this

week in a raid on an illegal gambling club.

The paper quoted al-Sayegh as saying that their flat had been equipped with computers and faxes.

The newspaper said Saudi residents were able to place bets by buying digital cards costing up to nearly \$3,000.

It said their cash prizes were then determined in Taipei and ran to as high as a quarter of a million dollars.

Gambling is illegal in all the Gulf states, since it is pro-

hibited under Islamic law, but there are close to five million non-Saudis living in Saudi Arabia, many of whom are tempted to make some extra money by indulging in illegal activities.

The Saudi police frequently announce that they have caught a group of south Asian workers distilling and selling alcohol, which is also banned.

Saudi jails are holding many non-Saudis accused of smuggling drugs, selling pornography or working as prostitutes.

In a country where most normal forms of entertainment are banned, the temptations to break the law are many and various.

Pakistan to send troops to Sierra Leone

Pakistan is to send over 4,000 soldiers to join the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), UN deputy spokesman Manoel de Almeida e Silva said recently in New York.

"The details of their deployment, including discussions on equipment, logistics and transportation requirements, are still being worked out," he reported. The government of Nepal is also "actively considering" offering a battalion which would bring UNAMSIL close to its newly authorised strength of 17,500, Silva added.

Ethiopia and Eritrea meet

Ethiopian and Eritrean military representatives have met in Djibouti under the auspices of the United Nations, to resolve the outstanding issues brought about their border war.

Eritrea told the meeting that on 5 March it had begun redeploying its armed forces from the proposed temporary security zone that

Israeli security forces are on high alert for the Jewish festival of the Passover amid renewed violence and Islamic militant threats to carry out bombings.

Thousands of soldiers, police and border police have been deployed throughout the country for the week-long holiday, which began on Saturday evening.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has urged the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, to use his authority to end

Police arrest two pupils over fire

Two teenage boys have been arrested in Kenya in connection with last week's school dormitory fire that killed 67 pupils.

These are the first arrests that the police have made - but the boys have not been charged.

The boys are both pupils at Kyanguli Secondary School where the fire happened.

A local newspaper has reported that one of the suspects showed police the petrol station where he filled up a 25 litre jerrycan.

Petrol is thought to have been used to start the fire.

The newspaper reported that the police had to hold back an angry crowd who were threatening to lynch the boy.

Fifty-eight of the boys that died in the fire were buried in a mass grave on Wednesday.

Israel tense as festival starts

the current upsurge of violence in the West Bank and Gaza.

He made the plea when Mr Arafat telephoned him to offer Passover greetings. In a similar call to the opposition leader, Yossi Sarid, Mr

wounded in a gun battle with Israeli tanks near the Jewish settlement of Netzarim. There were reports of similar clashes near the West Bank settlements of Psagot and Ofra.

The fighting followed violence between demonstrators and Israeli security forces on Friday in which about 30 Palestinians were reportedly wounded.

Arafat called for a resumption of peace talks.

But just hours after the conversations, there were reports of fresh fighting in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In Gaza, three Palestinians were reportedly



A member of the militant Islamic Hamas dresses like a suicide bomber during a rally against Israel and America in the West Bank city of Nablus April 7, 2001. (Reuters)

Bus collision kills 32 in Tanzania

All 32 passengers aboard a commuter bus died on Saturday morning after it rammed into a stationary bus at

Songwe, southern Tanzania.

The commuter bus, a Toyota Coaster, was plying the Mbeya-Tunduma route. While trying to avoid a cow, which was crossing the road, it crashed into a Tawfid bus, which was heading to Dar-es-Salaam from Zambia, said Mbeya regional police commander Laurian Sanya.

"Thirty passengers and the bus driver died on the spot while the last one died while being rushed to the hospital," Sanya said, adding that 14 passengers aboard the second bus were injured and admitted to the Mbeya regional hospital.

Traffic police statistics showed that Tanzania witnesses on a daily average at least 39 accident, which claim 13 lives and leave 105 people injured.

Over the past few years, the total number of accidents occurring each year was 14,548, which left 4,932 killed and 38,380 others injured.

The increase in the number of vehicles, improper parking, passengers' concerning together with drivers concentration were some of the factors that largely contributed to road accident, police said.

Local media complained that the crisis resulted from the fact that many licenses were corruptly obtained and without much concern about traffic rules.



Coffins with bodies of 58 students lying in a mass grave at the Kyanguli Secondary School. President Moi said unspecified 'enemies' were to blame for the blaze. (Reuters)

Funeral fuels anti-racist anger

Mourners in South Africa have called for racists to lose their land at the funeral of a black teenager allegedly beaten to death by nine white rugby players.

Leading members of the ruling African National Congress were among a crowd of at least 1,000 mourners at the funeral of 19-year-old Tshepo Matloga in the small town of Ga-Mokgethle in Northern Province. They sang old anti-apartheid songs and raised clenched fists.

His killing two weeks ago while out hunting rabbits on a farm owned by one of the accused has further fuelled racial tension in rural areas of South Africa.

A bail hearing for the defendants, all Afrikaners and friends from the local rugby club, had to be abandoned earlier in the week when angry crowds overran the courthouse in the northern town of Pietersburg.

There was a strong police presence at the funeral, but although feelings were running high there was no trouble.

The premier of the Northern Province, Ngoako Ramathodi, told the crowd Mr Matloga did not die in vain, as his death had exposed the racism that still plagues South Africa.

Tom Boya, the funeral's organiser, said the government should take over farms owned by violent racists.

"Will I be wrong to call for the expropriation of farms that are owned by these racists that beat and kill our people?" Mr Boya said.

Senegalese election campaign begins

Election campaigning began yesterday in Senegal, where rival political parties are competing for a hundred-and-sixty seats in parliament.

Senegal's president, Abdoulaye Wade, is hoping that his Senegalese Democratic Party and its allies will secure a majority, displacing the Socialist Party, which has traditionally dominated Senegalese politics.

Last year Mr Wade defeated the Socialist leader, Abdou Diouf, in a presidential election.

The BBC correspondent in Dakar says Mr Wade's party believes Senegal is more prosperous and forward-looking since his presidential victory.

But the Socialists accuse the new government of rewriting history, exaggerating the problems of previous corruption and mismanagement, while accomplishing little itself.



Ethiopian troops withdrawing from the temporary security zone last month.

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

World Report



President Bush, (l), urging China to return the plane and its crew April 3, 2001 as China's President Jiang Zemin laughs it off in Santiago during his three-day visit to Chile. (Reuters)

US optimistic over spy plane talks

A senior US official has expressed optimism over diplomatic efforts to secure the release of the US spy plane crew, held for a week by China on the island of Hainan.

Describing the negotiations as sensitive, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said President George W Bush was hopeful that the crisis would soon be resolved.

The Chinese Defence Minister, General Chi

Haotian, said the Chinese Army would not allow Washington to shirk its responsibilities.

The 24 air crew have been held on the southern island of Hainan since last Sunday, when their EP-3 plane was forced to make an emergency landing after a mid-air collision with a Chinese fighter jet.

US diplomats have held three meetings with the spy plane crew, and are now pushing for regular daily access.

The 21 men and three women are said to be in high spirit and hopeful that they will soon be going home.

US and Chinese officials are understood to be working on a joint statement on how the collision occurred.

Last week Mr Bush expressed "regret" over the incident, but Chinese officials have again demanded a full US apology.

On Saturday China's top foreign policy official, Deputy Prime Minister Qian Qichen, insisted that an apology was of the "utmost importance".

But in a sign of hardening US Congressional sentiment, the Republican head of the House International Relations Committee, Henry Hyde, described the US crew as "hostages".

"I would call them hostages. They are being held against their will, and five days is a rather long time, especially if you're the one being held in detention."

They stressed that the EU remains committed to Kyoto and will ratify the agreement with or without Washington.

The decision by the US to abandon the treaty provoked angry reactions across the world.

A Japanese government delegation travelled to Washington to urge the United States to remain committed to the Kyoto agreement.

According to Japanese media, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage outlined the new US proposals at a meeting with the delegation on Friday.

Japan's Kyodo news agency reported that the US substitute plan would differ from Kyoto by seeking the participation of developing nations.

Mr Armitage said Washington would come up with the new framework in time for an international conference on global warming to be held in Bonn in July.

The 1997 Kyoto protocol calls on industrialised nations to reduce their emissions of so-called greenhouse gasses.

A delegation from the European Union is heading to Beijing after visiting Tehran in continuing efforts to rescue the Kyoto agreement.

EU to renegotiate Kyoto treaty

The European Union has said it is willing to renegotiate parts of the Kyoto protocol on global warming to accommodate the United States.

European Commission president Romano Prodi and Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson said it would be a "tragic mistake" to tear up the agreement and start from scratch.

President George W Bush announced last month that he was not prepared to ratify the treaty because it could have a negative effect on the US economy.

On Friday, a senior American official indicated to a visiting Japanese government delegation that Washington would propose an alternative plan.

"If certain parts of the agreement prevent the United States from ratifying it, we should negotiate about those parts rather than bury the entire agreement", wrote Mr Prodi and Mr Persson in a joint article in the Swedish regional daily newspaper *Goteborgs-Posten*.

"In our opinion, it would be a tragic mistake to tear up the agreement and start over from scratch. We would lose time, and that would make us all losers",

War crime tribunal seeks Milosevic

A senior official from the United Nations War Crimes Tribunal has managed to hand Yugoslav federal ministers a warrant demanding the extradition of ex-president Slobodan Milosevic.

Hans Holthuis had earlier been snubbed when he tried to hand the papers to Serbian officials.

The tribunal, which has indicted Mr Milosevic over war crimes allegedly committed in Kosovo, wants him handed over immediately.

Western leaders have suggested, however, that Mr Milosevic should stand trial first in Belgrade for corruption, and later be extradited to face the war crimes trial.

Mr Holthuis, registrar of the court in The Hague, said he had handed the papers to Yugoslav Justice Minister Momcilo Grubac in talks on Friday.

"I handed over the indictment and warrant for the arrest, and Mr Grubac promised to have it served to Mr Milosevic in person," said

ODD WORLD

Man stops own funeral

A 58-year-old Nicaraguan man stepped in to stop his own funeral, appearing to his wife and family as they prepared to bury the wrong corpse.

Cesar Aguilera, who found his demise being mourned when he returned to his house in Tipitapa, just east of the capital Managua, was interviewed by a local television station on Wednesday.

"Are you from this life or the other, one kid screamed at me when I showed up," Aguilera said.

He had disappeared from home a week earlier to care for a rural property. His relatives, fearing the worst, went to the morgue in search of his body. They found the corpse of a man who had been run over by a car and took it to be that of their loved one.

Aguilera helped return the body to the morgue

Mr Holthuis, whose visit to Belgrade is aimed at setting out practical steps to Mr Milosevic's handover.

On Thursday, Mr Holthuis had met with a frosty response when he tried to deliver the papers to Serbia's Justice Minister, Vladan Batic.

Mr Batic demanded that the international tribunal indict Kosovo Albanians - including former rebel leader Hashim Thaci - for attacks on

Serbs.

"The tribunal must show it is not dispensing justice selectively," he said - pointing out that all senior politicians indicted by the tribunal have been Serbs.

Mr Batic has written to Hague prosecutor Carla del Ponte, making similar complaints about bias.

As the row over Mr Milosevic's future goes on, the ex-president remains incarcerated in Belgrade's Central Prison.

Countess embarrasses Buckingham Palace

The Countess of Wessex faces more bad publicity as her unguarded interview with a phoney sheikh is published in full, along with an alleged drug confession by her business partner.

The *News of the World* printed about 10 pages of secretly taped conversations between Sophie, her business partner Murray Harkin and undercover reporters, in

which she allegedly made disparaging comments about leading royals and politicians.

According to the paper, the Countess said Chancellor Gordon Brown's Budget was "a load of pap", Cherie Blair "hates the countryside" and Conservative leader William Hague "sounds like a puppet".

The publication adds to what has been one of the worst weeks for the Royal Family since the controversy that followed the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Other newspapers have followed up the indiscretions, particularly those allegedly connecting Mr Harkin to drug-taking.

In the conversation with

Now's reporters - at which Sophie was not present - Mr Harkin allegedly said "I don't do lots of drugs but the odd line of coke I quite like" and admitted taking Ecstasy some years ago.

The paper consulted its lawyers and decided to go back on an earlier agreement with Sophie not to publish the secretly taped conversation with the Countess.

It defended its decision to publish by saying there had been a host of inaccurate reports since last Sunday.

The details are likely to provide further embarrassment for Buckingham Palace and for Sophie and Edward after a week of intense media attention.

Swiss charges former Kremlin aide

Former top Kremlin aide, Pavel Borodin, has been extradited to Switzerland and formally charged with money laundering and belonging to a criminal organisation.

Mr Borodin, 54, was detained in New York in January on an international arrest warrant issued by a Swiss judge.

The Swiss authorities accuse Mr Borodin of taking millions of dollars in bribes from two Swiss construction companies in return for contracts to renovate the Kremlin and other public buildings in Moscow while Boris Yeltsin was president.

He denies the charges.

Mr Borodin was formally charged after a two-hour meeting with Geneva investigating judge Daniel Devaud.

His lawyer, Dominique Poncet, told reporters: "Mr. Borodin has been indicted formally on charges which are well known, money-laundering and belonging to a criminal organisation, which he totally contests".

Mr Borodin was one of former Russian President Boris Yeltsin's closest confidants.

He was one of the first officials removed from the Kremlin by President Vladimir Putin last year, as the new Kremlin chief sought to distance himself from corruption scandals dogging his predecessor.

Mr Borodin is currently the secretary of the Russia-Belarus Union. Though largely ceremonial, the position guarantees him legal immunity in Russia.



Countess Sophie Rhys-Jones. (AP)



NEPA

NATIONAL ELECTRIC POWER AUTHORITY

PRESS RELEASE

NEPA Weekly Situation Report

In line with our commitment to keeping the general public, especially our valued customers adequately informed and updated on our core operations Management of the **National Electric Power Authority (NEPA)** has decided that with effect from this week, we shall present to you a regular report sheet of our generation and transmission profiles.

With this we expect to keep you abreast of our current efforts to bring about significant improvement in our delivery of power supply across the country. In other words, we shall be steering the course together with you as we continue to make strenuous efforts to realize the target of 4,000MW by the December 31, 2001 set by the President.

The achievement of this target will open up for Nigerians a new era of stable power supply. We are appealing for the support and understanding of all Nigerians to ensure we achieve this objective.

The Bulletin for the week:

1. PEAK DAILY GENERATION IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK:

DAY	DATE	GENERATION (MW)
SUNDAY	25/3/2001	1964
MONDAY	26/3/2001	2185
TUESDAY	27/3/2001	1970
WEDNESDAY	28/3/2001	2175
THURSDAY	29/3/2001	2153
FRIDAY	30/3/2001	2200
SATURDAY	31/3/2001	2138

2. PROJECTED AVERAGE PEAK GENERATION IN THE CURRENT WEEK: 2112 MW

3. PEAK WEEKLY GENERATION (ALL IN MW) FROM EACH POWER STATION IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK:

STATION	MW
KAINJI	156
JEBBA	278
SHIRORO	409
AFAM	14
SAPELE ST	178
EGBIN (GAS)	856
IJORA	H/R
CALABAR	H/R
DELTA	312

4. PROJECTED AVERAGE DAILY GENERATION (IN MW) FROM EACH POWER STATION IN THE CURRENT WEEK

STATION	PROJECTED GENERATION (MW)
KAINJI	186 MW
JEBBA	250 MW
SHIRORO	220 MW
AFAM	14 MW
SAPELE ST	176 MW
EGBIN (GAS)	807 MW
IJORA	0 MW
CALABAR	0 MW
AVERAGE TOTAL	1951 MW

5. AVERAGE ESTIMATED DAILY NATIONAL DEMAND FOR MONTH OF APRIL 2001.

ENERGY SAVING

At times like these when we are experiencing limitations in our generation: status we like to appeal to all our valued customers to cultivate the habit of saving energy by using electricity wisely.

YOU CAN DO SO, BY:

- Switching off all appliances not in use. For example, when you are not home remember to switch off your water heater, air conditioners, television sets or indeed all lights you do not need before dark.
- Switching off security lights.
- Switching off street lights during the day.
- Ensuring that when cooking with the electric cooker you use pots or pans that match the ring sizes.
- Using energy saving bulbs.

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

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

Management

BUSINESS DAY

The National Council on Privatisation (NCP) has approved the re-advertisement for expressions of interests (EOIs) by prospective Core Group/Strategic investors for Nigerdock Nigeria Plc, just as the Senior Staff Association of Statutory Corporations and Government-owned Corporations, Nigerdock branch rose against the plan to privatise the enterprise.

The NCP had earlier advertised for expressions of interests in Nigerdock in July 2000. It however deemed it necessary to re-advertise for EOIs in the organisation following a review of the preferential share allotment to core investors from 40 to 51 per cent equity interest in enterprises slated for privatisation.

Nigerdock, which is Nigeria's premier ship-repair yard, is conservatively valued at about N5.5 billion.

NCP re-advertises Nigerdock, as workers oppose its privatisation

By Ahmed Shekarau

Yet, the Corporation was only able to post N20 million interest to its shareholder, the federal government, as at May 2000.

The head of Public Affairs Unit of the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), Joe Chigbo Anichebe who announced the NCP's approval for the re-advertisement of Nigerdock Plc at a media briefing in Abuja, disclosed further that the re-advertisement of the corporation's shares was also "to ensure efficiency through effective management control" in the enterprise.

Anichebe also emphasised that the re-advertisement is taking into consid-

eration the need to make available to the prospective core investor "adequate information on other investments of the enterprise which are hitherto not available."



Vice-President Atiku Abubakar, NCP Chairman.

He however noted that the companies which earlier expressed interests in Nigerdock "are not required to re-apply" except where they have additional information that may enhance their chances for the pre-qualification. Four companies had applied for the core group/strategic investor in the enterprise. These are Global Energy Company Ltd./The Kvaerner Group; Navinor Consortium; Stolt Offshore and CSO/SBM Consortium.

Meanwhile, the President of Nigerdock Senior Staff Association, Mr. Thomas Osilame vowed last week that the entire workers of the corporation would resist the move to privatise the

dockyard "with their last blood".

He said there was no reason to privatise Nigerdock, which he claimed has been self-sustaining. According to him: "Nigerdock is not a burden to the Federal Government," stressing that its present management led by Engr. Nkpubre O. Nkpubre "is capable of tackling the problem facing the company

without crying to the Federal Government for funds."

Industry analysts are however curious about Osilame's comments, particularly when Nigerdock Plc, with an investment of about N5.5 billion was only able to declare an interest of N20 million for the 1999 financial year ended May 2000.

...to sell off three national monuments

The National Council on Privatisation (NCP) has opened invitation for expressions of interest in three of the nation's monuments, International Trade Fair Complex, National Arts Theatre and the Tafawa Balewa Square all in Lagos, through concession.

According to the head of BPE's Public Affairs, Joe Chigbo Anichebe, by the concession arrangement, the

Federal Government will not sell off its shareholding in the three companies. Rather, it will contract out the management and operation of each of the facilities to private firms "on a competitive basis, for a specified time period and under specified terms."

Anichebe disclosed further that the concession contract turns out not only the operation and maintenance functions, but also "the re-

sponsibility and risk relating to construction and/or rehabilitation of the facility."

The contractual arrangement, he stressed further, specifies the service criteria, which ensures the technical quality of services, format of delivery, as well as other services expected from the concessionaire. This way, he explained, "the government ensures that its policy is implemented, not only in its technical aspects, but also in

its social and environmental dimensions.

He cited advantages of concessioning to include retention of asset by government, stemming corruption by avoiding government interference as well as the government's leeway to terminate contract and recover an asset in the event of non-performance or any breach of contract.

CAVEAT EMPTOR BUYER BEWARE

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THIS IS TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE LANDED PROPERTY CURRENTLY HOUSING THE PROPOSED ALKALAD LUXURY HOTEL AT PLOT NO.682 CADASTRAL ZONE B2 DURUMI EXTENSION AREA 1 GARKI FCT ABUJA AND COVERED BY FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA ABUJA FEDERAL CAPITAL CITY CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY NO. FCT/ABU/BA.884 GRANTED TO AMBASSADOR MAHMOUD YAHYA IS MORTGAGED TO INLAND BANK (NIG.) PLC AND THE DEED OF LEGAL MORTGAGE IS REGISTERED AS NO. FC 124 AT PAGE 124 IN VOLUME 10 (MISCELLANEOUS) OF FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY ABUJA LANDS REGISTRY IN THE OFFICE AT ABUJA.

ANY PERSON DEALING IN THE PROPERTY OR PURPORTING TO ACQUIRE TITLE OVER THE PROPERTY BY WAY OF ASSIGNMENT, MORTGAGE, LEASE OR ANY OTHER FORM OF DISPOSITION WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF THE BANK DOES SO WITH NOTICE OF THE MORTGAGE AND AT HIS/HER OWN RISK.

WUNTI & COMPANY
CORNERSTONE CHAMBERS
SOLICITORS TO THE BANK

NIPC boss addresses FICAN Forum tomorrow

Chairman of the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC), Chief Kola Daisi will tomorrow at the NICON Hilton Hotel, Abuja address members of the Finance Correspondents Association of Nigeria (FICAN), Abuja Chapter on the role of his Commission in promoting foreign investments inflow into Nigeria.

The Secretary-General of the Association, Ben-Bright Mkpuma said in a statement at the weekend that the theme of the Forum, which is FICAN's first quarterly forum this year, is: "Maximising Investment Opportunities in Nigeria: The role of Institutions".

Other personalities billed to address the Forum include chairman of the Industries Committee of the House of Representatives, Hon. Hamisu Shira, as well as the deputy director and head of Mergers and Takeovers of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Mr. Chris Okereke.

Woo banks to Kogi State, Societe Generale boss tells governor

The Managing Director of Societe Generale Bank Plc, Chief Adebisi Oyenola has appealed to the Kogi State government to encourage financial institutions opening their branches in the state through patronage.

He made the appeal in Lokoja after paying courtesy call on Kogi State Governor, Prince Abubakar Audu as part of his working visit to the new branch just opened in the state capital.

Adebisi however assured the state government and its people of his bank's efficient services noting that the bank has just re-launch its teller card which enable a customer withdraw from his account without recourse to long queue in the banking hall.

Other services rendered by the bank include technical and financial patronage of small-scale industries, as well as soft loan to farmers, apart from normal banking services such as savings, current and fixed deposit.

Answering questions on introduction of new currency into Nigerian market, Adebisi

From Mamman Akpena, in Lokoja

said it would reduce high risk of criminal activities in the society.

He explained that with the introduction of the new N500 note people can conveniently carry large amount of money anywhere without feeling uncomfortable and urged Nigerians to take advantage of the introduction of the new currency.

Adebisi said the management opened a branch in Lokoja because the state is growing on daily basis.



Gov. Audu of Kogi State

Group denounces oil industry deregulation

The deregulation of the oil sector currently being initiated by the federal government has been described as a total betrayal of people's trust and a physical manifestation of the myopicness of Obasanjo regime in sourcing for solutions to the persistent fuel crisis.

This assertion was made by the National President, Civil Leadership Association of Nigeria (CLEAN), Mr. Ayodele Thomas while on a consultation visit to Katsina.

He described the move as an avenue used by government to accommodate the interest of few economically empowered section of the Nigerian public so that they could hijack the entire oil sector and to economically enslave Nigerians.

He said though his organisation welcome any initiation to stabilise the availability of petroleum products, any attempt however, that could further harden the already untold hardship on Nigerians will not be tolerated.

He added that government is aware of the reasons for the

From Hassan A. Karofi, in Katsina

persistent petroleum crises evades every solution, because according to him "the instability in the availability and distribution of petroleum products is as a result of the smuggling and diversion of the products, which was carried out by some powerful individuals and unlawful allocations by government for political settlements".

He therefore called on the President to wake up to his responsibilities by correcting these anomalies before introducing any deregulation option.

On resource control, Ayodele called on the federal government to assist the states in order to identify their natural problems, help to assist in the development of such states' potentials, since the overall objective is to facilitate rapid development instead of crises.

He urged the federal government to promote a democratic experiment that could take this nation to its dreamland instead of the present self-succession drive.

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Sale of forms will close on **Friday 15th June 2001.**



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Tel: 09-5231729, 5231730.
Fax: 09-5231927.

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Way, Maitama, Abuja.
Tel: 09-4136305-6

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32, Balogun Street Lagos.
Tel/Fax 01-2663079.

GUSAU

35, Canteen Area, Gusau.
Tel: 063-204732. Fax: 063-
204731.

IKARA

7, Secretariat Road,
Ikara, Kaduna State.

JOS

3, Beach Road, Jos.
Tel: 073-451611-4.

KATSINA

No. 61 Ibrahim Babangida Way,
Katsina.
Tel: 065-434265, 434267.

KADUNA SOUTH

24B Inuwa Abdulkadir Road
Industrial Layout, Kaduna.
Tel: 062-231076-9.

KANO

89E, Ibrahim Taiwo Road/Kano.
Tel: 064-637426, 637427,
637429.
Fax: 064-637295.

MINNA

3, Commercial Complex,
Bosso Road,
P.M.B 128 Minna.
Tel: 066-223099,
223530, 221725.
Fax: 066-221190.

MAIDUGURI

No. 10 Kirikasama Road
Maiduguri.
Tel: 076-234796.
Fax: 076-233908

PORT HARCOURT

No. 198B Aba Road,
Port-Harcourt.
Tel: 084-233245.
Fax: 084-233248.

SOKOTO

1, Aliyu Jodi Road,
Sokoto.
Tel: 060-232116.

SULEJA

Usman Farouk Road,
P.M.B. 31, Suleja
Tel: 09-8500663
Fax: 09-8500664

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274, Akin Adesola Street
P.M.B. 80031 Victoria Island, Lagos
Tel: 01-2618485, 2620511-2
Fax: 01-611526

YABA

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Opposite Sabo Market
P.M.B 1072 Sabo Post Office, Yaba
Tel: 01-862310; 868517,
7750844; 866629. Fax: 01-
2880703

ZARIA

No. 1 Sokoto Road, Zaria.
Tel: 069-333276. Fax: 069-332460

CASH CENTRES:

KANO

Kantin Kwari Cash Centre
49, Babban Layi Way,
Kantin Kwari, Kano
Tel: 064-641785.

KANO

Kofar Wambai Cash Centre
69/71, Babban Layi Kasuwar
Kofar Wambai, Kano. Tel: 064-
642754.

MINNA

Minna Market Agency Store,
A1, Central Market, Minna,
Niger State.

BUSINESS DAY

Unions protest new airline out of Nigeria airways

The crisis in the Nigeria Airways Limited (NAL) has assumed a new dimension as the two unions in the national carrier have kicked against proposed plan by the federal government to float a new airline to replace the ailing company.

At a joint press conference in Lagos, the two unions, the National Association of Aircraft Pilots and Engineers (NAAPE) and the Air Transport Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (ATSSAN) disclosed that they were not carried along in the privatisation process of the industry.

The unions said they were not opposed to the exercise. They however kicked against the methodology employed by BPE and NCP.

The unions hinted that government had last week decided to float a new company in a meeting between President Olusegun Obasanjo, Atiku Abubakar, El-Rufai and representatives of Nigeria Airways management. Adding that El-Rufai had been given two weeks to provide a blue print for the new company.

They posited that since the federal government has taken its decision on the national carrier, it is only fair on the part of government to pay the workers

From Shakirat Abdulmajeed.
in Lagos

The unions threatened to compel the government to consider paying off the workforce along floating a new company, adding that they will employ all the legal means to ensure that their rights are not trampled upon.

Represented by Engineer Kyari Sheri, NAAPE National President and Michael Ekugun, Secretary-General, ATSSAN, the workers also demanded that there should be a reasonable degree of transparency in the privatisation exercise.

Passing a vote of no confidence on the management of the Nigeria Airways, the workers vowed to take their future in their own hands.

According to the workers, "the Managing Director of NAL, Mr. Yomi Jones and his Directors are appointed by the federal government, they have limitations on how to defend the workers on the issue of privatisation and interest of workers," stressing that management cannot perform because they are not core investors.

The workers argued that the federal government should first turn-around the national carrier before privatising it to make it credit worthy to would- be in-

vestors.

The workers alleged that El-Rufai being an auctioneer by profession is in haste to auction the national carrier without giving consideration to the future of pensioners and the current workforce.

They accused El-Rufai of renegading on the promise he made to the representatives of the two unions last year that Nigeria Airways will not be privatised.

The unions lamented that



Dr. Kema Chikwe,
Aviation Minister.

there is no professional in all the committee set up by El-Rufai in an industry that is so technical.

Business Day however gathered that the national carrier is in a state of serious financial mess as it is unable to pay its workers' salaries for the

past three months.

Sources close to the national carrier disclosed to *Business Day* that all sources of generating funds to run the airline have closed. The sources hinted that the situation is so bad that the airline had to rely on the money it realises from the sale of tickets to buy aviation fuel, adding that all international flights have grounded as only one of the two Boeing 737 is operational and that there are always problems such as lack of fund for fuel for the only one that is working.

Business Day also gathered that passengers are humiliated as they carry the Nigeria Airways ticket about but no plane to take them to their destinations. Only last week 66 passengers bought tickets but 44 collected their money back because the airline had to carry just 12 passengers from Abuja to Lagos.

The joint venture it entered into with some airlines are no longer profitable as they are at the edge of collapsing.

Sources hinted that only last week the national carrier lost

out on one of its most lucrative routes to London due to its failure to renew agreements with British Airways.

Business Day gathered also that Nigeria Airways is running at a loss in the joint venture with South Africa Airways on the New York route because out of about 3,000 seats allocated to the national carrier, it could not sell more than 150 seats monthly while in most cases, South Africa Airways sell all its seats thus defeating the aim of the joint venture.

Calabar EPZ granted free trade status

By Bassey Ita,
in Calabar

The nation's premier Export Processing Zone in Calabar (CEPZ) has officially been granted complete free trade status by the federal government.

A letter No. CEPZ/405/S.1/79 dated March 30, 2001 and signed by Yusuf Abdullahi for the Honourable Minister for Commerce directs "that the Calabar Port be re-designated as a Free Port to attract investors to the Free Trade Zone.

Business Day learnt that with the latest development on the Export Processing (free) Zone, the Calabar Port and the CEPZ will now be used freely devoid of tariffs as excise duty

among others.

The letter, which is captioned "Strategic Restructuring of Calabar Free Trade Zone" and directed to the Managing Director, Nigeria Export Processing Zone Authority, Abuja further directs the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing "to build a new concrete bridge in addition to the old one on the Ikom River to facilitate movement of heavy trailers into the southern axis" as a way of streamlining business operations at the free trade zone.

In a related development the

Cross River State government has made additional 66 hectares of land to accommodate the expansion programme of the Calabar Free Port Trade Zone, Calabar.

The state governor, Dr. Donald Duke who made this known while receiving the newly inaugurated members of the Nigeria Export Processing Zone Authority (NEPZA) led by its chairman, Alhaji Munir Ja'afaru added that the demarcation of the land will soon be done while the free port status of the Calabar Port-Complex will also complement the zone.

He said the people and government of the state were appreciative of the Free Trade Status of the Calabar Export Zone.

OBITUARY

INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILLAHIR RAJI'UN

We have lost a Director and a Pillar



Senator Adamu Baba Augie (mni)
Wazirin Kebbi Argungu

The Chairman, Members of the Board, Management and Staff of I-Net Global Services Ltd., commiserate with the Augie family on the death of their son, husband, father and our director, who died in a motor accident on 27th March 2001.

May Almighty Allah grant him eternal rest Ameen.

Please visit www.inet-global.com to register your condolence.

Signed:
Management

I-NET GLOBAL SERVICES LTD

Just a note to inform you about the #500 note

It's a mixture of green and grey colours with a dash of red on the back



FRONT



BACK

SECURITY FEATURES



RAISED PRINTS SENSED BY TOUCH

Many areas especially the portrait, oil rig, letterings and the denomination numerals on the front and back are engraved. These items are coarse/raised prints which can be felt by touch.



EMBOSSED EAGLE

At the bottom left corner on the front side, the eagle is embossed on a gold background.



COLOUR SHIFT

On the front side of the note, at the bottom right corner, the denomination numeral 500 is printed to show a colour shift. This is observable when the note is tilted at different angles. The colour changes from green to Deep Blue.



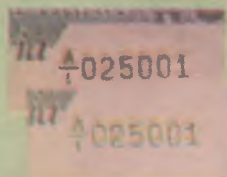
TINY PRINTS

On the left side of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe's portrait, '500 Naira' is repeated several times in tiny prints. See arrow marked (x) above.



WATERMARK

The picture of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe appears again in the watermark when the note is held against light. Also visible in the watermark is the bold print 'CBN 500'.



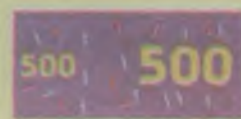
VISIBLE UNDER ULTRAVIOLET LIGHT

The serial number on each note is black to the naked eye but turns green under ultraviolet light.



SECURITY THREAD

The security thread ordinarily looks broken but when held against light, you will notice the following: (a) It is a dark continuous line. (b) 'CBN' is repeated on the line.



VISIBLE UNDER ULTRAVIOLET LIGHT

The N500 note paper has scattered invisible fibres which appear red and blue under ultraviolet light. The figure 500 also becomes visible and shows in green.



CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA
The #500 Note ... Convenient and Secure

Star Feature

Travelogue

The road to London

By Aliyu Ma'aji

Ophthalmologist with Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital, Kaduna, "What do you think of that?" "Thrilling" she enthused in between smiles. It was then that I concluded that video movies can never equal theatre performers in terms of realistic aesthetics.

We filed out in an orderly fashion which expectedly was quite characteris-

tic of London. Enormous electronic billboards and neon signs were everywhere. The streets were busy as if the day was just beginning.

An hour later the bus pulled in front of Millennium Gloucester Hotel where I was staying. I alighted, nodded at Hookey, the Nigerian doorman, and entered the lobby. The concierge, Douglas, acknowledged my wave with a smile. The elevator took me to the seventh floor,

Gatwick non-stop services. You are one of the Business Editors nominated to participate in this trip. British Airways will be responsible for your tickets, accommodation and feeding while in UK and in Abuja," Tumba explained.

After being stranded in Nigeria for the last 28 years -oops, I mean since I was born-to say I was excited is an understatement. Getting an international passport was as easy as eating cake. Honestly, for once in my life, I came across a bureaucratic system that worked. I got the passport in a day. Thanks to new improved immigration officials, getting the visa was, however, tough. Officials at the British High Commission were firm and curt. The crowd of Visa applicants could easily misled a first timer into assuming that there was probably a mass exodus from Nigeria to the UK. It took me two weeks of go-come, bring this, produce that before I finally got a visa. Phew! It wasn't easy. A close friend, however, told me that going by the sheer volume of applications processed every week, British visa procurement is the most organised and straightforward. Well, for all I know he may be right.

On the day of our departure, I met Simon Tumba, Eniola Bello of *ThisDay* and Godfery Obioma of the *Champion*, at Abuja Nicon Hilton, from where we drove to Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport in the dead of the night. Our plane was scheduled to take off at thirty minutes past midnight, March 19. BA officials were wonderful.

We were treated like kings. Amos Edime, a colleague of mine at Bayero University, Kano, during those memorable years of "ALUTA", was one of them. His charming smile never failed as he ushered us into the lounge.

Unlike the general executive lounge at the domestic wing of the Murtala Mohammed Airport, Ikeja, BA's VIP lounge was exquisite and spacious. You serve yourself anything you want, from local soft drinks to foreign alcoholic beverages. While some of our colleagues guzzled some of the stiff stuff, being Sharia compliant, I simply sipped a glass of coke.

I should mention that I have learnt to

Contd. on Pg. 18



Palace of Westminster - House of Parliament

tic of London. The last time I was at the National theatre, Iganmu, Lagos, the mad rush was something else. Well, the world is vast and cultures differ.

I hit Argyll Street and the cold pierced through me like a knife. It was drizzling with splattering of snow here and there. Thank God, there was no NEPA in London. The streets were well lit. I walked hastily towards the waiting bus, or coach, as Londoners would prefer, which was parked three blocks away. We were still rubbing the cold from our hands as the bus pulled away from the kerb, heading towards Knightsbridge. The time was 11:55 pm. The bright lights of the dome of Harrods department store illuminated

where the smart card key as usual, did the magic. I had deliberately left the heater on, so the room was warm. As I finally settled into the bathtub, with the steam rising, I began to reflect on how I came to find, myself in the land of Anglo-Saxons.

It all began last month when I received a phone call from Simon Tumba of SY & T Communications. He said that British Airways, (BA) has nominated me to be part of a delegation comprising of politicians to participate in a press trip to the United Kingdom.

"Our Client, British Airways, is undertaking a second inaugural trip for some key Nigerians to get them familiar with the new direct Abuja-London

On an icy cold night in central London, with temperatures hovering around 40 degrees Celsius, clad in a flowing white kaftan and a "kuba" cap, I stood out like an odd ball amidst crowds of white theatre goers in heavy winter clothing. I was queuing at Argyll Street in front of the London Palladium. The play I was itching to watch was Rodger's and Hammerstein's "The King and I", starring Elaine Paige and Paul Nakalchi. I nudged Eniola Bello, an editor with *ThisDay*, standing beside me, "buddy this cold isn't funny". "Don't worry you'll soon freeze. I warned you against wearing those light Malam clothes yesterday, didn't I?" he queried. Chief Bode Olajumoke standing in front glanced back and smiled.

Soon it was our turn. I leapt into the warm embrace of the theatre in relief-phew! That was close. The hall was enormous. We were ushered onto the upper deck. One striking thing was that even the music was live. An orchestra stood half submerged beneath the stage supplying music with point blank precision in consonance with the movement of the performers.

Unlike Nigeria, where such presentations are characterised by noisy crowds, the audience was quiet. Needless to mention, the props and the lighting arrangement were spell binding. At appropriate intervals the audience applauded.

The setting is 19th century Siam (the orient). The king of Siam (Paul Nakauchi) employs Anna (Elaine Paige), English widow to teach his children western education. Anna who is visiting Siam for the first time did not find it easy living in the royal household where the king has many wives and children. It is a clash of cultures. Anna is very liberal in her thoughts and ideas, which are western. The king's relationship with his subjects is that of master and servants. A purely patriarchal society where women are second-class citizens.

Anna resists the king's moves to incorporate her into the system. He sees this as an affront to his powers. Liberal ideas that contradict feudal whims are strange. But in the long run he gives some ground advice. He discovered that her advice, which he mostly detests prove helpful to him. It was a musical drama that ran for almost three hours.

At the end of the performance the applause was deafening. I had never clapped so hard in my life. I looked at my neighbour, Dr. Susie Ogorike, an



Buckingham Palace - London home of the Sovereign Since Queen Victoria made it so in the mid-nineteenth century.



Tower Bridge built 1894, gateway to the City of London, crosses the River Thames.

Star Feature

Travelogue

Contd. from Pg. 17

The road to London

dread escalators (motorised staircases)

I almost tumbled down one of them. Climbing that thing is a tricky business. Some people, however, call it convenience.

Soon, it was time to go. We went down the ramp into the waiting arms of smiling British Airways crew. I was travelling Business Class, so I held my head high. When you are a special guest of the British carrier, in an entourage of personalities comprising Plateau State Governor, Joshua Dariye, Lagos State Commissioner for Information, Dele Alake, Special Assistant to the President on Press matters, Steven Itugbo, The Right Honourable Akunnia Okeke, and Dr. Olabode Olajumoke, the least you can expect is first class service.

I settled in my seat beside an Australian-based Nigerian diplomat while the cumbersome safety blah! Blah! commenced. The Plane looked enormous when compared with our local butterflies. There were six rows of seats. Someone whispered that the aircraft was a 777 jetliner. As we pulled away from the terminal building, I looked out of my window at the runway and said a little prayer. The plane gathered speed and we were airborne.

I got along well with Chris the Igbo fellow sitting beside me. A well travelled man, he showed me all the cues.

Apart from how to adjust the miniature television screen attached to the seat, Chris even taught me how to eat salmon with lime. He asked me to visit him in Australia.

The flight from Abuja to London Gatwick was smooth. The six hours passed like six minutes. The pretty air hostess pampered us. One pretty face was constantly at hand to see to our needs. From the way she looked at me, I guess, she liked what she saw. Of course, I found her attractive in that snug fitting blue BA uniform. If I weren't getting married to an angel next month, I probably would have returned to my native Zaria with a caucasian bride.

When it comes to entertainment you can't beat British Airways. There were 23 channels available from Omnia productions; music, comedy, action, historical, news, navigational science, fiction, movies and so on. With headphones in place and miniature TV screen adjusted, every passenger was in a private world. It soon became chilly and I covered myself up in the blanket that "pretty face" gave me.

The captain's voice woke me up "ladies and gentlemen we shall be landing at Gatwick Airport in the next twenty minutes." When we left Abuja Airport six hours earlier, our flight was the only aircraft on the tarmac. At Gatwick, however, the stay was different. The place was as busy as Kofar Wambai Park in Kano. There were so many planes and these were mostly BA aircraft, that I lost count.

As we disembarked into the terminal building, the crew were all there to say bye-bye. I gave "pretty face" my most charming smile, especially preserved for such

unique moments. She smiled back and winked mischievously.

Veronica Kenini was there to receive us. She took



London Gatwick International Airport.

one look at my costume and said "Alhaji, "Barka da zuwa". I was awe struck. I later got to learn that she was an Igbo girl from Nigeria. She spoke Yoruba, Hausa, German, French, Polish and other native European languages with remarkable fluency. She was good company as we chatted in "Hausa" throughout. The terminal building was five times bigger than the ones in Nigeria. Steven Itugbo, presidential Adviser on Press Matters, nudged me "Aliyu look, birds in the terminal building, Democracy works here. Everyone is free, even the birds," he enthused. Everyone laughed.

The cold outside was horrible. The temperature was 7-degree celsius. A piercing wind was blowing. We quickly entered the waiting bus and zoomed off. Governor Dariye sat behind me and snored away. It had indeed been a long journey.

Ms. Kenine told us that British Airways has an arrangement whereby whenever a plane arrives at Gatwick or Heathrow among the BA welcome party are workers who understand and speak one or two or more native languages of the country the plane departed from. Quite convenient you might say.

I won't bore the reader with narrations of tourist attractions in London. The pictures contained here can speak for themselves. One noticeable thing though, was the explosion of road signs and traffic lights. Everyone on foot appeared to be in a hurry. But motorists do not seem to share the haste of pedestrians. Traffic lights were obeyed religiously and speed limits painstakingly observed. Unlike in Lagos where Okada riders take delight in startling pedestrians with loud horns, in Lon-

don drivers avoid hooting unless it was necessary.

As we drove towards London I noticed that the landscape was well trimmed. Undulating hills with fresh green grass shimmered in the distance. There weren't many animals in the fields. I guessed they must have fallen victims to the foot and mouth epidemic.

We arrived the millennium Gloucester Hotel. It was located in the heart of Kensington, opposite Gloucester road underground station. Like magic, everything had been arranged by our hosts. We checked in and came down for breakfast.

Throughout my stay in the United Kingdom, I didn't find their food appetising. The cuisine was radically different from African dishes, Islamic ones for that matter. They eat a lot of pork (Pig meat). Someone asked me why I avoided the seemingly delicious ham and eggs. And I said, "where I come from pigs are called swine and we don't eat them. Our religion prohibits it"

"Oh! Just the way Hindus don't eat cows huh? he observed. I smiled and nodded. To set the records straight I added, "Unlike Hindus, however, we don't worship pigs".

Simon Tumba, myself and our colleagues (Journalists) arrived the British Airways head office at mid-day. It was a huge glass house at the water front. Our host, Richard Murfitt, showed us around, and then treated us to a lavish lunch. He doubled up as a guide for he identified all the item on my plate. I was really meticulous about whatever I ate.

The British Airways head office could easily qualify as the 8th wonder of the world. It was built on reclaimed land with water fountains everywhere. Trees were growing right on the corridors. The glass roofing allowed sunlight to come through. Even the elevators were transparent, you could see people going up and down like science fiction. I stood with mouth agape and gazed. Outside swans were swimming in the vast expanse of water.

The building was divided into different sections with each named after the five continents. In the Africa wing we had a press conference with Sir Alan Burnett, BA's Director for Africa and Indian Ocean Islands Operations. An extremely jovial Scotsman. For a while I was tempted to ask him where he kept his kilt and bag pipes. He said he was a personal friend to Alhaji Ado Bayero, the Emir of Kano.

That evening we had a small cocktail party at he Millennium Gloucester. As usual, while they drank spirits, I sipped lemonade. From my experience, the British are a hospitable people. British Airways pampered us in no small measure. With my six months visa, I hope they write me again before it expires. I wouldn't mind going to London anyway.

Aliyu Ma'aji was the Business Editor of Daily Trust. He now works with the Corporate Affairs Dept of International Trust Bank Plc, Lagos.

"Throughout my stay in the United Kingdom, I didn't find their food appetising. The cuisine was radically different from African dishes, Islamic ones for that matter. They eat a lot of pork (Pig meat). Someone asked me why I avoided the seemingly delicious ham and eggs. And I said, "where I come from pigs are called swine and we don't eat them. Our religion prohibits it" "Oh! Just the way Hindus don't eat cows huh? he observed. I smiled and nodded. To set the records straight I added, "Unlike Hindus, however, we don't worship pigs."

NEWS

Igbo chief sues Bola Ige

An Igbo high chief, through his counsel, Lord Prince Okey Okoroji, has dragged the Attorney-General of the Federation, chief Bola Ige, before a Federal High Court in Umuahia, Abia State, challenging his arraignment trial and subsequent conviction in absentia by the defunct Failed Banks Tribunal, Kano Zone II.

The plaintiff, Chief Onwuka Kalu, an industrialist and president of Children of Africa Group in his application is arguing for leave to enforce his fundamental rights. Joined in the suit is the Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Musiliu Smith, as a co-respondent.

Others also joined in the suit No. FHC/UM/CS/128/2001 are: Controller-General, Nigerian Prisons, the Attorney-General of Abia and the Commissioner of

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, in Lagos

Police, Abia state. In a 30-paragraph affidavit in support of the application, the Igbo chief claimed that he incurred the wrath of the then government because he was vehemently opposed to the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election.

He stated that he was arrested on November 15,



Chief Bola Ige

1996 at his residence in Abia state and subsequently detained for over nine months.

He claimed further that while in unlawful detention, he lost the use of his left eye before the police recommended his release on bail.

He stated that while on bail, he proceeded to England for prolonged medical treatment, but was convicted and sentenced in absentia over an alleged fraud case between Children of Africa

and First Bank of Nigeria Plc. According to the Igbo chief, the delay in bringing the suit was due to his critical illness in London.

Justice A.M. Liman of the Federal High Court, Umuahia, ordered that the Igbo chief be granted bail of N10 million and a surety in the same amount.

The court further ordered that upon his arrival in Nigeria, Chief Kalu should submit himself to the Commissioner of Police, Abia State, who will within 24 hours produce him in court to execute the terms of his bail.

Fire razes Kingsway building, bank in Lagos

Property worth millions of naira was yesterday destroyed by fire which gutted Kingsway building on Marina Street in Lagos which also houses Rims Merchant Bank.

The cause of the fire was

From Wisdom Patrick, in Lagos

not immediately known. Police authorities said it was premature to state categorically the cause of the fire, as they were still conducting indepth investigations into the inferno.

Emmanuel Adebayo, a Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of Operations in the state, told *Daily Trust* that investigation into the fire incident has opened and detectives have been directed on what to do.

Although he told *Daily Trust* over the telephone that no arrest had been made, authoritative sources among the men of the Federal Fire Service, who put off the inferno, confirmed that arrests had been made.

The source also revealed that badly affected by the fire are the offices of Rim Merchant Bank, located on the last floor of the ancient building.

He stated that the fire was more of a sabotage than a mere accident as areas touched by the fire were the bank's documentations unit, records department and foreign transaction section.

It was gathered that the fire started at about 5.30 a.m. yesterday morning and the fire fighters were not contacted until about 7.30 a.m. when some damage had been done.

Investigation by *Daily Trust* revealed that four Rim Merchant Bank top officials have been quizzed by police detectives from Lion Building police station in central Lagos.

The Kingsway building is one of the oldest structures on the Marina street and houses most of the blue-chips companies including Rim Merchant Bank, Mr. Bigg's, etc.

\$210,000 bank fraud: Eight workers arraigned

No fewer than eight staff of the Eko International Bank Plc, Lagos, are facing trial over their alleged roles in the theft of \$210,000, an equivalent of about N21 million.

The accused, according to police sources, were alleged to have broken the bank's vaults and stolen the money in hard currency notes.

Assistant Superintendent of Police, ASP Uka-Obasi Eluwa, from Alagbon alleged that the accused in November, last year conspired together to commit the crime.

The count read: "That you Suleiman A. Jimoh (42), Gregory Ogunyinka (31), Opeyemi O. Bajulaiye (40), Ademola Adegbusi (35), Bakare Adewale Omolola (35), Oludapo Shoyebo (50), Issa Talobi (43) and Tolorunlogo Olotu (46) between 21 and 22 November, 2000, at Lagos being officers of the Eko International Bank (EIB) Plc Lagos did steal \$210,000

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, in Lagos

(about N21 million) property of EIB Plc, Lagos and thereby committed an office punishable under section 390(7) of the criminal code Vol. II Cap 32 laws of Lagos state of Nigeria 1994."

All the accused persons pleaded not guilty. They were, however, granted bail in the sum of N2 million and a surety in the same amount.

At the resumed hearing on Wednesday, police prosecuting officer, ASP Eluwa, told the court that although the case was for trial, the case file has been sent to the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) Lagos, for legal advice.

Apart from all the accused persons who were arraigned in the dock, a representative of the complainant bank was also present in court to watch the proceedings. Further hearing has been fixed for 6 June, 2001.

Patient denies Abalaka

A former Nigerian soldier, Mohammed Farouk, has said Dr. Jeremiah Abalaka's claim to HIV/AIDS cure was false.

Farouk, one of the 30 soldiers sent by the army to Abalaka's clinic for treatment, said at a news conference over the weekend in Lagos that it was time to speak out on matters concerning such claims in order to put the facts right.

"I was one of the 30 soldiers sent to Dr. Abalaka by the Nigerian army for HIV/AIDS treatment," he said at the news conference which was organised to

former soldier described all claims to cure the disease as false and meant to only deceive the government and people, noting, "people who have taken these drugs have come out with terrible complications including hepatitis B".

He also spoke of his



Prof. A.B.C. Nwosu

highlight issues concerning discrimination and stigmatisation of people living with the disease and the cost of its treatment.

He said that 12 of the affected soldiers were now dead, while "the remaining 18 of us are still HIV-positive." He said that he first received treatment for three months without success from a Kaduna-based policeman who also claimed that he could cure the disease.

NAN reports that the

experience when he discovered that he had contracted the virus.

"When I first knew that I was HIV positive, I reported this development to my Commanding Officer, who, instead of helping me, sent me to the guardroom."

He said he had to leave the army and publicly declare his HIV status when one of his colleagues, who also tested positive to the disease, died in his house as he was allegedly refused treatment at a military hospital.



A cross-section of the Chairmen and Chief Executives of River Basin Development Authorities and National Water Resources Institute at the meeting of the Minister of Water Resources with the Chairmen and Chief Executives in Abuja ... recently. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje

Unstable academic calendar scares expatriate lecturers from UNICAL

Concerted efforts by the authorities of the University of Calabar to engage the services of expatriate lecturers to ameliorate manpower shortage in the institution have failed because of instability in the country's university calendar.

The Vice-Chancellor of the university, Prof. Ivare Esu, disclosed this on Tuesday at the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) forum in Calabar.

He said some professors at the University of Ghana, Legon, whom he approached recently, "were foot-dragging coming here. They were asking me what session are they coming to start, what time, what semester? I couldn't tell them.

"As big as we are, we

don't have a stable academic calendar, people from outside would not want to send their children to come to Nigeria to study because they are not really sure of tomorrow", he stated.

The vice-chancellor noted that because of the dearth of lecturers, post-graduate studies at the Faculty of Law had been suspended as the faculty did not have a single professor, adding that a few disciplines in the Faculty of Social Sciences had also been affected.

Esu, however, said in some faculties, such as Education, the university was overstaffed with professors and senior lecturers.

Reacting to the threat of strike by ASUU, Esu said "the world is laughing at us, I

would have said let my colleagues in ASUU exercise patience.

"We should threaten government but implementation of strike should be with real pain, two wrongs don't make a right. We should exhaust dialogue now before we use the instrument of strike," he advised.



Prof. Borishade

Star Interview



I have done a lot for the PDP

Recently, Jibril Daudu, the editor, *Daily Trust*, interviewed Mr. Simon Shango, a frontline politician and journalist. In this interview, Mr. Shango bares his mind on his community paper, his role in the formation of the PDP, the origins of the anti-corruption commission, the issue of sole candidacy in 2003, and his ties with Gemade. He comes across as a very patient person in the interview. Excerpts:

After seven years of practicing journalism you have now retired home to publish a community newspaper, what is the philosophy behind the newspaper?

My coming home does not mean I retired from practicing journalism, but I came home because I was doing nothing in Abuja. I was neither a government worker nor in any of the political parties. So, I decided to come home, and spend my time instead of staying in Abuja. The philosophy behind my paper is that I want to bridge the gap of information; my people in Benue State are missing on the need to support their leaders who are willing to serve them.

We learnt the paper is being circulated only within your community. What really do you intend to achieve?

I intend to educate the local people like Yandekya, Zakibiam and Konshisha about what is happening in the government here, to know who is the best farmer, to know the best method of planting and the right time to plant their crops, and to know the happenings in the world without necessarily buying national dailies like your own in Abuja.

You said earlier that you have not really retired, but you returned home because you are not in

government. One wonders why you are not in government even though you are one of those that put this government in office?

I don't think many people appreciate the fact that I did so much to put this government in power. As soon as the election was over everybody forgot about who did what to make his/her election a successful one. I was the first director of publicity of the ruling party (PDP). I took part at the formation stage of the party and I took part in most of the committees that piloted the convention of the party to the land of success.

The tendency is that if you are not moving from one person to another you will be forgotten, so I decided not to do that because the president (Obasanjo) told us that you don't need to apply even for job, what you need to do is that you should have it on record that you did something and that you are a good party man.

I want us to trace your role in PDP right from the period of formation to the period of elections?

I joined PDP from what was called the National Unity Forum, a break-away group from CNC, led by Chief Gemade. I was in that group, the other group was led by Saraki and I was the one who negotiated with G34 on behalf of this group. I did the final signing for PDP on

behalf of my group, the National Unity Forum.

Which means therefore that before PDP was formed you were there?

Yes, I was there. I attended all the G34 meetings that were held in Jerry Gana's house and even participated in the zoning of the offices. It was through my own moves that the national chairmanship of the party was zoned to the North-Central. There was a small committee set up by the Northern caucus. They presented their report before people like Abba Dabo, Alhaji Abdullahi Kumbai and the then administrative secretary of the party.

When we got to the meeting, they zoned the party chairmanship to the North-West and I said it was wrong and that North-Central should have the chairman and I told them why it should be so. They agreed with me and I wrote a minority report. When we got to the Northern caucus, they tabled their own and I tabled my own. Alhaji Bamanga Tukur, Kumbai and others bought my idea and agreed with me and said that the Chairmanship should be zoned to the North-Central.

To tell you the fact, people like Solomon Lar, Jerry Gana, Gemade and a lot of them did not know what we were doing, Gemade got to know because I was reporting to him. Solomon Lar and Jerry Gana were surprised at what we were doing, because they were not in the Northern caucus meeting.

When the campaign started, one expected that you would have supported none other than your brother, Gemade. But why the sudden change of events?

Yes, because, I told Gemade in Jos when we went to receive Obasanjo after his election that I wanted him to run for the chairmanship of the party but he refused.

It was after Gemade insisted that he couldn't contest for the chairman that I now took Awoniyi to Gemade's house and said, chief, since you said that you couldn't run for the Chairmanship position, here is my candidate. He said yes, he is a good man, work for him and I started working for Awoniyi. I did not know of any plan by Gemade to run for the Chairmanship of the party. I was Awoniyi's campaign manager. Few days to the election, I was at the governor's lodge in Abuja, Gemade phoned me and said that he was contesting for the election so I should support him.

I told him that I couldn't withdraw from Awoniyi. I will continue to support him, if he wins, fine. I've been close to Gemade since 1971. He has been very close to my family and I to his. He is my in-law too. But I supported Awoniyi and it would have been bad for me to drop him for Gemade because Gemade is my brother. When Gemade was in CNC, I was in UNCP, but I gave my local government areato him and his party won the Chairmanship of my council. But in the case of that election I could not support him because It was late for me to do that.

Did Gemade take offence at your lack of support for him?

I don't know whether he is angry with me, although I have not been appointed even as a board member of any of the newly constituted board of parastatals. I still don't want to believe that he is angry, although I know that he is blocking my chances.

There are speculations in the party that because you did not support Gemade during his campaign, as you also confirmed, he is now blocking your chances. Did you hear any rumour?

I didn't hear any rumour, even though I have not been appointed to occupy any position in the party. But I am a patient politician and I am prepared to wait. I waited for about fifteen years for the military to go because I don't want to do anything with them. So I am prepared to wait for 4 years out of which Gemade has just 2 more years to go.

I also learnt that you played a vital role in the formation of the Anti-corruption Commission. What role did you play?

I was the Secretary of the committee, called the Presidential Advisory Committee, set-up by President Olusegun Obasanjo. Adamu Ciroma was the Chairman. It was that commission that recommended the anti-

Star Interview

corruption bill and the probe commission which is now headed by Justice Oputa. All these commissions were recommended by my committee.

That means you should have been appointed a member of one of the commissions now?

No, no, I am a politician.

What I mean is that you are supposed to be there to implement what you proposed.

No. We did many things, so you should have said that I would have been in the media board to help implement, because I remember that we proposed that government should sell out FRCN, NTA and other media that government owns. You see, Mr. Ben Bruce, who is now the DG of NTA was the number one person to call for the sale of NTA and those of us who were against it have no role in these things.

You worked in both New Nigerian newspapers (NNN) and Daily Times, both papers were dear to you. Do you support the idea that they should be sold?

The arrangement to run Daily Times by NICON Insurance was the best arrangement. Government owning these two media is giving a free hand to abuse. I do not subscribe to the sale of these organisations but govt should identify parastatals that can be able to run these media like NICON Insurance that took over Daily Times. If these media go to individuals the message they have for the people may be missed. But if organisations that know the message buy it, it will continue to enhance the message.

We understand that you are a strong supporter of the government of Benue State. What do you think is the achievement of the state under the leadership of Mr. George Akume?

I am not the strongest person supporting this government. The government is supported by everybody, because the government was voted in by everybody. I am only close to the governor. But I am not the strongest supporter of the government. I am close to the late Aper Aku and I was also close to Rev. Adasu Moses because I am a good party man.

Coming to his achievement, if you look at the level of development within Akume's 19 months in office, you will wonder whether there was government in Benue State for the past 16 years. When he took over, salaries were in arrears; the salaries were not up to half of what it is now, but workers were not paid. Unlike those days, salaries and pensions are now paid. You know Benue State is the only state in the North that runs a University and you know how expensive it is to run a University. Infrastructural development is going on, township roads are now well tarred and construction is going on in the health institution. He also constructed about 65 bore holes throughout the state. About 15 old secondary schools in the state have been renovated and the renovation of primary schools is still going on now. It may look ordinary but these have not happened for many years.

From what I read in the community papers in Benue State, people want Akume to continue as governor. What is your position on this matter?

If the majority of people talk, there is nothing we can do about it. If they say yes then it is yes. Nobody is saying that another person should not contest but I believe strongly that people would like to see Akume in the office for a second term. I understand that when Akume was six months old in office, people in the state were not happy with him because all his projects were in the pipeline. But now some people are riding vehicles calling it "Akume thank you". People are building their houses everywhere, It was not so in the past six years.

We learnt that some sections of the state, especially the Idomas are warming up to come out for the governorship of the state. If I were an Idoma man and want to contest for the governorship, I would like a situation whereby the Tiv governor complete his 8 year tenure, so that there will be an opportunity for another person to come in after the 8 years. So, as far as I am concerned they should support Akume to make sure he continues in 2003.

What is your own position on the issue of sole candidacy in the 2003 election, which is what people like Arthur Nzeribe have been advocating in recent times?

You know when I was in CNC during the Abacha days. There was this issue of sole candidacy by all the five political parties including my party. I strongly opposed the idea. Even when they gave N5, 000 to delegates to come for convention in Markudi, I refused to go. Therefore, I will not buy the idea of sole candidature. Whatsoever is the case?

What I know about Obasanjo is that he is a democrat, so he would like to go through the process of primary election to the main election. I know he will still want to go to convention and go through the normal processes. I am in support of Chief Ekwueme because we were in the NPN together and I am still an NPN supporter.

We campaigned for Obasanjo because of his past achievement. At least we made sure that he got Tarka Local Government which is my place.

Why did you refer to Adamu Ciroma as your master?

Adamu Ciroma brought me up. I worked with him in New Nigerian newspapers. I was his personal assistant for two years when he was the managing director of the company. In principle I worked, for him when he

contested for president, because he was in NRC and was in SDP.

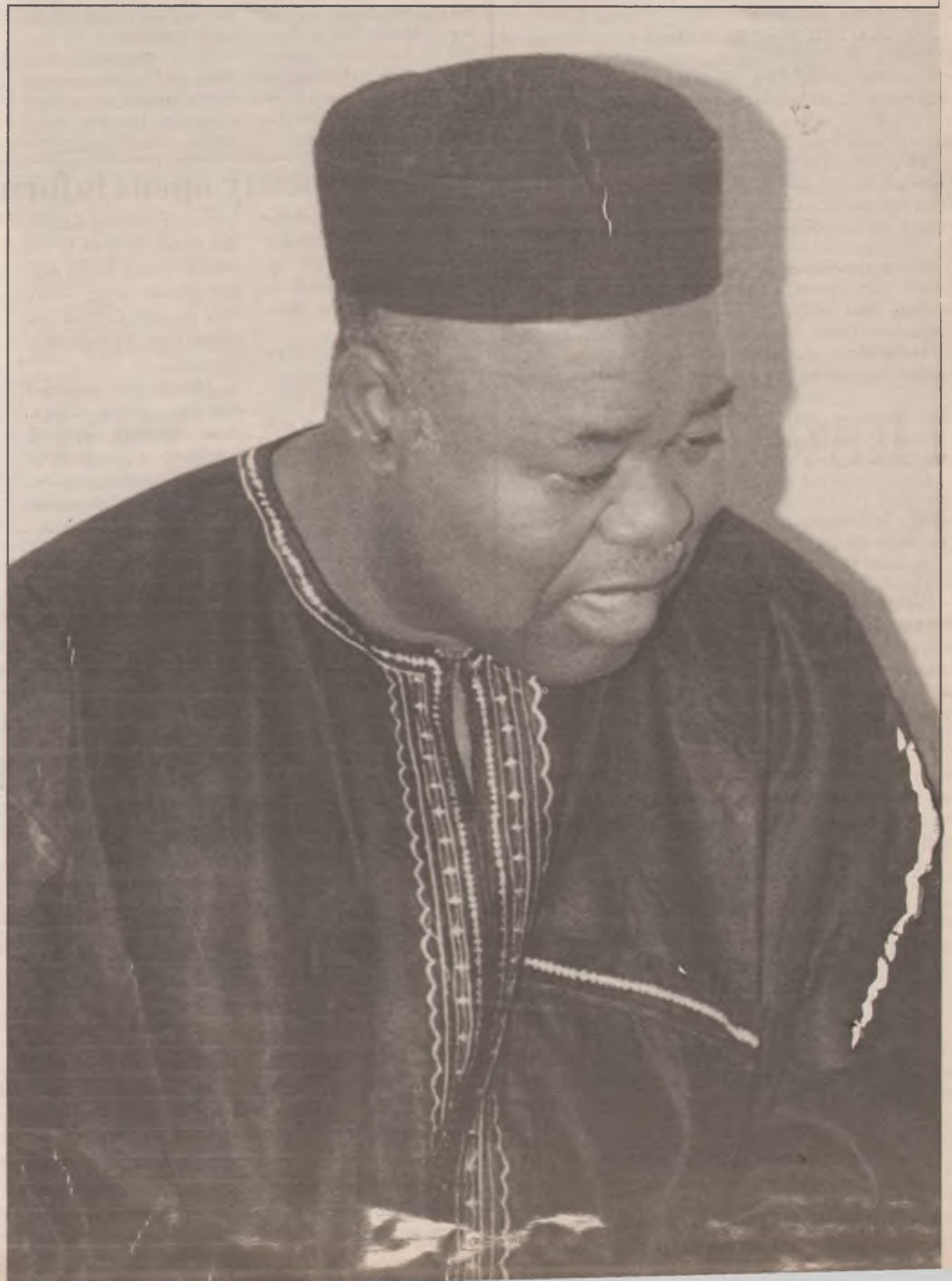
So, why didn't he call you this time around?

He is not the president. Moreover, appointment is done by the president and I don't want to be his personal assistant again. I want a major appointment.

We know very little about you, especially your days in NNN and Daily Times. Can you tell us little about your life?

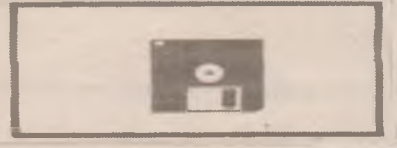
I am a self-made person. After going through normal primary school in my village, I had secondary school education at Government College, Kaduna and after that I joined the NNN. I attended courses both in Nigeria and overseas. I have spent my entire life in the newspaper business.

God has been very good to me because I learn quickly. I started with NNN in 1972. I was the assistant news editor. I was not confirmed before I was invited to start the Nigeria Standard newspaper during the Benue Plateau. After the creation of Benue State I came home and set up the Voice newspaper. After that I joined late J.S.Tarka in his party as the state secretary. I was appointed director of the Daily Times, after the demise of the Second Republic, I left. Then Adasu called me back when he was the governor of the state. I've spent all my life in newspaper houses.





I.T. WORLD



IT PERSONALITY

Meet Steve Chang: the anti-virus king

Trend Micro and its CEO, Steve Chang, are practically household names in the anti-virus world.

Chang, 47, founded the company in 1988 to produce anti-virus software solutions for personal computers. Today, Trend Micro, with more than 750 employees and 20 million users worldwide, is indubitably one of the leaders in virus management.



Chang

In September 1999, Chang, who is also the president and chairman of Trend Micro, launched the eDoctor Global Network for managed service providers to deliver Trend Micro's Internet content security services to their customers.

This subscription service model is expected to grow at a 105 percent compound annual rate for the next four years, according to International Data Corp (IDC). Alliances have since been formed with many companies, including Internet Security Systems (ISS), PSINet, Equant, Telstra and Sprint.

For fiscal 2000, Trend Micro announced net income of 4.72 billion yen (US\$45 million) for the year 2000, reflecting a 91 percent increase from 1999. Operating income and net sales rose to 75 percent and 59 percent, reaching 7.44 billion yen (US\$70.9 million) and 21.84 billion yen (US\$208 million) respectively.

Chang attributed the strong gains to a rising demand for high-end Internet protection products such as InterScan VirusWall and ScanMail for Microsoft Exchange and Lotus Notes. InterScan VirusWall captured 54 percent of global anti-virus software sales for Web servers and was voted Best Virus Protection by users to capture the W2Knews Target Awards 2000. ScanMail for Exchange 2000 did just as well, winning Best Tool/Utility at the Microsoft Exchange Conference 2000.

Trend Micro also offers Linux-based Internet server appliances, software and services through its fully owned subsidiary - ipTrend Inc. Targeted at small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), ipTrend launched its first product - eStation - an Internet-ready server bundled with Linux applications in Asia late last year.

Chang predicted that net sales this year will reach 30 billion yen (US\$250 million based on current rates) while ordinary income will reach 10 billion yen (US\$83 million). Real profit was projected to grow by 47 percent in 2001.

As Trend Micro's enterprise client base expanded, Chang realized that anti-virus solutions were perceived more as a service than a product.

"The ILOVEYOU virus helped change the perception from product to service ... Users don't expect you to detect every virus, but they want you to respond quickly. Anti-virus software must be constantly updated and maintained to protect against the latest threats, especially in this era of fast-spreading e-mail viruses," Chang told ZDNet Asia.

To meet the needs of clients, Chang built TrendLabs, a global anti-virus research and support network that employs over 250 engineers and operates round the clock to handle new virus outbreaks or urgent support problems. Its headquarters in Manila recently earned ISO 9002 certification for its quality assurance standards.

Chang's strategy for 2001 is focused on growth. To this end, one of the areas Chang plans to concentrate on is broadband. Trend Micro will launch what it claimed to be the world's first Internet broadband security device - GateLock - later this year. GateLock, a plug-and-play broadband device, acts like a personal firewall to keep out hackers and viruses.

With wireless threats on the rise, Chang also believes that his company should help organizations implement multi-layered virus protection for both wired and wireless networks. In February this year, Chang launched PC-cillin for Wireless, an anti-virus solution for most handheld mobile and wireless device platforms, including Palm OS, Windows CE, and Symbian EPOC.

Trend Micro was named the world leader in the Internet security market by IDC last year. Under Chang's guidance, Trend Micro may well remain the king of Internet content security for years to come. (ZDNet Asia).

FG creates National Geographical system

President Olusegun Obasanjo has approved a 10-Member Board to implement and manage the National Geographical Information System (GIS).

The Chief Economic Adviser to the President, Chief Philip Asiodu, announced this, penultimate Tuesday, while declaring open the presentation of the capacity of Geographical Information System as an economic Planning and management tool at the Hilton Hotel, Abuja.

The National Geographical Information System project, according to him, would involve the development of a Decision Support System (DSS) through which the nation can take inventory of her man-made and natural assets and fashion out environmentally friendly courses of action in managing the nation's wealth.

Chief Asiodu revealed that the role of the Board would be purely advisory and to ensure that the nation fully benefitted from this modern High-tech tool for efficient economic management, sustainable development and planning.

"It is a planning tool to facilitate the optimal utilization of resources, thereby minimising waste while reducing environmental degradation and providing an effective mechanism for monitoring economic development projects," he said.

The Chief Economic Adviser Commended the Director of National Data Bank, Dr. Akinyosoye and the Managing Director of GML Projects, Dr. Tabi Tawo, for putting in so much to ensure that the nation acquired this modern management technology.

In his own contribution, Mr. Fernando Vaveiros, the Associate Director of GML Project, explained that several efforts were made on the Geographical Information System past ten years but problems of expertise and funding seriously restricted their use and availability for national planning.

He observed that Geographical Information System could be used to create a planning tool that would support efficient allocation of

resources between competing needs and determine pressures on specific resources for sustainable planning and measuring the impact of government policies on the people.

Similarly, Dr. Mohammed A. Mohammed, another systems designer and developer for Raytheon, also explained that Geographical Information System for Nigeria would enhance viable decision-making and formulation of sound planning policies.

According to him, operational applications of the National GIS would cover among others, oil/gas exploration and pipelines

monitoring, utilities like telecommunication, power, water and sewers. Development and maintenance of transportation networks and environmental assessment including disaster management would be available, he added.

The GIS would also provide forestry and natural resources protection with precision on agriculture as well as commercial web site development (investment services).

The Geographical Information System has many stakeholders, including the government, the private sector and donor agencies.

NITEL gets acting Managing Director

Engineer Ganiyi O Adebuji has been appointed acting Managing Director of Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL). The former Managing Director of NITEL, Dr. Emmanuel Bello Ojeba, has been directed to proceed on

pre-retirement leave.

The Minister of Communications, Alhaji Mohammed Arzika (OFR), while explaining the reason for Dr. Ojeba's removal as Managing Director of NITEL, said that the action was part of the efforts to accelerate the process of re-invigorating NITEL to effectively compete in the deregulated telecommunications environment in Nigeria.

According to a statement signed by the Assistant Director of Press and Public Relations, Mr. S. O. Ajayi, the position of NITEL Managing Director has been advertised and the process of selecting a dynamic and result-oriented Managing Director for NITEL was receiving attention.

He added that, the former Managing Director, Dr. Ojeba is due for retirement in June this year, having put in 35 years in service and reached 60 years of age.

It will be recalled that Dr. Ojeba was appointed acting Managing Director of NITEL in February 2000 and his appointment was confirmed in January 2001.

Muslim society opens information centre

The Islamic Society for Upholding Orthodox Traditions of the Prophet has established an information systems centre in Kaduna.

The Administrative Secretary of the Centre, Mallam Muhammad Sani Adam, told *Daily Trust* that they established the Assunnah Information Systems Centre with the basic objective of propagating Islam through preaching, seminars, first aid services, publications, as well as to provide divine connection for ultimate salvation of mankind.

As he put it: "Islamic Information and Knowledge are the imperatives of virtuous Muslims and for their deliverance."

Speaking on the activities of their organisation, he stressed that, they formed an Islamic society for reformation to eradicate some innovations in the religion so that orthodox practices would be upheld through their preaching and teaching.

They also established a monthly, *Assunnah Newsletter*, published fortnightly, in addition to other activities like, preaching, teaching, publication of books, and calendars among others.

Speaking on the achievements of their organisation, he explained that, they had explored some possibilities of publishing and printing. They had the

largest circulating Islamic newsletter, as well as the bureau service centre they had already set up where they provide English and Arabic Desk Top Publishing Services.

Mallam Sani, explained that they lacked enough, news reporters, vehicles, information technology and communications equipment.

He said that information technology products were vital in Islamic information development, adding that they had acquired few computer systems, including a photocopier and a scanning machine among others.

He appealed to Muslims to donate generously towards achieving their laudable objective of a powerful and virile Islamic Information System to meet the current cyber age challenges,

He also called on individuals and organisations to patronise and advertise in their newsletter.

Assunnah Islamic Information Centre can be reached at Assunnah Publications Limited, No. 12 Auwal Street, Uguwar Sanusi, New Extension, P.O.Box 7801, Kaduna, Tel: 062-416393

Senator advocates protection of intellectual property

Senator Mike Ajegbo has called for the protection of intellectual property in Nigerian and Africa.

Senator Ajegbo made the call in a paper he presented at the opening ceremony of the Conference on the development of intellectual property in Africa, which too place in Abuja, last week.

He said that, geographical indications, industrial design, patents, layout-designs (topographies) of integrated circuits and trade secrets should be well protected by copyright laws.

He added that, TRIPS should also set standards for the control of anti-

competitive practices in contractual licences.

To counter the traditional weakness in the enforcement of intellectual property contracts, TRIPS contains detailed obligation on enforcement procedures and provisions regarding cooperation and technical assistance among signatories, he said.

Senator Ajegbo further stressed that, "as a region in dire need of catalysts to growth, Africa could not afford to leave its intellectual property regimes in near-comatose state."

He recommended that steps should be taken by African countries to erect effective intellectual

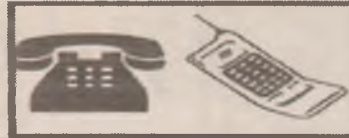
property infra-structure.

According to him, TRIPS - Compliant legislation must be urgently enacted and religiously enforced. Such legislation would encompass a law or laws for each category of intellectual property and the requisite authority for its enforcement.

He added that, access must be established to a properly equipped agency, replete with trained staff that would grant intellectual property protection, publicise information on rights that have been granted as well as general information on intellectual property.



I.T. WORLD



Nokia may have recalled millions of cell phones due to a software glitch that renders them inoperable with the third-generation (3G) networks that major U.S. carriers plan to start using this year.

Nokia maintained that it can resolve the problem with a software patch in the network infrastructure, which would avoid a recall. But major carriers and an industry working group want to carefully evaluate the fix to ensure that it does not delay the network rollout or generate other compatibility problems.

Espoo, Finland-based Nokia, said the problem, which it discovered last week, stemmed from the approach it took in developing its second-generation (2G) phones operating on the Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) protocol. That approach makes them inoperable with the 3G networks that carriers such as Sprint PCS Group in Kansas City, and Verizon Wireless, plan to start deploying this year.

Ed Chao, Senior Manager in the wireless networks group at Murray Hill, New Jersey-based Lucent Technologies, said Nokia's problem is the result of a "software shortcut" the company took with the 2G CDMA standard.

According to Chao, if Nokia had followed the 2G CDMA specifications, the older phones should have been able to access the new 3G networks for voice calls and data transfer at lower speeds. As it is, Nokia's older phones cannot access 3G networks at all.

Nokia cell phones face problem



Executive Vice President of Nokia Mobile Phones, Aussi Vanjoki (Reuters)

Megan Matthews, a spokeswoman for Nokia, acknowledged that due to the company's "interpretation" of the older 2G CDMA standard, its phones cannot tap into the synchronization channel of the 3G CDMA networks, making it impossible for them to grab a signal. "The phones keep spinning but just won't register with the network," she said.

Matthews said Nokia was working with wireless network

systems manufacturers, including Lucent, to develop a software patch that can be loaded into base stations, allowing its older Model 2100, 5100, and 6100 phones to tap into the 3G networks. "We believe a software-based solution is best for the industry," she said. "It would eliminate the recall of millions of phones."

An official at one carrier, who declined to be identified, does not accept Nokia's argu-

ment, however. "It's their problem, and because we have a quarter-million of their phones in a warehouse, we think they should take them back and put in a new chip set. We don't want to sell these phones to our customers," the official said.

Andrea Linsky, a spokeswoman for Verizon Wireless in Bedminster, N.J., said her company "is working with Nokia to make sure customers' handsets can evolve" to the new 3G standards. She declined to say whether Verizon would accept a software patch in lieu of a wholesale handset replacement.

Perry LaForge, Executive Director of the CDMA Development Group in Costa Mesa, Calif., said it will take the CDMA

industry, including carriers, network systems providers and Nokia, at least 30 days to determine whether to resolve the issue with a handset replacement or a software fix to wireless base stations.

"[But] we don't want any delay in the rollout of 3G," LaForge said. "There is a tremendous amount of momentum to deploy this year, and we don't want any delay." He said a software patch "would benefit Nokia the most, but we have to be prudent and test the software [to ensure] there are no downstream ramifications."

Chao said Lucent believed it had developed a software base-station patch for Nokia phones within the CDMA standards, and

which will not cost carrier customers much, and can be rolled out quickly. But Lucent needed to conduct tests of its fix, he added.

Bob Egan, an analyst at Gartner in Stamford, Connecticut, said Nokia's problems with CDMA are not new. "Nokia has no clue on how to build network equipment or handsets for CDMA," he said. "They have failed miserably in the past, and this latest round is yet more evidence of their ineptness in realms beyond [GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications), the European standard.]"

(Computerworld)

Motorola denies liquidity problems

Motorola on Friday issued a wordy statement denying that it was facing a liquidity problem in response to a published report questioning the company's cash position. The vendor is set to announce its first-quarter financial results tomorrow.

With sales of its phone handsets dwindling, demand for its semiconductors slumping, and a slowing U.S. economy weighing on the company, some bond analysts are now worried that Motorola may not have the financial strength to obtain short-term debt financing, according to a Bloomberg report.

"Motorola today is financially sound," Bob Growney, Motorola president and chief operating officer, said in a statement refuting the analysts' comments in the Bloomberg report. "Any suggestion or erroneous report that Motorola faces a serious liquidity problem is simply not correct and is not supported by fact." The Motorola statement was released towards the close of regular Friday market trading.

The company's attempt to calm investors didn't work. In line with a broader market loss Friday, Motorola's (MOT) shares fell below its 52-week low, ending the regular trading at \$11.50, a drop of 23.08 percent or \$3.45.

"People are concerned they're caught in a squeeze," said Samuel May, a senior research analyst with U.S. Bancorp Piper Jaffray. "Now are they? I don't know."

Motorola strongly denied any so-called squeeze. As of Friday, the company said it had

more than \$4.5 billion in cash and cash equivalents and outstanding commercial paper had been reduced to \$3.1 billion. Those figures compare with its financial position at the end of the first quarter of this year — March 30, 2001 — when Motorola said it had cash and cash equivalents of \$4.4 billion and \$4.1 billion of outstanding commercial paper.

Still, investors have punished Motorola continually on fears that the company isn't sufficiently prepared to wait out a slowdown in sales. To boost its ability to borrow, Motorola must reduce capital spending, sell off some of its business units or bring in more revenue, according to May.

"Investors have reason to be cautious about any large cap equipment company that is seeing its business deteriorate," he said.

According to its March proxy statement, Motorola noted that it "expects accounts receiv-

able to decline during 2001." With revenue continuing to diminish, the company has actively pursued the other options to add to its cash position.

Since December, Motorola has laid off more than 22,000 employees, reducing its capital expenditures significantly.

Motorola has also sold off a number of its business units. The company said it has received more than \$1 billion from the sale of several of its interests in cellular operating companies worldwide and expects to receive about \$1.8 billion for the sale of its interests in cellular operating companies in northern Mexico by the third quarter of this year.

Looking ahead to Tuesday, 26 analysts polled by First Call/Thomson Financial are expecting Schaumburg, Illinois based Motorola to report a first-quarter loss of \$0.07 per share. The company reported a \$0.20 per share profit in the last quarter of year 2000.



Model displaying Motorola's mobile phones (Reuters)

Napster vs. Recording Industry: Napster denies breach of order

Leading up to its first court appearance in over a month, Napster released its third brief last week, detailing its compliance with a U.S. District Court order that it block copyrighted material from its service.

With a hearing scheduled for tomorrow in the courtroom of U.S. District Judge Marilyn Hall Patel, who handed the order down, Napster and its foe, the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), have traded increasingly hostile legal filings for the past month.

In Napster's latest brief, which details its efforts between March 16 and March 30, the company argued that not only had it effectively filtered copyrighted material from its service but that the record companies suing it were attempting to "re-litigate" the case and its ruling in their filings.

The RIAA's last filing charged that Napster was failing to abide by the court's order and was not taking adequate steps to block infringing material. Napster responded by saying that the RIAA was "seeking to re-litigate issues already decided"

by the court. The issue of contention is deciding who is responsible for providing Napster with the information necessary to block the proper files.

In a previous brief, Napster had said that the RIAA was failing to provide the artist/song-title pairs, filenames, and proof of ownership the judge's order required. The RIAA countered that it was abiding by the court's order and that Napster had brought any problem it had on itself by creating its service in the first place.

Napster charged in Thursday's brief that "the RIAA's position is unfair in light of the extent of the good faith efforts that Napster has already expended" and "make no sense because they are based on an attempt to circumvent the requirements" set out by the court in its ruling. Not only that, but Napster also said that the RIAA was attempting to return to the court's original ruling, which was overturned on appeal for being too broad.

In asking the court to place more of the burden on Napster for determining which files should be blocked, the RIAA was violating the court's order, Napster said.

This action has even more far-reaching implications, Napster said. "As a practical matter, Plaintiffs' position cannot (italics theirs) be correct. If an Internet Service Provider, such as Napster, can be 'put on notice' — and required to block and patrol its system — simply by being provided with catalogues of millions of artists and titles absent any (italics theirs) proof of availability of copyrighted works on the ISP's system, the operation of Internet technologies would be seriously

compromised."

Despite this dustup, Napster also said that its success in blocking copyrighted songs is "incontrovertible." Since March 20, the company has added 15 persons to its staff dedicated to blocking materials and has blocked more than 550,000 files, according to the brief. The total number of files blocked now sits at more than 1.7 million files.

In October of last year, Napster signed a surprise agreement with BMG, the parent company of BMG Entertainment, to create a copyright-friendly service. Just this week, the record companies have signed a flurry of digital music deals with such Internet heavyweights as RealNetworks and Yahoo.

European Commission probes Intel

The European Commission, (EC), has launched a probe into Intel's licensing practices, the company said Friday. The EC said the investigation focuses on marketing tactics.

"We have received a request from the European competition authorities for information on our policies in licensing our bus architecture for Intel processors," said an Intel spokesperson.

The EC said in a statement that it has asked Intel to react to allegations that the hardware vendor in its marketing practices abused its dominant position in the microprocessor market for Windows-based computers.

Citing the "confidential" nature of the inquiries, the Intel spokesperson declined to

specify what questions the EC was seeking answers to, when the request was made, or when Intel will respond.

However, the EC said it was already examining the U.S. chip giant's replies and that the probe was triggered by two complaints against Intel. Requests for information have also been sent to several PC makers and retailers, according to the EC statement.

"We believe our practices are both fair and lawful," the Intel spokesperson said, adding that Intel will cooperate with the regulatory agencies.

Noting that the investigation was in a very early stage, the EC said that it has not found that Intel acted against European Union competition law. There is no strict timetable for the conclusion of the antitrust

investigation.

In a PC, the bus interconnects the microprocessor with the motherboard and components attached to the motherboard, such as hard disk drives and graphics adapters. Intel's bus architecture is part of the company's intellectual property and is licensed to PC builders. PC manufacturers who used processors from Intel's rivals were allegedly denied access to design data.

"We want a fair return for our intellectual property assets, one of our key assets," said the Intel spokesperson.

According to a report in *The Wall Street Journal* on Friday, the probe also examined possible exclusionary effects of Intel's marketing tactics, specifically the subsidies the chip manufacturer gave PC vendors

for including the "Intel Inside" logo or tune in advertising. Intel would not confirm that and nobody at the EC was available for comment.

The investigation followed an antitrust probe of Intel launched by the U.S. Fair Trade Commission that began in 1997 and ended in late September last year with no action taken.

The FTC accused the chip maker of harming competition when it refused to do business with three companies — Compaq, Intergraph, and the former Digital Equipment (since acquired by Compaq) — unless they agreed to license patented technology on Intel's terms. The case was settled in 1999, but the investigation continued until late September last year. (IDG News Service)



Sean Fanning: Napster's founder (Reuters)



Arts & Entertainment



Singapore pushes for better-spoken English

Singapore will launch its second campaign in two years to urge better spoken English while taking a softer stance on the local dialect known popularly as "Singlish".

"Singlish is part of the search for a national identity, something that is uniquely Singaporean," David Wong, Chairman of the joint public and private sector speak good English Movement Committee, told a news conference.

With Singapore looking to be

a key player on the international stage, good English was vital, Wong said.

The city-state of four million has three official languages—English, Mandarin and Tamil. But English holds sway as the language of government, business and education, partly due to the island's past as a British colony.

Malaysia and Hong Kong, both former British colonies, have also been fretting about the failing standards of spoken and written English.

Singlish—the local mishmash of English, Chinese dialects and Malay—sprouts from the lips of everyone from office workers to housewives and students.

Ask someone if they have been shopping and they might reply, "Go come back already!"

"Aiyah! He catch no ball one" is a common exclamation that means someone doesn't understand something. Another favourite, "don't play play", is a winsome appeal to be serious.

This year's activities are

aimed at people under the age of 40 who already speak English. The pilot campaign was launched last year amid disparaging remarks about Singlish in the media.

"The best Singaporean speaker all speak an excellent standard of English but at the

drop of a hat switch to Singlish," Steve Adams, a senior teacher with the British Council, told Reuters.

"What we're trying to do is push up to the top of the range so that people can switch to a very good intentional variety of English when they need to,"

National Committee on slave Route Project underway—Minister

The Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism is to establish a national committee on the slave route project to highlight the activities of the slave trade, the Minister of Culture and Tourism, Ms. Boma Jack, has said.

Ms. Boma Jack dropped the hint at the closing ceremony of a week-long regional Youth encounter which would be made up of well-meaning Nigerians, knowledgeable in Culture and Tourism.

She congratulated UNESCO for initialising the programme, which

provided a forum for the children to rub minds and express their opinions on issues concerning their cultures in the modern world.

Jack, represented by Mr. Augustus Ajibola, noted that it also afforded them an opportunity to enjoy themselves and intermingle as well as build bridges of friendship and association which did not exist before now. She expressed gratitude to all children, local and foreign, for participating in the programme and expressed friendship that would endure.



Ms. Boma Jack, Minister of Culture and Tourism.

... also demands return of stolen Artefacts from France

The Minister of Culture and Tourism, Ms. Boma Bromilow-Jack, has in Abuja implored the French Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. Germaine Philipe, to assist the country in retrieving some of its stolen artefacts stored away in France.

Speaking during a visit of a French Cultural Team, the Minister said the artefacts were removed by some unpatriotic Nigerians without due process and sold for selfish reasons.

"Some citizens of Nigeria who are not patriotic enough find it lucrative to filter out some of our artefacts, which invariably finds their way, unknown to you, to your museums," she said. "Please notify us when such artefacts come in because what we have is just our history," she said it was important for the French government to intervene so that Nigerian history would not be lost "Because whatever one country has is for the benefit of all".

Boma also encouraged the French to support Nigeria in combating some of the negative international publicity about the country by journalist who do not adequately check their facts be-

fore writing.

"During the military regime, a lot of things actually went wrong



but now we have democracy and we want Nigeria to be viewed in a different manner, as a country that is ready to join the comity of nations in a way that it should stand up to, she remarked.

She said the French government should contribute to the growth of democracy in Nigeria by calling on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Ministry of Culture and tourism to confirm some derogatory stories before sending them out to the public. The Minister said Nigeria would prefer having a Mini-Cultural Exhibition within the country in some international museums, which would demand written proposals.

Earlier, the French Ambassador gave Nigeria an opportunity to submit a "shopping list" of what it wanted to benefit from the French government.

He invited Nigeria to be part of the New World Cultural Museum to be declared open in Paris in 2004. The Culture Minister also demands the return of artefacts F (2) which according to him, would have collections from America, Africa, Asia, Australia and other parts of the world. "African countries tend to be seen from ethnological perspective and it was time to give Africa a deep historical point of view with theatre, music, archaeology and architecture," Germain said.

NAN

Taliban says Bamiyan Buddha rubble not for sale

Afghanistan's ruling Taliban movement vowed on Tuesday to punish anyone caught smuggling remains of two giant Buddha statues, demolished last month in the face of international protest and a global outcry.

Taliban officials dismissed media reports that truckloads of rubble from the historic Bamiyan Buddhas, which once towered 53 metres (175 feet) and 38 metres (120 feet), had been up for sale in the city of Peshawar.

"We will severely punish anybody trying to smuggle or excavate relics from Bamiyan and other parts of the country," Information Minister Quaratullah Jamal told reporters.

Foreign Ministers Wakil Ahmad Muttawakil told Reuters there had been no smuggling.

"The reports of the debris smuggling and sale are totally wrong. No one is allowed to take a single piece out and nothing has been sold," Muttawakil told Reuters.

Antique dealers and smugglers in Peshawar said they were not aware of any new Afghan artefacts on the market.

Muttawakil said rubble from the wrecked Bamiyan statues was

still piled up next to the sand stone cliffs where the massive idols were hewn out around 1,500 years ago.

The Taliban's supreme leader Mullah Mohammed Omar in February decreed that Statues were un-Islamic and ordered every figure, including the Bamiyan Buddhas and priceless relics in Kabul's national museum, be destroyed.

"All statues have been smashed and the final decision about the destiny of the debris will be taken by the information ministry," Muttawakil said.

The United Nations Cultural Agency (UNESCO) it was now trying to track down missing Afghan artwork for safekeeping. UNESCO said it was working to buy up Afghan art objects—many of which have been smuggled out to Pakistan and Japan—on the open market and place them in safe havens.

The Taliban's Jamal said the movement was mixing Bamiyan rubble with soil and that the remains could no longer be distinguished.

"The debris has been thrown and mixed up with other soils," he said.

"We have proved that we are iconoclast. The statues have no value for us and nor have we sold any piece of them. Reuters

Spice girls will be together at 50-Bunton

Baby Spice Emma Bunton insisted on Tuesday that the Spice Girls would still be performing together in their fifties.

"We have always said we'd have Zimmer frames and be saying 'I'll tell you what I want, what I really really want,' she told GMTV.

Bunton said the band, which has sold 38 million albums worldwide since 1995, hoped to follow in the footsteps of the rolling stones and still perform together in their fifties.

The quarter have all branched out in solo careers, sparking persistent rumours that they were about to split up.

Melanie Chishom, a.k.a. Sporty spice, provoked pop bedlam last month when she told Reuters she had no plans to keep working with Britain's biggest pop phenomenon since The Beatles. But Bunton insisted: "We love working together. We love writing and touring together. We just thought we'd take this year to do our own things,"

Bamako hosts two-day African Language Academy Workshop

A workshop bringing together scientists and linguists held from April 2 to April 3 in Bamako to draw up a draft for an African Language Academy, official source have said on Bamako.

The project will subsequently

be submitted to the organisation of African Unity (OAU) for its consideration and input, the head of the Mission in charge of its implementation, Adama Samassekou, said. President alpha Oumar Konare, who was Friday briefed on the progress made

Samassekou's group, initiated the creation of the Language Academy.

According to former Malian Basic Education Minister Samassekou, Konare's wish is to see the setting up of the Academy into an institution of the African Union.

Arts & Entertainment

The Story of the New Nigerian Part XI

Season of storms!

Sequel to the coup of January 15th 1966, the country is caught in a vortex of crisis, tensions and uncertainties. The New Nigerian served as an agile and objective chronicler of these events.

The following day the news paper carried another editorial in support of Ironsi's move. Entitled the "Tree of unity" the editorial claimed that "the general reaction is that the changes announced by the Supreme Commander, and the new plan for the future of the country, are a genuine attempt to build a new nation, free from the blunders of the past."

The editorial then justified its stand with the following ex cathedra declaration:

"Invariably there have been some doubts expressed at the possible effects of the new systems introduced in the various fields of public activity. However, these come almost entirely from selfish motives.

It is difficult to expect people to forget old differences and antagonisms overnight but there must be a sincere attempt to drop old prejudices.

Nationalism must replace tribalism. Enmity and distrust must wither in the white heat of nationalism and the battle to win true, long lasting nationhood.

True Nigerians will give their full and whole-hearted support to the government's plan. The Executive Council has produced its blueprint for the future. It is a blueprint to build a nation. Every true Nigerian will want to contribute his share to seeing that the nation is built on a firm foundation.

Unless this is achieved, the Republic of Nigeria will, at some future date, be once again in danger.

The government's expressed intention of restoring the people's faith in their fatherland, will fail.

No Nigerian will want this to happen. To those who might feel personal resentment at some of the new orders, or who do not throw their full support behind the government's new policy, we say: Think, and think hard, of the consequences:

Thirty years later Mr. Sharp in apparent effort to defend the Nigerian's editorial direction at that point in time explained that after the coup, the country appeared to be getting back into its own confident stride, but beneath the surface was a growing swell of Northern discontent over what was seen as Eastern plans for domination of the Federation.

"I was advised by 'higher au-

thority' on the need to tread carefully as far as comments on the growing unrest about Ironsi's latest declared intentions were concerned, widely regarded by many in the North as the first move towards an Igbo-dominated military dictatorship.

"For sometime prior to the announcement abolishing the federal arrangement and in pursuance of its carefully-carefully policy, the *New Nigerian* had continued to report factually, editorialising when appropriate, but always in a manner calculated not to invite punitive action being taken against it. Increasingly we were reaching a position where even the mildest criticism seemed to upset the Ironsi crowd and made life difficult for the Northern Governor, as well as of course, for Ahmed Joda, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information, Kaduna.

"The *Eastern Outlook* did not help matters and never lost an opportunity to have a go at us. It could not understand how a government owned newspaper could dance to a tune that was not the exclusive right of those who paid the piper." However to many of its readers in the North, the *New Nigerian* this time got it wrong. There were fears at all levels of the society that the Ironsi decree on National Government was aimed at a take-over by



South-ern-ers, especially the Igbos, of the North-its government, its civil service, its judiciary, its parastatals and its educational institutions and even the *New Nigerian*, itself. Mr. Sharp said he was told that the company would be taken over by the Federal Government and would be run by Igbos. *Gaskiya Ta Fi K wabo* will cease to

Books

exist. Soon, the wait-and-see attitude of the Northerners since the fall of the Sardauna's government and his assassination gradually gave way to opposition to the legislations of General Ironsi which were seen as anti-north. The broadcast came at this time when the news of the pattern of killing in January and the identity of coup leaders was gradually becoming general knowledge.

On 29th May, a week after his "end of Federation" broadcast, the masses took to the streets. The May riots began as peaceful student demonstrations in Kano and Zaria but later became violent when men folk from the towns joined. The mobs demanded an end to the unitary government or even secession - "A ware"! Igbos became the target both because they were seen as the perpetrators of the Northern anguish and as a result of the provocative way the ordinary Igbos had conducted themselves in the markets and other public places in the North, since the death of the Sardauna. This writer was taunted by his Igbo tailor in Sabon gari Zaria market and in the market of Mubi, Adamawa State by an Igbo provisions trader in a space of two weeks. I was shown the picture of the Sardauna lying in a pool of his blood, and asked "who is now your leader?" Also the article by Nelson Ottah an Ibo journalist in *Drum* magazine which included a picture of the Sardauna in a recumbent pose was widely circulated by the Igbos. All these did not endear Ibos to the Northerners whether Hausa/Fulani or not. And when the riots came in Kano, Zaria, Jos and Kaduna they bore the brunt of the fury of the masses.

The *New Nigerian* as the newspaper on the spot, prepared detailed stories of the weekend riots illustrated with pictures: But as the press was about to roll the Monday 30th May edition, the authorities made their move. The management of the newspaper was ordered not to publish any story, picture or comment on the riots. The stories and pictures were removed and blank four pages sent out, each with this comment:

"Within fifteen minutes of this edition of the *New Nigerian* going to press a telephone message was received from a Government official

instructing that no reference was to be made to the subject that formed the basis of the reports and pictures which should have occupied



Alhaji Ahmed Joda

This newspaper does not share the view which evidently prompted this instruction, acknowledges the difficulty of those who had to pass it on, but regrets that under the circumstances it has no alternative but to obey the order.

It apologises to its readers for failing in its duty and reminds them of its statement of policy which was recently repeated in this newspaper: "... then they will become the principles by which we shall fight and, if necessary, fall."

It was an act of defiance. And it gave further boost to the *New Nigerian* as a paper of authority. This courageous act has up till today, as far as I know not been repeated in the *New Nigerian* itself or any other newspaper in Nigeria, even though censorship of sensitive stories take place once in a while whatever the colour of the government. The Managing Director of the company, Mr. Charles Sharp, was almost deported to England. In the paper's edition to mark its first anniversary he said he had one foot on a VC 10 plane to take him to London. But he survived the crisis and continued to run the paper until 1969.

Thirty years later Mr. Sharp was to explain his decision as follows:

"Then, not for the first time in Nigeria's post independence period, all other considerations were overtaken by events. The disturbances of 29th May produced another issue of the *New Nigerian* destined to become a national talking-point... The only time in my life when I was stopped in the streets by complete strangers and told what a grand

chap I was. "During those disturbances our district reporters responded in a way that did their paper proud. Eye-witness accounts came into the office, together with pictures, and we produced an issue that we knew would sell like proverbial hotcakes."

"We were literally minutes off starting the press when the telephone went. It was the Military Governor. He was clearly upset and explained that what he had to say would take only a minute. He had just received instruction from Lagos to inform us that nothing should appear in the following day's issue of the *New Nigerian* concerning the disturbances. "I am sorry, but there is nothing I can do about it. I attempted to explain the disturbances were common knowledge, but they insisted. The ban is on," he told me. I knew he meant it.

No sooner had I put down the receiver, than the telephone rang again. It was Alhaji Babatunde Jose, boss of the *Daily Times* in Lagos.

He told me he had received similar instructions and had to destroy 50,000 copies of the early Western edition of the *Sunday Times*.

"I have been told I shall be arrested and the place closed down if I don't comply," he added. He asked me what I proposed doing. "I had thought of not printing at all, but then an idea suddenly came to me." I'll tell you what I am hoping to do, Alhaji I'm going to do precisely what I am told. I intend obeying the order to the letter: We are going to publish an issue in which not a word or photograph about the previous day's events will appear: I suggest you do the same." I explained what I was going to do.

"It took a few minutes to strip our front page and three inside pages of type matter and pictures devoted to coverage of the disturbances. I then placed a brief panel in the middle of each empty page apologising for the blank space, with a brief explanation that shortly before going to press we had been forbidden to refer to the subject matter that was to have occupied the space."

"The outcome was predictable. Never in the history of journalism had blank pages told a story more dramatically and conveyed comment more effectively."

To be continued.

NEWS

FG urged to develop rails, inland waterways...

Participants at a workshop on "options in mass transit operations in Nigeria" have called on the Federal Government to invest in the development and maintenance of other mass

From Dare Oyewole, in Kaduna

transit modes like rails and inland waterways.

In a communiqué issued at the end of the workshop held in Zaria at the weekend, the participants said this would inject much needed capital investment, new technology and management expertise into Nigerian Rail Mass Transit System.

According to the communiqué signed by the Director General/Chief Executive of the Nigerian Institute of Transport Technology (NITT), Zaria, Dr. Mahe Dange, the Nigerian rail system should be able to offer rapid rail (metroline) in some

cities for mass transit.

It observed with concern that most state governments have not shown interest in exploring the development of the rail transport option and that the present Nigerian rail transport system in terms of technology, management, capital base and network, cannot operate viably and effectively as a mass transit option.

According to the communiqué, government should as a matter of urgency, provide the necessary support in terms of infrastructure and funding to the transport sector in the country.

It also recommended that all the modes of transportation should be coordinated

to ensure that each mode does the job for which it was most suited and achieve the desired intermodalism.

Observing that properly integrated research had not been carried out to assess the viability and implications of other mass transit modes for Nigerian cities, it said the NITT in collaboration with the National Council on Transport, should institute an integrative research on the viability and implications of all mass transit options.

It called on government to come up with a clear policy statement on the way forward in terms of infrastructural and legal framework to fill the vacuum created by the demise of FUMTA in areas of procurement and urban transport regulation.

The workshop was organised by NITT for chief executives of state mass transit agencies.

Illegal mining will continue unless... -Agabi

Minister of Solid Minerals Development, Mr Kanu Godwin Agabi, has noted that unless there is a complete overhaul of the Nigerian security system, illegal mining would continue to thrive in the country.

The minister made the observation while delivering a keynote address on the occasion of the 3rd Conference of the National Consultation Forum on Solid Minerals development held in Ibadan last week.

According to Mr Agabi, illegal mining is detrimental to the nation's economy, noting that it was wrong for the illegal miners to engage in the act since they can do it legally; "I have pointed out to illegal miners that they do not have to do illegally what they can do legally," he said.

"Come to the ministry for

From Yinka Oladoyinbo in Ibadan

lease as a licence and officials of my ministry will assist you with advice as to how best to proceed," he added.

The Minister warned that if the illegal miners continued with their activities, he would not hesitate to have them arrested and prosecuted. "It is clearly wrong to imagine that the Federal Government lacks either the will or the means to arrest and to prosecute illegal miners," he asserted.

He also said that the Federal Government was prepared to co-operate with any state for the exploration of minerals for the benefit of both. This he said, is in accordance with the constitution of the country.

In an address read on his behalf by the Oyo State governor, Alhaji Lam Adesima, President Olusegun Obasanjo said government has approved the Geological department of the ministry to become a full-fledged Agency and assist investors in the sector.

He further said that the mineral act in the country has been revised and updated to attract potential investors as the Federal Government was determined to provide enabling environment for investment in the sector.

Duke raises alarm over erosion menace in Cross River

From Bassey Ita, in Calabar

Governor Donald Duke of Cross River State has raised an alarm over the effect of erosion in some parts of the state and called for the formulation of a national policy to fight ecological and environmental problems in the country.

Duke who spoke at a forum organised for members of the Integrated Research Group (IRG) of the Senior Executive Course No.23 of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) Kuru, Jos, stated that ecological problems being a national phenomenon should be fully addressed by sensitising the people on their roles in that regard.

He pointed out that certain habits like reckless dumping of refuse bring about ecological and environmental hazards, adding that in such cases, provision of enough ecological funds would not be the only practical step to combat the problem but a conscious step which would be rooted on research.

The governor hinted that erosion has threatened Bakassi, Agwagana in Biase Local Government, Calabar Municipality, including the NTA 9, NPA and Government House, emphasising that practical measures must be taken to tackle it immediately, otherwise those areas would be extinct in the next five years.



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NEWS

Panic grips Dutse as robbery suspects get bail

The entire people of Dutse Alhaji, a suburb of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), are now living in fear following the return of six armed robbery suspects to the area after an Abuja High Court granted them bail.

The six robbery suspects had been arrested by the police from the Federal Intelli-

Stories by Uwem Umo

gence and Investigation Bureau (FIIB), Abuja, on December 5, 2000, on allegations of robbery particularly at No 334, Zone One, Dutse Alhaji, in which one Abdullahi A. Garuba, a civil servant, was victim.

The six robbery suspects, which included a newly called to bar lawyer (names withheld) had been detained since December 5, 2000, until their arraignment before an Abuja Magistrate Court on Charge No. AB/MCI/CR/11/2001, (Commissioner of Police Vs. Innocent Okonkwo and 5 others) for criminal conspiracy and armed robbery.

The magistrate court, presided over by Hajia Ramatu Shehu, had in a ruling she delivered on February 14, 2001, denied the accused persons bail but also ordered they could seek re-

dress in a High Court.

However, counsels for the six accused persons, Mr. O.E. Ogunkeye and Mr. Gabriel Egbule, had sought to secure bail for the accused persons under section 341 of the criminal procedure code (CPC), sections 36 (b) of the 1999 constitution and the

inherent jurisdiction of the court.

In denying the accused persons bail, the magistrate had said she was taking into consideration the seriousness of the allegations against the accused persons and the likelihood that, if granted bail, they could jump bail. She

had also hinged her denial of bail on the fact that the trial of the matter was not within her jurisdiction even though "there was a prima facie case against the accused persons" and ordered that the police expedite action within 60 days and charge them to a High court.

The accused, however, through their counsels, went to the Abuja High Court and were granted bail while the case file was still awaiting the perusal of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP). The accused persons have meanwhile gone back to their beat.



Justice Mohammed Uwais, Chief Justice of the Federation



The Minister of Police Affairs, Chief Steven Akiga left, being received at the Police Officers' Mess, Area 11, Garki, Abuja, by the Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Musiliu Smith, when the minister met with senior police officers recently. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje.

Man, 60, in court for car theft

A 60-year-old man, Abdulkarim Saliu, has appeared before an Abuja Senior Magistrate Court on charges of being in possession of vehicles reasonably suspected to be stolen.

The suspect, whose address the police gave as A2/114 Abuku, Okene, Kogi state, was alleged to have committed the offence on March 15, 2001, when one Inspector Richard Jaiye of the Wuse Central Police Station, Abuja, arrested him on tip-off.

The prosecuting police officer, Mr. Gentle Dokubo, told the court that the accused person was found in possession of a Mercedes Benz 300E "V" Boot, dark grey in colour, with registration number unknown; a Mercedes Benz 200, grey in colour with registration number AA 648 FKJ; a

Mercedes Benz station wagon, dark green in colour with registration number AA 185 GDS and a Datsun Laurel (new model) with registration number unknown.

The offence, according to the prosecution, is contrary to section 319A of the penal code. The accused person pleaded not guilty while his counsel, Mr. Humphrey Agunbiade, made an oral application for bail. He was, however, opposed by the prosecution on the grounds that the man was not resident in the FCT and was also still being investigated for other stolen cars.

The presiding magistrate, Mr. Bala Haruna, ordered the man remanded in prison custody while the counsel was advised to seek bail through a motion and a sworn affidavit to that effect.

Meanwhile, April 19, 2001, has been fixed for further mention.

Man, 30, remanded for rape

A 30-year-old man, whom the police claim is of no fixed address, has been ordered remanded in prison custody until April 25, 2001, when he will be sentenced for rape.

The accused person, Francis Akpan, was arraigned before an Abuja Upper Area Court, for gang-raping one Miss Ronke Adeyeye, with three others now at large, on March 31, 2001, at about 11 pm when the victim was going home

after closing from work at Area One Shopping Centre, Abuja.

The prosecuting police officer, Mr. Ijafu Bukar, said the offence was contrary to sections 97 and 283 of the penal code.

The accused person pleaded guilty, but the presiding Upper Area Court Judge, Alhaji Aliyu Abdulrahman adjourned till April 15, 2001 for judgement while the police were ordered to intensify efforts in order to arrest the fleeing suspects.

Police smash Nyanya robbery gang

Following consistent reports of recurring armed robbery operations in the suburbs of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) particularly in areas like Nyanya, Karu, Gwagwalada, Kubwa, Gwagwa, Karimu and others, the police said they had to intensify efforts in these areas such as patrol and undercover surveillance operations.

Recently, one of such patrols yielded dividends when on March 20, this year at about 5.30 am towards day-break, a patrol team that was heading back for the Karu police station, after an all night patrol, sighted one Victor Phillip along Area B, Nyanya, laden with some items as if he were heading for the nearby Karu Park.

However, acting upon intuition, the patrol team was said to have taken him up for questioning and he could not give a satisfactory account of the expensive electronic items and substantial cash found on him. The police consequently arrested the said Victor Phillip.

Upon rigorous interrogation however, it later proved that the police had acted well in reasonably suspecting the

accused person.

According to the FCT Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mr. Ofem Arikpo, an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), the suspect later broke down upon interrogation and named four other gang members whom the police equally arrested. They have all, according to the police, confessed their involvement in the last three robbery operations in the Nyanya - Karu axis in the preceding two months.

The police PRO, who was addressing newsmen on behalf of the FCT Police Commissioner, Mr. Dika Bwala, also paraded the armed robbery gang. It included two notorious receivers of stolen items, one Emeka Ilo and ThankGod Olorunfemi and their mentor, one Julius Alias "Abacha", whom the police said was "harbouring" the criminals.

Meanwhile, the police gave a breakdown of household items recovered from the gang, which included some electronic gadgets, wristwatches, clothes, shoes and assorted video C.D. plates.

The Police Public Relations Officer also paraded

another group of four suspected robbers whose leader is said to be at large.

Those paraded included: Mohammed Nura, Peter Joseph, Lucky Ekele and Moses Tagba while the police said they are still looking for other members of the gang particularly one Titus who allegedly robbed people in Gishiri village, Maitama, Abuja on Monday March 25, 2001.

Meanwhile, a Toyota Lite ace bus with registration No. XA 250 LEM, belonging to one Alhaji Fatai Mohammed of Gwagwa, was reportedly recovered in Jos, Plateau state, by the FCT Police de-

tectives after it had been stolen on February 20, 2001.

The vehicle, according to the police was recovered from one Paul Taiye, of Gwagwa village who later confessed to have stolen other vehicles.

Also recovered from the same person is a Toyota Lite ace bus with registration No. XB 179 KUJ allegedly stolen from the Wuse General Hospital, property of one Mudatus Ishi; another Toyota Lite ace bus with registration No. XB 373 RBC stolen from Idu village, Abuja, and belonging to one Alhaji Adebayo Lawal.

In another separate operation, two suspects were arrested in Okene, Kogi state, in possession of a Toyota Starlet, with registration No. AY 31 ABJ, belonging to one Mrs. Sadatu Suleiman of Block B, Flat 6, Harare Street, Zone 6, Wuse, Abuja.

The two suspects, Daniel Igboligbo and Edoho Peter, whom the police arrested, have since confessed stealing the said car in Zone 6, together with another Peugeot 505 car with registration No. EDO BV 43 BEN, on March 10, 2001. All the vehicles have been recovered.



Mr. Musiliu Smith, Inspector-General of Police.



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF COMMERCE

*Federal Secretariat,
Area 1 Garki*

AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (AGOA) FACTS YOU MUST KNOW

PREAMBLE

The emergence of democracy in most African states along side attempt to redress the age-long trade in balance between the United States of America and Sub-Saharan Africa prompted the passage, in May 2000, of the America's "Trade and Development Act". The Act which encompasses the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), is to among other things, authorize a new trade and Investment Policy for Sub-Saharan African through the provision of "Duty free and quota-free" treatment to most products from designated beneficiary countries.

The new Act, which already has been embraced by most African States including Nigeria, provides for deliberate reduction in tariff and non-tariff barriers and other obstacles to Sub-Saharan African and United States trade, and expansion of the U.S Assistance to Sub-Saharan African's regional integration efforts. The Act is in essence expected to further strengthen, encourage and expand the private sector participation in Sub-Saharan Africa, renew the generalised system of preferences, and re-authorise the trade adjustment assistance programmes.

TRADE POLICY AND WHAT BENEFITS?

The new world trade policy today centre on mutual benefit to both participants. Most Sub-Saharan African States, (Nigeria Inclusive) have increased their economic growth rates taken significant steps towards liberalizing their economies, and made progress toward regional economic integration that can have positive benefits for the region. Increased trade and investment flows have the greatest impact in an economic environment in which trading partners eliminate barriers to trade and capital inflows, as well as encourage the development of a vibrant private sector that offers individual African Citizens the freedom to expand their economic opportunities. It is therefore in this direction that the African Growth and opportunity Act (AGOA) evolved.

Specifically, AGOA is geared towards the provision of opportunity for

Sub-Saharan Africa to negotiate reciprocal and mutually beneficial trade agreements, establish free trade areas that can serve the interests of both the United States and Sub-Saharan Africa as well as facilitating the establishment of a U.S. Sub-Saharan Af-

frangement whereby developed nations offer certain trade benefits to developing nations). Also, beneficiary would have a waiver on the GSP programmes "competitive need", limitation which prohibits the importation of GSP eligible products above a certain level; while

projects in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Importation of Merchandise under the AGOA arrangement requires that the imported merchandise must be produced in a designated beneficiary Sub-Saharan African country, also meet the Value-Added requirements for non-textile/apparel products and the various specific requirements for different apparel products which must be imported directly into the United States, accompanied by import documentation that claims AGOA benefits on the appropriate shipping documents.

HOW FAR HAS THE GOVERNMENT GONE?

In order to maximise these benefits derivable from the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), The President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo promptly constituted an implementation and Advisory Committee on AGOA under the chairmanship of the Hon. Minister of Commerce, Engineer Mustafa Bello, with membership drawn from both the public and private sectors. In addition, government engaged the services of two consultants who, in collaboration with the committee drew up a comprehensive action plan tagged, "Export Promotion Strategy" for effective implementation of the AGOA provisions. Highlights of the plan include; review of government export promotion programme and refine existing export strategy; identify and compile a "Target list" of Nigerian companies which have capacity to export to the United States and review the competitiveness of these firms to determine their capability. Similarly the plan strives to identify trade lead in the U.S, organise marketing activities and instruments such as trade promotion missions, trade shows and expositions. will develop plan with donors coordinated assistance for implementation of strategic plan; and undertake contacts to establish collaborative relations with U.S business organisations.

Other elements of the plan are to among other things complete assessment of 50 apparel and 25 footwear



ENG. MUSTAFA BELLO, Minister of Commerce

frican trade and economic cooperation forum and the accession of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) convention on combating Bribery of Foreign Public officials in International Business Transactions.

There are specific benefits accruable to exporters from beneficiary Sub-Saharan African countries under AGOA arrangement. These include; a guarantee of Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) benefits for eligible Sub-Saharan African countries for at least Seven(7) years above other countries (GSP is an ar-

exporters of apparel and other products to U.S will enjoy zero duties giving them greater advantage over other exporters. This is likely to encourage competition as exporters in Sub-Saharan African countries now have opportunity to enter into partnership or joint venture agreements with importers and investors in the United States. This is made even easier with Trade Economic Cooperation Forum which institutionalizes a presidential and cabinet. level dialogue between U.S. and the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa; expand support from the overseas Private investment corporation and the U.S. Export-Import Bank; aimed at increasing the interest of American exporters and investors in undertaking

Continued from Page 28

manufacturing facilities and develop strategy to overcome buyer objections to Nigerian apparel and footwear, develop selling strategy for Nigeria to become sourcing solution for United States buyers. Of most interesting is the task on the committee to secure a total of \$500million in contracts and joint ventures, from U.S market in addition to attracting a total of 30 apparel and 20 foot wear firms and trade mission of retail Chief Executive Officers from National Retail Federation in the United States to Nigeria. It is expected also that the Presidential Committee will identify standards and educate Nigeria firms to meet quality, price and timeliness, as well as zero in on key success factors for gaining entry into U.S market and ensure face to face training on what Americans expect among other things.

Already, the committee has, in liaison with the Nigeria Customs Services, produced a standard Custom Visa (Certificate of Origin of goods) to avoid transshipment. The Visa to be used as official AGOA Export/Import document requires participating firms to provide necessary information such as; name and Address of exporter/importer or manufacturer (fabric thread or yarn from Africa or U.S), and description of goods. In order to facilitate the processing of Export/Import documents, the Nigerian Customs Service has created what it called, "Dedicated Customs Desks" at all the major ports in Nigeria to handle all customs related matters on AGOA. These ports are; A papa, Tin, can Island, Murtala Mohammed Airport, Ikeja, Lagos, Warri, Calabar, Port Harcourt I, II, III and Mallam Aminu Kano Airport, Kano. Interested persons or firms are to obtain AGOA Exporter Registration forms, certificate of origin to be used for textile and other related documentation forms from the above listed ports or at the AGOA Secretariat at the Nigeria Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC) Building, Maitama, Abuja.

To further sensitise stakeholders on the opportunities available in AGOA, the Ministerial Committee for Nationwide Publicity led by the National Presidents of the Nigeria Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA) and the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) immediately swung into action while sub-committees on Textiles and Apparel, Footwear/Leather products, Agriculture products and other product such as Solid Minerals, Flowers etc. are determined to ensure that no stone was left unturned in this direction.

DON'T MISS THE OPPORTUNITY

It is no doubt that a new trade and economic opportunity has evolve for Sub-Saharan Africa, and Nigeria in particular to exploit. With a Nation so much abound with resources, the Nigeria investors have unlimited ground to benefit immensely from the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). In order not to be left behind, please send your company profile/or contact the chairman of any of the Sub-committees relevant to your line of production. You can channel your profile to the underlisted:-

Textiles and Apparel:

Alhaji Yuguda Usman,
Nigeria Export Promotion Council (NEPC), Abuja
Tel: 09-5230938, 5230980-1, 5233382
Fax: 09-5230931, 5230983
E-mail: nepc@nigl.net.nig

Agricultural Products:

Chief (Mrs.) V. M Gemadae Representing Small Scale Industrialists, :
VASE PAMA Limited.
Tel: 09-3140143, 4135024

Foot wear/Leather and Leather Products:

Eng. Akin Sawyerr,
Nigeria Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC)
Tel: 09-4134112,
Fax: 09-4134182 I
E-mail: sawver@nipc-nigeria.org

Other Products:

Mr. Brimoh Awudu
Continental Trust Bank Limited,
Tel: 09-4139949, 090-404219, 01-2624150
Fax: 01-2620860
E-mail: brimoh@continental-bank.com

For other general information and enquiries, please contact.

Mrs. A.D Adedayo Chainnan, Publicity Sub-committee for AGOA Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Youth Development, Abuja. Tel: 09-5237113	Mr. y .F Agah Executive Secretary AGOA Federal Ministry of Commerce Old Secretariat, Abuja. Tel: 09-2343615
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IMPLEMENTATION AND COMMITTEE ON AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (AGOA)

DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE PROGRAM

Public Affairs Section of the Embassy of the United States of America

Request for Proposals

The Democracy and Governance Program provides grants to Nigerian non-governmental organizations working in the areas of democratization and human rights. The program finances activities which enhance civil society's contribution to increased democratic participation and respect for fundamental human rights, and support the building of a sustainable democracy in Nigeria.

Currently, the Democracy and Governance Program is accepting proposals for projects that:

- assist non-governmental organizations to shape policy agendas, mobilize support for policy reform, inform government of public opinion, provide expert advice to the newly elected democratic government, and monitor policy implementation.
- encourage advocacy for the reform of existing laws and institutional practices that violate human rights and conflict with democratic values.
- strengthen the role of the media in promoting advocacy issues of Nigerian civil society and government.
- enlighten the public about advocacy and reform efforts through the media.

These advocacy reform and media outreach efforts will focus on key transition issues such as:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| -anti-corruption policies | -legislative advocacy/reform |
| -constitutional review/reform | -accountable and transparent governance |
| -budgetary management and oversight | -judicial independence and professionalism |

The Democracy and Governance Program may fund projects up to the Naira equivalent of \$50,000, or, on an exceptional basis, up to \$75,000. All funds under the Democracy and Governance Grant Program are disbursed in Naira.

Proposals for funding should be part of the long-term program for the organization which can realistically be completed within the time frame of the grant. The proposed activities should be within the mission or objectives of the organization and part of its overall advocacy strategy. The application package contains complete information.

To initiate the application process, organizations should bring this advertisement to one of the following two office locations and request an application package:

Democracy and Governance Program Public Affairs Section, US Consulate 2, Broad Street, Lagos
or
Public Affairs Section, US Embassy 7, Mambilla St, off Aso Drive, Maitama-Abuja.

The deadline for submission is April 30th. The Democracy and Governance Program will not accept application forms sent by fax or email. Incomplete forms, non-program forms, or forms received after the deadline will not be processed. Those not able to meet the deadline may apply under a future announcement. Additional information may be requested from organizations during the proposal review period. Interviews with staff and office visits may also be conducted.

Program selection criteria vary with the size of grant. Assessment criteria are listed in the application package. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. Due to the volume of applications received, only successful applicants will be contacted.



SPORTS



Barrera outclasses Hamed for unanimous decision

Prince Naseem Hamed, master of the outrageous entrance, existed on the heels of his first career defeat after dropping a unanimous decision to Marco Antonio Barrera of Mexico in a 12-round, non-title featherweight showdown on Saturday.

Boxing's great showman was completely outfought and outclassed in the town known for garish entertainment.

The bout at the MGM Grand was delivered 45 minutes while the Briton had to have his right glove repeatedly re-wrapped as fans few impatient.

Once the grand entrance fireworks followed by Hamed being carried down the aisle on a trapeze-like bar was out of the way, Barrera wasted no time producing some fireworks of his own.

He staggered Hamed three times in the first round and never let up his assault. The Mexican had a point deducted in the 12th round for a bulrush that hammered Hamed's head against the ring coat.

Even with the deduction, Barrera won by scores of 115-112, 115-112 and 116-111.

"The delay had no effect on me," Hamed said. "The guy boxed better than me tonight and that's it."

Hamed, whose record fell to 35-1, tried to put a positive spin on his upset defeat.

"I'm happy, I'm still confident, he said. "The fact is he couldn't drop me and he couldn't know me out. I'm going out of this ring as a champion still."

Barrera, a 3-1 underdog before the bout who improved to 53-3, came away less than impressed with the man who had been consid-

Boxing

ered one of boxing's best.

"He doesn't hit as hard as he thinks he does," Barrera said.

After Barrera's barrage in the first round, Hamed tool down his opponent with a headlock in the next round.

Barrera scored with a big left hook late in the fourth round, assuming control of the fight the rest of the way.

After Barrera used a late flurry to win the ninth round,

Hamed began making faces at him following the bell.

Prior to the 11th, trainer Emanuel Steward told Hamed he needed a knockout to win, instead, it was Barrera who pressed the attack to the final bell.

Hamed's reputation as one of the best pound-for-pound fighters may have been shattered by this outing.

Although he has most recently held the lightly regarded WBO belt and also

captured WBC and IBF titles over the last five years, he has surrendered all his crowns by avoiding mandatory contenders.

In August, Hamed posted a brutal fourth-round knockout of American Augie Sanchez, who was carried out of the ring on a stretcher. But the flashy Briton was stripped of even the WBO belt for failint to meet 1996 Olympic gold medallist Istvan Kovacs of Hungary.

Herren helps keep Celtics playoffs hopes alive

The Boston Celtics got a boost from an unlikely source on Saturday, turning to Chris Herren to help keep their playoff hopes alive.

The local kid with a long history of injuries came off the bench and scored nine points in the fourth quarter as Boston edged the Washington Wizards 102-100 to stay within one game of Indiana in the battle for the eighth and final playoff berth in the Eastern Conference.

Herren entered the game having made just seven 3-pointers in 34 career attempts. But he sank three from beyond the arc in less than two minutes to give the Celtics the lead for good.

"I tore my rotator cuff and was out of 11 weeks," Herren said. "I've basically only played in like 10 games so far this year, so just to get back in the swing of things and start playing again feels good."

Antoine Walker had 28 points, 13 rebounds and seven assists and Eric Williams added 20 points for Boston, which has a crucial meeting with Indiana next Friday in its quest for its first playoff appearance in six years.

"If we don't get this win,

I don't know how realistic our chances are," said Celtics coach Jim O'Brien. "But we're one game behind. If we take care of business, you never know what's going to happen. Our guys are very hungry and they want this in a very bad way."

In Cleveland, the Phoenix Suns clinched a playoff berth for the 13th straight season with a 102-98 win over the Cavaliers.

Shawn Marion led a rally from 17 points down, scoring 126 of his 25 points in a 34-15 run over the second and third quarters.

Marion made 10-of-22 shots, 5-of-6 free throws and had 10 rebounds and three blocks. Clifford Robinson added 19 points and Jason Kidd had 17 points, nine assists and six rebounds.

Phoenix edged within a game of Portland for six spot in the West and moved five games ahead of eighth place Minnesota.

In Dallas, Karl Malone scored seven of his 30 points during a key 19-0 run as the Utah Jazz grabbed fourth place in the Western Conference with a 116-103 win over the Mavericks.

The Jazz scored the last 11 points of the first half to erase a five-point deficit and

ran off the first eight of the third quarter to open a 14-point lead.

Malone also grabbed 11 rebounds, John Stockton dished out 13 assists and Donyell Marshall scored 21 points for Utah.

Juwan Howard led Dallas with 24, with Dirk Nowitzki chipping in 22.

The win broke a tie with Dallas for fourth place in the West-the last spot to earn home court advantage in the first round of the playoffs.

In Charlotte, the Hornets continue to struggle as they suffered a 97-92 loss to the Detroit Pistons, who got 30 points from Jerry Stackhouse and 25 from Chucky Atkins.

Charlotte has already clinched a playoff berth but suffered its seventh defeat in their last nine games as they sink in the jockeying for postseason positions.

Ben Wallace had a career-high 24 rebounds for Detroit, which won for the fourth time in five games despite being out of the playoff picture.

In Los Angeles, Tim Duncan recorded his league-leading 62nd double-double with 32 points and 18 rebounds as San Antonio maintained the league's best record (54-22) with a 93-83 win over the Clippers.



Leading the pack... Tiger Woods leads other competitors at the Augusta National ahead of Masters final rounds... yesterday.

Leeds' Woodgate and Duberry found not guilty

Leeds United footballer Michael Duberry has walked free after being cleared along with team mate Jonathan Woodgate and two of Woodgate's friends of conspiring to pervert the course of justice.

But the jury at Hull Crown Court has still to reach a verdict on serious assault charges faced by Woodgate and a third Leeds footballer Lee Bowyer, and the two friends, Neale Caveney and Paul Clifford.

Duberry dropped his head in relief when the jury gave its verdicts on the conspiracy counts at the end of a second day of discussion.

The player embraced Woodgate, a man who he described during the eight-week trial as probably his best friend at the club.

Duberry's solicitor John Perry said outside the court he could not comment on the verdict until the end of the trial.

He told reporters: "Today ends a year for Michael Duberry. I can't say any more but Michael would wish to thank his advocates..."

"You will forgive us for not saying any more today but given the nature of this case I will have a lot to say at the end of this trial."

Woodgate and Bowyer are accused of beating an Asian student Sarfraz Najeib unconscious in January 2000.

They face jail if convicted of grievous bodily harm with intent. They have denied the charge and affray.

Duberry was the final defendant to give evidence and he said that he had initially lied to police to protect Woodgate.

He told the court that Woodgate had said he had been in a fight with a group of Asians on the night Najeib was punched and kicked senseless in Leeds city centre.

F1 rival wouldn't affect me, says Schumacher

Michael Schumacher will have retired by the time a proposed rival to the Formula One series comes into being, the world champion has said.

European car makers -- including the Fiat group which owns Schumacher's Ferrari team -- have said they plan to set up an alternative to Formula One.

Their aim is to wrench control of the rights to broadcast the sport away from German media group Kirch and its partner EM.TV, who they fear want to sell the rights to pay-per-view television channels.

But Schumacher, three times world champion, said on Thursday he would have stopped racing by the time it ever gets off the ground.

Motor Racing

"When would it start, in six year's time?," the German asked reporters after a test session at the Fiorano circuit in central Italy.

"I don't think I'll be on the circuit by then."

Schumacher said he shared the concerns of Fiat and other manufacturers that Kirch and EM.TV -- which own a 75 percent stake in commercial and broadcast rights group SLEC -- might restrict television viewing of the sport to those who can afford to pay.

"I'm convinced that Formula One should be a patrimony for everyone and that everyone should be able to see it," he said.



Outclassed... Prince Naseem Hamed pounding Argentine Juan Cabrera some few years ago. Hamed was defeated by Mexican Marco Antonio Barrera in a non-title fight... on Saturday.



Bonfrere breaches contract-NFA

The Nigeria Football Association (NFA) has asserted that the national technical adviser, Johannes Bonfrere has not kept faith with his contractual agreement with Nigeria.

The NFA boss, Brig-Gen. Dominic Oneya revealed while appraising the performance of the Dutchman whose contract with Nigeria was predicted on the Super Eagles qualification for the Japan/Korea 2002 mundial.

The NFA board chairman said Bonfrere has failed woefully to work in concert with an aspect of the contractual agreement which specifically stipulated that he must develop functional programmes for the enhancement of Nigerian football.

"Bonfrere has breached an aspect of his contract with Nigeria. The aspect that stipulated his development of programmes for our football and coaches. He has failed and we are trying to

Stories by Patrick Andrew redirect him to mend that aspect by looking inward instead of relying wholly on foreign-based professionals to prosecute the world cup campaign."

Consequently, Oneya said the NFA was determined to compel the Dutchman to brace up for his responsibility.

"That part of the clause in the contract must be effected to the letter and we are determined to enforce it," he said, stressing that the directive limiting Bonfrere's foreign trips purportedly to monitor players was done to ensure he fulfils his contractual terms.

Though he failed to state categorically the NFA's im-

pression of Bonfrere's performances so far he however allayed fears that the Eagles will not qualify for the mundial in 2002.

Oneya disclosed that the Glass House was working assiduously with Bonfrere to ensure that the general aspiration of Nigerians as regards the World Cup in 2002 are met.

... drops rookie Eagles

Despite the splendid performance of the rookie Super Eagles in Zambia a fortnight ago, technical adviser Johannes Bonfrere has dumped all but two members of the squad in the list of invitation for the crucial World Cup qualifier against Sierra Leone.

The Dutchman, who did not offer any explanation for dumping most of the fresh legs that thrilled soccer fans in Chingola, Zambia where they were forced to a draw by the Chipolopolo, only re-

tained Yobo Joseph and Karibe Ojigwe in the list of 18 players who are to confront the Leone Stars on April 21 in a make or mar World Cup qualifying encounter.

In spite of the unimpressive performance of PSG's Austin Okocha, Arsenal's Nwankwo Kanu and Skipper Sunday Oliseh against the Black Stars, Bonfrere invited them to report to the camp in Lagos on April 15. The team would only train for three days before moving to

Freetown, Sierra Leone for the match with the Lone Stars.

But PSG's bench warmer, Godwin Okpara and Chelsea's Celestine Babayaro were left out of the list. Emeka Ifejiagwa and Ifeanyi Udeze, whose absence in Chingola threw up an experimental duo of Joseph Yobo and Karibe Ojigwe manning the right and left backs, got the nod to camp.

Derby County's central sweeper, Taribo West who was spectacular in Accra, Ghana against a makeshift Black Stars along with Isaac Okoronkwo, Julius Aghahowa, Benedict Akwuegbu and George Finidi were also listed.

Tijani Babangida who led the rookie Eagles in Chingola and Garba Lawal, Yakubu Aiyegbeni, Victor Agali and the duo of Ike Shorunmu and Peterside Idah who kept goal in Chingola complete Bonfrere's list.

In spite of Bonfrere's lapse, manifested in the dumping of the brilliant crop of rookies who played the Nations Cup qualifier in Zambia, the NFA said it would not interfere as the clause in Bonfrere's contract allows him the liberty to select players of his choice for any national assignment.

NFA boss Dominic Oneya said the association would not insist on who should be invited since the onus rests on the Dutchman to do so.



Suleiman Mohammed of Abuja returning a serve from Yomi Iwere at the World TB Day tournament in Kaduna.. recently
Pix Joe Oroye

Nestle donates N1.3m to NTF

Nestle Nigeria Plc has donated a sum of N1.3 million to Nigeria Tennis Federation to facilitate the hosting of ATPA men's satellite tournament coming up in July in Lagos.

Addressing the press yesterday, Nestle commercial manager, Mr. Richard Midgley said his organisation's gesture was to provide good opportunity for home-based tennis stars to be exposed to international tournament on home soil.

"We at Nestle look forward to a time when we will be in a position to produce tennis champions starring at such international tournament as Wimbledon and top world tennis tournaments,"

Stories from Richard Abayomi, in Lagos

Tennis

he said.

Also, Mr. Midgley unveiled his organisation's plan to organise tennis clinic/tournament for future champions in two venues for the first time.

He said the clinic will hold at the national stadium tennis court from April 9-12 and Lawn Tennis Courts of Ibadan recreation club, from April 9-14.

"We are putting together an Easter package for the kids apart from learning how to play tennis," he promised.

AFN, athletes set for Ibori tourney

Athletics

The stage is now set for the second edition of Nkoyo Ibori U-20 athletic championship slated for April 12

In a chat with *Trustsports* at the National Stadium, Lagos, AFN's assistant secretary Bode Dusotoye said the federation is fully set for the championship by putting in place facilities place to ensure a successful and hitchfree championship.

Dusotoye also said that all of the states associations and some notable clubs in the country have sent their entries for the two-day championship.

Commenting on the im-

portance of the event, AFN chief coach Armelia Edet said this championship would go a long way to complement the federation's efforts toward resuscitating its grassroot programme.

Coach Amelia assured that all the young athletes that would be discovered in this championship shall be groomed for future engagement.

It will be recalled that Mrs. Nkoyo Ibori gave the sum of 2 million naira for the sponsorship of the maiden edition last year.



Nwankwo Kanu, in action against Sierra Leone during the first leg of African World Cup qualifiers in Lagos. He was invited alongside 17 other foreign-based professionals for the return leg in Freetown. . . April 20.
Pix Omo Oba.

Resign now, Akinyele tells Oneya

No, I won't-Oneya

Former chairman of the National Sports Commission, Chief Alex Akinyele has advised the NFA boss, Brig-Gen. Dominic Oneya (rtd) to resign his position as the NFA board chairman.

Chief Akinyele adduced the lack of visionary leader and bereftment of focus in the management of football as the reasons for his advice to Oneya.

But the NFA boss has re-

buffed Chief Akinyele's call, stating that the former NSC boss was only weeping up public sentiment unnecessarily. Oneya also said it would be unfair to castigage the NFA board for want to vision and direction because facts on the ground prove otherwise.

"It is unfortunate Chief Akinyele said I should resign. Of course, he has cause to say that because of the thorny path we are going

through. But we are still on course. So Chief Akinyele and the general public should not exercised fear," he said, noting that Nigeria will definitely pick the group's ticket.

Oneya stoutly defended the present board, stressing that the board which had inherited no blueprint has successfully initiated a visionary programme in harmony with his mission statement when he assumed office last May.

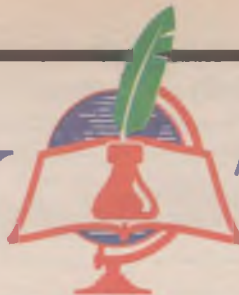
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Flying Eagles lack character - Oneya

The Flying Eagles who failed woefully in the quest for one of the four African tickets for the 11th World Youth Championship-Argentine 2001 were without spirit and character peculiar to any Nigerian team.

The NFA boss, Brig-Gen. Dominic Oneya handed the verdict while speaking with *Trustsports* on the untoward performance of the Eagles in Ethiopia.

The NFA board chairman said the crop of players who represented Nigeria were no team and did not deserve victory in the youth fiesta. "The Flying Eagles did not have character. I mean usual fighting spirit, determination and desire to conquer common with any Nigerian team. "I did not see any fighting spirit in them. And on one occasion, I had to question them whether they

Stories by Patrick Andrew

were truly Nigerians," he added.

Though Oneya admitted the NFA was partly to blame for not sufficiently monitoring their training programme as well as take the team on tour of the length and breath of the country, he exonerate the technical crew from the blame.

"The coaches should tell the public the truth. Those players were not the best this country can boast of. There are definitely better and more proficient players in the local league so the coaches did not select the best.

Besides, their clubs did not help matters because they were in the habit of withdrawing them from camp to play the league matches for them.

In fact the team only train together in Ethiopia barely three days to the kick-off of

Oneya "the Championship."

Oneya also said the inexperience of the boys was

another factor even as they were overwhelmed by the presence of scouts after pulling the draw with Mali. "They began to relax perhaps thinking that they have already conquer the toughest opponents. And there was psychological problem which they could not overcome."

The NFA chairman regretted the woeful performance, noting that the association will pick the pieces of the disastrous outing to build a formidable youth team.

"Yes, we (NFA) admitted the poor performance. But we have also assured that we have learnt useful lessons and

we ensure that a formidable youth team eventually emerged for subsequent championships.



Barcelona's Philip Cocu vies with Liverpool striker, Micheal Owen during their UEFA Cup semi-final clash at the Nou Camp... on Thursday.

NEPA lifts Abuja FA Cup

NEPA FC Saturday lifted the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Challenge Cup by beating Court of Appeal 1-0 in a match that was crunchy and characterized by rough play.

The electricians found target nine minutes from regulation after they had put up a gruelling battle to break the solid defence wall of their amateur league opponents to no avail.

The Challenge Cup played under a conducive weather before a fairly large crowd was almost marred by unnecessary stoppages which killed the rhythm and flow of the game.

Golden Eagles goal tender Chigozie who manned the post for the Court of Appeal FC, Abba Abdullahi, Oto Bassey and the skipper of the eventual winners stood out among the pack who were on parade.

With the victory, both will play the national Challenge-Cup preliminaries which begin in a fortnight.

Professor Nomau's travails, written & illustrated by Bulama Mustapha

