

DAILY TRUST

Trust Is A Burden

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Ibrahim A. Kolo on:

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STAR INTERVIEW

There is no western sahara

-Moroccan Ambassador

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UMARU DIKKO

Oputa summons Danjuma

By Uwem Umo

The Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission (HRVIC) yesterday in Abuja issued a summons for the Minister of Defence, Lt-General T.Y. Danjuma (rtd), to appear before it to explain his role in the abduction of Transport Minister in the Second Republic, Alhaji Umaru Dikko in 1984.

The commission issued the order when the counsel to Alhaji Umaru Dikko, Mr. Bassey A. Ebenezer, insisted that it would serve no useful

purpose for the Defence Minister to consistently fail to appear personally before the commission.

According to Mr. Ebenezer, counsel to General Danjuma could not give satisfactory answers to some of the questions that the minister would be asked if he were personally before the commission.

However, counsel to the defence minister, Chief Sabo Sowemimo (SAN), said he was making a no-case submission for his client before

the commission but the chairman overruled this as according to him, "the panel is a fact-finding one and not a regular court."

Alhaji Umaru Dikko had in his testimony before the commission indicted the defence minister for playing

some roles in the botched abduction attempt on him in London in 1984.

He also accused Alhaji Mohammed Rafindadi, the last Director-General of the National Security Organisation (NSO) and retired General Mohammed

Buhari, the then Head of State in the failed kidnap bid.

Alhaji Dikko said he fled the country after the December 1983 coup because of perceived threats to his life.

The former chieftain of the defunct National Party of

Nigeria (NPN) said he was hated both by some of his political associates and opponents based on his views on how to run the country at that time, adding that his stance on many political issues did not go down well with many Nigerians including the army hierarchy.

According to him, he was *contd. on pg 2*

...Soyinka demands FG's apology

Nobel Laureate, Prof. Wole Soyinka, yesterday, in Abuja asked the Federal Government to tender a formal apology to him for violating his fundamental human rights during the regime of late Gen. Sani Abacha.

"I wish to demand for a formal apology from the federal government and for it to be pasted on the notice boards of all Nigerian missions abroad for a period of one year," Soyinka told the Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission headed, by Justice

Chukwudifu Oputa.

He said his demand for an apology stemmed from the infringement on his rights through a defamatory publication in an edition of "Conscience International," a magazine published by Chief Abiola Ogundokun, an Abacha apologist and circulated outside Nigeria.

He said that the magazine was also sent to the President of a University in the U.S., where he was a visiting professor and to some institutions in the United Kingdom, the United States of America *contd. on pg 2*

Nasir tasks northern govts on education

Northern governments have been called upon to build their future on sound and well articulated education policies that will propel their citizens into the mainstream of national life.

Chairman of the former Transition Implementation Committee, Justice Abacha Nasir, gave the message during the finals of a primary school quiz competition organised by

From Hassan Karofi, in Katsina
Katsina State Primary Schools Board.

Justice Nasir informed the gathering that the future of the north rests squarely on the readiness and preparedness of the region to acquire education in all its ramifications.

He said Islam itself did not condone illiteracy, hence the necessity of acquiring *contd. on pg 2*



Professor Wole Soyinka at the Oputa panel... yesterday.

Pix: Kennedy Eghonodje.

JAMB nabs 16,282 exam cheats

No fewer than 16,282 candidates cheated in this year's Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) examinations held in different centres all over the country.

The Board's Registrar, Professor Bello Salim, who disclosed this to journalists in Abuja, yesterday, blamed the phenomenon of examination malpractices on the Nigerian society.

Because of the unusually high rate of examination malpractices recorded this year he said,

the board cancelled the results of 21 centres, while the result of eight centres have been withheld pending completion of investigations into the issue.

According to the JAMB boss, results from seven other centres were also withheld because of the alleged collusion of invigilators and candidates with intent to cheat.

Said he: "The Board is indeed saddened by this development as the affected invigilators failed to live up to the ethics of their profession as

teachers."

Another system used by exam cheats, he said, was the mass movement of candidates across state boundaries which, according to him, "is, an abuse of the board's policy of allowing candidates to choose centre of their choice."

He pointed out that such movements were motivated by the intention to cheat, adding that such mass movements were recorded in Igawa (Agbede) in Edo State, Afrikpo in Ebonyi State, Nnewi in Anambra State,

contd. on pg 2

Ghana reburies ex-leaders

The bodies of eight senior military officials, including three former heads of state, who were executed in 1979 when former President Jerry Rawlings first took office, are to be exhumed next week and given military burials.

The state-owned Ghanaian Times newspaper, yesterday, quoted an official statement as saying the decision to exhume the bodies was taken by the Executive Committee on the Exhumation and Burial of Generals after meeting the widows and families of the generals.

The statement said the widows of the officers had expressed the wish that their husbands be given military burials.

Among the eight are General Akwasi Afrifa, General Ignatius Acheampong *contd. on pg 2*



President Kuffour

NEWS

We are committed to peace — Anyim

The Senate President, Chief Anyim Pius Anyim, has reiterated the commitment of the National Assembly and indeed the President Obasanjo government to the promotion of peace within and outside Nigeria.

Chief Anyim, speaking through Senator Jonathan Zwingina, at a seminar organised by the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR), explained that this commitment has been responsible for the creation of Senate and House Committees on Cooperation and Integration.

According to him, "the executive, National Assembly as well as other peace and national reconciliation bodies are working tirelessly to study and understand the

By Musa Aliyu and Kevin Ebele Adinnu

roots of conflicts so as to resolve them, once and for all.

The number one lawmaker posited that "it is only when governments and people of the world create the enabling conditions for peace and security that economic development and social integration can take place."

He stated further that such conditions could be best achieved through open communication and preventive mechanisms

Against this backdrop, Senator Anyim commended the Ministry of Cooperation and Integration and the IPCR for its role in organising such seminars, which help in sensitising Nigerians on the need to understand the

causes of conflicts and measures to prevent escalation.

Earlier in his welcome address, the Director-General of the Institute, Dr. Sunday Ochoche, had lamented the escalation of internal conflicts the world over.

The only antidote, he said, "is our ability to understand, anticipate and prevent situations of tension from being blown out of proportion.

The wisdom in such a bold step is certainly in the spirit that prevention is better than cure," he added.

Speaking further, the Director-General stated that "it is when conflicts are nipped in the bud that there will be a genuine atmosphere for peaceful co-existence and development."

Oputa contd. from pg 1

specifically targeted by some soldiers because he had advised the then President, Alhaji Shehu Shagari to retire some of them who had served in some political capacities during the 13 years of military rule.

The former Chairman of the Task Force on Rice Importation said General Buhari had grudges against him for holding that opinion, adding that Buhari was a politician in military uniform.

Alhaji Dikko also added

that Buhari had a grudge against him because he (Dikko) had informed Shagari that Buhari was planning a coup while serving in Jos as a General Officer Commanding (GOC), 3 Division but the president ignored the advice.

The former Head of State has not appeared before the commission despite all the allegations against him and the fact that the commission's counsel, Mrs. Chinwe Uwandu, said the retired General could not be

personally served the summons.

The commission, however, adjourned the matter to August 14, 2001 to enable the Defence Minister, the former Head of State and Alhaji Rafindadi to appear before the commission in their own interest. The commission particularly wants to hear from Gen. Danjuma, who allegedly received \$40 million to effect the plans to abduct Alhaji Dikko in London so he would stand trial for embezzlement of public funds among other unspecified charges.

Artyingba in Kogi State, Imo in Osun State, Ibadan in Oyo State and Bali in Taraba State.

"Unfortunately, some of the candidates involved in this unwholesome practice, while returning to their base in Umuahia, Abia State had an automobile crash which claimed the lives of 30 people," he said.

This year's JAMB examination was held in 115 examination towns and four countries — Ghana (Accra), Cameroon (Buza), the United Kingdom (London) and Saudi Arabia (Jeddah).

and to some African countries.

Soyinka averred that the Abacha administration used the machinery of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Information to distribute the magazine with the intention to smear and tarnish his image and reputation across the world.

"It is because of my stand to promote justice, fairness and democracy in Nigeria that the Abacha regime mounted a campaign of character assassination against me and also trumped up stories against my person," he charged.

and General Frederick Akuffo, former military leaders.

The officers were executed in the heat of a coup by junior officers and other ranks that ousted the Su-

JAMB contd. from pg 1

Imo State with 8,495 or 10.28% recorded the highest number of candidates while Zamfara with 525 candidates or 0.06% recorded the lowest.

Candidates who applied to read Administration were the highest with 200,434 while Social Sciences recorded the least with 153,855.

Ibrahim Ali, with registration number 014612041, from Borno State had the highest score of 328 while Bamidele Koladoye Tesse, with registration number 0175601745, from Ondo State came second with 233. Emmanuel C. Enwere, number 0155214374, from Imo State was third with a score of 322.

Nasir contd. from pg 1

education cannot be over-emphasised.

He added that the performance exhibited by the competing children is a manifes-

tation of what our future holds.

"What these children exhibited today is a sign of what the state and the nation will be tomorrow."

Soyinka contd. from pg 1

Soyinka also stated in his petition that his house in Abeokuta was vandalised and looted under the pretext of searching for a transmitter of a private radio station called "Radio Kudirat."

He further alleged that the Chief Security Officer of Abacha, Maj. Hamza Al-Mustapha, wrongfully accused him of involvement in a coup plot and urged the Commission to compel Mustapha to substantiate his allegations.

He, however, said that he was not asking for any monetary compensation, but wanted the panel to "dili-

gently" address the various issues of human rights abuses and recommend appropriate compensations to individuals or communities that had been injured.

Soyinka also requested the Commission to summon Ogundokun, Prof. Ibrahim Gambari, the then Nigerian Permanent Representative to the UN and Abacha's Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Information, Chief Tom Izkimi and Dr. Walter Ofonagoro, respectively, to answer questions relating to the said publication and its circulation.

Ghana contd. from pg 1

preme Military Council on June 4, 1979.

Rawlings calls the period one of "house-cleaning" during which the executions were carried out and stiff punishment meted out for

economic offences and corruption.

Human rights activists say it was a period of bloodshed and abuses unparalleled in the country's history.

Ghana is now ruled by a civilian administration.

The Debate Continues

The *Daily Trust* Debate on national issues continues with the two remaining topics on the agenda. They are;

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2. NAIRA OR LIRA: Should our national currency be allowed to find its level?

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NEWS

Union refutes bribery allegation against Oshiomhole

By Ahmed Shekarau

The National Union of Textile, Garment and Tailoring Workers of Nigeria, has refuted certain allegations of corruption levelled against the President of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Comrade Adams Oshiomhole, by some anonymous persons claiming to be members of three unions under the NLC.

According to a statement signed by the Information Officer of the union, Comrade Chris Nwachukwu, the anonymous had, through a full page advertisement, published in some national newspapers last Monday, accused the NLC president of collecting money from the government to undertake a foreign trip.

The statement dismissed the accusation as "a hoax," stressing that the write-up "may have emanated from people infected with violent strains of triviality, inanity, absurdity and deliberate run-labour-down syndrome."

The statement argued further that the fact that the write-up emanated from people who could neither disclose their individual identities nor their fixed address makes it "weightless," noting that the leadership of the unions they

claimed to belong to feigned ignorance of their membership.

The anonymous writers, according to the statement, claimed to belong to the Nigeria Union of Local

pointed out that there was a public hearing on the allegations but "none of these faceless people came out to substantiate or lay credence to their allegations."

The union then wondered why the anonymous writers are



Comrade Adams Oshiomhole Government Employees (NULGE), the Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) and Agric and Allied Union, all of which it said, denied knowing the writers.

The textile, garment and tailoring union also refuted another allegation that the NLC leadership had also collected money from the government during the fuel strike in May last year, stressing that: "This is an old issue which only charlatans like Nnorom propagated." It

26,000 second world war veterans live in penury

By Hammeed M. Bello

About 26,000 second world war veterans are living in penury without any form of allowance or pension, the Secretary-General of the Nigerian Legion, Captain John Adole (rtd), told journalists in Abuja on Tuesday.

The veterans, he said who are between 80 and 90 years old, cannot cater for the welfare of their children as they are in dire need of assistance.

Those war veterans, Adole added, fought for the British government and were demobilized and paid off at the end of the war without any provision for their retirement needs.

To boost the moral of the veterans, according to the secretary-general, the Nigeria Legion places them on what he called monthly hardship

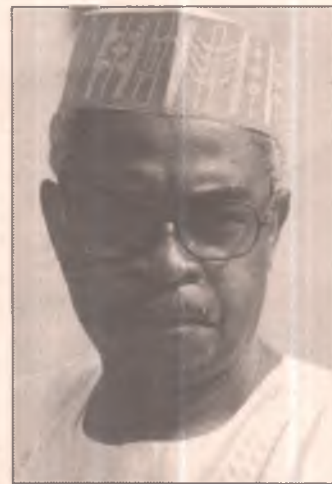
raising the issue now, "without any fresh fact or information."

It, therefore, urged the public to dismiss such allegations, noting that: "It is obvious that these people seized by moral and intellectual arctic, are preoccupied with pedestrian pursuits and instant gratification rather than the lofty ideals of promoting workers' comfort, venerating in the most ephemeral ideas."

allowance of N300 per month.

Similarly, Adole said that the Legion spends about N2.5 million per annum as allowance to veterans, adding that about 850 war veterans are on the regular payroll of the Legion.

Speaking further on welfare assistance to war veterans, he said that the Nigeria Legion



Lt.-Gen. T.Y. Danjuma runs a scholarship scheme to assist in sending children of veterans to school.

Earlier on Tuesday in Abuja, the sum of N2 million was handed over to the Nigerian Legion by the Minister of Defence, General T.Y. Danjuma (rtd), who was represented by the Minister of State (Air Force), Engr. Dan Chuke.

The money, *Daily Trust* gathered was the proceeds realized from the sale of 2001 armed forces remembrance emblem from the Nigerian missions abroad.

This year's proceeds is

FG engages Commonwealth in UBE programme

By Suleiman Mohammed

The Federal Government has engaged the Commonwealth of Learning in the development of a blueprint and training of teachers for the Universal Basic Education Programme (UBE),

launched two years ago in the country.

Similarly, the Commonwealth will design a blueprint for distance learning in Nigeria and



President Olusegun Obasanjo produce instructional materials for the programmes.

This was unfolded, Tuesday, when President Olusegun Obasanjo met with a delegation of educational experts from the Commonwealth of Learning at the State House, Abuja, where he pledged government's commitment to laying a strong foundation for functional and qualitative education through the UBE programme.

President Obasanjo, who was informed by the group that progress has been made in the design of the UBE blueprint, stressed that education remains the focal point of his administration and is given the highest priority next to provision of food.

higher than last years which was put at N1.1 million which was considered as one of the dividends of democracy.

Engr. Dan Chuke enjoined the leadership of the Legion to put the money to judicious use to justify the reason for which it was given.

While showing his appreciation for the assistance given to the Legion, the Secretary-General, Captain Adole, who noted the uniqueness of this year's armed forces celebration, also said the membership of the Legion included ex-servicemen and members of their family, the fallen heroes and victims of war and their children.

Soliciting national and international assistance for the Legion, considering its financial predicament, Adole said that the Legion needs money to host its national council meeting scheduled to hold at Lokoja in August.

Tor Tiv named chancellor

The Tor Tiv, Dr. Alfred Torkula, has been appointed Chancellor of the Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State, by the Federal Government.

A statement issued by the university's Public Relations Officer, Mr. Ejike Uchella, said the appointment was "in the personal capacity and in recognition of the meritorious services of the Tor Tiv." It said that the appointment was contained in a letter, conveyed to the royal father by the Minister of Education, Prof. Babalola Borisade.

Borisade in the letter stated that, "President Olusegun Obasanjo approved the appointment in the conviction that, with the Tor Tiv in such an important position, the lost glory of the university would be regained." The

the royal father, on behalf of the president, for his well-deserved honour and prayed God to grant him guidance, abundant blessings and good health.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that new chancellors are being appointed for federal government-owned universities. The Emir of Ilorin, Sulu Gambari, was at the weekend named as the Chancellor for the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.



Social critic opposes govt panels of inquiry

Retired Maj. Aliyu Tahir, social critic and former chairman of Yola Local Government Area, has questioned the rationale behind the constitution of commissions of inquiry by governments "since the findings of such panels are always not implemented."

In an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Yola on Tuesday, Tahir decried the enormous public funds and time wasted on such investigative commissions, while the white papers were never implemented.

He said that most of the problems facing Nigeria today could be traced to the non-implementation of the white papers in which members of the elite were highly indicted, "which gives them the opportunity to commit the same crimes again tomorrow."

The social critic said that governments at both the state and federal levels have been insensitive to the feelings of the people about the findings of such panels.

"It is usual for governments to constitute

people in the society, spend a lot of money and time and at the end of the day, throw away the findings, only to end up creating enmity between the panel members and those indicted," Tahir declared.

He described as unfortunate, "a situation where thousands of lives and properties were lost in some crises and nothing concrete was done by government," citing the

Maitasine riots in Kano, Maiduguri and Yola, where thousands of people were killed.

He said that in Adamawa, hundreds of people were killed and public funds amounting to millions of naira were looted during the Tigno Wadugu communal conflict, after which the government constituted the Paul Wampana Commission "whose findings are now consigned to history."



The Chief Executive Officer, Commonwealth of Learning, Prof. Ras Dhanason (left) being received by President Olusegun Obasanjo (right) during the Commonwealth of Learning team's visit to the President at the State

NEWS

AIDS workshop opens in Makurdi

As the joint seminar organised by UNICEF/NYSC on HIV/AIDS campaigns and advocacy begins in Makurdi, the Benue State capital, the Director-General of NYSC has described the disease as a satanic force ravaging the world.

Brig.-Gen. K.O. Ogunkoya stated this while declaring open a two-day workshop on the dreaded disease that has claimed millions of lives.

The director-general stated that UNICEF is the first organization to vote money in assisting NYSC with the

From Mike Elaigwu, in Makurdi



Prof. A.B.C. Nwosu

campaign against AIDS.

He added that the seminar was the result of the organisation's call on non-

governmental bodies to assist in the areas of community development and poverty eradication programmes to complement the efforts in reinvigorating the NYSC.

Governor Ahmed Sani of Zamfara State is to be conferred with the Al-Islam man of the year award in Lagos come Saturday 28th July, 2001.

The award is being

Al-Islam newspaper honours Gov Sani

From Rakiya Mohammed, in Lagos

conferred on him by Promoting Publishing Company Limited, Publisher of Al-Islam

newspaper.

Briefing newsmen in Lagos, Alhaji Ba'qee Yemisi Coker, Publisher/Editor-in-Chief of the newspaper, said the award has been given to the governor as a result of his significant contribution to the propagation of Islam.

Secretary-General, Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Dr. Abdul-Lateef Adegbite, as well as Sheikh Abdul Afeez Abou, who were 1st and 2nd runners-up, had 15 and 25 percent respectively during the pre-selection poll.

They would also receive an award at the ceremony

Expelled students responsible for rampage at FCE, Yola - Provost

The Provost of the Federal College of Education, Yola Prof. Mustapha Abba, has said that the students expelled from the college for examination malpractices were the brains behind the

rampage at the institution.

Abba said in an interview on Tuesday in Yola, that the expelled students refused to vacate the campus and seized the opportunity of the students union elections to cause confusion.

He said the "hoodlums" also looted property of other students while some school property, including doors and windows of the administrative block, were destroyed. The provost expressed dismay with the reaction of the students, who went out of the college premises to destroy private vehicles and disrupt the flow of traffic by mounting road blocks.

Meanwhile, a seven-man panel has been constituted to study the remote and immediate causes of the rampage and advise the school authorities on measures to be adopted. The panel, which is expected to submit its report within two weeks, would determine the date for the re-opening of the institution closed down last week.

Mustapha said the institution's authorities have banned student unionism in the college until further notice and that the results of the last election have been cancelled.

It will be recalled that the college was, last week, closed down indefinitely following a violent rampage over the tearing of the election results by some unidentified persons.



Gov Ahmed Sani

which will also feature the launching of Al-Islam newspaper. The publisher, who decried the attitude of muslims toward Islamic publications, urged them to cultivate a good reading culture so that they will be very informed about their religion.

Among dignitaries to grace the occasion include Lagos State Governor, Senator Ahmed Tinubu and his Ogun State counterpart, Chief Segun Osoba, Deputy Governor, Zamfara State, Alhaji Muhammad Aliyu Shinkafi.

Workshop on gender violence ends in Bauchi

A two-day North-East zonal workshop on gender violence and poverty has ended in Bauchi.

The workshop which was organised by the office of the Special Adviser to the President on Women Affairs, in collaboration with Keyrole Consultants, Jos, was attended by key government functionaries from the six North-Eastern states and their local governments in the zone, representatives of women groups, academics, students, NGOs and CBOs. The wife of the Vice-President, Mrs. Titi Amina Atiku Abubakar and wives of the governors of Bauchi and Borno states were also in attendance as participants.

After two days of exhaustive debates, discussions and consultations, the participants came up with a number of observations and far-reaching recommendations.

The participants noted the peculiar situation in the North-East of the country which contributes substantially in the political and

economic disempowerment of women which include early marriage, denial of girl-child education, abduction and harbouring of young females, restrictions placed on women in terms of holding public affairs and wife battering.

Participants further observed that child begging and hawking remain prominent social malaise in the zone with attendant consequences such as making girl-child vulnerable to accident, sexual harassment and abuse and the associated health

social rights of women.

Participants pointed out that despite the modest improvement in the representation of women in institutions of governance since the Beijing conference and especially the return of democratic governance in May 1999, the manipulation of religion and religious texts have continued to militate against the involvement of women in political and civic affairs.



Gov Ahmed Mu'azu

hazards. The workshop noted that Nigeria painfully remains least committed to the observance of several international conventions and charters that explicitly protect and defend the economic, political and

NOA DG blames market associations over food prices

By Simon Imobo-Tswam

The Director-General, National Orientation Agency, Dr. Ifeanyi Chukwuka, has blamed the escalation in the prices of food items in the country on the unpatriotic activities of some market associations in the various markets in the nation.

Speaking to newsmen in Abuja, Dr. Chukwuka observed that: "The value of the naira against the dollar has little to do with the costs of production of local food items within the country.

"The bulk of the problem has to do with greed, ignorance and insincerity on the part of these market associations who arbitrarily fix prices of commodities

without recourse to the basic economic principles of demand and supply."

Such people, according to him, need to be re-orientated to know that their actions have devastating effects on the lives of millions of people. Dr. Chukwuka further stated that "the federal government cannot be blamed for the selfish posturing of these unpatriotic traders who have eliminated competitions in our markets, and are running monopolies."

The director-general wondered why these associations would prevent women who want to sell their goods at cheap rate in the market from selling by harassing them or buying up their commodities, only to resell same at cut-throat prices.

He warned that NOA would soon visit all markets to ensure free trading in our markets as is done in all free-market economies world over. He assured Nigerians that NOA would soon have volunteers who will sell the food items in the various markets at reduced prices to the people.

The director-general disclosed that the National

Orientation Agency has already concluded plans to meet and discuss with market women in all states of the federation beginning with Abuja.

"In this way, the agency would approach the issue in a tentacular manner such that the impact would be felt in all parts of the country," he said.

Oyo SPEB approves car loan for teachers

From Yinka Oladoyinbo, in Ibadan

Oyo State Primary Education Board (SPEB) has approved a vehicle loan scheme to both the teaching and non-teaching staff in the state primary schools.

In view of this, a total sum of N6 million has been released as take-off grant of the loan and an additional N1 million will be made available monthly to be payable in 40 months.

Executive Chairman of the Oyo State Primary Education Board, Dr. Suleiman Adediran, who made the disclosure in a chat with pressmen, said the loan form would be provided free and would cut across all cadres of staff.

According to him, the loan would be granted in four groups, with levels 2 - 6 officers receiving N60,000, level 7-8 will collect N132,000, level 9-10 would be granted N180,000 while those on level 12 and above will take N200,000 as loan.

Dr. Adediran, however, said that the loan scheme was one

of the dividends of democracy accruable to teaching and non-teaching staff of public primary schools in the state, adding that this was an improvement over what was in operation before.

The SPEB boss, therefore, assured interested applicants that there would be fair treatment in the allocation of the loans, saying that all education secretaries should collect the loan form from the SPEB headquarters.



Gov Lam Adesina

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DAILY TRUST

EDITORIAL

Welcome African Union

Last week in Lusaka, Zambia, African heads of state at the summit buried the 38-year-old Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and midwived the delivery of the African Union (AU). This development is a milestone in the continuing struggle to create a more viable, prosperous and independent continental body. The struggle started by such visionary pan-Africanists as Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Ahmed Benbella, Emperor Haile Selassie, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Gamel Abdel Nasser, Jomo Kenyatta and our own Abubakar Tafawa Balewa.

The new body, the brainchild of President Obasanjo and Colonel Muammar Ghadaffi, is fashioned around the European Union (EU) and expected to have an African Parliament, Central Bank, African Court and eventually, a common currency. The union is the medium through which the continent expects to achieve the aim of its renaissance and the objectives of the African Millennium plan.

As lofty as the objectives of the union are, we advise that African leaders heed the timely warning by the United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan that the change in nomenclature may not amount to much if the numerous intra and inter-national strifes on the continent are not resolved. Mutual suspicion, territorial designs, petty jealousies, clannish and tribal wars, ethnic and religious crises have combined to dissipate Africa's resources so much so that it can not develop economically.

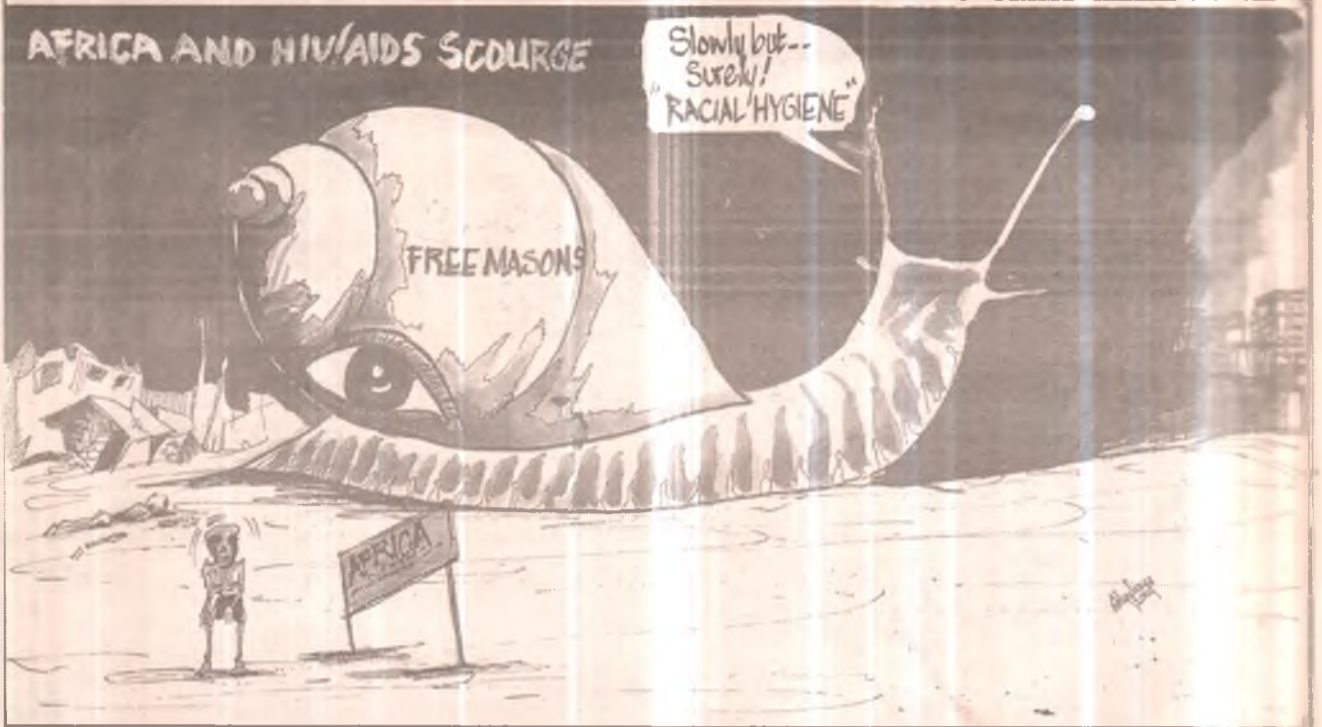
In this respect, we welcome the renewed initiative to encourage regional groupings such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Economic Development Conference (SADEC), the defunct East African Common Market (EAC) and the Maghrib Economic Union as the fulcrum around which the African economic union would be built.

Politically, we hope the union will achieve the much-desired goal of democratisation and human rights. We hope the continent will prove sceptics wrong and organise elections into the African Parliament within the one-year transition period.

However, of immediate concern to the union should be the opening up of communications between all the countries. It is a sad commentary that after 40 years of political independence, very little has been achieved in making Africans speak with one voice or literally to speak among themselves. Today a Nigerian can speak to his Algerian or Nigerien business partner only through a third country usually the erstwhile colonial master.

There is also an urgent need to complete the Trans-African Highway project which is expected to link Cape Town and Morocco through West, Central and East Africa. On the same footing is the need to resuscitate the ailing national and regional airlines in an effort to ease communications within the continent.

Finally, we believe that if African countries are to make a headway in strict economic planning and prudent management the burden of debt must be removed from its shoulders. This it can do by forming a united front to confront its debtors. The debt burden has required African countries to run twice as fast as they now do only to catch up with a walking world economy, a task none of the countries can undertake on its own.



THURSDAY COLUMN

A people damned by the dams

By Ibrahim A. Kolo

As Niger, Kwara, Kogi and Kebbi States intensify the demand for the creation of the Hydro Power Areas Development Commission (HYPADEC), many questions have been asked regarding the *raison detre* for such a move at this point in time in the political dispensation. Indeed, many have even asked whether the states concerned were asleep and had only woken up to the demand. For how else can one explain the past silence by them when varieties of agitations have become the order of the day. Unfortunately, not too many have given thought to the fundamental issue of how many have lost their lives; have had their lives and means of livelihood completely truncated or indeed, how many have been damned by the dams created on Rivers Niger and Kaduna to provide electricity for the nation.

In an era when reparations for the inhuman traffic called slave trade have been demanded and in which debt cancellation (not forgiveness) is being seriously canvassed for reasons of injustices committed by past generations, the articulation of the demand for HYPADEC cannot be seen to be just another demand in the agitation-infested Nigerian political scene. Right from the beginning, the citing of the dams were not just a matter of political exigency. Like the location of the coal and tin mines at Enugu and Jos respectively and the oil wells in the Niger Delta areas, the citing of the dams were a matter of geological equation. And so, the people in the immediate environment of the dam areas got more than they bargained for when they were deceived and conscripted into the human labour resource used to construct the structures. But beyond that has been the systematic neglect of the protracted plights of the people so damned by the dams.

To start with, nobody has really considered it worthwhile or honourable enough to have kept a record of those who lost their lives in the construction of the dams. So criminal have been those who handled the construction of the dams and the subsequent authorities (i.e. ECN and NEPA) that the death toll following the construction of the dams have been confined to the dustbin of history. But the sore remains and sooner or later, the count will be made from among almost every family in over 400 villages and communities who still remember their members who got drowned in constructing the dams. The only reason those who lost their lives in the construction of the dams have been forgotten is that those so involved were natives whose sacrifices were regarded as good enough only to have been used and discarded. All that is history now.

The denial of electricity supply through the national grid is the most inauspicious example of the damning of the people in the areas around the dams in the four states. Till date, many villages in Kebbi, Niger, Kogi and Kwara states from where the dams can be sighted and which bear the greatest brunt of perennial displacements occasioned by over-flooding can hardly benefit from the power generated. At a point, the excuse was that the power so generated around the source of the national grid was too much to be stepped down for these communities. Perhaps, the only thing the villagers could see over their heads are the power transmitting towers and lines

connecting far away lands and countries to the national grid while they serve as the damned cushions and conduit pipes from which the hydropower is drained. Consigned to their fates, these communities have been for several years denied the benefits of utilising hydropower to transform their rural economies into a modern small-scale industrial system - a transformation that has since taken place in many rural communities in Nigeria that do not even know the source of the electricity they utilise.

Then, on the uncontrolled environmental consequences and hazards to which people and communities in the upstream, and downstream areas of the dams have had to contend with over the past two to three decades. Incessant flooding and high rising of water levels both in the lakes created and the tributaries have constituted such a menace to the lives of the people in the upstream parts of the dams. Villages and communities are submerged on a yearly basis ever since the dams were created, particularly in Kebbi and Niger States. The consequences have included loss of lives and property, dislocated (in most cases permanently) sources and economic patterns of livelihood and destruction to large portions of farmlands and livestock. Yet, the dams and feeder waterways from the dams are in themselves sources of economic mainstay if the dam authorities had carefully planned and facilitated effective harnessing of the dams' resources for maximum benefit. Unfortunately, this has not been the case, and the ultimate losers are the damned people in the areas of the hydropower dams.

In the past twenty years, the story of the three giant dams for the host communities has been of damnation of a people in the face of huge natural resources. The fishing and irrigation potentials arising from the dams have been so neglected that communities are only left to fiddle around the lakes and feeder rivers with their primitive approaches to harnessing the economic benefits available. The potentials for eco-tourism in the areas have been so utterly forgotten with the communities condemned to further depleting the remaining aspects of promoting this huge potential in the areas.

The possibilities of opening up farmlands in the upper and lower parts of the dam areas have been so neglected even in the face of river basin development authorities in the areas. The harnessing of hydropower from the dams to ignite these economic development activities has progressed at such a slow pace that there is every reason to suspect criminal neglect. Then, the years of protracted stealing of even the chicken feed that has been thrown to the thieving of huge revenues accruing to NEPA without anyone caring a hoot about the needs and welfare of the people who have sacrificed so much for the dams to be. These are the vexed issues that have given birth to the demand for HYPADEC. This is the contention of a people damned by the dams of huge potentials. This is where the justice in the demand for a Hydro Power Areas Development Commission lies.

In the months to come, the will and resolve of our representatives in Abuja will be tested to determine their political sensitivity to the plight and need of a people so damned by the dams. If the bill is passed and followed up with executive action, our representatives, in the eyes of the communities in the four HYPADEC states, would have passed the litmus test of the political sensitivity of these people.

Dr. Kolo is a lecturer at the Bayero University, Kano.



PUBLIC NOTICE.

The Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) has set up a committee to check proliferation of filling stations along Airport Road, Kaduna - Lokoja Road, Outer Northern Expressway, outer Southern Expressway, Asokoro - Nyanya Road.

Consequently, owners of such property are hereby invited to bring all relevant documents relating to their allocations to Room 151, Block C, Dept. of Planning, Survey and Development Control, F.C.D.A. latest by 21st July, 2001.

Failure to comply would imply that the properties involved are illegal and therefore stand revoked.

Signed

IKOKU OKONKWO

For: Executive Secretary

Opinion

Is IBB that bad? What's wrong with Gov Saminu Turaki?

By Silas Udoh

Much has been said, published and commented about the former head of state, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (IBB) since the emergence of the present democratic government in Nigeria, perhaps with insinuations as the worst ex-military leader in Nigeria. There's hardly a day one would not read one report or the other on the pages of newspapers or hear about him on the electronic media. Even news about him in the local newspapers draws attention.

To some, the acronym IBB is synonymous with the word evil. But in the strict sense, is IBB all that bad? On the other hand, could any significant positive thing be traced to IBB's past administration of 1985 to 1993?

One singular thing that should concern us in this country should be the assessment of the qualities exhibited by our leaders be they military or civilian. No military government in Nigeria has ever been a purely military affair and the IBB administration was not. In that government, there were civilian ministers and chairmen of some boards and up till the end of his administration, no one voluntarily resigned in protest of his maladministration.

Nigerians should not be in a hurry to judge the man IBB because if he was that bad our God of retributive justice would have started bringing his iniquities upon him. I don't think there is any tribe in Nigeria that IBB's administration did not affect positively, at least in one way or the other. For instance, IBB's administration took reasonable steps to provide employment through the directorate of employment. One would agree with me that if other governments after IBB's had given such attention to creation of employment, Nigerian youths would have been proud of their education and be willing to contribute their talents as against the present trend of leaving the country to seek greener pastures abroad.

Through the directorate, numerous youths were self-employed, and avoid temptations of joining the evil world like robbery, hired assassins, fraud and touting to mention but a few. I need not mention IBB's numerous achievements. Well, let's consider the creation of states, construction of roads, bridges, industries and tremendous improvement in the welfare of civil servants.

Nigerian women are fully mobilised and are competing favourably with their men counterparts as a result of the gains from the better life programme of IBB's wife. Right thinking Nigerians will agree with me that the better life programme generated a lot of awareness in women and developments, especially in the rural area.

Even the present civilian administration, it is widely believed, was made possible by IBB as he was said to be the one who persuaded General Obasanjo to accept the PDP presidential nomination, possibly to redeem his image on the issue of June 12. Unless IBB falls within those barred by provisions of the constitution from contesting election in Nigeria, I don't think it would be right for anybody to continue to confuse people through the media concerning IBB's presidential ambition. It is one thing to contest and another thing to win, we should realise.

Moreover, IBB is constitutionally qualified to contest the 2003 presidential election or any election. After all, in Section 131 of the 1999 constitution, a person shall be qualified for election to the office of president if he is a citizen of Nigeria by birth; has attained the age of 40 years; is a member of a political party and is sponsored by that political party and has been educated up to at least school certificate level or its equivalent.

It will not be surprising to see those condemning IBB now using all their might and connection to secure national appointments if he is eventually elected the president of this country. After all, when President Obasanjo wanted to contest the last election, he was likewise condemned by some Nigerians but today his government has benefited even those that condemned his candidature. It is our collective responsibility to give peace a chance and focus our attention on things that will bring progress, development and unity to the country.

Udoh is of No. 9, Adebisi Street, Alagomeji, Sabo-Yaba, Lagos.

By Bashir Muhammad

Democracy allows rights of speech, religion, and opinion, among many others. This engenders many Nigerians to express their views either verbally or through any other medium. Jigawa State indigenes are not exempted from these rights, they have said a lot from the onset of this regime to date.

Many have raised issues relating to the state, which signifies their concern for the "New World". In accordance with this, some openly accused the governor, Alhaji Saminu Turaki of implementing worthless projects as well as many other allegations.

Besides the criticism, some unscrupulous elements ignominiously insulted

Kazaure being the hometown of Governor Turaki. The ignoble acts were targeted at disheartening and obscuring the state's populace from righteous deeds of the government.

To my understanding, Gov Turaki is implementing prodigious projects that can only be comparable to those of Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto and Gov Audu Bako of former Kano State.

It was through their long-term planning and foresight that Northern Nigeria and Kano State are what they are today respectively. Unfortunately, in Nigeria today, there are few people that have the foresight of our ancestors. So it is not surprising that in

spite of the fruitful projects of the governor, some are still impeded in understanding the noble projects going on in Jigawa State.

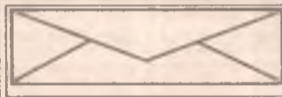
The obscurantist never see the good side of the projects simply because they are pessimistic instead of being optimistic, preconceive preposterously rather than understanding pragmatically.

They consider such productive projects as obsolete thus questioning why such should be initiated in this millennium where nothing is good except bribery, corruption and looting of public funds.

As an actuary I never doubt the diligence and probity of Gov Turaki, though nobody is impeccable. The disparages, discontent and disincentives

are pre-concerted prejudice that are basically illusive and imbroglios. At this juncture, I will like to call on the entire Jigawa State populace to do away with the impertinent remarks and try to avoid the imbecile individuals among them. Lastly, my advice to Governor Turaki is to incorporate short term projects e.g. roads and water supply along with others for the benefit of the masses. Indeed those with foresight and strong belief in the progress of our state will never misjudge the acumen of the governor, hence let us all put our hands together and work towards a better Jigawa of today and tomorrow.

Bashir Muhammad (Bash), is of Zoo Road, Kano, Kano State.



YOUR LETTERS

Constraints of film production in Hausa land

Prior to the present rise in the production of films of indigenous value in Nigeria, the northern part of Nigeria, particularly the Hausa dominated part has been flooded with foreign films that lacked social, cultural or traditional values.

Most of them were films that traditionally enhance the culture of violence such as the likes of *Rambo*, *James Bond*, *Mission Impossible* just to mention but a few. Of no less devastating effect on the youths are also phonographic films i.e. blue films which have the tendency of making youth morally bankrupt which are shown in our cinema houses or video clubs. Little wonder, therefore, that the present youth unrest and the attendant moral bankruptcy

is the direct consequence of these films.

The present mass production of Hausa films in the northern part of the country is therefore a welcome development. Apart from checking the moral decadence brought about by the emergence of foreign films, they will also enhance the cultures of respect for elders and accommodation that we were hitherto known for.

The question now is, will the present film production mainly by Hausa, match the decorum and sophistication that is associated with the production of films in Europe, i.e. the complexities and expensiveness of Hollywood? The answer is an emphatic no. Hausa/Fulani women who are traditionally

Muslim would hardly undertake to go onstage and dramatise before spectators. This to them is a taboo considering the role of women in Islam. Logical as this may be, it is obvious that the advantage of staging films that are traditionally Hausa/Fulani and socially in line or in tone with the life of the people must be given prominence on its merits.

Efforts should, however be made by all and sundry including governments, towards enhancing the processes of film production that are indigenous to Africa rather than relying on foreign films that have the tendency of brainwashing the youth. Mrs. Bilkisu Sani Kurawa, FAAN Staff Secondary School, P.M.B. 3418, Kano, Kano State.

Help, federal govt!

Kindly allow me space in your widely read daily to air the calamities in my village. It is very painful to note with great dismay over a period of years now that there is a forgotten village of about 40,000 inhabitants residing in a remote area without light, water, roads or hospital in Ankpa Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Majority of the villagers are farmers while a few are traders. Olufoto has been linked a long time ago with Inye while Ofugo remains in their district. All efforts made by our only son (Late Captain E. A. Ataboh) in the village to bring light to the village before his death in a plane crash along with the then Kano State military administrator, Col. Abdullahi Wase, was to no avail.

I therefore want to use this medium in calling on the federal government to assist us with all basic necessities of life that can make living worthwhile, especially pipe-borne water or even boreholes because our people trek miles to get water and there is enough water in our soil.

I also call on the federal government to assist in giving us a government secondary school and light (NEPA) since the villagers have provided poles for themselves. Finally, a good road of about six kilometres to link the market at Aforgam gam so as to boost commercial activities. The people are peace loving but neglected by the district, ward, local and state government, but I hope the federal government will assist us.

Daniel Ocheni Garki II, Abuja.

Re: OPC is not the answer

Your editorial on the above subject matter, carried in the *Daily Trust* edition of Wednesday, June 27, 2001 refers.

That Governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu of Lagos State is trying to employ the services of Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) for the purpose of keeping law and order and safeguarding the security of lives and property of the Lagosians, is very unfortunate as it is disgusting. The governor should be informed that nowhere in the history of any civilised society, are street urchins, touts and ethnic militia employed to do such a sensitive job. Governor Tinubu should be educated about such a decision. That the maxim: "it takes a crook to catch a crook" does not generally apply to such a situation.

OPC, a characteristically violent organisation in nature will do Lagos no good as a state security outfit, but

instead, worsen the situation. It is, therefore, unfortunate that the Lagos State government has lost focus on its activities, thus chasing shadows. The earlier

the Chicago scholar realises this, the better. Abdullahi S. Abubakar, Anguwan Hausawa, Box 5331, Garki, Abuja.

NOA DG, you're wrong

My attention has been drawn to a news item in the *Daily Trust* of July 5, 2001, where the new Director-General of the National Orientation Agency (NOA) attributed Nigeria's social vices to indiscipline which make Nigerians rundown their leaders. He also said that we have never heard of Americans running down their leaders, that is why they are respected by other countries.

The Director-General is wrong. There is no doubt Americans love their country and leaders and when compared to their Nigerian counterparts, they try to provide good governance for their people. They are not selfish as they put the people first. They do not abandon their constituencies after attaining victory at elections. They try not to provide fluctuating electricity, bad water, potholed roads, unemployment and above all, they are not the *Tazarce* and *Owambe* kinds of leaders we have in Nigeria.

These are characteristics of Nigerian leaders, hence Nigerians would continue to run them down till they are ready to provide us the desired leadership and good governance needed by the people for the development and progress of the country.

Isah Tijjani Danjuma, P. O. Box 8979, Kaduna, Kaduna State.

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA & THE MIDDLE EAST

UN praises DR Congo

The United Nations has praised the enormous progress that has been made towards ending the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The UN's chief of staff in Congo, Colonel David Mayor, said that in the past six months the warring troops had, in the main, pulled back from the front line and were observing a ceasefire.

The United Nations has also stepped up its involvement in the Congo.

Before Laurent Kabila's death the peace process in the Democratic Republic of Congo was going nowhere.

The former president seemed to have no interest in an end to the war but under his son Joseph there has been tangible progress.

A ceasefire is now in place and UN monitors have fanned out across the country to

oversee troops' withdrawals from the front line.

After months of frustration the United Nations mission in Congo has a new dynamism.

The peacekeeping force is small, just 2,500 military personnel in a country the size of western Europe. But even so the UN is determined to make its presence felt.

On the Congo river at the strategic town of Mbandaka, Uruguayan soldiers patrol in gleaming white speed boats. It is a confidence building measure.

The war stopped trade along the river, a lifeline for many rural communities.

The United Nations presence assures people that it is safe to begin again.

Across the country ordinary Congolese who are heartily sick of the war has welcomed the blue berets enthusiastically.

But the mission is also in

danger of raising unrealistic expectations.

The Security Council

Clashes mar Zambian poll

Police in the Zambian capital, Lusaka, fired tear gas to break up violent clashes as voting ended in a crucial by-election on Tuesday.

Journalist Alphonsus Hamacila told the *BBC* that supporters and opponents of President Frederick Chiluba had fought with guns and machetes in the Chiwama constituency.

This is the first electoral test for the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) since it split over the issue of a possible third term in office for Mr Chiluba.

A police officer told the French news agency *AFP* that the fighting started because MMD supporters wanted to move the ballot boxes for

mandate is limited to observing, not enforcing the peace process.

If war should break out again the Congolese people will not be able to rely on the United Nations to protect them.

Israeli troops mass in West Bank

The Israeli army has begun sending infantry and armoured vehicles to the West Bank in what it says is a response to escalating

Palestinian-Israeli violence.

An army statement said the deployment of troops, who have not so far entered Palestinian-controlled areas, was a response to Tuesday's "flagrant violation" of the two sides' tattered ceasefire.

It came after some of the worst violence in the region in recent months, including a suicide bombing and mortar attacks by Palestinians and Israeli helicopter strikes.

The *BBC* reported that the mobilisation may be just a threat or bluff, but that it could also be a prelude to an invasion of the West Bank - which would essentially be a declaration of war.

Whether there was intent to use the troops or not, he added, the mobilisation was "the most serious move in many days, if not weeks."

Senior Palestinians were quick to warn that Israel's actions were pushing the region towards disaster.

"These reinforcements, tanks and military units are pushing the fragile situation to the edge of explosion," Ahmed Abdel-Rahman, an aide to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, said.

Israeli leaders are reported to be meeting overnight to discuss the situation. An army spokeswoman refused to say if the troops would be sent into Palestinian-controlled areas.

The mobilisation is coming after at least four Palestinians were killed and several others injured in an Israeli helicopter strike.

Israeli military sources said that the targets had been planning a bomb attack on the Maccabiah Games, an international Jewish sporting event which opened on Monday evening in Jerusalem.

The Palestinian Authority immediately condemned the attack as an "act of war perpetrated by the Israeli Government against the unarmed and innocent Palestinian population."

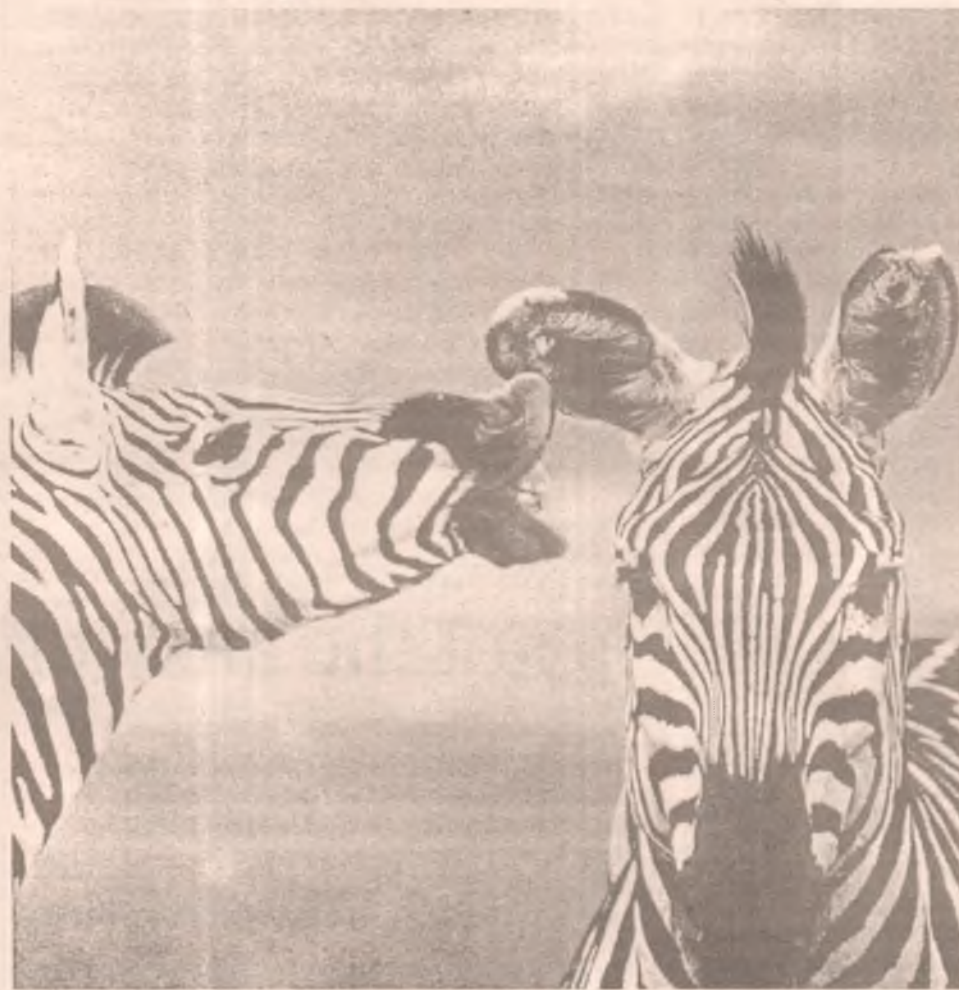
Just a few hours later, a mortar bomb was fired at the Jewish settlement of Gilo in what the Israeli army says is the first attack from the West Bank since the latest Palestinian uprising began in September 2000.

There were no immediate reports of any casualties.

Palestinian sources said the helicopters struck a house in the town of Bethlehem belonging to the Fatah movement of Mr Arafat.

A coalition of Palestinian groups known as the National and Islamic Forces was quoted as saying they would avenge it, and that every settler and soldier was now a target.

have you Heard?



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Ariel Sharon, Israeli

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

World Report

Bush visits Britain

...insists on missile defence

President George W. Bush arrived in Britain yesterday hours after reaffirming plans to press ahead with his controversial defence and environmental policies.

He told the BBC that the United States Government remained determined to develop a missile defence shield, and to oppose the Kyoto treaty on global warming.

During his trip, his first state visit to the UK since taking office, Mr Bush will hold talks with Prime Minister Tony Blair, and meet the Queen at a state dinner at Buckingham palace.

Mr Bush will then fly to Genoa for the Group of Eight summit of leading world powers, where discussions are likely to be dominated by the thorny issues of global warming and missile defence.

On the eve of his UK visit, the president also called on the IRA and other paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland to decommission their weapons, and offered to play a greater mediatory role.

Earlier this week, Mr Bush said the visit would "confirm and renew" the strong relationship between Britain and America.

He said his "strong personal relationship" with Mr Blair was "most helpful to making sure our countries continue the tie that binds".

On Kyoto, Mr Bush has simply dismissed the existing protocol as not a proper way to proceed.

"I've got an obligation to the working people of America", he told the BBC, "to pursue a policy that protects the environment but also promotes economic growth."

In defending his ambitious plan for a missile defence shield, the president was animated and adamant.

He told the BBC: "It's about time a leader stepped forward and made it clear that Russia is not the enemy, and therefore we shouldn't have a treaty that was written to clarify that status... it's a new day."

Despite such words, the planned shield, which would break the terms of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, is viewed with scepticism among NATO allies and deep suspicion by Moscow and Beijing.

Chinese officials now say at least 36 people died when a crane collapsed during installation at a shipyard in the eastern Chinese city of Shanghai on Tuesday.

Three other people are in a serious condition in hospital.

State media said the giant crane was the first and largest of its kind ever built in China, and the dead included engineers from a local university who had worked on its design.

Crane collapse claims 36 in China

The collapsed gantry crane was to be the centrepiece of a new shipbuilding facility at one of Shanghai's longest-established shipyards.

The computer-controlled crane was designed to lift loads of up to 600 tonnes.

Just a day before the accident, a ceremony had been held celebrating its installation.

The China Daily newspaper said engineers and professors from Shanghai's Tongji University were supervising the raising of its giant cross beam into its final position when steel cables were accidentally released.

The 3,000-tonne cross beam plunged 50 metres to the ground, crushing the academics, project engineers

and some 20 shipyard workers.

The scale of the disaster has shocked a city which has set great store on improving safety standards at its thousands of construction sites.

Shanghai's mayor, Xu Kuangdi, is reported to have returned from the capital, Beijing, where he was attending a meeting, to visit

the few survivors in hospital.

The accident came just a day after an explosion at an illegal fireworks store in central Shaanxi province killed more than 40 people.

The Chinese Government has this year pledged to make local leaders more accountable for fatal accidents in their areas.

The governor of Shaanxi province earlier this year became the first person to receive a public disciplinary warning after another accident in his province.



R-L: The Chief Executive Officer, Commonwealth of Learning, Professor Raj Dhanarajan, Mr. Visa Naidoo and David Walker both members, Commonwealth of Learning, during their courtesy visit on President Olusegun Obasanjo at the State House, Abuja, ... Tuesday. Pix Kennedy Egbonodje.

Pakistani militants to continue attacks over Kashmir

Militant groups have vowed to step up their attacks on Indian forces in Kashmir in the wake of the Agra summit.

Syed Salahuddin, the head of the United Jihad Council which groups together 15 militant groups in Pakistani Kashmir, said the "rigid and unrealistic" stand of the Indian Government had led the summit to fail.

Militant groups would now expand their attacks, he said.

And one of the most active groups, Lashkar-e-Toyeba, said it would redouble its activities.

The group's leader, Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, said jihad or holy war efforts "will be accelerated and India will be dealt with a fatal blow."

Separatist leaders in Indian-administered

Kashmir have universally blamed the Indian Government for the failure of the two sides to agree on a joint declaration at the end of the summit.

Omer Farooq, a former chairman of the main separatist alliance, the All-Party Hurriyat Conference, said Indian "intransigence" was responsible.

And he praised the Pakistani president, General Pervez Musharraf, for focusing on Kashmir.

He also insisted that the

only way out was for India and Pakistan to seek third-party mediation, something India opposes.

Abdul Ghani Bhat, the head of the alliance, said the summit had been sabotaged by Indian "hawks."

He said that although Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee had tried his best, he was under the influence of hardliners who wanted to sabotage any solution.

Ordinary people in Indian-administered Kashmir voiced pessimism about the future.

Government worker, Hafizullah Mir, said he was hoping some good news would come out of the summit.

"But when I saw the flash on Star TV that the talks had failed, I was very disappointed," he said.

Schoolboy Naveed Bashir said he was hoping the talks might lead to peace so that he could go trekking with his friends in the mountains, which his parents had forbidden because of violence in the territory.

"Unfortunately, the failure of talks means more violence, death and destruction," he said.

FBI loses secrets

The United States' Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) says a large number of its laptop computers and weapons are missing, and may have been stolen.

A total of 184 computers are missing, including 13 that are believed to have been stolen. Three of the missing machines may contain classified information, said officials.

Out of 449 unaccounted-for firearms - including pistols, handguns, rifles, shotguns and sub-machine guns - 184 were stolen while 265 were lost, said officials.

The missing computers and weapons were discovered during a comprehensive inventory of equipment carried out at the request of the Department of Justice.

The disclosure came hours before the opening of a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing into a series of high-profile FBI mistakes in recent months.

In May, the bureau admitted that it had withheld evidence in the case against Oklahoma city bomber Timothy McVeigh, causing his execution to be delayed for nearly a month.

Months earlier, the FBI had been left red-faced when one of its former agents, Robert Hanssen, was arrested and later charged with spying for Russia over a 20-year period.

The federal government suffered another blow last year when the State Department admitted that it had "misplaced" a laptop containing highly classified information.

This followed accusations that the FBI had covered up aspects of the fateful siege in Waco, Texas in 1993 and arrested the wrong man in the bombing of the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

In June, Louis Freeh stepped down as FBI director two years earlier than expected following severe criticism of the bureau after the Hanssen affair.

He has been succeeded by high-ranking Justice Department official, Robert Mueller.

FBI officials said that the bureau has roughly 50,000 guns and 13,000 computers.

The FBI said it believes that 66 weapons were lost in connection with a retired agent, while about four were carried by agents who had either been sacked or had died, officials said.

Washington Post publisher dies



Katharine Graham.

Katharine Graham, the publisher who built the Washington Post into one of the most important newspapers in the United States, has died at the age of 84.

She was at the helm during the paper's coverage of the most important news events of the past four decades, including Watergate, the Pentagon Papers and Vietnam.

She had been unconscious since a fall on Saturday and underwent surgery the same day at the St Alphonsus Regional Medical Center in Boise,

Idaho, hospital spokeswoman David Smith said.

She took over the Washington Post newspaper in 1963 after her husband Philip committed suicide.

She headed the company from 1973 to 1993 and built the business into an important media conglomerate that owned newspaper, magazine, broadcast and cable properties, including Newsweek magazine.

She passed control to her son Donald in 1993 and continued to chair the executive committee of The Washington Post Company until her death.



ABIA STATE GOVERNMENT



In fulfilling my promise to always publish the financial summary of Abia State Government (to give account of my financial stewardship to the people), I am publishing the Consolidated Financial Summary of the Government of Abia State for the Half year Period of 1st December, 2000 to 31st May, 2001, as audited by the State Auditor General of Abia State.

This half year review completes the two years of this administration in office, as we had earlier published the one year financial summary which covered the period of 29th May, 1999 to 31st May, 2000 and the half year period of 1st June, to 30th November, 2000.

As earlier promised, the bi-annual and annual publication of the summary of our financial status will be continuous throughout the tenure of this administration.

My dear Abians, the future is bright; our State is getting better. Honestly, I am proud to let the world know that we are God's own people from God's own State. So, let all hands be on deck.

On my part, my covenant with God to serve all Abians and be accountable to them will never be broken. Thank you. God bless God's Own State, Abia and God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

DR. ORJI UZOR KALU (MON)
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, UMUAHIA

ANNEXURE 1

AUDIT CERTIFICATE

The Financial Summary of Abia State for the half-year period 1st December, 2000 to 31st May, 2001 has been examined in accordance with Section 125 (2) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 as modified by the Audit Law.

I have obtained all the information and explanations that I required and I certify, subject to the comments and observations contained in my Report shown in the attached Annexure - Audit Inspection Report for the attention of the Honourable Commissioner for Finance and the Accountant General, that in my opinion and to the best of my knowledge and belief, the annexed Financial summary gives a true and fair view of the transactions of the Government of Abia State of Nigeria for the period and of the Financial transactions for the half-year period ended on that date.

G.E. ENWEREJI

Auditor-General
Abia State

Office of the State Auditor-General
State Audit Headquarters,
P.M.B. 7040 Umuahia

11TH JUNE, 2001

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL SUMMARY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ABIA STATE FOR THE HALF-YEAR PERIOD OF 1ST DECEMBER, 2000 TO 31ST MAY, 2001.

RECURRENT ACCOUNT:

Recurrent Revenue:

Statutory Allocation from Federal Government (Schedule 1)	N4,930,661,949.03
Value Added Tax (Schedule 11)	472,928,971.20
Internally Generated Revenue (Schedule 111)	233,773,012.83
Other Revenues (Schedule V)	90,839,274.56
	(1) N5,728,203,207.62

Recurrent Expenditure:

Personnel Costs (Schedule VI)	N2,161,647,616.05
Overhead Costs (Schedule VII)	1,607,072,470.27
Consolidated Revenue Fund Charges	619,823,656.62
Other Expenditures	1,096,864.00
	(2) N4,389,640,606.94

Surplus/Deficit Transferred to

Capital Account (1) - (2)	N1,338,562,600.68
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CAPITAL ACCOUNT:

Transfer from Recurrent Account	N1,338,562,600.68
Capital Receipts (Schedule VIII)	3,899,360,000.00
Total Capital Receipts	N5,237,922,600.68
Capital Expenditure (Schedule IX)	3,190,179,348.54
Capital Development Fund c/f	N2,047,743,252.14

G.N. ANYANWOKE

Accountant-General
Office of the Accountant-General
Umuahia.
11th June, 2001.

BUSINESS DAY

NGC rakes N4.087b revenue

The Nigerian Gas Company (NGC) generated a total of N4.087 billion as its revenue for the 1999 business year. This was contained in the company's 9th annual general meeting report made available to *Business Day*. According to the report, the amount represents N3.992 billion realised from gas sales.

Meanwhile, the sum of N66.57 million was realised from transmission of third parties gas while N2.96 million was from miscellaneous income.

However, according to the report, only a total of N2,845.754 million was actually received from customers representing a 507.4 percent collection or receivables.

The report also

From Aisha Momoh, in Port Harcourt indicated that within the year, the company purchased a total of 118.35 billion standard cubic feet (scf) of gas valued at N490.406 million from its suppliers within Shell Petroleum

Development Company (SPDC) and Chevron.

"The profit before tax during the period ended 31st December, 1999 was N1,255.166 million (N1.3 million)."

Snippets from the report indicated that in order to

develop the company's infrastructure for growth of the business, a number of developmental efforts must be made, especially in the area of the supply of gas to Bonny Export Terminal and Port Harcourt Refining Company (PHRC).

London-bound passengers chase Virgin Atlantic

Virgin Atlantic has continued to witness a large turn out of customers at its temporary booking office in Lagos in spite of its high fare of N140,900 on the Lagos-London route.

Business Day investigations revealed that the booking office located on the ground floor of Sheraton

Hotel and Towers, Lagos has been witnessing over 100 customers daily.

Potential travellers are issued card numbers as they arrive to book for reservations. They sit around the hotel lobby for turns.

However, the much expected low fare promised

by the airline's representative in Nigeria, Mr. John Adebajo, has not been implemented with the N140,900 fare for a two month period while British Airways is charging N141,000 for the same period.

A source close to the airline told *Business Day* that "the fare is so because

Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) is to supply a total of 1600mm scfd of gas to Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) with its new contract to supply half of the gas required for trains 4 and 5 of NLNG project in Finima, Bonny.

The company, which at present is contracted to

Shell to fuel NLNG

From Rakiya A. Muhammad, in Lagos

supply 500 mm scfd of gas to trains 1 and 2, would also provide additional 375 mm scfd when train 3 comes on stream next year.

With the addition of trains 4 and 5, Shell will supply a total of 1600mm scfd to NLNG.

According to the Shell Bulletin, the NLNG gas supply outlet together with the expected growth in domestic and regional gas market will enable Shell to produce two million barrels of oil per day without routine flaring.

It was disclosed that the feed gas from trains 4 and 5 will come from a number of oil and associated gas nodal developments in both the East and the West, which include Otumara, Utapate, Gbaran and Ubie, Nun river, Akri/Oguta and H/K blocks, while further development of train 3 integrated projects nodes such will also contribute.

Shell is planning to invest in a 170 km gas pipeline in order to bring associated gas from Nun river and Gbaran Lubie Nodos to NLNG 4 and 5.

Alakija charges govt over textile dev.

The Federal Government has been urged to explore ways of developing the nation's textile industry into a viable foreign exchange earner.

Mrs. Folorunsho Alakija, a foremost player in the industry, made the call at the public presentation of her book "Fashion: The African Connection," in Lagos.

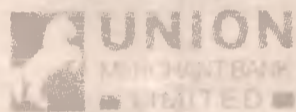
She noted that the Nigerian fashion industry was one that could generate billions of dollars in export earnings for the country and also boost tourism.

Mrs. Alakija, who observed that India today is one of the leading textile producers, attributed it to the century-long promotion of their home-made goods.

While urging the president to establish a textiles and garments directorate in both Ministries of Commerce and Industry, Mrs. Alakija said such directorate would execute the fashion and textiles section of the great potential offered by America's African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA).



Kola Jamodu, Industry Minister



UNION MERCHANT BANK LIMITED

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT FOR THE EIGHTEEN MONTHS ENDED 31 MARCH, 2001

	18 MONTHS 31-Mar 2001 N'000	12 MONTHS 30-Sep 1999 N'000
Gross Earnings	1,279,984	708,009
Profit/(Loss) Before Taxation	383,824	(141,379)
Taxation	(30,200)	(2,862)
Profit/(Loss) After Taxation	353,624	(144,241)
APPROPRIATIONS		
Statutory Reserve	106,086	-
Reserve for SSI	38,382	-
Transfer to General Reserve	209,156	(144,241)
	353,624	(144,241)
Earnings Per Share	54K	(29K)

The Accounts were approved by the Board of Directors on 7 May, 2001

G.A.T. Oboh

Chairman

S. A. Ehimeakhe

Managing Director/CEO

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH, 2001

	2001 N'000	1999 N'000
ASSETS		
Cash and Short Term Funds	4,461,514	2,639,941
Investments	122,171	-
Loans and Advances	1,069,915	298,186
Advances Under Finance Lease	249,578	2,652
Other Assets	99,564	111,597
Fixed Assets	100,238	108,050
	6,102,980	3,160,426
LIABILITIES		
Deposits and Other Accounts	4,613,302	2,670,544
Taxation	31,218	3,582
Other Liabilities	551,403	82,867
	5,195,923	2,756,993
CAPITAL AND RESERVES		
Share Capital	650,000	500,000
Statutory Reserve	150,631	44,545
Reserve for SSI	38,382	-
General Reserve	68,044	(141,112)
	907,057	403,433
	6,102,980	3,160,426
Acceptances, Guarantees and other Obligations for the account of Customers and corresponding Customers' Liability thereon	1,659,266	445,555

REPORT OF THE AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF UNION MERCHANT BANK LIMITED

We have audited the financial statements of Union Merchant Bank Limited as at 31 March, 2001.

In accordance with the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 1990, the Bank's directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. Our responsibility is to form an independent opinion, based on our audit, on those statements and to report our opinion to you.

We conducted our audit in accordance with international standards on auditing. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Bank's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion, we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

The financial statements, drawn up in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles and the accounting standards issued to date by the Nigerian Accounting Standards Board, are in agreement with the books of account which in our opinion have been properly kept. We have obtained all the information and explanations we required for the purposes of our audit.

In our opinion, the assets of the Bank have been properly valued and adequate provision made for diminution in their value.

During the period, the bank contravened some sections of the Banks and Other Financial Institutions Decree 1991

In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the Bank's affairs at 31 March, 2001 and of the Profit and cashflow for the eighteen months ended on that date, and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 1990, the Banks and Other Financial Institutions Decree 1991 and relevant circulars issued by the Central Bank of Nigeria.

At Charles Williams Deloitte & Touche

Chartered Accountants
Lagos, Nigeria
7 May, 2001



There is no Western Sahara --

The Kingdom of Morocco has ancient ties with Nigeria. Larbi Moukharriq is the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to Nigeria. In this interview with Kevin Ebele Adinnu and Musa Aliyu of our Foreign Desk he comments on the African Union, cooperation among African countries, Morocco's withdrawal from the O.A.U., the Western Sahara issue, and more. Excerpts:

There is this issue of co-operation among African countries to enhance trade and economic development. How workable is this arrangement in the face of growing differences among African nations?

When Morocco won her independence in the early 50s, his majesty the late King Mohammed V, in an address to the nation, said "... Now we have emerged from the minor Jihad (struggle) to the major Jihad. The Jihad to develop our country..." Like the wise would say, in our continent we have proceeded from the minor struggle, which is the gaining of independence, to the major struggle, that is to develop and construct our economy. We have proceeded from the era of old notions of nation-state formation to the era of unity and integration, more especially as we have examples of initiatives in our continent.

At a time when the ideological barriers have vanished, the problem now is not that of language but that of clinging on to national sovereignty in its rudimentary form.

The problem is one of borders, visas, communication and so on. All these imposed upon us a certain

fended the idea of the plan at all international fora. Thereafter, today we witness that African leaders have come up with the same idea through the adoption of the millennium partnership project and the Omega project.

There is this proposal at the OAU Summit in Lusaka over which countries were divided on whether to allow your country into the African Union or not. What is your reaction to this?

The division you are talking about is not whether Morocco would reoccupy her seat or not. The division is on the legitimacy of the Saharawi Republic in the organisation. The group that says it is illegitimate - and they are in the majority - considers the presence of this republic in the organisation as having no legal basis. If we consider the provision of the organisation's charter regarding the features of states, namely: Land, population legitimate authority, constitution, we would see the republic couldn't enjoy the recognition of the majority of African countries.

Its presence in the organisation is pre-emptive to the referendum which everybody called for, Morocco inclusive. Its pres-

founder country of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), which occurred in Casablanca, in 1961.

What then were the basic reasons for your withdrawal from O.A.U.?

Morocco's exit from OAU was an expression of her refusal of the violation of the organisation's charter and its resolution on the project of the referendum, which Morocco proposed at the Nairobi Summit of 1982 and for which an implementation committee was formed, but later buried by this act of violation.

In that situation you must have gone through certain experiences, could you share these with us?

Our relations with other African countries did not suffer because of the suspension of our activity in the organisation. Instead, our relations have developed and waxed stronger. A clear indication of this is that Morocco received the support of all African countries to elect and re-elect Dr. Mohammed Al Gabash to head the African Development Bank (ADB).

Morocco also received the massive support of African countries

The division is on the legitimacy of the Saharawi Republic in the organisation. The group that says it is illegitimate - and they are in the majority - considers the presence of this republic in the organisation as having no legal basis. If we consider the provision of the organisation's charter regarding the features of states, namely: Land, population legitimate authority, constitution, we would see the republic couldn't enjoy the recognition of the majority of African countries.

dependence on others.

During the Marrakesh conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1994, the late King Hassan II called for the adoption of a Marshall Plan to develop African countries. Morocco de-

pendence in the organisation also contradicts the resolution of the UN on the referendum. For Morocco to return to the AU, there is a consensus on the issue. This is because the Union will remain incomplete, since Morocco is the

to the non-permanent membership seat of the UN Security Council in 1992. We have maintained excellent relationships with our brothers in the continent, which were manifested by the exchange of visits, and an



Ambassador Larbi Moukharriq

increase in the number of registered African students in Moroccan institutes and universities.

In your attempt to return to the organisation what other efforts did you make before now?

What we need to do is to return to legitimacy as provided by the charter and treaties that emanated from them.

At one time the UN was in support of a referendum to decide on the Western Sahara issue. But now it has shifted position.

What do you think is responsible for this?

The security council of the UN in its last resolution NO1359/2001 on the Western Sahara called on all parties to negotiate on what it termed a "perimeter agreement" without ignoring the principle of referendum. The opinion of the organisation is now focussed on this perimeter agreement plan after the apparent impossibility of organising a referendum. This is because of the opposition of the

POLISARIO to the number of the indigenous populations that have the right to participate in the referendum. And from a reading of the UN Secretary-General's latest report, it is clear that POLISARIO opposes this arrangement. Morocco has positively responded in spite of her reservation and showed her readiness to work with the UN Security Council resolution.

How does your country relate with Algeria considering Algeria's hosting and support for POLISARIO?

Algeria is a sister country that is bound to us by a web of relations, language, belief, blood and destiny.

Interview

Moroccan Ambassador

We seek to achieve an integral unity as a strategic objective within the Arab Maghreb. Regrettably, the process has faced many obstacles because of our brothers' position regarding our recovery of the Sahara. By the grace of Allah all these shall be temporary problems, because the yearnings of the people of our countries for unity, brotherhood and common destiny are deeply rooted.

Why is Morocco still opposed to the Independence of Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)?

On the ground that there is no trace of existence at all of a Saharawi Republic since our recovery of the Sahara in 1975. The area is under the sovereignty and authority of the kingdom. The indigenous population is there contributing with all freedom in economic and social aspects of life. They express their allegiance to the "Throne" as do their counterparts in other regions of the kingdom. And no doubt our brothers and sisters detained in the camps who are suffering from confinement and deprivation will not hesitate to return to their country if allowed as hundreds did before.

The OAU recognises SADR. Now you want to be part of AU, the successor to OAU. How do you intend to co-exist with SADR in that body?

I think I have already answered your question. Morocco is committed to international legitimacy. Since the presence of the Saharawi Republic in the African Union is a violation of this legitimacy, then Morocco by keeping membership in abeyance rejected and rejects the violation of this legitimacy.

Come July 30th you are celebrating your country's national day. What is the significance of this to you and the independence of the entire African people?

On July 30th the Moroccan people will celebrate the second anniversary of ascendance of his majesty King Mohammed IV to the throne of his forefathers. It is an occasion when the Moroccans renew their loyalty and allegiance to the throne. This also reminds me that Morocco lived under the monarchy since the seventh century when Moula Idris I reached Morocco from the east and established the Moroccan state in the Fez area. Since then Morocco has not known any other system of government but the monarchy.

The present ruling Allawiy family was established in 1640 and is one of the oldest ruling families in existence today.

His majesty the king is not only a king but also a prince of the faithfuls bound to his people by ties of allegiance, which is a contract between him and his people, and this is renewed annually. The king has to maintain and keep the land, de-

for a long time. We both belong to the same continent and the same Sahel region.

first countries in Africa to welcome the independence of Nigeria and sup-

ways pass through a third party.

During the last African/European conference held in Cairo, in May 2000 his majesty, King Mohammed IV and His Excellency, President Obasanjo met and decided to give a new breath to the relations by strengthening direct exchange and cooperation. In this regard the Honourable Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Chief Dubem Onyia, headed an important delegation, and visited Morocco in June 2000. During the visit, discussions were held on the mechanisms and ways of consolidating and strengthening cooperation. It was also an opportunity for the minister to call on the Moroccan Prime Minister and a number of officials. It was decided that the joint commission would be meeting next year by the grace of Allah.



fend and serve his people, in return for their loyalty and allegiance.

In 1953 when France sent King Mohammed V on exile to Madagascar (Malagasy), Morocco revolted and all parts of Africa were deeply shaken by this incident. It also coincided with the outbreak of liberation wars in many parts of Africa. When the king returned to his throne in 1955, it was as though a torch has shown the way. Hopes were rekindled and the struggles for independence began in many parts of Africa.

King Mohammed V adopted the cause of Liberation of Africa. On that basis, the Casablanca axis

was formed where the founding fathers of OAU met and consolidated the Liberation Movement. Again in April 1962, King Hassan II hosted another meeting to support the struggle for independence by Portuguese-speaking African countries.

As it is the first time I am celebrating it in Abuja, I thank all our Nigerian brothers for joining us to celebrate. I also wish the government and people every success.

How would you assess relations between your country and Nigeria?

The relation between Morocco and Nigeria is a historic one. We have had religious and cultural ties

The trans-Sahara route was a link and a meeting point for our people. They exchanged trade and religious scholarship.

Politically, we would say that Morocco was one of the

ported her when she was defending her territorial unity. Several treaties bind the two countries but unfortunately none was utilized as anticipated, mainly because we al-

On the ground that there is no trace of existence at all of a Saharawi Republic since our recovery of the Sahara in 1975. The area is under the sovereignty and authority of the kingdom. The indigenous population is there contributing with all freedom in economic and social aspects of life. They express their allegiance to the "Throne" as do their counterparts in other regions of the kingdom. And no doubt our brothers and sisters detained in the camps who are suffering from confinement and deprivation will not hesitate to return to their country if allowed as hundreds did before.





Shocking tales of a child labourer

By Yakubu Ozohu-Suleiman

Zilkibilu Saleh is 12 years old. He is dark in complexion and has an oblong face. Generally he is not more than 3.5 feet tall. The young boy hails from Bauchi State and lives in Abuja in an uncompleted building where he works as a

not unaware of the damage that his inability to forge ahead with education is causing him. He said: "If I

earns him an average of N200 a day. The question that follows then is whether this boy's father does not know the whereabouts of his son. Of course he knows. He is

with in this uncompleted building. He does see me when I assist the bricklayers to work here" In fact, *Daily Trust* was informed that Zilkibilu's father had just left Abuja

what his father presently does to earn his livelihood, Zilkibilu replied that he does not know exactly but that at times his father uses his 505 car for commercial purposes.

informed *Daily Trust* that his parents are still together as husband and wife. "My mother is at home in Bauchi. She is still with my father. No problem. But my mother is not aware of the



He lives in this uncompleted building

Zilkibilu at work labourer.

Zilkibilu told *Daily Trust* that his father, Mr. Saleh, has three wives and many children, the specific number of which he does not know. This young boy, whose manner of response to interrogations signified a profound level of intelligence, further informed *Daily Trust* that he completed an Islamic primary school after which he advanced to secondary school in Bauchi State. However, he was just in junior secondary two when financial difficulties and lack of proper parental guidance forced him out of the school.

Zilkibilu stated that even before completing his primary education, he had noticed that his father neglected him and even his brothers and sisters. An attitude, which, according to this boy, is also experienced by his father's relations.

A cheerful Zilkibilu completed his primary education at the age of 10. Although every word that he utters is accompanied with smile, but this boy is

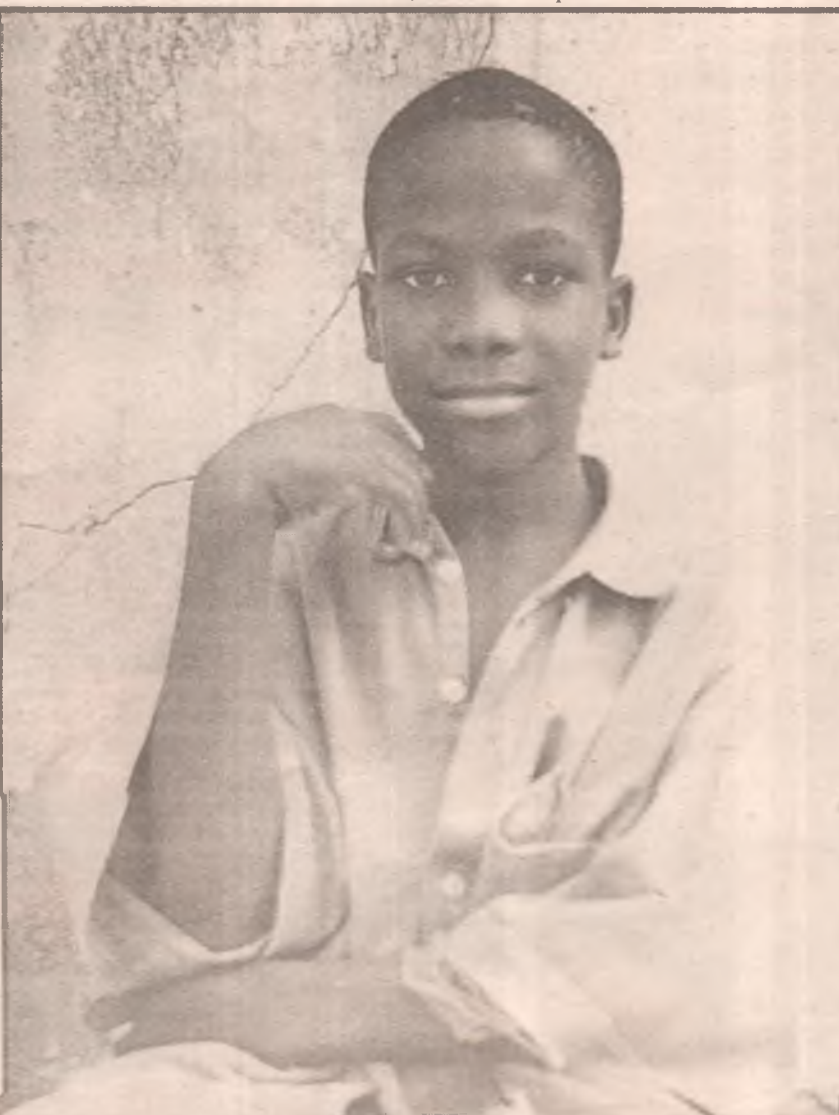
am fortunate, I would want to go to school because this work is difficult."

But how rich is your father? *Daily Trust* asked. Zilkibilu replied: "My father has two personal houses of his own. One is in Mararaba, Nasarawa State, another is in Bauchi State. Apart from that, my father has two cars, 505 evolution- one brown, the other a dark blue colour."

It may appear as though Zilkibilu's father is not a very wealthy man but there are people who do not have a quarter of his wealth but have trained their children ensuring adequate social security and education.

But what about your mother? *Daily Trust* asked. "My mother is poor and my father is not taking proper care of her. She cannot afford to pay for my education. Although my mother is not aware of the nature of work I am doing here, she knows that I am in Abuja."

Funny as these sound, it may interest you to know that the 12-year-old boy feeds and clothes himself from a casual job, which



Resting behind the fence of a neighbouring house. Pix by Yakubu Ozohu-Suleiman

even aware of the nature of work in which the young boy is engaged. "At times he comes to Abuja here to see his wife whom I live

not too long before the encounter with him.

Then what happens to your father's house in Mararaba and Bauchi State? *Daily Trust* asked. "I don't know," Zilkibilu replied.

One thing this young boy is very sure of is that his father is rich enough to sponsor him further in his education instead of the present work he does.

Zilkibilu never viewed his father's problem from the fact that he was not educated, he blamed it on polygamy. He lamented that if his father had foresight, he would not have been working as a labourer.

Zilkibilu informed *Daily Trust* that anytime he asked his father for financial assistance, he was always turned down. As such, over time, the young boy had learnt not to make such requests.

On the present state of his father's relationship with his mother, Zilkibilu

work I do here in Abuja be reiterated. If she knows, she would not allow me to continue," Zilkibilu said, adding that he came to Abuja on his own about one month ago, and that since then, his mother had not for once come to check him.

As a young boy who is not living with his mother, how does he cope with his step mother, considering the generally held view that one's step mother can never be like one's natural mother. Zilkibilu informed *Daily Trust* that his relationship with his stepmother has been quite cordial. According to him, he is not treated in such a way as to suggest that she was not his mother. "My step mother with whom I live in this uncompleted building travelled last week. She does not participate in the work we do here. If she were around, she too would not allow me to do this job."

As a matter of fact, this young boy does not have any specific plan to leave Abuja for home or even organise for a continuation of his education for the obvious reason that he cannot finance himself. "I would like to go back to school if anybody can help me."

NEWS

Gov Kwankwaso approves N81m for mosques

Kano State Governor, Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso, has taken a major step to dispel rumours about his sincerity over *Sharia* implementation in Kano State. He has authorised the release of N81 million for the construction and rehabilitation of 37 mosques spread across the 44 local government areas of the state.

The Emir of Kano, Alhaji Ado Bayero, in whose palace, the announcement was made praised the decision of the state government to rehabilitate and construct new mosques for the worship of Allah. He quoted a saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) which said "whoever builds a mosque for the worship of Allah will

From Musa Umar Kazaurc. in Kano

have a house built for him in he garden of Bliss."

The Emir called on district heads to ensure proper maintenance of the mosques.

The Deputy-Governor, Dr. Abdullahi Umar



Gov. Kwankwaso

Ganduje, had earlier listed Kumbotso, Kunchi, Zakirai, Tudun Wada, Gaya, Rano, Garko, Dawakin Tofa, Bunkure and Madobi as the towns to get the new mosques under the present arrangement. He also called for generous donations from the Muslim Ummah towards uplifting Islam.

Agricultural implements and inputs estimated at about N60 million have been acquired from the disbanded Petroleum (Special) Trust Fund (PTF) for onward sale to farmers in Katsina State at 50% subsidy.

The chairman of the disbursement committee, Alhaji Halilu T. Gilima disclosed this to *Daily Trust* in an exclusive interview.

He said the gesture was intended to make available farming implements to boost agricultural produc-

PTF agric implements for sale

Hassan A. Karofi. in Katsina

tion in the state.

Alhaji Gilima added that in the state government's policy to make agriculture a core sector, necessitated the decision by government to distribute the implements to all farmers in the state.

He further stressed that a comprehensive measure will be taken to ensure that the implements reach all nooks crannies of the state to allow all farmers access to the implements.

He maintained that as a cardinal principle, the committee will ensure that people will be informed about the sales immediately to prevent agents from buying the products.

He urged farmers in the state to be serious about the purchase so that they would not be left behind.

He assured them that the state government will do all at its disposal to provide agricultural inputs to all farmers so that food security will be maintained.

LG protests teachers' recruitment

The Lau Local Government Council in Taraba State has protested to the State House of Assembly against the recent recruitment of school teachers by the State Primary Education Board.

A letter signed by the leader of the council, Mr. Lukah Babale, dated July 12, and addressed to the

Speaker of the House through the member representing Lau constituency in the legislature, said the council was displeased with the 'lots of irregularities' observed in the exercise.

The letter, read on the floor of the house and a copy of which was made available to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), alleged that

majority of the recruits were not qualified teachers since they were still secondary school students.

The council also complained that majority of the employees were non-indigenes, som never appeared for the recruitment interview, while some electoral wards in the area were not even represented in the exercise.

It therefore, prayed the House "to intervene in this matter so that equity and justice would prevail for peace and development" to reign in the state.

The Speaker, Alhaji Hamidu Suleiman, ordered that the petition, which attracted scathing criticisms from various members, be submitted to the house committee on education.



Gov. Yar'Adua

Industrial dispute looms in Anambra

Workers in Anambra State parastatals will go on strike with effect from Thursday over the non-payment of their May and June salaries.

Mr. Frank Ndulue, Secretary of the Joint Action Committee of Trade Unions of the State Owned Parastatals (JACTUSOP), told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Awka today that it had earlier issued a 14-day ultimatum which expired yesterday to the government on the issue.

He said that but for the quick intervention of the Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Mr. Osita Ezenwa, who invited them for a meeting on Monday and sought to mediate on the matter, the strike would have commenced today.

Ndulue said that the workers had differed its action until Thursday to wait for the outcome of

the meeting with SSG.

The secretary noted that the committee had reminded the government that parastatal workers were still owed May 2000 difference and shortfalls of past salary/allowances review exercise.

"Our patience has reached elastic limited," he said.

He said that JACTUSOP was disappointed over the failure of



Gov. Nnamani

the state government to fulfil the promise made by the governor during his meeting with the state NLC and public service negotiating council on June 22, that the cheques for May subventions would be issued on June 25.

The state chapter of

the labour union had, on May-day, given the government a 21-day ultimatum to settle all outstanding entitlements to workers in the state.

The state government has set up a negotiating committee between the government and labour which is still holding meetings to settle the rift.

PLSG fights street begging, prostitution

From Buhari Bello, in Jos

Deputy Governor, Chief Michael Bofmang, is to



Gov. Dariye

Disturbed by the increasing menace of street begging, prostitution, child abandonment and other social viles, the Plateau State government has approved the setting up of a high powered committee to look into the problems.

According to a press statement issued by the Chief Press Secretary to the State governor, Mr. Harris Dawurang and made available to *Daily Trust* in Jos yesterday, the

head the committee.

He said, "concerned about the growing problems of street begging, street hawking, destitution and other social ills, the Executive Governor, Chief Joshua Chibi Dariye, had approved the constitution of a high powered committee on social policy."

He explained that the five-member committee was expected to evolve strategies and modalities for the immediate and sustained eradication of the menace on the street of Jos, the state capital and its environs.

Other members of the committee, according to

the statement are the special adviser to the state governor on political affairs, the state commissioner for Justice, commissioner for women affairs and social development and the representative of the social works department.

The committee members also included the representative of the University of Jos and the permanent secretary at the state ministry of women affairs and social development.

According to the Chief Press Secretary, the committee will be inaugurated on a date to be announced soon by the state government.

Policy on women will aid women's rights - Mrs. Atiku

Wife of the Vice-president, Mrs. Titi Atiku Abubakar has disclosed that the National Policy on Women, which is underway, would adequately address women's right.

Mrs. Abubakar said this in Ibadan, Tuesday, while declaring open a five-day National Workshop for Women in Association of Local Government in Nigeria (WALGON) held at the Western Hall, Oyo State House of Assembly, Ibadan

While restating the commitment of the present administration to enhancing the status of women in the country, Mrs. Abubakar em-

From Yinka Oladoyinbo, in Ibadan

phasised that all issues relating to women folk would be entrenched in the blueprint.

She, therefore, charged resource persons and participants at the 5-day workshop to come up with a research

based Databank to provide a more informed basis of advising government on better policy approaches to sustainable women economic empowerment and contribute to the emancipation of women in our society.

KWSG warns against circulation of malicious publication

From Abdul Laro, in Ilorin

The Kwara State Government has warned that it will not hesitate to deal with those behind what it called malicious publication now in circulation aimed at disparaging the good name and integrity of Governor Muhammad Lawal.

A statement by the Special Assistant, Media Affairs, Alhaji Razak Gidado, said the warning became imperative in view of the infounded allegations, misrepresentations and brazen lies contained in the publication.

Scrap private schools - FG told

From Ma'asin Ibn Ma'asin, in Lafia

The standard of education in Nigeria will continue to deteriorate, unless the private school system is scrapped and the curriculum modernised, Dr. Idris Bugaje, the Rector, Federal Polytechnic Nasarawa, has said.

Dr. Bugaje, who expressed this view in an interview with *Daily Trust* in Nassarawa also noted that the state of our educational system now has stagnated the nation's technological advancement.

He stated that managers and other policy initiators

themselves are also guilty of running the system.

"There is no way government can ever revive education in Nigeria if private schools exist along side public schools, no way. The ministers and commissioners all send their children to private schools and some overseas, don't they. Which means they don't have confidence in the system they are managing."

Dr. Bugaje said there should be a legislation to the effect that every child of a

public officer should attend a public school and not private school, so that the schools would be brought up to the high standard of the past.

"If a public officer wants to send his or her child to a private school, he should resign from public service," he said.

According to Bugaje, a graduate of Engineering of a Nigerian University or Polytechnic cannot fit into an Engineering faculty overseas because his Engineering knowledge is that of the 1960s he said.

ADVERTORIAL

PTF CONSULTANTS AND CONTRACTORS FORUM 6TH GENERAL MEETING

COMMUNIQUE

The PTF Consultants and Contractors Forum held its 6th meeting on Wednesday 20th June, 2001 at the Agura Hotel, Abuja. The meeting was well attended by consultants and contractors from all sections of the country. The meeting resolved as follows:

1. Settlement of Outstanding Debts

a. It would be recalled that the President appointed his Special Assistant, Adamu Waziri, to negotiate all debts owed by PTF, after the uneventful and fraudulent tenure of his predecessors. Our hopes were raised that President Obasanjo had finally succumbed to his conscience and initiated the appropriate approach to end the sufferings of the teeming individuals and firms being owed by PTF. The Forum notes and hereby registers its protest that several months after the Adamu Waziri led negotiations had been concluded, a very high proportion of consultants and contractors are still yet to be paid.

b. The PTF Consultants and contractors are said to be owed about N14 billion. There is an allocation of N10 billion in the 2001 budget, while revenue from sales of goods and equipment by PTF is expected to yield nearly N9 billion. There is no reason why the outstanding liabilities should not be settled once and for all.

c. The Forum, further to its previous protest (**Re: President Obasanjo, Enough of this Blackmail, Please**), wishes to reiterate its total rejection of the naked abuse of power and arm twisting, in President Obasanjo's subsequent unfair and unjust directive that consultants and contractors be paid only 50% and 85% respectively of the duly ascertained debts owed to them by PTF. This is clearly in breach of the President's own promise at the inception of his administration that ALL obligations of PTF would be settled by Government. Indeed, the debt negotiation exercise was so only in name. The Forum hereby resolves to continue its struggle legally and politically until this injustice is redressed.

d. The Forum decries the disorganized and unsystematic way subsequent payments were made to the effect that many cheques issued by PTF actually "bounced" on presentation. The legal implication of issuing dud cheques is very clear.

e. The Forum is aware that about N10 billion was appropriated by the National Assembly in the 2001 budget for settlement of PTF debts. It is pertinent, in this regard, for the National Assembly to seek explanation as to what happened to this allocation. In particular, the Nigerian tax payer demands to know what has happened to N3.5 billion from this money, allegedly collected by the Minister of Works and Housing, supposedly to settle claims on PTF contracts transferred to his ministry. Before then, the very same Minister had been quoted in the various media desecrating PTF contracts and vowing to have nothing to do with them.

f. The Forum further reiterates its total rejection of any plan to transfer payment of PTF debts to any ministry because the lack of transparency and accountability in government agencies has no bounds. Such arrangement will only further compound the suffering that consultants and contractors have had to endure for exactly two years now, without succour.

2. The Professional Bodies

The Forum condemns, in the strongest terms, the inaction exhibited by the various professional bodies in the PTF affair. They have completely abandoned their roles as custodians of professional values and champions of the rights and professional devel-

opment of their members, more so when the leadership of most of these associations themselves have also been beneficiaries of PTF programmes. President Obasanjo scraped the PTF arbitrarily, slashed all consultant's professional fees and contract sums, yet these professional bodies just stood watching: The Forum therefore calls on all Nigerian professionals to, in future, vigorously work towards electing executives that will be sensitive to their plight and who are bold enough to tread the path of truth, equity and fairness.

3. Cases of Corruption in PTF

The Forum is keenly watching the outcome of events regarding the established fraud of over N350 Million from the PTF coffers, by known members of the Haroun Adamu led Interim Management Committee. Anything short of bringing the case before the Justice Akanbi Anti-corruption Commission will speak volume of the sincerity of government in its so-called anti-corruption crusade. In the same vein, the Forum again calls on President Obasanjo to probe other allegations of wrong doings in the— PTF.

4. Nigeria's 2003 Election

The Forum notes that the government of President Obasanjo scrapped the PTF and left abandoned a trail of hundreds of projects at various levels of completion. The government should indicate its concern about the status of the projects, and show visible effort to complete them. These abandoned projects would have had positive impact on the lives of ordinary Nigerians and helped rebuild the middle class. The government must not allow for the colossal waste in our resources. The Forum, aware of its responsibility not only to PTF contractors and consultants, but also to the larger Nigerian populace who stood to immensely benefit from its activities but whose hopes have been dashed, hereby advises government to yield and complete these projects in time. Come 2003, the PTF will almost surely be a campaign issue again as to whether Nigerians have been better off with the fund's 'scrapping or otherwise. The government must be ready to provide convincing answers.

5. Last Words

- The government should clearly indicate:
 - What is happening to the billions of naira worth of equipment and materials still left in the bush, abandoned by contractors
 - due to system collapse in 1999.
 - What it is doing about completing important projects that were
 - started but not completed
 - What is going to happen to those items that have been pilfered
 - from the storage.
 - Where the monies saved from the increase in the petroleum pump
 - price is now going.
 - What is its final stand on the issue of transferring projects to the
 - line ministries.
 - What it aims to achieve through the hasty winding up of the PTF. The forum strongly
 - recommends that this accelerated wind-up should be re-evaluated in view of the colossal losses incurred through this ill-advised process.

.....*Ibrahim Mahmood*

Arc. Ibrahim Mahmood mni
Co- Chairman

.....*Femi Aluko*

Chief Femi Aluko
Co- Chairman

PARLIAMENT

Edo lawmaker supports Sharia

A female member of the Edo State House of Assembly, Mrs Esohe Jacobs, has described the Sharia legal system as the best approach to solving the problem of immorality prevalent amongst Nigeria youth.

She made this remark while speaking at a one-day seminar organised on the prospects of establishing Sharia in Nigeria by the Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN), Edo State chapter.

"An average Nigerian believes in Sharia. People are only trying to politicise the issue of Sharia. Personally, I don't see anything wrong with Sharia. If we are to introduce the Christian doctrine, you will see that we

From Shehu Abubakar, in Benin City

are all trying to teach morals. "There is nothing wrong with Sharia. There is nothing wrong with the muslims introducing Sharia to guide their way of life. Going against the Sharia is like



Gov. Igbinedion

somebody telling the christians not to accept a word in the Bible," she added.

Mrs Jacobs said christian were agitated when Sharia was introduced in Zamfara State, because they thought they will be forced to do things in the Islamic way.

"I appreciate the very simple, but decent manner muslims dress. They give both western and Islamic education to their children and I feel all religions should emphasise on the teaching of morals," the lawmaker said.

Also speaking at the

seminar, the chief whip of the State House of Assembly, Mr. Luqman Muhammad, called on all muslims to live in peace with one another and to treat non-muslims as brothers.

He said, "It is the responsibility of muslims, especially those of us living in states where we are in the minority, to educate our non-muslim brothers and sisters to understand the values of the morals being taught by Sharia and the advantages of living under Sharia."

He, however, advised muslims to remember that Sharia is not the ultimate in the life of any muslim, and urged Nigerians irrespective of religion to be God fearing.

Katsina Assembly probes LGs finances

The Katsina State House of Assembly, has begun investigation into the financial activities of the 34 local governments in the state.

This is sequel to a resolution of the House to investigate all local councils in the state, and find out how they have been spending their monthly statutory allocations, including internally generated revenue.

In a statement to officially open the investigation yesterday, chairman of the House committee on local government and chieftaincy

From Hassan A. Karofi, in Katsina

affairs, Alhaji Sani Yusuf Jibia, disclosed that the committee is out to investigate the accounts and activities of the local councils from May 1999 to date.



Gov. Yar'Adua

The exercise he stressed, is aimed at establishing a culture of accountability and transparency in the conduct of public affairs in the state.

"We want by this action to beautify our nascent democracy, to enhance our principles on good governance and transparency. I want all to know that our action is not out to witch-hunt anybody but to enhance our polity," he said.

He, therefore, urged both members of the investigation panel and chairmen of the affected councils to ensure that the exercise fulfils the objectives of building a better democracy.

The panel has 14 days to complete its assignment and submit its report to the House.

This is the third of such panels instituted by the House to probe the activities of local governments in the state.

Reps indict oil companies over community dev

The House of Representatives committee on petroleum resources has called on oil companies operating in the country to ensure that community development budgets were "implemented to the letter".

Speaking during a presentation by TotalFinaElf at the ongoing investigative hearing of the committee, the sub-committee chairman, Mr. Tony Okere, said that 27 years after Elf started operations in the country, it had not executed any development projects in its host communities.

"It is amazing to note that since the company started operations in 1966, there was no community development projects until 1993," he said.

He also said that the company built no cottage hospital for its host

communities, although it had assisted in the renovation of existing ones.

Okere said that the investigative hearing into the community development projects executed by the oil companies operating in the country had become necessary following conflicting figures given by some oil companies during a



Na'abba

recent tour by members of the sub-committee.

He said that after the investigative hearing, a public hearing would be held by the committee, where memoranda would be received from all stakeholders.

In a presentation, the deputy general manager, community development, Mr. Anthony Akpan, said that the company had operations in three states namely Delta, Akwa-Ibom and Rivers and had been able to provide the communities with basic infrastructure.

He said that, the organisation planned to spend N2.2 billion on community development projects this year, adding that a 16.4 megawatts generator would be installed next year to serve some communities.

Akpan said that the company had trained 30 people under its skills acquisition and utilisation programme, adding that the aim of the scheme was to make the people self-sufficient.

Egwu supports creation of new LGs

Governor Sam Egwu of Ebonyi has harped on the need for more local government councils, saying that the aim is to speed up grassroots development.

Egwu gave the explanation in Abakaliki when representatives of the newly-created Imoha local government called on him.

The state government recently created 21 councils out of 13 previous ones, but the Senate has since said it would not recognise the new councils.

The governor, who spoke through Dr. Icha Ituma, secretary to the state government, said the creation of the new councils was primarily "to address the problems of many years of neglect of the people of Ebonyi state."

He stressed that the aim was to satisfy the yearnings of the people, pointing out that "in a representative government, the wishes of the majority should always be respected".

The leader of the delegation, Eze Fidelis Ekechi-



Chukwu, said members of the delegation were at government house to express their appreciation for the creation of Imoha local government.

According to him, the measure represents "the biggest dividend of democracy" to the people of the area.

Meanwhile, despite the resolution of the Senate rejecting the 21 new councils, the government has appointed chairmen and vice-chairmen for the councils.

Rep backs power devolution agitation

A House of Representatives member, Rep. Umaru Babangida, has backed calls for the devolution of powers from federal to state and local governments.

The lawmaker, who gave his support while speaking with *Daily Trust* in Benin, said the Federal Government has too much powers and is presently having difficulties in discharging its responsibilities.

"I feel devolution of power is paramount in the review of this constitution. More powers must be transferred from the federal to the state and local governments and give the adequate resources not only to back up the transfer of these powers, but also to execute more people oriented projects that will promote development.

"There are a lot of failure in the federal government's

attention to the devolution of powers," the lawmaker said.

He said problems like clamouring for resource control, by the south-south states wouldn't have occurred if power had been devolved to states.

"The south-south zone feels they own most of the resources which the country



President Obasanjo now depends on and because of the over-centralisation of power and over-retaining of resources by the federal

nothing works anywhere. Now the people say they want to control their resources by themselves," he added.

Rep. Babangida who said he is a firm believer of true federalism which he interprets to mean devolving powers to where they should be, said there is nothing that will make the government regain its respect from the public other than by transferring responsibilities to where they can be adequately addressed.

He added that "the federal government is merely monopolising everything even when they don't have the means of executing them properly.

He suggested that ministries like agriculture, health, water resources and a few others ought not to exist at the federal level because according to him these are matters that can be better handled by state and local

Taraba LG chairmen shun Assembly

Local government council chairmen in Taraba State, recently summoned by the state House of Assembly to give account of their two-year stewardship are resisting the move and have refused to appear before the house of assembly.

The council chairmen had intimated the assembly of their reservations, through their umbrella body, the Association of Local Governments in Nigeria (ALGON).

They alleged that the House had wanted to use the appraisal exercise to settle personal scores with some of them, describing it as an avenue for extorting money from the councils.

While reacting on the issue, ALGON prayed the House to allow the councils

accordance with section 13 of the 1999 constitution and section 6 34, 35, 36 and 37 of the state's local government law.

Meanwhile, ALGON has instituted a legal action in a Jalingo high court, challenging the powers of the House to probe its members.

However, the chairmen of Ardo Kola, Jalingo and Lau council areas have dissociated themselves from the position taken by ALGON, and vowed to honour the invitation, saying: "We see nothing bad in the exercise, as we have nothing to hide."

But after heated deliberations on the matter, the house unanimously discontinued the submissions made by ALGON, citing relevant constitutional provisions that



HABITAT

(Housing and Environment)



By Warsaw Imoh Udosen

Land acquisition and compensation matters

From the grassroots NTA program on July 2, 2001 brought to our screen a news story on progress made on the construction of a highway in Edo State.

The Minister of State of the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing FMWH was on scene and stated that the road whose main objective is to cut off traffic on the Asaba-Benin highway will be completed by October, about two months away. What also appeared on the screen was the story of a man whose family house for over 50 years was an arms reach away from a bridge on the highway. The danger of his new neighbour (the bridge) was pointed out to him by the reporter. The old man accepted that he is quite aware of the risk but that he simply had nowhere to move to. He had neither money to feed it he moves because his source of food is his farm that is also affected by the project. The land use Decree of 1978 provides for adequate compensation on compulsorily acquired interest in land (sec. 29). The 1979 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Sec. 40 (1) also provides that "no movable property or any interest in any immovable property shall be taken possession of compulsorily and no right over or interest in any such property shall be acquired compulsorily in any part of Nigeria except in the manner and for the purposes prescribed by a law that among other things: requires the prompt payment of compensation therefore; gives to any person claiming such compensation a right of access for the determination of his interest in the property and the amount of compensation to a court of law or tribunal or body having jurisdiction in that part of Nigeria."

In this case, the old man has not even been "inadequately compensated." He cannot go to court, as he has no money, so life goes on with his family on such a dangerous spot. What will become of this old man? As stipulated by the Land Use Decree 1978 (see (29) he should be compensated for his interest on the property including crops, trees and other un-exhausted improvements on the land such as his Fish pond, shrine and graves. Interest should also accrue to him on delayed payment of compensation.

Other similar stories abound in the different parts of the country including Lagos and the FCT affecting both the rich and poor, the later being more hard hit.

It is of my view that the Land Use Decree should be updated and modified to accommodate issues overlooked previously. A lot has been learned over the years. The government should be able to assess and pay compensation promptly or re-housing as an alternative to compensation especially on such cases as the one narrated on the first paragraph.

In the early 90's in Lagos, the controversial Land Use Act reared its ugly head as a handy excuse for the seizure of the landed property of two residents within the Agege Local Government Area. The expanse of land estimated then to contain about 18 plots, situated at Ajangbadi/Ogba road and belongs to two sisters. The land which was bequeathed to them in 1969 by their grandfather was purchased way back in 1924. The survey plan covering the land bears No K/3239.

In 1992 the land was taken over by the Local Government Authority which handed it over to the Lagos State Waste Disposal Board to use as a refuse dump. All entreaties directed to the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning at Alausa went unheeded. When the local authority, via a public notice placed in *Daily Times* of March 27, 1995, indicated its intention to put up a shopping complex on the disputed land, the two sisters decided to appeal to the court of law.

It was in the course of the hearing of the suit No. 10/1166/95 that the Land Use Act defence was resorted to by the local government. The council indicated that sec. 28(3) (a) of the act vested the state authority with the power to revoke any certificate of occupancy in favour of anybody in as much as the purpose for such revocation is based on overall public interest. The council claimed that it applied in November 1993 to the state government for the land in dispute for the purpose of erecting market/shopping complex and allied services. And that the request was formally granted them on February 1994. But the Presiding judge S.O. Adagwa, who granted an injunction restraining the council from trespassing on the land pending the determination of the suit.

Nevertheless, the council persisted in harassing the owners, a situation that led to the filling of contempt proceedings against the Local authority. Counsel to the Sisters, Mr. Mayomi Afekhuai disclosed that when the then military administration of Col. Marwa (rt) noticed the intricacy of the case, it soft-pedalled, filing a defence that it was not aware of the previous court injunction. However, in June 1999, defying the court injunction the council went ahead to chase away the owners and commenced construction of a shopping complex worth over N300 million.

The question now is "what is compensation all about" if the old man by the bridge who had no money and the two sisters who went to court both come to a dead end.

According to law, the purpose of compensation is to pay to the affected person(s) the money equivalent for the loss, or in other words, the pecuniary value to the owner for the loss suffered and which value should not be less than the money worth of the property had he not been deprived of the property.

In practice however, compensation is almost always grossly inadequate. For instance (see Sec. 29 of LUD 1978), no compensation is due to (undeveloped) land even if the owner bought it for a N100 million. What is payable is the amount equal to the rent paid, if any, by the occupier during the year of revocation as all land is deemed to be owned by the government. Under this head, there is no provision for compensation to the holder of the right of occupancy; it is the occupier who is entitled to a refund of whatever rent he had paid for

The federal government has needs five million new housing units to meet the existing and future needs of the people, statistics from the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing have shown.

The statistics, which was made available to *Daily Trust*, indicated that the acute shortages of housing, especially in the urban areas, have resulted in the disproportionately high rents being paid.

For example, the statistics showed that the average salary earner in the urban area devotes as much as 30 percent of his income to housing cost adding, in fact, at the lower levels of income, housing costs may consume an intolerable proportion of the salary.

Against this backdrop, the prospect of the National Housing Fund (NHF) holds out for wider society to pro-

'Nigeria needs 5m houses' - statistics

* Workers paid 30% income on house rent

Stories by
Tashikalmah Hallah

vide an enduring pool of funds for lending to contributors to enable them build, buy or renovate their own houses.

Also, it stated that, "every Nigerian can have access to affordable and low cost housing; with housing loans made more affordable, there is a better prospect for housing costs to become greatly reduced, especially as many more people will be empowered, and with the large scale involvement of private savings, the housing sector would become insulated from the past problem of inadequate funding by government."

But, the NHF launched in

1991, mainly to create conducive environment for a sustainable housing delivery system as well as to encourage private entrepreneurial initiative in housing development has been short of its objective.

Also the policy to open up a partnership between government and private sector in working towards an effective housing delivery system has been put in place and the arrangement for government to play the role of 'andenabler,' while private sector provides the vehicle for the delivery of housing services.

Also the statistics indicated that "housing finance, which is the centrepiece of the policy document, has a

two-tier arrangement with the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN) as the apex mortgage institution, on one hand, and the multiplicity of Primary Mortgage Institution (PMI) on the other."



Chief Tony Anenih

Private investors tasked on housing finance

The Kano Private Investors Club (KPIC) has called on the federal government to allow private investors to set up a primary mortgage institution to create a firm foundation for the industry to nurture growth.

KPIC explained that the establishment of the private mortgage institution would pave way for private investors to invest in long-term housing bonds to strengthen and expand the capital market.

The KPIC, an association of businessmen, academics, professional and artisans also said that investors should be encouraged to purchase through the stock exchange, the mortgages created by viable private institutions by allowing greater liberalisation in the operation of the land delivery system.

This, they said would reduce the cost acquisition and increase substantially the volume of land that comes to the market.

KPIC in a statement said, its aim is to involve the private sector in housing finance in the country also advised the existing institutions including the National Housing Fund (NHF) be strengthened to enable them originate soundly based loans as a function of affordable housing.

"That as a way forward, there must be evolution of appropriate instruments for securities of housing loans and as a veritable mechanism for inducing the capital market to invest in housing," they said.

Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN) to diversify into other areas of housing including furnishings to nip in the bud the escalating cost of furnishing by public officials who spend millions of naira on furniture without enough money for building itself.

Similarly, they advised that states and local govern-

ments should float housing bonds on the stock market to finance construction of low cost houses for purchase through housing loans by NHF to the teeming population.

According to them, both states and local governments have found it difficult to provide cheap but decent accom-

modation to their people due to stringent laws governing borrowing money from financial institutions.

However, they advised the private sector to cooperate with the Federal Mortgage Bank to ensure the success of the National Housing Policy.

FG told to open new areas

To avoid the current rush for renting house in the Abuja city centre, the federal government has been told to open up the council areas for property developers in the Federal Capital, Mr. Ire-Okoli Chuks has said.

Mr. Chuks, an estate surveyor in an interview with *Daily Trust*, explained that the opening of the council areas in the city would assist in the decongestion of the Abuja city, and advise that the government should make it a policy.

"It's never late. It is just the government policy. The government needs to do that, since they have the resources.

"If you open up areas and you decide to allocate plots not only to those who owns land and properties in Asokoro, Maitama but those

who want the land to develop it as their residential houses."

However, he said if the government refuses to open up the areas, the FCT would continue to be under pressure. Culminating in the erection of illegal structures in the city centre.

According to him, if areas are being curved out, people will developed them. "They will put on infrastructure; the low income earner should be targeted, they have the resources; and they can afford to put on a one, two or three bedroom structures, then the illegal structures will go."

Similarly, he said: "they will not border to look for accommodation in the town; they will not border to know who is living in Asokoro or Maitama. It is when they cannot get this land then they resort to purchase land from these shylocks; these illegal land merchants, from the areas.

Mr. Chuks explained that the present crisis over the demolition of illegal structures in the FCT, was a result of the hoarding of land to willing developers, resulting in people building houses on unauthorised areas and "at the end of the day, when development comes, they are demolished, because it was fundamentally illegal, and you know when something is illegal there is no way you can legalise it, so that is what

up."

Coupled with the high cost of building materials he said, cost of rentage have sky rocketed, saying to rent a house in Asokoro and Maitama are costing about N2.5m to N5m per annum with an embassy model netting N7 million.

Said he, "Maitama and Asokoro are highbrow areas. You cannot compare them with Wuse, Garki or the satellite towns. So, if you are talking about renting a house in the FCT, you cannot get a piece of land for N25m or N30m, because we're not talking about one or two bedroom houses. No. We are talking of duplex. So you need a large plot of land."

On the involvement of the private sector in the provision of housing for the teeming population, Mr. Chuks explained that the private sectors are in the good position of providing shelter for the people.

However, he explained that the public should not expect cheap houses from the private sector, because, "the primary goal of the private sector is profit. Profit maximisation is its watch word."

As he explained that any private developer that engages in property business, will take into account the ex-





HABITAT

(Housing and Environment)



Nigeria's ecosystem under 'siege' — Kabir

Nigeria is currently under siege of invasive species which are devastating our natural ecosystems, coastal lands, lakes and reservoirs, inland water ways, irrigation and drainage channels, paddies, rangelands, farmlands, homesteads and recreational facilities," Alhaji Muhammad Sa'id Kabir has said.

Kabir, Minister of Environment while inaugurating inter-ministerial committee on environment also said: "Invasive species are aggressive, harmful alien organisms, which become established in natural or semi-natural ecosystems or habitats; and bring about changes that threaten native organisms and system."

Major threats posed by such species on the ecosystem, habitats and species, he said are consequence of the fact that introduced or invader species can establish very fast and invade new habitats to the detriment of the native species.

Said he: "It may interest you to note also that a variety of invasive species are widespread in the world and are found among bacteria, seaweeds, trees, shrubs, grasses, sea squids, insects, worms, fish, reptiles, birds and mammals."

Amongst the variety of the most devastating alien invasive species identified in Nigeria he said are, water hyacinth, water lettuce, Niger grass, striga, hype palm, typha (kachalla grass) Ethiopian rats, locusts, quelea birds, army worms, and pacific urchins.

According to the minister,

Stories by Tashikmah Hallah

the invasive species have caused the disruption of irrigation activities, navigation and fishing in



Alhaji Kabir Sa'id

the Niger/Benue water trough; affects water delivery systems and hydroelectric power plants, and also accelerate the filling of lakes, dams, and reservoirs through siltation.

The minister explained that the rapid growth of water hyacinth in the Niger/Benue trough and Nypha palm in the Niger-Delta has led to the disappear-

ance of the indigenous mangrove vegetation with consequent loss of aquatic faunal species, erosion of creek bank and closure of small creeks causing navigational problem.

However, the minister explained that the federal government is out to curb the menace, and has constituted the National Council of Environment comprising 8 ministers and at their recent meeting received memorandum from Kwara, Kogi, Edo, Delta, Akwa Ibom, Ogun, Rivers, Kebbi, Cross Rivers, Bayelsa, Benue and Lagos states, on the problem of water hyacinth Nypa palm, kachalla grass, water lettuce and quelea birds.

Alhaji Kabir, who is also the chairman of the inter-ministerial committee and NEC while inaugurating the inter-ministerial committee on the control of invasive species, said the committee is mandated to design policies strategies and action plan for the control of water hyacinth and other invasive plants for necessary consideration of the council.

11 states under the threat of erosion

As the rainy season hoots-in, 11 states in the federation have been identified as prone to soil erosion.

The identified states are Edo, Kwara, Lagos, Yobe,

Kebbi, Enugu, Cross River, Kogi, Imo, Abia and Benue.

However, the Nigerian Environmental Society has warned that in no distant future all parts of Nigeria will equally be affected even as they said the states identified are currently under the threat of severe erosion.

Laslic Adogemi, NES secretary-general in a statement said that the identification of these states was sequel to a survey they (NES) carried out which spans a period of two decades.

According to them, heavy rainfall, land topography, soil characteristics, and poor drainage system are the primary causes of erosion in these states.

Also, they said that human factor like wrong farming practices, over grazing, and the construction of buildings and other infrastructures are other major contributors.

Consequently, they warned that the states may experience severe damages, unless both the states and federal government team up together to arrest the menace by always conducting impact assessment on any projects undertaken; construction of proper drainage system, as well as the demarcation of land for cattle ranches.

UNEP sees globalisation as a threat to environment

The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) has warned that nature's secrets, locked away such as stories, songs, arts and handicrafts of indigenous people may be lost forever as a result of globalisation.

"The freeing up of markets around the world may well be key to economy growth to the rich and poor countries alike. But this must not happen at the expense of the thousands of indigenous cultures and their traditions," UNEP's executive director, Kalu Toepfer has said in Nairobi.

According to him, indigenous people not only have a right to preserve their way of life, but they also hold vital knowledge on the animals and plants with which they live.

Enshrined in their culture and customs are also secrets of how to manage habitats and the level in environmentally friendly sustainable

ways.

Toepfer explained that much of this knowledge is passed down from generation to generation orally, in art works or in designs of handicrafts such as baskets, rather than being written down.

"If culture disappear they and their intimate relationship with nature will be lost forever. We must do all we can to protect these people. If they disappear the world will be a power places," said the UNEP executive director to the 21 session of the governing council in Nairobi.

Research, done on behalf UNEP and drawing on works by hundreds of academics, highlights the way native farmers in parts of West and East Africa (such as fulbe of Benin and Khoisan in Tanzania) fined and encourage termites mounds to boost the fertility and moisture contact of the

You and the environment

By Dr. Sani Mashi

Nigeria's move to establish a shelter-belt

On Tuesday 12th of June 2001, another democracy dividend was unveiled by the civilian president of the world's most populous country. The dividend had nothing to do with the historical significance of the June 12, date to Nigeria's political history. On that day, Chief (General) Olusegun Obasanjo launched a mega shelterbelt development programme at Maiduguri, Borno State. By all standards, this appears to be the most ambitious programme on desertification control ever embarked upon in Nigeria's history.

But this is not the first time where concerted efforts towards establishing mega-shelterbelts, covering extensive areas, were being launched in Nigeria with a view to checking what some people erroneously regard as the spreading or advancing Sahara desert. Records indicated that in 1977, the Federal Government of Nigeria established a National committee on Arid Zone Afforestation Project with the responsibility of examining the problem of desertification, and drawing up a suitable programme of afforestation to provide wind-breaks against soil erosion and the advancing Sahara desert.

In 1985, the committee was dissolved, without anybody giving account of how over N5 billion of the taxpayer's money advanced to it was expended. In its place, the River Basin Development Authorities (RBDAs) were charged with the responsibility of co-ordinating the project. Before the relevant RBDAs could take stock of how much of wind-breaks or shelterbelts were established, a new committee on drought and desertification was established in 1986. In 1987, the World Bank's assistance was sought by the federal government to assist in forestry resource development in the country. A multi-million dollar loan was given, and a new agency called Forestry Management and Co-ordinating Unit was established. African Development Bank also handsomely granted some loans to help this agency realise its objectives. In 1988, another unit called the Afforestation Programme co-ordinating unit was established to co-ordinate afforestation programmes in Nigeria's desertification front-line states of extreme northern Nigeria. As with all projects of their kind, the FORMECU and APCU started on very good notes but as soon as the dollar-loans were exhausted, they became white elephant projects.

Government conceives an idea of yet embarking on another afforestation drive, neither APCU nor FORMECU was solely entrusted with the task. Instead, the programme has already been launched, amidst fanfare and extensive media campaign and coverage. Targeted at an area of 1,500 km length by 1 km breadth along Nigeria's northern border, the programme's blueprint is yet to be made public. The only thing Nigerians so far know is that the project is to cost N15 billion and is aimed at preventing the desert from marching into the country.

There are apparently many questions to ask here. First, is the desert really marching downward such that we need to plant trees to prevent it from moving down? Second, is shelter-belt planting all that we can do to confront the problem of desertification? Third, are the soils, agro-ecology and social systems of the targeted area capable of accommodating the gigantic project? Fourth, have we taken stock of what achievements have been recorded by past similar projects embarked upon by the federal governments? Fifth, are the various front-line state governments involved in taking for this gigantic project? Sixth, have we taken stock of why past programmes of similar nature failed? Seventh, are we in a position now to prevent the current one from failing? Do we have information on the extent of the area in the country under the threat of desertification? If the answer is yes, is 1500 km x 1 km shelter-belt adequate enough to make the area desertification free, and finally do we really know what we are talking about?

These ten questions, in my view, are the vital ones we need to answer as we move towards establishing one of the largest man-made plantations in the world. As a poor man, to me N15 billion is such a huge amount of money that we must not spend it recklessly. Perhaps inputs of experts, local resource managers and users, not just those of technocrats in federal ministry of environment are required to tackle such questions. Nigerian fortunate to possess some good consultants in this regard.

Dr. Sani A. Mashi writes from Department of Geography, University of Abuja, Abuja.

Arts & Entertainment

Non-violence, focal point for youth festival – Acholonu.

The Senior Special Assistant to President Obasanjo on Arts and Culture, Dr. Catherine Acholonu, has said that non-violence and positive focusing of youth potentials and creativity are the focal point of year 2001 youth festival scheduled to hold in Uyo in October, this year.

Speaking at a press briefing in her office, Dr. Acholonu said the president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, attached much importance to the festival because of the aims.

Some of the aims, she said, include the promotion of creativity in the field of art, sports, science and technology among the Nigerian Youth.

“Not only that, the festival will help in mobilising and motivating our youths toward the noble ideals of making their own contributions to promoting national pride, solidarity, self-consciousness and patriotism” Dr. Archolonu said.

Tagged “National youth Festival of Arts and Culture, NAYOUFEST 2001,” the programme, Dr. Acholonu

By Ikenna Emeka Okpani

said, has been specifically designed to provide a platform for tapping as well as positively focusing on the potentials and creativity of our youths, vis-à-vis National development and peaceful co-existence.

On the preparations made so far, the special assistant said the Akwa Ibom State government which is hosting the event had set up a committee to that effect.

The competition for the festival, she said, is expected to begin at the local government levels to state and finally



Bromilow-Jack, Min. of Culture & Tourism

winners at the state level will compete at the festival proper.

Dr. Acholonu pointed out that her office decided

Festival

to co-ordinate the programme because of the importance it attaches to youth development, adding

that 111 contingents were expected at the festival including a group of black youths from USA.

Over here in Nigeria 14 states have indicated their interest to participate in the festival while letters have been sent to the remaining states informing them of the festival.

“Does your Mama know?”

The pop step, Bobbie Ejike has come out with a fire album entitled “Does your Mama know.”

Bobbie, who is not a new face in Nigeria’s shows biz circles is a multi-talented artistes that has made his mark in Modelling and in Nigeria’s home video industry.

However, as he told *Daily Trust*, the new eight-track album is bound to hit the northern parts of the country in a big way, because of the inclusion of an Arabian song entitled “Salamaleku.”

According to him, this particular song is expected to also make in-roads in the northern parts of Africa and beyond.

From Bright Ewulu, in Lagos

Other tracks include “Uncle Sege,” “Kiss of a Witch,” “No vacancy,” Taribo West” etc.

Bobbie Ejike, who is currently on the stable of one of Nigeria’s top recording company, Felin Records, revealed to us that the idea behind the album is ultimately a celebration of democracy and its dividends.

According to him “My al-

Music

bum “change the system” released in 1999 was dedicated to former Head of state General Abdulsalami Abubakar because of the wind of change that he was pioneering.

“Change the system” was a call, it’s like “Let my people go.”

But “Does your Mama know” is a relish of the gains of democracy. I believe that democracy is the best and we don’t have any option.”

Bobbie, however, pointed out that this does not mean that we are already at eldorado”, saying “In the Song ‘Uncle Sege’ we are appealing to Uncle Sege most importantly not to pauperise the masses and to live up to his campaign promises.” The artiste whose music style is a melt-down of Afro hip-hop and Afro-Rock stated that his singing style is not just artistic but goes beyond mere music.

Commenting on the song “Salamaleku” he said “it’s a cry for peace. Of course, as you know we cannot achieve anything without peace.

“If you listen to my songs you will observe that I don’t sing, I cry because the problems are so much that you have to cry.”

Bobbie, who returned back to the country some years back from Italy, began his musical career with his 1985 release entitled “No Vacancy,” he followed it up with “Checking out” in 1992.

He was a bond member of Italy’s renounced reggae band “Iree”, before joining Lisa Hunt and Zucch ero”. The star is currently involved with an NTA drama project “Close to you.”

On the trail of Ibn Battutah

Ibn Battutah has a claim to be the greatest traveller of the premechanical age. In 1325, aged 21, he left modern-day Morocco. Some 29 years later-having journeyed 120,000 km as far north as the Volga, as far east as China and as far south as Tanzania - Battutah returned home to become a judge and dictate his spell-binding story. The volumes that resulted - The Marvels of Metropolises and the Wonders of Wandering (known as Travels)-are little read in the English-speaking world. But in a brilliant, erudite and entertaining literary coup, Tim Mackintosh-Smith, a British student of Arabic who has lived in San’a, Yemen, for the past 17 years, tracked down the remains of Battutah’s world-not just the buildings and monuments, but the smells, sounds and people. The result is *Travels with a Tangerine* (John Murray; 340 pages).

Mackintosh-Smith, 39, is a worthy eccentric successor to Battutah. In the course of a year spent meandering from Morocco to Egypt, Syria to Oman and Anatolia to the Crimea for the first instalment of what he promises is a multi-volume narrative, Mackintosh-Smith lives, eats and talks Battutah. The author’s research takes him from the HotBot Internet search engine to the back streets of Cairo. In Damascus he dips into the Bath of Sultan Nur-al-Din, as Battutah did, and notes that Strauss waltzes are now played to soothe the bathers. A transvestite propositions in the Crimea. He explores aphrodisiacs in some detail, wears a thick double-breasted British jacket in the heat of Luxor, devotes an entire day

By Robin Knight

to binge eating in Damietta (as did Battutah) and even unearths a 12th century Arabic remedy for

Book

an itchy anus. Throughout, he sees far more than the landscape. “Walking back along the Corniche,



Mackintosh-Smith, left, and Ibn Battutah, right, the man in whose footsteps he followed

I reflected that the physical Alexandria of today would be all but unrecognisable to IB,” he writes. “But the intangible city-the one built on devotion to saints, holy pledges and belief in miracles-was in remarkably good shape. To travel with IB I would have, in effect, to keep my third eye peeled.”

Delightfully old-fashioned and courteous, Mackintosh-Smith has a gift for the arresting phrase and the vivid metaphor. “I have not yet admitted to my Muslim friends that I forked my father’s ashes into a Lincolnshire flower bed,” he writes at one

point. At another he remarks that Battutah’s itinerary was “as irrational as that of a New Zealand backpacker.” In Alexandria he notes that anti-Western militants have a 700-year-old history, though at least “bi-section seems to have been abandoned” in contemporary Egypt.

“Perhaps I was becoming obsessive, seeing 14th century



profiles everywhere,” he admits towards the end of his epic journey. “Over supper I realised that my close focus could also be seen as tunnel vision.” Happily, it is this commitment that turns Battutah’s world into a living reality for modern readers. In Cairo, Mackintosh-Smith chances on an antiquarian bookshop and reflects that it should disabuse any writer with dreams of immortality. Travels with a Tangerine is a splendid work that should stand the test of time, like *Ibn Battutah’s Travels*.

Culled from *Time*

AGONY CLASSICS
Reproducing the earliest entries in Al-Bints Diary

On their terms?

Just wear them out with patience.” Tahir had said as he navigated the car through the narrow country lane that will take us to our destination, and I wondered just how such a feat was achievable.

How do you wear out through patience the degree of insolence we were talking about, I asked myself. The issue of Tahir’s relations has always been a thorny one in our relationship. But the recent episode was one I couldn’t ignore so I decided to have it out with him once and for all. He either makes it his duty to call them to order or he lets me do it whatever the consequences.

Else, how much longer will I continue to be held hostage by in-laws who think it is their divine right to do whatever they liked in my house and with disrespect to match. No! I can’t have it much longer.

So I decided to bring it up during one of our weekend outings, only to be told that I had to wear them out with patience. For God’s sake how can that ever be a way out. You exercise patience with people who will appreciate it and possibly come round to your way of thinking, not with people who think you have no choice but to take it.

At the Lady’s Club meeting the other day there was a heated discussion on the matter of in-laws and from the various views I heard, it seems to me like every woman’s problem. That ought to have been a source of comfort, but it wasn’t. The reason being that there is a general consensus that the kind of in-laws who are above the law in any man’s house are his elderly relations.

A mother, an aunt, an elder sister, even an uncle sometimes show up to make your life miserable in your own home. And you can’t, of course, expect your husband to rise up in your defence or to call them to order. That will be too disastrous for the two of you as the matter will never end there. But when younger brothers and sisters grow insolent and treat your wife with disrespect, should you stand by and watch?

Granted that some are so clever they will never do anything to displease you when your husband is around, but surely when you report such incidents to him, you should be given the benefit of the doubt and the offending person be warned against future occurrences. Anyway, that was what I always thought until Tahir’s younger siblings began to do what one can call “throwing their weight about.”

When it reached the stage where I urged him to call a particular young lady to order, my dear pacifist simply said “just be patient she’ll grow out of it.” And she never did in fact, she grew only steadily worse. Became out-rightly rude and did stuff I don’t wish to remember.

Today many more have followed in her footsteps. Take the case of the one who will take her bath early in the morning, dress up as if to a wedding, find a place and lie down and spend the whole day sending my house girl about the house. As young as she is she wouldn’t lift a finger to do anything.

Then there is the one who will always go for extra soup, stews whatever is in my pot, and when my cook protests will only say, its my brother’s money not anybody else’s. For night cap she used to take four to five of whatever fruits are in season, the normal explanation of course being that her brother bought everything seen around.

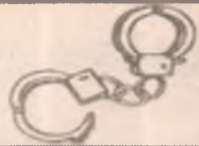
And then there is the one who will listen while you instruct her to do something then will refuse to do it. When asked why she will just refuse to say a word.

I honestly can go on and on with the list of such disrespectful behaviour but to Tahir all these can be overlooked with patience. And may be it is possible with some people because they are used to seeing such things.

But I was brought up to believe that wrong behaviour can only be corrected by verbal rebuke and possibly punishment. Indeed, coming from young ones there is no other way to check it.

I feel baffled when Tahir emphasises this watch-and-see method. I certainly can’t understand how that can work. Of course his only explanation is that we should avoid any confrontation with them to avoid being branded by other family members. And I have accepted that for as long as I was able. But today I have a new resolution. I will not tolerate any such nonsense any longer, whatever it costs I will enforce my authority on these upstarts henceforth.

Whoever comes to my home will have to live on my terms. Whatever my darling pacifist thinks, I will not live on their terms any longer.



Crime & Punishment



Police charged with murder

A trigger-happy policeman is now in trouble for allegedly shooting and killing a defenceless citizen. The policeman, Gbadamosi Liak at about 3:30 a.m. on June 25, 2001 at the Ports complex, Apapa, Lagos, was reported to have caused the death of one Abayomi George Oyebola through an accidental discharge.

It was also gathered that the incident took place while the accused policeman was pursuing a suspect thereby shooting the deceased instead of the fleeing man.

Daily Trust gathered that the policeman is already on suspension pending the outcome of the case.

The charge against the accused reads: "that you

From Adelanwa Bangboye, in Lagos

Gbadamosi Liak on June 25, 2001 at about 3:30 a.m. at the port complex, Apapa, Lagos, in the Lagos magisterial district did accidentally cause the death of one



IG Musiliu Smith

Abayomi George Oyebola 'm' by shooting him with your police rifle while pursuing a felon and thereby committed an offence contrary to section 317 of the criminal code.

The accused pleaded not guilty while the matter was adjourned to September 10, 2001 even as the trial magistrate granted him bail in the sum of N500,000.

Three policemen detained over colleague's death

The zone six police command in Calabar last week ordered the detention of three police officers with the Cross River State Police Command who were believed to have murdered one of their colleagues, Anietie Udo Orung.

The three policemen, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), Ezekiel Silas, Inspectors Ibang and Augustine Ani were said to be arrested immediately on

From Bassey Ita, in Calabar

the orders of the Assistant Inspector General (AIG) of the zone, Mr. Agbo Koroma for failing to give substantial reasons leading to the shooting of their colleague.

It would be recalled that the late Corporal Anietie Udo attached to the anti-robbery squad of the state police command was shot on Friday, June 22, 2001 at his residence, No. 3, Saintmary Lane, Calabar, by the

Six docked for robbery

30 and Usman Adamu.

The others are Mohammed Jafaru, 25 and Ibrahim Shugaba, 26.

In a related development, 21-years old Albert Mark and 19 years-old Michael Ojo at the Railway Compound Ebute Metta in Lagos were also alleged to have conspired to commit robbery.

According to Inspector

Albert Ebohata, the two robbery suspects while armed with offensive weapons robbed one Yakeem Kolawole, Alaka, John Dele Ajala and Babawole Sikiru Akanji of valuables valued at Ninety two thousand naira (N92,000.00). When the charges were read to the accused persons, no plea was taken from them.

The offences are punishable under the robbery and firearms (Special Provisions) Act cap 398 vol. II Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 1990.

Police arraign fake officer

An alleged fake Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), Mr. Taiwo Ahmadu, who allegedly presented himself as a serving police officer at the force criminal investigation department, force (C.I.D.), Alagbon close, Ikoyi, Lagos, has been charged with advance fee fraud before a Lagos magistrate.

The 43 year-old man according to the prosecuting police officer, Mr. Nnaji John had with intent to defraud, obtained N15,000 and one rechargeable fan from a Deputy Superintendent of Police, (DSP), Robert Ade on the pretext that he (the accused) was giving the money to a retired Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG), zone II Onikan Lagos.

Following a search that was carried out at the residence of the accused on April, 17, 2001 at No. 43, Olofin Street, Ikotun, Lagos, one Police Policy file No. AB:2002/LS/ACC/T.I titled "Patrol and Guard" belonging to the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) Area 'C' command headquarters, Surulere, Lagos was found in his possession.

According to the prosecutor, the police file was reasonably suspected to have been stolen or unlawfully obtained.

Earlier, the accused person was alleged to have presented himself as an ACP serving at the Force, CID Alagbon Close, Ikoyi, before one DSP Robert Ade.

The offence for which the accused is standing trial is punishable under sections 484, 419 and 32 laws of Lagos State. When the charge No. D/217/2001 was read to him, he pleaded not guilty.

He was later released on a N1 million bail with two sureties in like sum.

In a related development, 33 years-old Adah Emmanuel has been arraigned before the same court for allegedly impersonating a police officer and presenting a police Identification Card No.

176535 to one Awodeji Inoh.

Eight soldiers accused of forging discharge certificate

Eight retired soldiers who allegedly forged their discharge certificates have been arraigned before a Lagos magistrate court.

The accused persons are 51 years-old Dauda Ovebanji, Abidan Lamidi 53,

Rafiu Ibikunle 53 and Musiliu Ishola 50.

The rest are 57 years-old Kolawole Raji, Onifada Lasisi 50, Abdul Abolomope 51, and Samuel Oletu 52.

All the accused persons were alleged to have conspired along with others

now on the run to commit felony to wit forgery.

According to court sources, the accused persons on different dates in Lagos allegedly committed the offence by forging a Nigerian Army discharge certificates bearing their

names and knowing same to be false.

If found guilty, the punishment for the offence under sections 516 and 467 of the criminal code attracts a jail term of not more than two years with or without an option of fine.

Student accused of forgery

Master Udechukwu Ogochukwu Nkan, alleged to have forged a West African Examination result slip has been arrested by the police.

The 16 year-old suspect was alleged to have sometime in April this year forged the November/December 1999 West

African Senior Certificate Examination No. 5010274315.

In a two count charge preferred against the accused, it was also alleged that he knowingly altered and fraudulently forged WAEC confirmation of result to knowing same to be fake.

According to the police, the offences are punishable under section 467 (1) (a) of the criminal code cap 32 laws of Lagos State vol. II.

When the charge was read to the accused, he pleaded not guilty.

While ruling on the bail application, the court ordered that N800,000 bail be granted to him with two sureties

whose addresses must be verified by the police.

Sharia convicts caned, jailed one year

Kabir Dogon Daji, in Birnin Kebbi

A man Atiku Chindo and his former girl friend but now married, Shafa'atu Nata-Allah have been sentenced to one year in prison and fifty strokes of the cane each for what was described as unwholesome extra marital relationship.

The presiding judge of the upper Sharia court II, Malam Muhammadu Sani Jega, maintained that the two people were caught while perpetrating the act of ungodly relationship.

He said Chindo and Shafa'atu were lovers before and it was beyond reasonable doubt that the two were engaged in such an act.

According to him, Atiku usually meets with Shafa'atu in her husband's home under the pretext that he was the senior brother.

The judge, Malam Sani Jega explained that the court was satisfied with evidence before it and left with no option than to deliver the judgement according to the provision of the divine book (Holy Qur'an).

The two were publicly given 50 lashes after which they were marched to prison.



Minister of Defence, T.Y. Danjuma

Borno Gov sets up panel over death of inspector

The Borno State government has set up a judicial commission of enquiry to investigate an alleged robbery incident in Konduga Local Government area in which a vigilante patrol called Yanbanga allegedly shot dead a police Inspector and injured another police man.

The incident took place on July 14 at about 11:00 p.m. between Benisheikh and Ngandu towns when a robbery incident was reported to be taking place by passing motorists.

In a chat with Daily Trust, the Borno State Commissioner of Police, Alhaji Uba Bala Ringim said a police patrol team along that road was informed of the road block mounted by the

From Abdullahi Bego, in Maiduguri

robbers and the team which at the time was in Ngandu town headed towards the scene on the road to Benisheikh.

As the team arrived the scene, said the police commissioner, another information was passed to a vigilante patrol in Benisheikh which also headed towards the scene.

When the vigilante arrived and saw police at the scene without their vehicle, the vigilantes automatically opened fire on them, killing one Inspector Usman on the spot and injuring another police personnel.

Alh. Uba Ringim said the police themselves were there to dismantle the road block

but were not the robbers themselves.

The police commissioner added that he has visited Benisheikh police station and has confirmed entries made in respect of members of the patrol team



Gov. Mala Kachalla "They were duly authorised to ply the road between

Abuja News

FG pledges compensation for Keffi-Nyanya road

Residents of the Federal Capital Territory affected by the dualisation of the Keffi-Nyanya road who have genuine claims for compensation have been assured of government's preparedness to pay their compensation.

Minister of Works and Housing, Chief Tony Anenih, gave this assurance during a courtesy visit to the chairman, Abuja Municipal Area Council, Chief (Mrs.) Esther John Audu (JP), in her office on Tuesday.

Chief Anenih said the Federal Government would ensure that compensation is

Stories by Austine Odo and Emmanuel Ande

paid to original settlers whose villages existed before the road came to be. The Minister however drew the attention of claimants to the edict marking out a buffer zone of 50 metres on both sides of the road as Federal Government property.

He commended the chairman, Abuja Municipal Area Council, Chief (Mrs.) Esther John Audu (JP), for her efforts at improving the living conditions of the people.

Earlier, the AMAC chairman had in her

presentation to the Minister, among other things, requested for more time and alternative location for people expected to relocate as a result of the dualisation of the Nyanya-Keffi road. She pointed out that the rainy season was not a conducive time for movement of people and that necessary infrastructure had to be provided on any alternative places provided for the people before they moved.

According to Chief Esther Audu, information should be given before hand to the affected people before any action is taken.

"If movement is urgent, then there should be a transit accommodation to affected people while construction is going on at the permanent site," she said, adding that indications were that a flyover would be required at the Karu/Nyanya road, which might also lead to demolition of more houses along that road, hence, proper information should be given to inhabitants to get their minds prepared for any development that would take place.

Kwali calls for commissioning of hospital

An appeal has been made to the FCT Minister, Engr. Mohammed Abba-Gana, to commission the Kwali General Hospital, which has already been completed.

Speaking with newsmen in Kwali town last week on his two years in office, the Kwali Area Council Chairman, Mr. Samuel Gwamna, said the commissioning of the hospital would attract people to Kwali town, as they would not lack basic health facilities.

Mr. Gwamna pointed out that the hospital, which had the capacity for 30 beds, had been completed and what was left is the furnishing and posting of medical personnel to work there.

The Kwali Council Chairman noted with satisfaction that his administration had impacted positively on the lives of people in his area, adding that he had achieved what past administrations could not achieve in many years.

He expressed happiness that his invitation to people to be part of his administration was being heeded, adding however that those who saw nothing good in his administration were trying to cause ill feelings, but that it was his responsibility to carry along both those who admired him and those who hold contrary opinions against him.

According to Mr. Gwamna, it is a misconception to hold that his administration is weak, but that on the contrary, he had a firm policy thrust, adding that this

administration had the substance that could stand the test of time in transforming the lives of the people in his area.

Abuja NDE flags-off national training programme

The Abuja Chapter of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), has flagged-off its national Training Programme at the Cultural Centre in Abuja.

The ceremony, which was performed by the Minister of Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Engr. Mohammed Abba-Gana, is another formula by the present administration to create more jobs for unemployed Nigerians.

In a statement signed by the Public Relations Officer of the NDE, Mr. Abdulrahman Mohammed, the training which is in collaboration with all the Area Councils, is aimed at creating about 62,000 jobs nationwide, out of which 1,382 graduates and school leavers will be trained in skills and trades.

The other programmes to be launched include the National

Open Apprenticeship scheme (NOAS) where about 1,000 school leavers recently deployed to master trainers will be oriented.

Environmental Beautification Scheme, which is sanitation focused and professional pupilage training is for unemployed graduates paid by the NDE and attached to requesting organisations, which can sometimes lead to eventual permanent employment.

Other programmes are the Integrated Farming and Training Scheme (IFTS) introduced to train youths selected by Area Councils in Agricultural Business and Production while the Start Your Own Business ((SYOB), and the Stabilised soil Block production training will train graduates for self employment.

Minister advises on employment programmes

The Minister of Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Engr. Mohammed Abba-Gana, has urged

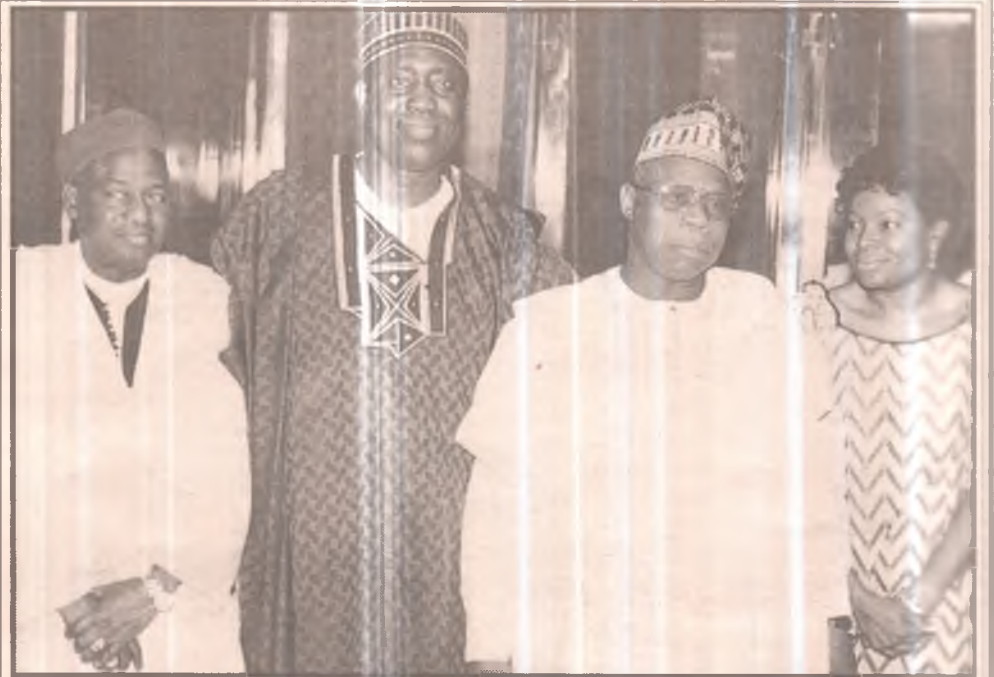


Engr. Abba-Gana

beneficiaries of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) programmes to make the best use of the resettlement equipment given to them, saying that such opportunities may come only once in a lifetime.

He made the call on Tuesday at the flagging off of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) programmes in Abuja.

Abba-Gana said that the task of cultivating and maintaining a business friendly environment attractive to foreign investors calls for a joint venture between them and government for the skill needs



From left, FCT Minister, Engr. Mohammed Abba-Gana, Chairman, Board of Management, FCDA (Dr.) Olu Alabi, President Olusegun Obasanjo and an employee of the Presidency during a courtesy call by the management of FCDA on the President at the State House, Abuja...Monday.

Pix Kennedy Egborodje

FCDA braces up for demolition of illegal settlements

The chairman of the newly constituted board of the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA), Senator Olu Alabi, has said the FCDA would demolish all buildings erected on sewage lines, security and green areas, irrespective of the owners of such buildings.

Senator Alabi spoke with newsmen in Abuja on Monday after being directed by President Olusegun Obasanjo to take urgent steps to clear the FCT of illegal settlements.

"We have compiled a list of houses on sewage lines, security zones and green areas and we are going to pull them down, approval or no approval, so long as they violate the master plan," he said.

The FCDA board chairman noted that though it was an unpleasant assignment, it was going to be done.

"We will do it, we have to do it, moreso when the persons who erected such buildings did not comply with the building regulations. We will not lose any sleep doing it," he asserted.

Senator Alabi maintained that the master plan had been thoroughly distorted by residents of Abuja, pointing out that although the first phase of the city was planned to take in 250,000 people, more than one

million people now live in it.

Before now, uneasy calm had pervaded several parts of the FCT as a result of rumours of an impending demolition of such settlements. The rumours had gained so much ground that some residents of such settlements have themselves, threatened to lose their lives rather than lose their homes, if government goes ahead to execute the demolition exercise. Some have even relied on the succour of the nation's newfound democracy to dismiss the demolition fears.

Though quite a number of such residents agree that they live in sub-human environments, they feel it was through no fault of theirs to be there, but accuse government of short sightedness in planning the nation's Federal Capital City for only elites, even in the first phase.

President Obasanjo in a meeting with the new board of the FCDA on Monday gave the directive to "urgently" clear the illegal settlements, saying such

developments and settlements constituted a serious distortion to the Abuja master plan, in addition to creating safety and security hazards.

The president said government would pay "a moderate compensation" to owners of building in such unplanned settlements, stressing that the FCDA must act fast and "pull down such structures" because any further delay would further escalate the cost of compensation.

Though the FCDA has yet to come out with the clear list of the "illegal settlements," it is widely believed that shanty towns such as Kado village, Nyanya village, Jabi, parts of Karmo, Mabushi, Idu, Gwagwa, Piacasa, Kuchingoro and similar other squatter settlements commonly called satellite towns which emerged as a result of the rapidly expanding population of the FCT, would be visited by the bulldozers.

... as board members parley with contractors

Board members of the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) met on Tuesday in Abuja with representatives of major construction firms handling projects in the new Federal Capital Territory.

Addressing the meeting, the Chairman of the Board, Chief Olu Alabi, urged the contractors to be "positive in their dealings" to ensure speedy development of the FCT, saying that the meeting was aimed at providing a forum for the board members to familiarise with the contractors with a view to understanding their problems. Alabi noted that such a parley was also necessary to ensure speedy physical development of the FCT.

According to him, the Federal Government believed in organised private sector participation in the development of FCT and would continue to encourage it.

Alabi assured that the board would assist the contractors in obtaining duty exemptions on imported components required for the execution of their contracts.

Efforts, he said, were being made to resettle the indigenes of Jabi community to ensure that contractors went about their work without molestation or hindrance.

Contractors who spoke pleaded with the authority to ensure prompt payment for jobs done, as this was a major cause of delay in the completion of projects.

They also urged the government to favourably look into the issues of foreign exchange and import duty charges since most components used in their jobs were imported.

Those present at the meeting, which was also attended by the Executive Secretary of FCDA, Sir Charles Dorgu, included representatives of some construction firms such as Julius Berger and Dan...



SPORTS



Nigeria/Ghana World Cup cracker

FG to ensure safety

Less than two weeks to the 2003 world cup qualifying match between Nigeria and Ghana, the Federal Government said today that it was doing everything possible to ensure that there was no ugly incident during the match.

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Chief Duben Onyia, gave the assurance when the Ghanaian Acting High Commissioner to Nigeria, Mrs. Nana Bema Kumi, called on him in his office.

"There have been very few records of violence in matches involving the two countries. Government is doing everything possible to ensure that peace and security prevail during the match scheduled for Saturday, July 28," the minister said.

Onyia noted that the two countries had been together through "thick and thin" and said that government would ensure that the World cup qualifier further strengthened "existing cordial and fraternal relations between them".

"Government will ensure

that nothing is done to destroy the bridge of friendship between the two countries," the minister said, adding that no stone would be left unturned in ensuring safety at the stadium.

He noted that the two countries were working seriously together to jumpstart the ECOWAS fast-track aimed at speeding up the development of the sub-region.

Earlier, the acting High Commissioner, who had been in Nigeria since November, said she came to deliver a special message on the world cup qualifying match from her government to the Federal Government.

"I asked for this meeting to convey a message from my government regarding the football match between Nigeria and Ghana in Port Harcourt," she said.

Kumi said her country wanted the match to "show how far we have gone and how keen we are in maintaining the existing cordial relations between our two countries."

She added: "We hope everything possible will be done to ensure that the match is as peaceful as possible."

The acting High Commissioner said she would deliver a similar message to the Rivers State government, host of the qualifier.



Argentine football sensation, Javier Saviola in action for River Plate. He has completed a £15m transfer to Barcelona of Spain...yesterday.

Yakmut condemns Super Four

Special Assistant to the Minister of Sports and Social Development, Mr. Alhassan Yakmut, has criticised the Pepsi Super League known as "Super Four" saying, "it is irrelevant, Yakmut told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) Tuesday in Abuja

that the Super Four was not the most justified means of determining the winner of the Pepsi League.

Super Four is the selection of the four best teams at the end of the Pepsi professional league for another competition get the overall winner.

He said that the Super Four was capable of robbing any team, that performed well during the Pepsi pro-league proper, and cited example of Rangers of Enugu, who topped this year's pro-league, but performed badly in the Super Four."

"Have you seen anywhere in the world where such a method is used to determine the overall winner of a professional league?" Yakmut asked, adding, "Rangers of Enugu, who topped the league this season have just been denied of that glorious title."

He called on the relevant authorities to abolish the Super Four, adding that the measure would encourage teams to work very hard during the professional league series.

Yakmut, who was formerly the Head of Professional League Department of the Nigeria Football Association (NFA), said that the inefficiency of match officials in the past, during the pro-league series, contributed to the formation of the Super Four.

He said, however, that the officials had improved during the just concluded Super Four held at the National Stadium Lagos, but that they still needed more orientation to get to greater heights.

It will be recalled that Enyimba FC of Aba, who finished second at the pro-league series won this year's edition of the Super Four and qualified to represent Nigeria in the Confederation of African Football (CAF) Championship next year.

Saviola joins Barca

Barcelona have completed the signing of Argentine forward Javier Saviola from River Plate.

The 19-year-old is reported to have cost the Catalan club £15m in a six-year deal.

Saviola is expected to arrive in Barcelona on Thursday before his unveiling the following day.

One of the hottest talents in Argentine soccer, Saviola was the star of the recent World Youth Championship in Argentina.

He scored 11 goals in a series of superb performances for the tournament winners.

In addition to his numerous performances for Argentina's youth teams, he has also been called up for the senior side to compete in qualifying matches for the World Cup.

Saviola becomes the sixth new arrival at Barcelona after the signings of defenders Patrick Andersson and Philippe Christanval, midfielder Fabio Rochemback, forward Giovanni Debernardis and goalkeeper Roberto Bonano.

Juve owner brands Zidane a flop

Juventus owner Gianni Agnelli has lashed out at World Footballer of the Year, Zinedine Zidane.

Zidane left the Italian club for Spanish side Real Madrid in a world record £46.5m deal earlier this month.

The midfield star recently praised Juventus and thanked the club for his time in Turin, but Agnelli has hit back by playing down the French star's contribution to the Serie A outfit.

And his comments have been fuelled by reports in the Italian press arguing that Zidane's best games were for his country and not for Juventus.

"Zidane is more entertain-

ing than useful, even if he did score two goals during the World Cup final against Brazil," Agnelli told Gazzetta dello Sport.

Referring to Zidane's debut with Juve in 1996, Agnelli said: "When I saw him (Zidane) for the first time, he played very badly.

"I asked Michel Platini, 'Who did you send us?' And he answered, 'Don't worry he will amuse you.' And he was right."



Yakmut

Olympic heroine, Alozie switches to Spain

Gloria Alozie, Nigeria's 100 metres hurdles silver medallist at last year's Sydney Olympic Games,

has switched her allegiance to Spain, a Nigerian official said on Tuesday.

Yomi Adeyemi-Wilson, president of Athletics Federation of Nigeria (AFN), said Alozie, 23, telephoned from her Spanish base to inform him of her Spanish citizenship granted last month.

"She said she has not been

well-treated by Nigeria and now wants to be competing for Spain. So she won't be in our team to next month's World Championships in Edmonton, Canada," he said.

"It's painful that we have to lose her but we respect her view because our athletes are free to take decisions that suit them."

Alozie's bravery to compete in Sydney attracted worldwide sympathy because her fiance was killed in a car accident in Sydney just prior to the Olympics.

Obisanya tutors table tennis coaches on new rules

Nigeria Table Tennis Federation chief coach, Babatunde Obisanya has been saddled with the responsibility of teaching Nigeria coaches and umpires the new rules introduced by the International Table Tennis Federation recently.

Commenting on the new rules introduced by International Table Tennis Federation, Obisanya explained that a match will now end at 11 points instead of 21 points. "When two players tie at 10 points, the players who picks the next two points would be adjudged the winner.

The coach stressed that the essence of having the development programmes was to

From Babs Oyetoro, in Lagos

refresh and update the knowledge of top class coaches in the country and also to introduce the new rules to the coaches and umpires.

"The new rules would make the game more exciting and give maximum satisfaction to the followers of the sports," he explained.

He noted that the recent appointment of some officials of NITF into various committees of the board was informed by combination of several factors like hard working and exposure in the game.

"this goes to show that we are a force to reckon with in Africa," he said.

Football fans to pay more -NFA

Football fans in the country, will pay more to watch matches when the nation's stadia were commercialised, the NFA spokesman, Mr. Austin Mgbolu, has said.

The Sports Ministry said it would commercialise the operation of the nation's stadia for proper accountability and management of facilities.

Mgbolu said that stadium owners should also prepare for increased charges, noting: "In Nigeria that the cheap ticket is paid by fans to the stadium owners."

He said that stadium owners should also prepare for increased charges, noting: "In Nigeria that the cheap ticket is paid by fans to the stadium owners."

ment of facilities.

On the recent statement by the Sports Ministry that NFA would be made to pay for the use of the stadia, Mgbolu said that the NFA had been paying certain percentage of it's earning as fees to the appropriate authority.

"The issue is that we (NFA) were under the supervision of the sports ministry but think the modalities for the payment will have to be changed now that private sector is taking over the management of the stadia," he stressed.

He said that NFA would co-operate with the ministry to enable it successfully execute its policy to make football a business.

Rugby League resumes on Saturday.

Rugby matches will resume on Saturday for the two National Rugby League Championships -the Southern and the Northern Zonal Centres, the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports.

Ntiense Williams, the National Publicity Secretary of the Nigeria Rugby Football Association (NRFA), said in a statement today in Lagos that two matches would be played in each of the two centres.

Williams said that in the Southern Centre, Eko Island-

ers would trade tackles with Young Lions in the first match of the day, while host Lagos RFC would lock horns with defending champions Eco 11 in the second match.

He said that both games would be played at the University of Lagos (UNILAG) Rugby pitch.

He added that in the Northern Centre, host Kano would play the first match of the day against Zaria, while Jos will meet leader Kaduna for the second match.

Both games are billed for the Kano race course.

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FIFA queries NFA over planned restructuring

By Patrick Andrew

The world soccer ruling body-FIFA has queried the NFA over the adumbrated restructuring of the soccer governing council in Nigeria by the sports ministry.

FIFA, which recently banned Guinea from participation in any of its programmes, warned that should the planned restructuring be true it would be compelled to act in consonance with its standards.

The world soccer authority reacted specifically to the planned restructuring of the body of the NFA, a process that would lead to the reduction of the membership from its present 22 to six.

Trustsports recalls that the sports ministry had last April drawn up a new organogram for the NFA with the intent of effecting the planned restructuring of the NFA.

Sports Minister, Ishaya Mark Aku has been consistent in the call to reshape, and refocus the NFA to make it attractive for private sector to invest in football.

The thinking of the minister is that the NFA as presently constituted and reinforced lacks the required management dynamics and vim to attract willing investors in the sector.

Consequently Aku told the National Assembly Sports Committee that plans were afloat to restructure the NFA in tune with government desires.

But FIFA warned that any such restructuring at variance with its modalities for selecting membership would attract due penalty, as was done to Guinea and Lebanon recently.

Whereas the ministry was bent on overhauling the NFA structures, FIFA is actually concerned about the selection or election of the NFA board membership, a view many reasoned is meant to frighten the government from dissolving the present board headed by Dominic Onéya.

The leadership of the NFA secretariat had come under barrage of five following Eagles poor runs enroute Japan/Korea World

Trustsports learnt that but the intervention of some individuals, Ishaya Mark Aku would have dispensed with the services of the NFA scribe moments after the Super Eagles

flubbed before the Leone Stars of Sierra Leone.

These and the poor image of the NFA and the alleged administrative ineptitude of the secretariat gave vent to the minister's avowed determination to shake-off the present leadership and structure.



US golfer, John Daly watches his chip shot on the 11th green at the final day's play of Scottish Open on Sunday.



Brazil's Everton, center, is stopped by Peru's Martin Hidalgo, right, and Jose Soto in their Copa America match on Sunday.

NFA sends Eaglets to Mali

The NFA in desperate efforts to keep the Golden Eaglets time up for the World U-17 Championship in Trinidad and Tobago has concluded plans to send them to Mali.

The NFA resorted to Mali after failed efforts to secure crack friendly matches for the team with in the West African sub-region.

Aside from this, attempt to secure sponsors for a

South American tour where the Eaglets were expected to trade tackles with their Brazilians counterparts and some clubs had also hit the rock.

NFA spokesman Austin Mgbolu disclosed yesterday that the Glass House has concluded plans for the Eaglets to go Mali this weekend to engage their Malian counterparts in a time up match even as search for both clubs to

play friendly with and sponsors continue.

The quest for secure crack friendly matches for the Eaglets is gingered by plans to make their reappearance in the world scene memorable after about a decade of absence.

Mgbolu said that the NFA wants to sustain Eaglets tradition in the championship noting that it would boost further Nigeria's image in the international soccer podium.

Strands of Fate: written & illustrated by Bulama Mustapha

