

Shoot On Sight Against Igbo Youths Call For Another Genocide — Ohanaeze

PATIENCE OGBODO-IWUAGWU
ENUGU

Ohanaeze Ndigbo has frowned at alleged shoot on sight order given

to soldiers on how to engage Igbo youths in South East.

Prof. George Obiozor, President General of Ohanaeze Ndigbo, disclosed this in a statement made available to journalists by the

body's National Publicity Secretary, Chiedozie Alex Ogbonna, in Enugu on Monday.

Ohanaeze Ndigbo warned that

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Buhari Should Be Impeached If He Can't Secure Us — NEF Spokesman

Hakeem Baba-Ahmed, spokesman of the Northern Elders Forum (NEF), has asked the National Assembly to impeach President Muhammadu Buhari if he is unable

to secure Nigerians.

Speaking on Kakaaki, an AIT programme, on Monday, Ba-

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●N200

Banks Boards Jittery As CBN Moves To Clamp Down On Insider Abuse

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Babajide Sanwo-Olu, Governor, Lagos (left); Justice Kazeem Alogba, Chief Judge of the State (second left); Air Vice Marshal Sunday Makinde, Air Officer Commanding Logistics Command, Ikeja, Nigerian Air Force (second right), and Ahmed Illiyasu, Assistant Inspector General of Police Zone 2 Command, during the security stakeholders' town hall meeting in Lagos on Monday.



Air Marshal Isiaka Oladayo Amao, Chief of Air Staff (left), and Ahmad Ibrahim Lawan, Senate President, during the latter's visit to the Senate president at his official guest house in Abuja on Monday.

Troops Eliminate Top Bandits' Commanders, 48 Others **P5**

FG Considers 228 Building Component Firms For Social Housing Projects **P5**

Abdulsalami Abubakar Denies Link With Bandits, Terrorists **P5**

PDP Demands Amaechi, Usman's Sack Over NPA's Unremitted N165bn

- Reps Minority Caucus Asks EFCC To Probe Hadiza Bala Usman

SAMUEL OGIDAN;
AHMED MUSA

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has demanded the immediate sack,

investigation and prosecution of Minister of Transportation, Rotimi Amaechi, as well as the suspended Managing Director of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Hadiza Bala

Usman, over alleged outstanding unremitted balance of N165 billion by the management of NPA.

The party also asked Amaechi to come clean on his reported connec-

tion in the alleged involvement of his wife, Mrs. Edith Amaechi, in the exposed N48 billion contract scam

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COVID-19: FG Reintroduces Restriction On Mass Gathering **P2**

Peter Obi Alleges Plot To Link Him With S-East Violence **P5**

Sanwo-Olu Gets Lagosians' Backing To Tackle Security Challenges **P5**

News

Govt, Labour Must Work Together For Industrial Harmony –Abia NLC Chairman

UCHE NWOSU

The Chairman of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) in Abia State, Chief Uchenna Obigwe, has described the Organised Labour and government as partners in progress rather than enemies.

Speaking in an interview with Daily Independent in Umuahia on Monday, he explained that the two institutions must work together for the enthronement of industrial harmony.

Obigwe, who also reacted to his purported removal as NLC Abia State chairman by the national leadership of NLC over his alleged romance with the Abia government and keeping two jobs, contended that it would amount to living in denial for the national leadership of the congress to expect state chairmen "to be fighting state governments."

He likened the relationship between labour and government to that between husband and wife, adding, "If your wife is disobedient to you and always proves stubborn to you, will you give her money, when she demands it?"

"Labour and government are partners in progress and should work in synergy to ensure industrial harmony and robust welfare package for workers," he submitted, even as he declared that he was able to recover the NLC permanent site allotted to the congress by the state government because of the cordial relationship he had with government."

Strange Disease Kills Six In Kano

The Kano State government on Monday confirmed that six persons died of a strange disease in Minjibir Local Government Area of the state.

The Commissioner for Health of the state, Dr. Aminu Ibrahim-Tsanyawa, who confirmed this said 46 other affected persons had been hospitalised.

Ibrahim-Tsanyawa said the disease broke out in Gandun Koya village on May 7, and spread to adjoining communities.

"The cause of the outbreak can be attributed to open defecation and poor sanitation in the communities.

"The patients presented symptoms of diarrhea and vomiting.

"Six persons died of the disease, 28 were discharged and 18 others are still on admission," he said.

Ibrahim-Tsanyawa said the ministry had begun investigation to unravel the cause of the disease.

While reiterating the commitment of the state government to awareness creation and preventive tips, Ibrahim-Tsanyawa urged the people to keep a clean environment and maintain personal hygiene to control the disease.

Insecurity: Okowa Advocates Synergy Between States, Security Agencies

MICHAEL OLADAPO
ASABA

Delta State Government has charged government stakeholders to support the Nigerian Army with effective military logistics in their fight against insecurity in the country.

Governor of Delta State, Ifeanyi Okowa, gave the charge in Asaba when he hosted officers and participants from

the Nigerian Army College of Logistics (NACOL), Lagos, on the occasion of their study tour to the state.

Okowa, who was represented by the Secretary to the Delta State Government (SSG), Mr Chiedu Ebie, noted that the visit is testament to the strong synergy that exists between the state and the security agencies.

Okowa said, "he state had played host to two study tours in less than a year, the first was that of the National

Defence College, Abuja, and this very one.

"For us here in Delta State, we are indeed gladdened that we can partner with the security agencies and the military, especially in these times when there are a lot of security challenges across the country."

He equally stated that the unity that exists among the security agencies in the state has helped in promoting peace and the fight against criminal elements even as he pledged to continue to invest

in the security sector for the development of the state.

The Commandant and Leader of the Team, Major General Martins Enendo, stated that the visit to the state has exposed them many opportunities that would strengthen logistic support for their military operations.

He noted that their training was never complete until they were able to go around the local environments in which they were either operating or were likely to operate in the future.



Abdullahi Idris, Assistant General Manager, Principal Facilities Management Company, Garki Market (left); Safiya Jijji, Assistant Director, Consumer Affairs Bureau, Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) (second left); Anukam Chibuzor, Chairman, Garki International Market (third left); Efosa Idehen, Director, Consumer Affairs Bureau, NCC (third right); Nnena Ukoha, Assistant Director, Project Department, NCC (second right), and Hafsat Lawal, Deputy Director, Consumer Affairs Bureau, NCC, during the Telecom Consumer Conversation in Abuja.

Army Debunks Alleged Deployment Of Only Northern Officers To South East

The Nigerian Army on Monday dismissed an allegation that it was deploying only commanders of Northern extraction to quell tension in the Southeast.

In a statement issued on Monday in Abuja, Director, Army Public Relations, Brig.-Gen. Mohammed Yerima, said there was no truth in the allegation.

He was reacting to an online publication entitled: "Nigerian Army shuns Southern officers, deploy Northern commanders to quell tension in Southeast."

Yerima stated that ordinarily, the Nigerian Army would have ignored the narrative by the online medium, but for the good of members of the public, it must respond.

He said the report was targeted at starting discord and disunity among Nigerians, who had refused to support the attacks on security apparatuses in the Southeast and South-South geopolitical zones.

He stressed that the army does not promote or post its personnel along ethnic or religious lines.

The Army spokesperson

added that postings were routine exercises based on professional competences not as portrayed by the said publication.

"For the records, let it be clear in everyone's mind that the Nigerian Army does not train, deploy or operate along ethnic, religious, tribal or regional divides.

"Senior officers are posted to command units based on their capability and competence taking into consideration their posting history.

"Furthermore, officers are the most frequently post-

ed personnel of the Nigerian Army.

"However, because of the bias and seed of discord that the author of the report wanted to sow, he did not do a thorough background check of his report," Yerima stated.

Discrediting the report further, he added that while the General Officer Commanding 82 Division, Nigerian Army, Enugu, Maj.-Gen. Taoreed Lagbaja, is from Southwest, the Commander 34 Brigade, Owerri, Brig.-Gen. Raymond Utsaha, is from the North Central.

COVID-19: FG Reintroduces Restriction On Mass Gathering

INNOCENT OWEH

Apparently perturbed by fear of COVID-19 third wave, the Federal Government has reinstated restrictions on mass gatherings bringing back the guidelines that require not more than 50 percent capacity in a particular location.

This followed reports of increasing cases of COVID-19 variants in India, Brazil and Turkey and more fatalities.

The National Incident Manager of the Presidential Steering Committee on COVID-19 (PSC), Mukhtar Mohammed, announced this during the briefing by the committee in Abuja on Monday.

This means that gatherings of religious groups, weddings and the likes, have been reduced to 50 percent attendance, while official engagements, meetings and conferences should continue to hold virtually.

He said event centres and night clubs are also to remain closed while curfew has also been reinstated from midnight to 4a.m.

Military personnel are to monitor and enforce adherence to non-pharmaceutical interventions on public transport including wearing face masks and maintaining social distancing.

The government at the centre has also appealed to

state governments to enforce these guidelines with violators made to appear before mobile courts and pay fines.

Mohammed, reading out the guidelines, said: "Last week on 26th of April, the PSE took a precautionary step by restricting travel from three countries, Brazil, India and wherever observed high incidence of cases have a totally different and widespread prevalence for virus.

"The PSC continues to reinforce the surveillance system and the country's points of entry. While our vaccine rollout has begun there is a shortage in global supplies affected by the current situation in India. These trans-

lates to a delay in vaccinating a large proportion of the population and therefore a risk of a large outbreak, especially in the context of poor adherence to the recommended public and social gatherings.

"There are strong concerns about the non-compliance to public health and social measures, which are contained in the health protection regulation 2021. "Specifically, the level of adherence to the use of face mask, physical distancing, temperature checks in public spaces, hand washing, and limitations placed on large gatherings remain very poor, in some areas these are even nonexistent."

SPN Tells Oyo Ex-LG Appointees To Return Salaries, Allowances

RAJI ADEBAYO
IBADAN

The Socialist Party of Nigeria (SPN), Oyo State chapter, has advised all politicians who had served in any government or members of local government caretaker committees to with immediate effect, return all salaries and allowances received while in the office.

The party gave this advice in a statement signed by its Secretary, Comrade Ayodeji Adigun, and made available to journalists on Monday.

SPN noted that the need for the former caretaker chairmen and members to return the money received while in the office was necessary in view of last week Supreme Court judgement, which faulted appointment of the caretaker chairmen and committee members.

NABTEB Releases 2021 Nov/Dec Results, Records 75.72% Pass In Math, English

FRANCIS ONOIRIBHOLO
BENIN

National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB) on Monday released the November/December 2020 examination results, declaring that of the total number of 32,336 candidates that sat for the examination, representing 99.37% of the total enrolment, 21,175 candidates obtained five credits and above including English Language and Mathematics.

It said 25,844 candidates scored five credits and above with or without English Language and Mathematics.

Prof. Ifeoma Isiugo-Abanihe, the Registrar/Chief Executive Officer of NABTEB, disclosed this while briefing newsmen in Benin City on the outcome of the 2020 November/December examinations.

Burglars Tried Breaking Into Gambari's Residence — Presidency

There was an attempt to burgle the residence of Professor Ibrahim Gambari, Chief of Staff to President Muhammadu Buhari, according to the presidency.

Malam Garba Shehu, Senior Special Assistant, Media and Publicity to the President, in a statement Monday night, said, "The Chief of Staff, Professor Ibrahim Gambari, has confirmed that there 'was a foolish attempt' to burgle his residence at 3:00a.m this morning but it turned out to be unsuccessful.

"Professor Gambari, whose house is on a street next to the Villa has assured that there is nothing to worry about from the incident."

NDPHC To Boost Power Supply To Delta Community

CHIDI UGWU
ABUJA

The Niger Delta Power Holding Company (NDPHC) has begun the construction of a 1x7.5MVA, 33/11kV injection distribution substation in Orogun, Delta State, to boost power supply to the community.

According to a statement by Olufunke Nwankwo, Head, Communications and Public Relations, NDPHC, which was made available to journalists in Abuja on Monday, Chiedu Ugbo, the agency's managing director/chief executive officer, performed the groundbreaking ceremony at the weekend.

Ugbo was quoted to have said the injection substation, which is an NDPHC/National Integrated Power Project (NIPP) intervention project, would also boost economic activities in the community in his remarks during the event.

NDPHC boss explained that the project, a 1x7.5MVA 33/11KV injection substation, will step down power from the already existing 33KV line to 11kV, disclosing that the project involves the construction of 4km of 11KV line to distribute the power to the community.

INEC Increases Polling Units In Anambra To 5,720

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has increased polling units in Anambra from 4,608 to 5,720.

Dr. Nkwachukwu Orji, INEC Anambra Resident Electoral Commissioner, disclosed this on Monday in Awka during Stakeholders' Forum on Expansion of Voter Access to Polling Units.

Orji explained that the expansion became necessary as the commission last expanded its polling units more than two decades ago.

"From INEC records, the existing polling units were created 25 years ago and some of them today are in locations where they no longer promote healthy electoral activities.

"Some of the polling units are located in front of shrines, some in private buildings and others in churches," he said.

Orji, who said that INEC national headquarters began the process about two weeks ago, hinted that already additional 1,112 new polling units have been added to the existing 4,608 polling units in the state.

The INEC official said the expansion was targeted at enhancing participation during elections, especially with the emergency of the novel Coronavirus pandemic.

He also announced that the commission would commence continuation of voters registration on June 28.

Rising Insecurity: Wike Extends Curfew

DANIEL ABIA
P/HARCOURT

In view of the rising insecurity situation, Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike, has extended curfew from 7p.m. to 6a.m., with effect from Tuesday, May 11, in order to stem dastardly attacks on security formations in the state.

Wike said the decision was taken in the wake of multiple armed ambush on police checkpoints along the East-West road, which resulted in the cold-blood murder of seven police officers over the weekend.

Governor Wike in a state broadcast on Monday said the state security council

have reviewed the way and manner the recent attacks were executed and discovered that the perpetrators, who disguised themselves as security officers, moved in unhindered from Oyigbo to launch the attack.

"However, as a further step towards enhancing our collective safety, we have reviewed the existing night time curfew across the 23 local government areas, which will now start from 7 p.m. and end at 6 a.m. until further notice from tomorrow May 11, 2021.

"The security agencies are hereby directed to note the new curfew time, ensure strict compliance and effectively deal with any person or group that violates or attempts

to violate it.

"We have reviewed, and for the moment, declined the pressure on the State Government to activate our youth to defend the State from these terrorists because we don't want to complicate our very delicate security situation by creating opportunities for some other monsters to emerge."

Governor Wike, who consoled the families of the dead officers and the State's Police Command over the irreparable loss, declared that the government and security agencies are determined to deploy everything at their disposal to advance the safety and security of lives and property in the state.

The governor explained

that security agencies are on the trail of the gunmen who attacked security formations in the State. He expressed optimism that the culprits will all be arrested soon and brought to justice.

He reiterated that nothing will stop the government from defeating the evil forces presently threatening the individual and collective security of the State.

"We wish to assure every resident that we are not intimidated by the sporadic and cowardly attacks on predetermined security targets by faceless criminals on our soil; neither will we be cowed into succumbing to baseless and doomed secessionists' agenda."



Edet Akpan, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Science and Technology (left); Ogonnaya Onu, Minister of Science and Technology (middle), and Ekanem Udoh, Chairman, Ministerial Technical Committee on Job Creation in Nigeria, during the presentation of the Technical committee report on job creation in Nigeria: contributions of the Federal Ministry Science and Technology to the Minister in Abuja on Monday.

PHOTO: NAN

Lawyers In Anambra Demand Financial Autonomy, Independence Of Judiciary

CHUKWUEKWU ILOZUE
AWKA

Lawyers in Anambra State, under the aegis of Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) on Monday staged a peaceful protest at the Government House, Awka, to press home their quest for financial autonomy and independence of the judiciary.

They carried some placards which read: "Governor Obiano please implement the constitutional provisions on financial autonomy and independence of the Judiciary", "Anambra

State branches of NBA demand financial autonomy and independence of the Judiciary."

They initially stood beside the entrance to the gate leading to the Government House, but when no one attended to them after about 30 minutes, they blocked the gate.

However, Secretary to the State Government, Professor Solo Chukwulobeli, came to listen to them.

Speaking on behalf of the eight NBA branches in the state, the Chairman, Committee of all chairmen Kingsley Awuka, said they were

at the Government House to submit another copy of the letter previously sent to the governor, which did not receive any response.

He said they decided to come with few selected members across the branches in consent of the bar leaders following ugly experience in the last protest where they lost a member, adding that the protest was not about the legal body nor lawyers, but the common man.

"We're here today because of the silence the governor gave to our press release where we appealed

to him considering the peculiar situation of the state and that his APGA-led government is a product of judicial independence and bravery.

"We feel saddened that the government of this party, which is supposed to do everything to ensure that the judicial arm of government is strengthened beyond what's obtainable in other states is doing nothing in that regard.

"If the judiciary yielded to executive subjection during that time, the mandate given to APGA would have been stolen till date."

Gani Adams Condolences With Adeboye, Abina Over Sons' Deaths

CHINYERE ABIAZIEM
LAGOS

Iba Gani Adams, Aare Onakakanfo of Yorubaland, has described the demise of the sons of the General Overseers (GOs) of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) Pastor Enoch Adeboye and that of Gospel Faith Mission International (GOFAMINT), Pastor Elijah Abina, as huge

losses, adding that God was surely unquestionable in all respects.

Adams, who had earlier sent a letter of condolence to Adeboye, in a statement by his Special Assistant on Media, Kehinde Aderemi, expressed shock that the shining light of the young Adeboye went dim when his spiritual strength was needed most.

"I was short of words when the news broke out that we lost Pastor Oluwadare Adeboye. It

is one loss too many and I feel pained that we lost the younger Adeboye at such a time when he was still active in the service of the Lord," he stated.

Describing the late Oluwadare as an exemplary young man that was filled with the Holy Spirit and talent, Adams added that he was a true embodiment of a young, vibrant servant of God.

Adams noted: "At this grieving moment, I share in

your grief and that of the Christian community all over the world. But I am sure you will definitely take solace in the words of the Lord who giveth and taketh."

While drawing inspirations from Pa Adeboye's sermon that he cannot query God, but rather continue thanking Him for whatever happens to him, Adams added that such a response was a true reflection of the cleric's dept of spiritual knowledge, wisdom and understanding.

Group Decries Impact Of Security Situation On Women, Children

CHINWENDU NNADOZIE
MINNA

Women group, under the auspices of Lapai Azza Women Development Association, has called on the Federal and state governments to intensify efforts at ending armed banditry and general insecurity, which is taking its negative toll more on the women and children.

When the men are killed, it is the wives that suffer the pain more as a widow, when children are killed, the mothers bear the agony more. Mothers and their daughters also face rape and they suffer psychological consequences, hence are always at the receiving end of all the atrocities associated with the prevalent insecurity.

Persistent bandits and Boko Haram attacks on communities across the country always have the women and children as the most vulnerable and that is why we are calling on the government to evolve practical ways of tackling the challenge, the Chairperson of Lapai Azza Women Development Association, Amina Mohammad Gulu, said.

Gulu in an interview in Minna over the weekend decried the increasing number of widows, orphans and the destitute as a result of deaths caused by the activities of armed bandits and Boko-Haram and, therefore, wants the government to stop paying lip-service and quickly find a lasting solution to insecurity.

CP Ciroma Reassures FCT Residents Of Safety Ahead Of Sallah Celebration

JOSEPH UNDU
ABUJA

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Police Command has deployed proactive measures at strategic places such as recreational parks, worship centres and major highways to ensure a hitch-free Sallah celebration.

According to a statement signed by the Command's Spokesperson, ASP Mariam Yusuf, the Commissioner of Police, Bala Ciroma, has ordered uninterrupted patrols, diligent stop and search operations and coordinated intelligence-based crime fighting strategies within the FCT.

"On this note, the Command wishes FCT residents a Happy Sallah celebration ahead and implores them to report all suspicious movements, emergency or distress, through these numbers: 08032003913, 08061581938, 07057337653 and 08028940883 and to report the conduct of Police Officers, call the Public Complaint Bureau (PCB) number :0902222352."

News

BAMIDELE OGUNWUSI

Banks boards in the country are said to be unsettled and taking another look at their loan books following Central Bank of Nigeria's (CBN) move to crack down on insider abuse.

A reliable source said the apex bank is worried at the rate at which the board and management of deposit money banks (DMBs) in the country are involved in insider abuse at the detriment of customers and shareholders.

The source said the decision taken by the CBN two weeks ago where the board of FBN Holdings and FirstBank were replaced was an indication that the bank is ready to wield the big stick this time around and prevent another round of failure in the banking sector.

Insider abuse, according to the Special Assessment Reg-

Banks Boards Jittery As CBN Moves To Clamp Down On Insider Abuse

ulations (SAR), is when employees and top officials use insider knowledge to commit fraud.

In the past five decades Nigeria had witnessed three bank failures due largely to poor regulations and non-enforcement of appropriate sanctions, financial recklessness of the directors and management, lack of corporate governance standards, inadequate operating capital requirements and un-refunded loans.

Analysts believe that the unethical and disturbing trend of insider abuse, which pervades the banking industry today if unchecked through appropriate legislation and sanction, will continue to portray the sector in bad

light, and perhaps give the impression that Nigeria's banks are unsafe for depositors, who are the ultimate losers in the event of insolvency or outright collapse.

Investigations by *Daily Independent* revealed that the CBN is currently investigating some high-profile cases of insider abuse by members of the board of directors of some commercial banks and other financial institutions in the country.

It was revealed that the recent COVID-19 pandemic which ravaged economies of the world has left shocking governance weaknesses in the Nigerian financial services sector, as unreported losses, huge severance packages for directors, in-

sider non-performing loans incurred by overbearing bank executives in utter disregard to regulatory/prudential guidelines, were common occurrences.

Daily Independent learnt that the CBN is determined to come hard on incompetent board officials and protect depositors' funds.

Significantly, some bank chiefs had taken undue advantage of their insider knowledge, special access and privileges to commit fraud. Some banks have collapsed as a result of this malfeasance. Depositors and investors are the worst for it. Such loans corruptly obtained by them are often unrecoverable owing to the volume and waivers granted to the top officials

against the interest of depositors.

As a result of this, the CBN insisted that there would be no hiding place for any bank chief involved in dubious loans and promised that appropriate sanctions would be imposed on such errant board members.

Most banks, that are currently involved in insider abuse, according to a source, are currently trying to perfect their books by ensuring that actions are taken against loans that had been non-performing to be able to escape the wrath of the apex bank.

A top banker and former Deputy Managing Director of a Tier 2 bank in the country said, "Insider abuse cannot be eradicated in the banking

industry as most members of boards see serving on the board of the bank as an opportunity to enrich themselves or their cronies. If the CBN is actually serious about this, it should not spare any bank and carry out a holistic stress test on all banks and publish the report."

He stressed that the inability to publicly publish the reports of stress tests in banks over the years has encouraged perpetration of insider related abuses in banks in the country.

Cyril Ampka, an economist, said the decision of the CBN to take a tough stance on insider abuse in banks "is appropriate and timely"

Such measures, he said, would strengthen the regulator's hand and make the banks comply with extant prudential guidelines.

"It is necessary that confidence, which is the cutting

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PDP Demands Amaechi, Usman's Sack Over NPA's Unremitted N165bn

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currently rocking the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC).

The party lamented that the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) have become the All Progressives Congress (APC) cash cows and Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) in the past six years.

The PDP, in a statement by its spokesmen, Kola Ologbondiyan, alleged, "The foul stench of corruption oozing out of the NPA, NDDC and other agencies of government in the last six years has shown that our MDAs have become the cash cows and Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) of greedy leaders of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and their cronies in government in their unbridled looting of our patrimony under President Muhammadu Buhari's watch.

"Our party asserts that the fact that it took the minister a clear six years (2016 to 2021) to query the NPA Managing Director over ... N165 billion unremitted operating surplus of the agency, which is under his purview, is suspect and raises public belief that he (Amaechi) only acted apparently to shield himself after indicting audit documents had already been exposed.

"This is in addition to reports from the Office of Auditor General which also unearthed the looting of unremitted deduction to Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) amounting to N3,667,750,470, \$148,845,745.04, Euro 4,891,449.50 and £252,682.14 under the suspended NPA Managing Director and Amaechi's ministerial supervision.

"The audit report also exposed another N15.18 billion allegedly siphoned through shady corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects by the NPA, an agency under Amaechi's ministerial

purview.

"The PDP, therefore, rejected the obvious attempt at a cover up in the recourse to an administrative panel of enquiry recommended by the transport minister to investigate the NPA fraud, adding that the minister also has some questions to answer.

"Our party insists that both the minister and the ... NPA Managing Director should be handed over to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for investigation and possible prosecution," the party said.

The PDP said that Nigerians were appalled that fingers of fraud allegation are also pointing to the wife of the Transport Minister in a N48 billion contract scam under the sacked NDDC Managing Director, Nelson Bambraifa, who, according to the party, was reportedly nominated into that position by the Minister of Transportation, Amaechi, but fired on allegations of corruption.

The PDP described as unpardonable that the humongous sum in the NDDC contract scam involving the wife of the transport minister was allegedly siphoned under the guise of offering training to unsuspecting youths in the area.

"It is indeed disgraceful that under the APC that promised to fight and end corruption in our country, the public space is awash with revelations of sharing of government revenue among concubines, wives, girlfriends and family members of top APC leaders. This can only happen under the watch of an absentee president, who also condones corruption," the party said.

Probe Bala Usman Now, Reps Minority Caucus Tells EFCC

Meanwhile, the Minority Caucus in the House of Representatives has called on the Economic and Financial



Sunday Dare, Minister for Sports and Youth Development (right), presenting a T-Shirt of Jos Baptist High School Old Students Association to Simon Lalong, Governor, Plateau State, during the association's National Executive Council visit to the governor to mark the school's 60th anniversary in Jos, Plateau State on Monday.

PHOTO: NAN

Crimes Commission (EFCC) to investigate the suspended Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Hadiza Bala Usman, over alleged outstanding unremitted balance of N165 billion by the management of NPA.

According to a letter sent to President Muhammadu Buhari by Transport Minister, Rotimi Amaechi, the yearly remittance of operating surpluses by the NPA from 2016 to 2020 was "far short of the amount due for actual remittance."

In the letter, Amaechi said within the stipulated years, NPA recorded an outstanding unremitted balance of N165 billion (N165,320,962,697).

The caucus described as "another sad commentary on the brimming corruption in the APC administration."

In a statement signed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, Hon. Ndudi Elumelu (PDP, Delta) on Monday, it insisted that such huge alleged economic crime against the

nation should not be left to an administrative panel of enquiry, but committed to an anti-graft agency for independent investigation.

The caucus expressed concerns that by committing the alleged NPA unremitted balance to an administrative panel, political manipulations and partisan influences had taken precedence over what should have been a system-wide investigation.

"Our caucus holds that the mere suspension of the... Managing Director of the NPA, Hadiza Bala Usman, and the resort to an administrative panel of enquiry even after the report by the supervising Minister of Transport, Rotimi Amaechi, exposed an unremitted and possibly diverted operating surplus of N165 billion, amounts to romancing and perfuming corruption by the APC-led Federal Government.

"The minority caucus also believes that the recourse to an administrative

instead of a full-scale criminal investigation can only serve as decoy to shield some other APC government officials involved in the looting spree at NPA and other affiliated agencies in the transport sector.

"This is because, apart from the unremitted N165 billion cited by the minister, other documents and reports from the Office of the Auditor General of the Federation had also uncovered several sleazes, including unremitted deduction to Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) amounting to N3,667,750,470, \$148,845,745.04, Euro 4,891,449.50 and £252,682.14.

"This is in addition to audit query of N15.18 billion allegedly stolen through inflated corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects/programmes....

"As representatives of the suffering people of Nigeria, our caucus is particularly very worried that such monumental lootings are going on at a time terrorists,

bandits, unknown gunmen, and criminal militias are reigning supreme across the length and breadth of the country and life has consequently become the cheapest article in the country.

"We imagine that such resources if channeled to the security sector and well-managed would have made a world of difference in addressing the problem of insecurity in the country," the statement added.

It stressed further that the APC administration had crippled the national economy and brought untold hardship and suffering to Nigerians and therefore demanded more drastic step by anti-graft agencies to recover the stolen funds as well as prosecute all involved in the looting spree.

"It is a shame that a party that came to power with the promise to fight corruption, build the economy, and fight insecurity has ended up destroying whatever gains that were made before it came to power," the caucus said.

Troops Eliminate Top Bandits' Commanders, 48 Others

The Nigerian army said its troops of 8 Division operating in Zamfara and adjoining states have eliminated many bandits' commanders and over 48 members of their gangs in North West.

The Director, Army Public Relations, Brig.-Gen. Mohammed Yerima, disclosed this in a statement on Monday in Abuja.

Yerima said that the Division had earlier launched *Operation Tsare Mutane* following the directives of the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt.-Gen. Ibrahim Attahiru.

He said that the COAS had directed the Division to stabilise the security situation in the zone to facilitate the return of socio-economic activities.

According to him, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) the Division, Maj.-

Gen. Usman Yusuf, launched the first phase of the operation that lasted from March 23 to April 2 in Maradun Local Government Area of Zamfara.

"The troops successfully cleared many bandits' camps in Jaya, Kadaya and Bayan Ruwa, amongst several others.

"The troops successfully neutralised 48 bandits while the bandits' leader in the area known as Jummo sustained gunshot wound to his leg.

"The troops rescued 18 kidnap victims from the bandits' enclave and recovered eight AK-47 rifles, one G3 rifle, one PKT and a Machine Gun from the bandits," he said.

Yerima also disclosed that the troops sacked several other bandits' camps around Gabiya, Bozaya and Mereri and the adjoining forests in Maru



Valentine Ozigbo, Peoples Democratic Party's (PDP) aspirant for the 2021 Anambra governorship election (right); Chukwuemeka Oriaku, Chairman, Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), Awka and District Society (second right); Rev. Samson Disu, Council Coordinator, ICAN, Awka and District Society (second left), and Amobi Nwokafor, ICAN member, during the inauguration of Mr. Oriaku in Awka, Anambra State.

Local Government Area during the second phase of the operation.

According to him, the second phase took place from April 19 to May 3, adding that the areas which were heavily infested by bandits were

successfully cleared by the highly spirited troops.

He said that key bandits' leaders including Yellow Mai-Bille, Sani Meli, Dan-Katsina and Sama'ila Bakajin Bari were neutralised in the process while the main leader

known as Nasanda narrowly escaped with fatal injuries.

He said that one Isan Heshi, a close ally of a notorious bandit called Nagala, was also neutralised during the operation.

According to him, items

recovered in the second phase include 4,600 rounds of ammunition, two AK-103 rifles, eight AK-47 magazines, 1,628 rounds of AK-47 ammunition, 54 rounds of PKM as well as one motorcycle and five Techno mobile phones.

Peter Obi Alleges Plot To Link Him With South-East Violence

CHUKWUJEKWU ILOZUE
AWKA

Mr. Peter Obi, the Vice Presidential Candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) during the 2019 election, has alleged plot to blackmail him by linking him with the spate of killings in the South East.

Obi's Special Adviser on Media, Mr. Valentine Obienyem, in a statement issued in Awka accused Obi's political opponents, alleging that "the present effort to blackmail Mr. Obi is by some prominent Nigerians, including an incumbent governor in the South-East.

"Our informant, whom we have no reason to doubt, revealed how five

of them were invited to a meeting on how to nail Mr. Peter Obi so that, according to him, his 'rising profile will be dimmed for good'," Obienyem said in the statement.

He said the informant had said, "Watch out; soon you will see a group call a world press conference, speak of the insecurity in the land, appeal to anybody with information on the causes to help the government solve it and finally drop the bomb by linking Mr. Peter Obi to the sponsorship of the Biafran movement through offer of money to sustain the agitation and use of Biafran boys for selfish end, including winning of elections."

"Though our informant refused to disclose

the name of the governor behind this and the main person he is using", he assured that "in the fullness of time, the plot will unfold and the characters will become apparent on their own."

He, however, added that some of them were not comfortable on the way the tide is moving and may finally opt out," Obienyem further said.

Obienyem noted that most of the previous efforts to blackmail Mr. Obi by some prominent people through hired hands backfired, because the truth eventually prevailed, adding that "the present plot to make trouble for an innocent man will similarly come to naught as far as Almighty God remains on the throne."

FG Considers 228 Building Component Firms For Social Housing Projects

EMMANUEL BADEJO
LAGOS

As part of the measures to grow local industries, while pursuing delivery of mass housing in the country, the Family Homes Funds Limited (FHFL) is currently engaging 228 building component firms.

Daily Independent learnt the firms have expressed interest in supplying inputs including doors, glazing, paint, roofing sheet, among others, in the ongoing Federal Government's Social Housing Programme.

At the moment, the anchoring firm, FHFL, is currently in talks with the firms to secure bulk supply of key materials, which in turn will provide opportunity to grow their production capacity.

Mr. Femi Adewole, the Managing Director, FHFL, an architect, had dropped this hint while briefing the presidency on the housing projects at the weekend in Abuja.

"About 228 manufacturers of building components have expressed interest in supplying inputs including doors, glazing, paint, roofing sheet, etc. We are now engaging with these to secure bulk supply of key materials which in turn will provide opportunity to grow their production capacity," Adewole had said.

Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, who chaired a review meeting on the Economic Sustainability Plan implementation, earlier assured government's determination to deliver social housing projects across the federation.

According to Osinbajo, Buhari's administration will

continue to focus on creating more jobs while improving access to power and affordable housing for majority of Nigerians.

The vice president emphasised that the focus must be on providing affordable housing for the masses.

He said, "If the Federal Government is going to intervene in housing, most of it should be social housing. Everybody else, including the private sector, can build N9.6 million worth of houses, but nobody else will do social housing.

"All over the world, when government intervenes, it is social housing...those who cannot afford housing are the ones we must focus attention on.

"I think that we have

CONTINUES ON P29 →

Abdulsalami Abubakar Denies Link With Bandits, Terrorists

CHINWENDU NNADOZIE

Former Head of State, retired Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar, on Monday in Minna denied having any link with bandits or terrorist groups in Niger State.

Social media was replete with allegations last week that the former Nigerian leader owned a helicopter used in delivering arms and ammunitions to bandits and terrorists in the state.

Some online media outfits also claimed last week that the impounded helicopter was also the one used in supplying food to bandits and terrorists.

Abubakar described the

reports as "false and unfounded".

He disassociated himself from such "heinous crime that is unbecoming of any patriotic citizen".

He stated that ordinarily, he would have ignored such "spurious reports", but had to set the records straight.

"This kind of fake news has the potential of aggravating the already tensed security situation in the country and should not be condoned," he stressed.

He lamented that some individuals could be so callous as to peddle such allegations to smear the image and character of other people.

"I urge Nigerians to ignore such treacherous acts and to be careful with the kind of information they dish out or share on social media," he stated.

He also urged Nigerians to continue to work and pray for enduring peace in the country, saying that no nation could attain greatness without peace and security of lives and property.

His rebuttal is contained in a statement issued by his media aide, Dr. Yakubu Suleiman.

Meanwhile, Gov. Abubakar Bello has inaugurated a special weekly prayer session across the eight emirate councils in the state to

seek God's intervention to end insecurity in the state.

Bello said there was the urgent need to seek God's intervention in the security situation in the state.

He told newsmen after the inauguration held in Minna that significant progress was being made in restoring normalcy to some troubled areas in the state.

The governor said that the prayer sessions would continue after the Ramadan fasting period.

"We encourage every stakeholder to support government's efforts with prayers. With God, I believe everything is possible," he said.

Sanwo-Olu Gets Lagosians' Backing To Tackle Security Challenges

Lagosians have asked the state government to take decisive actions on some security issues to rein in what they described as a disturbing trend.

Among others, they demanded action against what many described as the menace of commercial motorcycles, otherwise known as *okada*, kidnapping, armed robbery, cult clashes, and violent assaults.

It was all at a Stakeholders' Meeting on Security held at the Adeyemi Bero Hall, Alausa, Ikeja, where Gov-

ernor Babajide Sanwo-Olu and leading lights in security circles listened to a group of panelists who highlighted the state's security challenges. In the audience were religious leaders, the Chief Judge, Justice Kazeem Alogba, military chiefs, traditional leaders, community leaders, students, unionists and members of the State Executive Council.

Governor Sanwo-Olu listed his administration's efforts in security and assured his audience that a decisive action

CONTINUES ON P29 →



DAILY MARKET UPDATE

May 10, 2021

Contact: research@cordros.com

Equity Market

COMMENTARY

- Trading in the domestic bourse opened the week positively, as investors took particular interests in Tier 1 Banks – ZENITHBANK (+3.6%) and GUARANTY (+2.6%). Specifically, the All-Share Index advanced by 0.3% to 39,312.74 points. Accordingly, the Month-to-date and Year-to-Date losses moderated to -1.3% and -2.4%, respectively.
- The total volume of trades increased by 35.7% to 324.19 million units, valued at NGN3.28 billion, and exchanged in 4,867 deals. ETRANZACT was the most traded stock by volume at 72.18 million units, while ZENITHBANK was the most traded stock by value at NGN1.02 billion.
- Analysing by sectors, the Banking (+2.9%), Insurance (+1.3%), and Industrial Goods (+0.1%) indices recorded gains, while losses were recorded in the Consumer Goods (-0.3%) and Oil & Gas (-0.1%) indices.
- As measured by market breadth, market sentiment was positive (2.0x), as 24 tickers gained, relative to 14 losers. ABCTTRANS (+9.7%) and REGALINS (+9.7%) recorded the most significant gains of the day, while UNITYBNK (- 8.3%) and NEIMETH (-6.0%) topped the losers' list.

KEY MARKET STATISTICS

Metrics	Outcome
All-Share Index	39,312.74
Today's return	▲ 0.29%
WtD	▲ 0.29%
MtD	▼ -1.31%
YtD	▼ -2.38%
52-week High	42,412.66
52-week Low	23,695.90
Market Capitalisation (N'bn)	20,490.73

TOP 5 TRADE PER VALUE

Ticker	Value NGN'000	Market Value
ZENITHBANK	1,015,465,286.05	30.95%
BUACEMENT	512,954,896.50	15.64%
GUARANTY	341,769,730.00	10.42%
ACCESS	189,173,515.95	5.77%
ETRANZACT	162,395,952.75	4.95%

TOP 5 GAINERS

Ticker	Pclose (NGN)	Close (NGN)	Change
ABCTTRANS	0.31	0.34	9.68%
REGALINS	0.31	0.34	9.68%
UBN	5.40	5.90	9.26%
LINKASSURE	0.69	0.75	8.70%
MBENEFIT	0.37	0.40	8.11%

TOP 5 TRADES BY VOLUME

Ticker	Volume Units '000	Market Volume
ETRANZACT	72,175,979.00	22.26%
ZENITHBANK	44,000,748.00	13.57%
ACCESS	22,978,740.00	7.09%
UBA	16,585,198.00	5.12%
MANSARD	16,429,809.00	5.07%

TOP 5 LOSERS

Ticker	Pclose (NGN)	Close (NGN)	Change
UNITYBNK	0.60	0.55	-8.33%
NEIMETH	1.82	1.71	-6.04%
FLOURMILL	31.00	29.50	-4.84%
CHAMS	0.22	0.21	-4.55%
NAHCO	2.20	2.10	-4.55%

CURRENT MARKET INFORMATION

Date	Days	NSE ASI	% Change	Volume	% Change	Value (NGN)	% Change	Gainers	Losers
10-May-21	Monday	39,312.74	▲ 0.29%	324,187,345	▲ 35.68%	3,280,637,033	▲ 11.10%	28	14
7-May-21	Friday	39,198.75	▲ 0.21%	238,937,530	▼ -40.79%	2,952,818,493	▼ -38.60%	25	14
6-May-21	Thursday	39,114.73	▼ -0.81%	403,511,692	▲ 54.85%	4,809,503,290	▲ 101.02%	24	20
5-May-21	Wednesday	39,433.81	▼ -0.92%	260,578,014	▼ -38.90%	2,392,548,837	▼ -48.59%	16	21
4-May-21	Tuesday	39,801.78	▼ -0.08%	426,507,912	▲ 29.90%	4,654,228,280	▲ 49.71%	24	16

FIXED INCOME AND MONEY MARKET

COMMENTARY

- The naira appreciated at the I&E window by 0.1% to NGN410.67/USD but stayed flat at NGN483.00/USD in the parallel market.
- The overnight lending rate contracted by 25bps to 15.0%, in the absence of significant funding pressure on the system.
- Trading in the NTB secondary market was bearish, as the average yield expanded by 14bps to 5.0%. Across the curve, the average yield was flat at the short end but expanded at the mid (+1bp) and long (+85bps) segments due to sell-offs of the 171DTM (+9bps) and 353DTM (+891bps) bills, respectively. Similarly, the OMO segment's average yield expanded by 10bps to 8.5%.
- The Treasury bond secondary market turned bullish, as the average yield contracted by 4bps to 12.2%. Across the benchmark curve, average yield expanded at the short (+1bps) end due to sell-offs of the JAN-2026 (+35bps) bond but stayed flat at the mid-segment and

ECONOMIC INDICATOR

	Current	Year Start
MPR	11.50%	11.50%
Inflation	18.17%	15.75%
Gross External Reserves	\$34.72bn*	\$35.37bn

* As at 7th May 2021

CURRENCY

	Current Value	1-Day Change	YTD Change
CBN Official rate	380.00	▬ 0.00%	▬ 0.00%
I&E Window	410.67	▼ -0.08%	▼ -0.10%
Parallel Market	483.00	▬ 0.00%	▼ -2.69%

Summit Of Hope: Attacks On Afe Babalola Unpatriotic – NBA

YAQOUB POPOOLA
ADO-EKITI

The Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) has berated an alleged malicious report against Legal Icon and Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) Aare Afe Babalola over his support for the proposed Summit of Hope.

The NBA chairman, Ado-Ekiti branch, Adeyemi Adewumi in a statement on Monday in Ado-Ekiti, Monday said Babalola was only being patriotic by calling for the summit to address the precarious situation in the country.

He said, “The Nigerian Bar Association condemns this criminally mischievous publication and calls on every Nigerian to disregard and discountenance its content but appreciate the patriotic and nationalistic move by way of suggestion of Aare Afe Babalola (SAN) to restore the Hope of Nigeria.

“The publication which is criminally mischievous and falsely reported is an attempt to hoodwink Nigerians into believing a negatively and falsely reported news as against the genuine reasoning behind Aare Afe Babalola SAN’s call to restore hope for Nigerians amidst her numerous challenges.”

INEC Establishes 2,239 Additional Polling Units In Delta

WILSON MACAULAY
WARRI

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has created two thousand, two hundred and thirty-nine new polling units in Delta State for the conduct of future elections.

INEC Resident Electoral Commissioner for Delta State, Pastor Monday Udoh-Tom stated this during a stakeholder meeting on the exercise at INEC

headquarters in Asaba, the state capital.

Mr. Udoh-Tom said following the establishment of the additional polling units, Delta State now has a total of five thousand eight hundred and sixty-three voting points spread across the twenty-five local government areas of the state.

“We have new settlements developing every day, and some of the polling units were put in places that they were not supposed to be. For instance, in shrines, religious houses and even people’s homes.

“So, the idea was to make sure that all of them are pulled out and kept where they are accessible to voters. And the distance between voters and polling units was now reduced so that on Election Day people can move easily and vote.”

The Resident Electoral Commissioner explained that the exercise which was conducted between the 22nd and 29th of April was followed by the verification of the conformity of the process by INEC teams at the local government areas in synergy with officials in the state and INEC headquarters in Abuja.

Mike Okiro Police Station, Umuahia Not Burnt – Abia Govt

UCHE NWOSU
UMUAHIA

Following the reports of alleged arson on the popular Ubani in Umuahia North Local Government Area of Abi State on Sunday, the state government has denounced the reports as false.

A statement issued by the State Commissioner for Information, Chief John Okiyi Kalu on Sunday explained that the station, named Mike Okiro Police Station located along Umuahia-Uzoakoli Road, close to Ubani market was not raised.

Okiyi Kalu used the opportunity to express the sadness of the Abia State Governor, Dr Okezie Ikpeazu over the incident, stressing that the activities of arsonists concerning the spate of attacks on security agents and facilities across the country are condemnable.

The governor warned that those responsible for the attacks in Abia State “will certainly not escape the long arm of the law as our security architecture in the State is robust enough to bring them to justice”.

NITDA, Cloudflex, Rackcenter Back NITRA Technology Forum 2021

services operator, Cloudflex and premier data center operator, Rackcenter.

NITRA Technology Forum 2021, which will be chaired by the Chief Executive Officer, Internet Exchange Point of Nigeria (IXPN), Mr. Muhammed Rudman has as its theme:

“Achieving 30% Growth In Local Cloud Hosting By 2024”.

The forum will throw a searchlight on the growth potentials, challenges and benefits of hosting Cloud services and data centers locally and assess policies and regulation around the sub-sector.

As the Nigeria Information Technology Reporters Association (NITRA) prepares for NITRA Technology Forum 2021, stakeholders in the Cloud Hosting service have expressed support for the event scheduled to hold on May 27 in Lagos, Nigeria.

Besides, the event has received backing from the nation’s information technology regulator, the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA); Cloud

FG Plans To Establish Marriage Registries In State Capitals

SEYI TAIWO-OGUNTUASE
LAGOS

The Federal Government has affirmed that efforts were ongoing to have Federal Marriage Registries in all the state capi-

tals of the federation to bring the registry close to the grassroots.

Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola, Minister of Interior disclosed this at the weekend during a National Stakeholders’ Confer-

ence on the Administration and Conduct of Statutory Marriage in Nigeria.

Aregbesola, represented by Dr. Shuaib Belgore, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, stated that the Conference was

necessitated by the need for the Ministry to inform stakeholders and enlighten the general public about some new guidelines and important aspects about the administration and conduct of statutory marriage in the country, as well as the amended Legal Notices in the Marriage Act.

CORDROS

CAPITAL

BENCHMARK BONDS - SECONDARY MARKET

New Nomenclature	Issue	TTM	10-May	Change	7-May
^14.50 15-JUL-2021	15-Jul-16	0.18	3.05%	▼ -0.05%	3.10%
^16.39 27-JAN-2022	27-Jan-12	0.72	6.09%	▼ -0.39%	6.48%
^12.75 27-APR-2023	27-Apr-18	1.96	10.49%	▼ -0.01%	10.50%
^14.20 14-MAR-2024	14-Mar-14	2.84	12.05%	▼ -0.01%	12.06%
13.53 23-MAR-2025	23-Mar-18	3.87	12.41%	▲ 0.19%	12.22%
^12.50 22-JAN-2026	22-Jan-16	4.70	12.70%	▲ 0.35%	12.36%
^16.2884 17-MAR-2027	17-Mar-17	5.85	13.10%	▼ 0.00%	13.10%
^13.98 23-FEB-2028	23-Feb-18	6.79	13.10%	▼ 0.00%	13.10%
14.55 26-APR-2029	26-Apr-19	7.96	13.10%	▼ 0.00%	13.11%
^10.00 23-JUL-2030	23-Jul-10	9.20	13.31%	▼ 0.00%	13.31%
^12.1493 18-JUL-2034	18-Jul-14	13.19	13.95%	▲ 0.00%	13.95%
12.50 27-MAR-2035	27-Mar-20	13.88	13.91%	▼ -0.21%	14.12%
^12.40 18-MAR-2036	18-Mar-16	14.86	13.90%	▼ -0.14%	14.04%
^16.2499 18-APR-2037	18-Apr-17	15.94	13.90%	▼ -0.05%	13.96%
9.80 24-JUL-2045	24-Jul-20	24.21	14.10%	▼ -0.19%	14.29%
^14.80 26-APR-2049	26-Apr-19	27.96	13.99%	▼ -0.09%	14.08%
12.98 27-MAR-2050	27-Mar-20	28.88	14.20%	▼ 0.00%	14.20%

AUCTIONS

Tbills	Tenor	28-Apr	14-Apr
	91 day	2.00%	2.00%
	182 day	3.50%	3.50%
	364 day	9.75%	9.00%
	VOLUME (N'bn)	129.46	153.38

INTERBANK OFFERED RATE

Tenor	7-May	10-May	Change
O/N	15.25	15.00	(25)

TREASURY BILLS – SECONDARY MARKET

Maturity	DTM	10-May	Change	7-May
13-May-21	31	2.86%	▼ 0.00%	2.86%
10-Jun-21	52	2.94%	▼ 0.00%	2.94%
01-Jul-21	66	2.99%	▼ 0.00%	2.99%
15-Jul-21	80	3.05%	▼ 0.00%	3.05%
29-Jul-21	108	3.15%	▼ 0.00%	3.15%
26-Aug-21	122	3.21%	▼ 0.00%	3.21%
09-Sep-21	129	3.24%	▼ 0.00%	3.24%
16-Sep-21	143	3.56%	▼ 0.00%	3.56%
30-Sep-21	157	3.88%	▼ 0.00%	3.88%
14-Oct-21	171	5.07%	▲ 0.09%	4.97%
28-Oct-21	185	4.08%	▼ 0.00%	4.08%
11-Nov-21	199	4.46%	▼ -0.41%	4.86%
25-Nov-21	248	5.79%	▼ -0.25%	6.05%
13-Jan-22	262	6.19%	▼ -0.21%	6.40%
27-Jan-22	276	6.59%	▼ -0.17%	6.75%
10-Feb-22	290	6.99%	▼ -0.12%	7.11%
24-Feb-22	304	7.41%	▼ -0.07%	7.48%
10-Mar-22	311	7.61%	▼ -0.05%	7.66%
17-Mar-22	325	8.04%	▲ 0.00%	8.04%
31-Mar-22	353	8.91%	▲ 8.91%	0.00%

Metro

Pastor, Two Others In Police Net For Human Trafficking In Delta

SUNDAY APAH
UGHELLI

Men of the Ughelli 'A' Division of Nigeria Police have arrested a Pastor, Pastor's wife, and one other for alleged human trafficking in Ovir-Ogor community, Ughelli North Local Government Area of Delta State.

It was gathered the suspects had initially trafficked the 23 years old girl, simply identified Oghenfejiro Obotakpore to a yet to be identified woman in Bayelsa State before taking her to Libya, an African country.

The suspects, One Mr. Sunday Adeyemi, an assistant Pastor of a White Garment (name withheld) in connivance with the wife a Pastor were arrested at the community after a text message from the trafficked lady to one of her relatives about her ordeal in Libya and the leadership of the community was notified.

The incident was immediately reported at Ughelli 'A' division which led to the arrest of the pastor's wife whose husband is a founder of another white garment church in Ewvreni, the Assistant Pastor in Ovir-Ogor and one other lady who masterminded the arrangement

in Bayelsa State.

A senior police officer attached to the Ughelli 'A' Division told journalists that "on April 10, 2021, a community leader from Ovir-Ogor came and reported that, one Sunny surname unknown conspired with one woman whose real name unknown and trafficked one Fejiro Obotakpore Marian, aged 23, from Afiesere community but resides in Ovir-Ogor to Libya without the consent of her parents, hence the complaint.

Speaking further the source who spoke on anonymous condition, revealed that the police took action which lead to the arrest of the pas-

tor's wife who is popularly known as Jahmichael Ibor and the Assistant Pastor, Sunny Adeyemi and with their confessional statements, another lady from Bayelsa State was arrested.

"They are yet to be charged to court because of the the strike action but would be charged immediately as soon as investigations is concluded". The security source said.

When Contacted, The Delta State Acting Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Bright Edeke confirmed the incident, saying investigation is still on and that he believed that the girl has been asked to come back to Nigeria.

FCCPC Investigates Deaths Of Two Patients In Lagos, Ogun Hospitals

CHIBUZOREMEJOR
ABUJA

The Federal Competition & Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC) has said it was investigating the death of two patients in hospitals located in Lagos and Ogun states.

A statement on Monday by Babatunde Irukera, Executive Vice Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of FCCPC, said the Commission learned from multiple channels and sources about the sad and unfortunate death of Mrs. Peju Ugboma after a surgical/medical procedure at Premier Hospital, Victoria Island, Lagos State, and Ms. Omolara Omoyajowo after receiving care at Beachland Specialist Hospital, Arepo, Ogun State.

Irukera said with respect to Late Mrs. Ugboma, publicly available information suggests that she was admitted at Premier Hospital, Victoria Island, Lagos State, on Thursday, April 22, 2021, to undergo what appeared to be an elective procedure on Friday, April 23, 2021.

"The information also implies that the procedure appeared to be uneventful, and the patient survived the operation.

"However, subsequent to the procedure, complications may have arisen. Premier continued management, including intensive care. The patient invariably deteriorated. On Sunday April 25, 2021, a decision was made to transfer the patient for further care and management to Evercare Hospital, Lekki Phase 1, Lagos.

"She was transferred accordingly. Mrs. Ugboma ultimately died in the afternoon of Sunday April 25, 2021.

"Similarly, available information seems to indicate that Late Ms. Omoyajowo was ad-

mitted at Beachland Specialist Hospital in Arepo, Ogun State, on Wednesday May 5, 2021, where she was receiving medical attention.

"Her condition appeared to deteriorate, and the hospital decided that the patient needed to be transferred to a teaching hospital in Lagos State.

"She was thereafter transferred. Ms. Omayajowo, was declared dead on arrival at the next facility on Thursday May 6, 2021," the statement of explained.

Irukera explained that in both cases, relatives and friends allege mismanagement including failure of professional standards as well as patient care/customer service standards including timely responses to requests.

He said, "The Commission in 2018, in collaboration with multiple healthcare professional associations led by the Nigerian Medical Association, and the Federal Ministry of Health promoted, created, and secured the adoption of the Patients' Bill of Rights (PBoR).

"The rights enshrined therein are provider obligations that otherwise exist in other enforceable instruments/codes governing healthcare delivery.

"Further, and in addition, the Federal Competition & Consumer Protection Act (FCCPA) mandates the commission to enforce "any enactment with respect to the protection of consumers, conduct investigations into matters related to consumer protection; ensure consumer interests receive due consideration, and provide redress to obnoxious practices; ensure service providers comply with local and international standards of safe service delivery," as provided in Section 17(a), (e), (s) and (y).



Godwin Obaseki, Governor, Edo State (left); Yusuf Haruna, Coordinator, Edo State Community Vigilante Security Network (second left); Brig. Gen. SA. Abdullahi, Commander, 4 Brigade, Nigerian Army (second right), and Philip Shaibu, Deputy Governor, during the governor's meeting with members of Edo State Community Vigilante Security Network and heads of various security agencies in Benin City, Edo State, on Monday.

How Police, Thugs Brutalised Me – Victim

● Urges IGP To Investigate SWAT Team

ANDREW UTULU
LAGOS

A 30-year old man, Sunday Michael has called on the Inspector General of Police, Usman Baba Alkali, to investigate his near-death experience in the hands of officers of the Police Special Weapon and Tactics Team (SWAT) in the Akodo area of Lagos State.

The SWAT was introduced by the immediate past Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Adamu, following the outcry against extra-judicial killings and abuse of power

by the disbanded Special Anti-Robbery Squad.

The victim narrated that he was on Thursday returning from his site in the Osoroko area of Ibeju Lekki with his brother-in-law, simply identified as Moses, when the policemen arrested and tortured them.

The victim, who is calling on the new Inspector General of Police, Usman Baba Alkali, to order full scale investigations into the mission of the Abuja based SWAT officers in Lagos, also demanded for apology for the treatment that was meted on them.

The victim said, "I was returning from my site in Os-

oroko when my car developed a fault and I had to park by the side of the road to call my mechanic. The mechanic told me to pour water on the vehicle and allow the engine to cool."

"My brother in law (Moses) went to get water and I was standing by the side of the vehicle, when some policemen with the inscription 'FCID' on their jackets came and started asking me questions."

He added, "I later got to know that they were SWAT officers from Abuja and I explained, where I was coming from and what happened to my vehicle to them."

"They searched my vehicle but did not find anything incriminating and they moved

away and stayed in their vehicle but some land thugs came with guns, machetes and other dangerous weapons and ordered us to go inside the policemen's vehicle."

He also continued, "They started beating me and my brother-in-law and we had to follow them to the parked police vehicle, where we were confronted with another round of beating from the policemen."

"The policemen targeted our knee caps and hit us with every available objects in their vehicle before driving us away to Akodo Divisional Police Station."

The victim also added, "When we got to Akodo Police Station, they did not take us

inside the station to write any statement but only allowed us to talk to their leader in front of the police station.

"When I narrated what happened to him, he expressed his helplessness saying that his boss in Abuja whom I later learnt to be a certain ACP Sani, has the final say on my release."

He also stated, "They drove us away from the station and when they got to a bus stop, they shot sporadically and arrested some people and packed them in their vehicle, while I was with one of them, Felix, in my own vehicle.

"Every time, the other policemen in the police vehicle would come down and ask Felix who was driving my car whether I had cooperated or said anything but he kept tell-

ing them that I have not spoken and when it was getting late I had to bail myself."

It was, however, gathered that four persons were earlier arrested and on administrative bail from the police as a result of the strike embarked upon by judicial workers nationwide.

The four persons were arrested by the IG Monitoring Unit in connection with the crisis in Akodo and the murder of a man, who led policemen to effect an arrest in the community and they had been recommended for trial by the immediate past IGP, Mohammed Adamu.

When contacted, the Police image maker in charge of the state Police Command, Muyiwa Adejobi said that he had not been briefed on the incident.

Our View

**Local Government
And Constitution
Amendment**

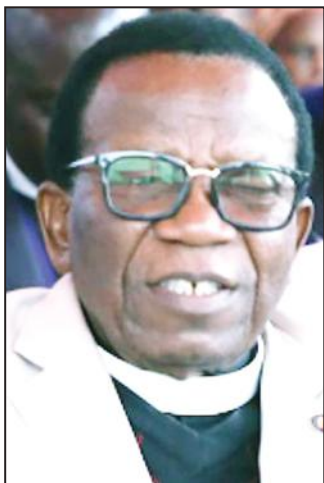
Employees of local governments in the country are understandably angry at the reported plan by the House of Representatives to amend the 1999 Constitution with a view to delisting local government as a tier of government. Their apprehension is not limited to a likely disruption of their employment should the proposed law sail through, they are equally concerned that the Nigerian people will be the ultimate loser, as development to them will be stalled drastically.

11

Quote Of The Day

"I condemn insecurity in its totality and I want to call on the Federal Government to be serious with the fight against insecurity. Our people need to have peace. As a church, we will continue to do our best to keep preaching and praying which we believe will lead many to repentance."

—Pastor Sampson Igwe,
National President of The
Apostolic Church Nigeria.



Buhari Must Restructure Police To Tackle Insecurity –Bode George

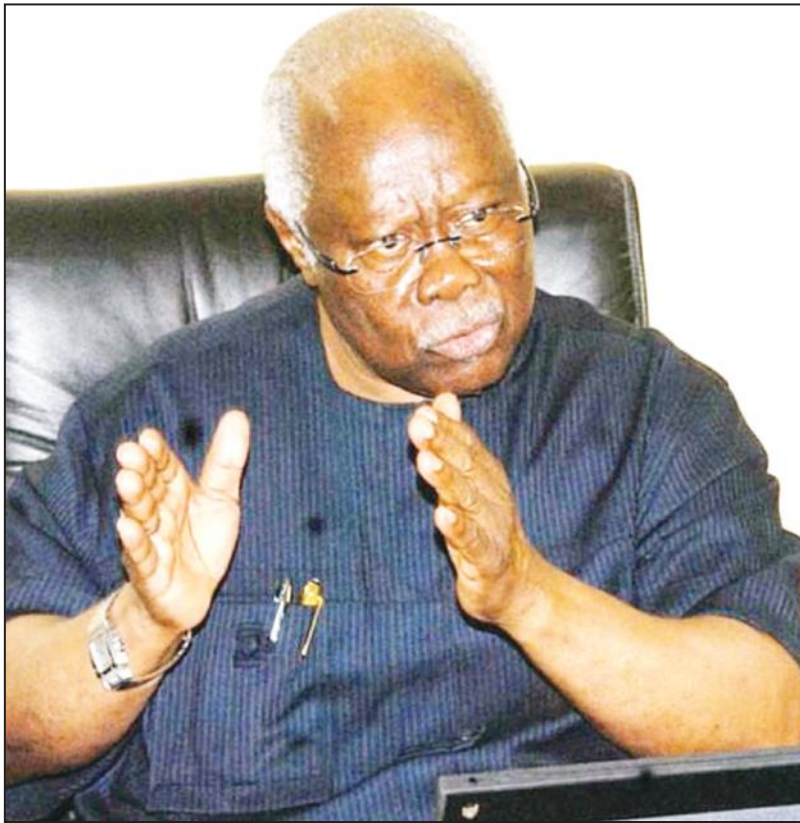
Chief Bode George, former Deputy National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in this interview, spoke about the state of the nation and way out of the myriads of challenges confronting the nation. **JOY ANIGBOGU** brings the excerpts:

What is your thought on the state of the nation?

The Nigerian polity is now straying towards its elastic limit. It is now over-stressed and over-stretched beyond the bounds of acceptability. Our survival as a nation is genuinely being questioned from the desert to the sea. Violence sprouts everywhere from the distant outpost of Ajangbadi in Lagos to the farthest reaches of Malum-Fatori in Borno, from Kisi in Oke-Ogun to Odi-ani in the swamps of Delta, our nation gradually descends into a dangerous gangland where the rule of the bayonet and clubs seems to be the norm. Our survival as a people is to reverse the ruinous course and retrieve ourselves from the gaping chasm that confronts us all. This is the time to change the path of old, to look beyond what hobbles our progress, to redefine our value system, to rejig and restructure the various anomalies that presently hinder the greater possibilities of the Nigerian Union. The challenges before us are far beyond the confines of partisan politics. The turmoil within the Nigerian entity is about the twisted present situation. It is about who we are. It is about what we ought to be. It is about the greater tomorrow. Unfortunately, the sway and the swing of the present political culture do not favour the triumph of merit. It does not favour the promotion of excellence. It does not encourage the accommodation of hard work, and discourages the blind indifference to ethnic or sectarian provenance.

In specific term what is your thought on the state of insecurity especially the constant kidnapping?

I will advise President Muhammadu Buhari to restructure the police to tackle insecurity. The country is fast deteriorating as a nation in terms of security. The police are disenchanted that they no longer feel safe to face the hoodlums. The time to restructure the police has come. The state of insecurity in the country is so obvious that even governors elected on the platform of All Progressives Congress (APC) have raised alarm about the state of insecurity in the country. We must restructure the police to tackle insecurity. Policing all over the world is local. Buhari must revisit the system



Bode George

of governance in this country. One man cannot sit in one spot to direct and manage this country. This is not a military government. The insecurity is adversely affecting our economy; companies are running away from Nigeria to a small country like Ghana. Printing the money to pay State allocations is a problem, nobody wants our crude oil and so the financial situation in Nigeria now is dire. The issue at hand is beyond partisan but how we can survive as a nation. Every corner of the country is challenged by variegated insecurities ranging from banditry, urban outlaws, rogue herdsmen, destructive fissiparous forces, the murderous Boko Haram terrorists and sundry insidious elements. The basic priority of all right thinking patriots should be about restoring peace and harmony among the people rather than the mercantile pursuit of a chimerical presidential bid.

Apart from insecurity there are rising inflation, poverty and unemployment. What is your thought on that?

A nation without an efficient power supply cannot rise into the bright dawn of digital civilization. It is stuck forever in the bleak dark side of economic underdevelopment and teeters inevitably on economic ruin. Indeed, something must give way to spur a Nigerian rebirth and renewal lest we become the permanent invalid giant of Africa. To change course, to redefine our path, we must cultivate the essential ingredients of meritocracy as the critical building blocks of modern nations. Wherever young, vibrant, intelligent minds are given a pride of place to steer the destinies of their nations, such societies invariably are widening the opportunities for competitive growth,

encouraging a healthy contest of ideas, strengthening their developmental advantages. Our young men and women excelling from the tundra of Russia to Saint Albert in Canada are symbols of our great possibilities if only we do the right things; If only we encourage knowledge and be kind to talent; If only we disregard the narrow province of nepotism and embrace merit regardless of its origin.

What can you say about the action of former Governor Ayo Fayose, who after the South West congress said that he agreed with the outcome of the election but later turned around to say otherwise?

Ayo Fayose is my younger brother; if he comes back to me I will accept him and advise him. It was unfortunate that he spoke from the two sides of his mouth. A new beginning is dawning upon our shores in the Southwest. Let us seize the moment, strengthen this new course; the rejuvenation of truth over falsehood, the accommodation and the embrace of righteous idealism over greed and narrow partisanship, the celebration of brotherhood over the decadence of enmity and the politics of bitterness. Truth, sincerity, faithfulness, loyalty to the good cause, the abiding resolve to pursue what is righteous and proper; Discipline, adherence to the rules of engagement, respect for leadership and established norms should be our watchwords. We will no longer tolerate or approve deliberate mud-slinging or character assassination by the devious and dubious elements that jump from one camp to the other in a desperate power grabbing fixity.

It appears that your party in Lagos

State is not prepared for the forthcoming local government election. What can you say about that?

The party will compete, even though there is doubt if the election will be free and fair judging by the antecedents of the ruling party in previous elections. I want to use this opportunity to drum support for electoral reform. If our electoral commission is more proactive in adopting the well proven and trusted electronic voting system which is the preferred platform in all enlightened democracies, there will be more fairness and balance in our wobbly democracy. That is not the case now where result sheets are moved manually from one stage to the other; allowing swift manipulation of figures by agents of retrogression. We are happy for the success of the South West zonal congress election; I want to charge all our members to embrace peace. There is room for reconciliation especially for all aggrieved members. I want to also warn that we will no longer tolerate faction in the party, and we will not hesitate to drive away anyone who wants to divide the party through creation of faction. There is nothing like 65/35. PDP is one. We are not like APC which has factions here and there. In fact it is against the party's constitution.

What can you say about the legislation by Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu to try former governors and their deputies of corruption charges?

Sanwo-Olu's legislation that seeks to shield criminals from Federal prosecution is dead on arrival. It is an elementary assertion that once a state law conflicts with a Federal legislation, the state law is voided. This is what the constitution says. Section 4(5) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) amplifies. If any Law enacted by the House of Assembly of a State is inconsistent with any Law validly made by the National Assembly, the Law made by the National Assembly shall prevail, and that other Law shall to the extent of the inconsistency be void. Sanwo-Olu rushes out with this bogus, invalid legislation, seeking to shield Tinubu from the day of reckoning. It will not work. This is politics of deceit and self-serving glorification. They cherry pick what suits them, railroading their enemies into jail and protecting their own. Let me say that the self-serving, dubious, incongruous legislation that seeks to shield the looters of our state treasury from the prosecutorial mandate of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), will fail. According to records, in the year 2020, the Alphabeta, a company owned by Bola Tinubu raked in about 37 billion naira from our treasury without lifting a finger. I was a victim of this dirty politics in the hands of Lagos State and Farida Waziri for committing no offense at all until I was discharged and acquitted by the highest court in our land. They are now haunted by their own seeds of discord.

Politics



Soludo



Ekwunife



Ozigbo

Anambra 2021: The Issues, The Candidates

CHUKWUJEKWU ILOZUE

AWKA

The first thing to be tackled by political parties in Anambra state in the November 6 governorship election is the issue of zoning. Although there is no consensus; on this issue, it is very likely to shape the course of the election now and in future.

Zoning came into Anambra political lexicon by accident. Immediate past Governor Peter Obi was rounding up his second tenure and all was set for the position to go South Senatorial District in the absence of serious contenders from the North Senatorial district. But Obi felt it was unfair that the North remained marginalised in Anambra politics and so he encouraged some groups to sensitise the rest of the state on the need for North to be given a chance. That singular decision was interpreted to mean rotation of governorship positions in the state. Hard as Obi tried to correct the misinterpretation, the notion stuck.

This means that the major factor to be contended with and which will likely sway votes is the issue of rotation. Common sense dictates that any party that does not field a candidate from the South will have a combination of South and North to contend with, mainly because the North being the weaker partner will throw its weight behind a Southern candidate.

As the political parties prepare for the party primaries rotation became a major issue for debate. However, it is worthy of note that it is only All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) under which Obi gave Anambra North that chance that is insisting on rotation.

There has been talk about political parties fielding candidates that

master the terrain well enough. Whatever may be the reason a group of people championing this insist that whomever that will govern the state in future must have lived in the state long enough to appreciate the way of life of the people.

In fact, as politicians approached 2021, the campaign had been that Anambra doesn't need candidates who live abroad to govern them. They believe that such candidates who came from abroad do not know the terrain sufficiently and are bound to falter in their approach to the development of the state.

Without doubt, the ruling All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) is considered strongest in the state. The party has been in power since March 16, 2006 and has consolidated its hold on power. However, true test of strength would have been measured if local government election had been conducted to find out true strength of political parties in the state.

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) is rated the second strongest party in the state. It tasted power through foul means between 2003 and 2006, when Senator Chris Ngige was sworn in after the controversial 2003 governorship election but was replaced by Governor Peter Obi of then APGA after protracted tribunal cases.

Since Obi left APGA and joined PDP, the party has gained strength. Not that the party was not strong before then, but the measure of integrity which Obi brought in radiated and attracted more members to the party. In the coming election the battle is likely to be between APGA and PDP.

The All Progressives Congress (APC) has been having difficulty in penetrating Anambra state just like in other states of the South East. It is even more difficult for it to do so now with the way things are in Nigeria.

Speaking on APC's chances in

the election, Senator Chris Ngige, former governor of Anambra and Minister of Labour said "We have started. We are laying the blocks. We did the foundation. We are putting the blocks on. By November, you'll see the house, the roofing and everything that a complete house has been built. Yes, we are going to mobilise both seen and unseen forces the way Governor Hope Uzodinma of Imo state said it. He is correct, seen and unseen forces. We are the seen forces. The unseen one is God".

The three major political parties in the state, namely: APGA, PDP and APC have reasonable number of aspirants.

APGA has at least six well known aspirants. They are: Professor Charles Chukwuma Soludo, Chief Chukwuma Umeoji, Chief Akachukwu Nwankpo, Prince Nicholas Ukachukwu, Sir. Damian Okolo and Chief Okwudili Ezenwankwo.

As for PDP, the party has 16 of them. Some of the aspirants are Iyom Uche Ekwunife, Dr. Obiora Okonkwo, Hon. Chris Azubogu, Dr. Winston Udeh and Mr. Valentine Ozigbo.

Others are Mr. Godwin Ezeemo, Mr. Emeka Etiaba, Dr. Ifedi Okwenana, Mr. Ugochkwu Uba, Mr. Tony Nwoye, Lady Chidi Onyemelukwe, Dr. Godwin Maduka, Hon. Chuma Nzeribe and Mrs. Ekwochi Genevieve.

In APC, there are Dr. Andy Uba, Chief George Moghalu, Mr. Dozie Nwankwo, Chief Amobi Nwokafor, Mr. Paul Orajiaka, Chief Azuka Okwuosa and Mr. Edozie Madu. Below are some of the gladiators to watch out for in the election:

Professor Charles Chukwuma Soludo

Since the creation of Anambra State there has never been so much trust placed on one man than Soludo. Solidarity groups pushing for his ambition are more than 30. And

these cut across all ages. What is more, former national chairman of APGA Chief Victor Umeh last week broke the proverbial "aku oyibo Nsugbe" when he said that Governor Obiano told him that Soludo is his choice. Umeh is not known for frivolities. To add to that a well known member of APC and former member of House of Representatives who represented Idemili North and South on the platform of APC Hon. Charles Odedo last week decamped from APC and collapsed his structure into Soludo's campaign structure. However, Soludo will need to battle intra-party intrigues to clinch the ticket in the first place.

Hon. Chukwuma Umeoji

Umeoji who is currently representing Aguata Federal Constituency and who has been chairman of Aguata local council for two terms is seen as the main challenger of Soludo in the upcoming party primaries. The rumour mill has it that the first family is divided over the choice of Soludo, and if that turns to be true the Umeoji may be the beneficiary. Both Soludo and Umeoji are from Anambra South Senatorial District.

Mr. Valentine Ozigbo Mr. Ozigbo, immediate past President and Chief Executive Officer of Transnational Corporation of Nigeria plc, Ozigbo is like the proverbial snail that can walk on thorns unhurt. His humaneness and philanthropic disposition virtues most admired by his supporters.

Hon. Chris Azubogu

Also known as "Mr. Project", Azubogu currently represents Nnewi North, Nnewi South and Ekwusigo Federal Constituency in the House of Representatives. He is identified with performance and people believe that if he is nominated he will gain support of many people.

Dr. Obiora Okonkwo: This is a big, wealthy and popular politician who has been making waves. However, he is from Anambra Central Senatorial District.

Iyom Uche Ekwunife

Ekwunife has mastered the terrain. She has been in the House of Representatives after which she currently sits in the Senate. Iyom has a tremendous support base. Although she is presently representing Anambra Central Senatorial District, she argues that she was born in Anambra South, so at worst, she belongs to both.

Speaking on her chances, she said: "I am a sitting senator of PDP and my tenure will end in 2023. The Senator representing Anambra Central Senatorial District in the upper legislative chamber, Uche Ekwunife, has declared her intention to contest the state governorship election under the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Senator Andy Uba

Senator Uba is a well-known figure who was once sworn in as Governor before he was removed by the court which settled the issue of tenure of elected governors in Nigeria. He contested in the party primaries in 2017 but his ambition was frustrated by Hon. Tony Nwoye.

Chief George Moghalu

Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA), Moghalu has come of age in politics. One of the most faithful party members, Moghalu has stuck to APP, ANPP, CPC and now APC. He hails from Nnewi.

APC has vowed to clinch Anambra state but it remains to be seen how that can happen. These notwithstanding, anything can happen in politics and any candidate can win

Our View

VISION

To be Nigeria's First Truly Independent National Quality Newspaper

OUR MISSION

To produce a quality, vibrant and viable newspaper that will inform and form the nation's present and aspiring political, business, economic and cultural leadership; challenge and inspire the nation's journalists to advance and defend the public good; and deliver superior value to all stakeholders.

EDITORIAL POLICY

We shall be independent on all matters, but shall never be neutral on any matter, especially those concerning the well-being of Nigerians.

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Local Government And Constitution Amendment

Employees of local governments in the country are understandably angry at the reported plan by the House of Representatives to amend the 1999 Constitution with a view to delisting local government as a tier of government. Their apprehension is not limited to a likely disruption of their employment should the proposed law sail through, they are equally concerned that the Nigerian people will be the ultimate loser, as development to them will be stalled drastically.

Basically, the lesson to take from the council workers is not to wave their complaints away as insignificant, but to regard any issue involving local governments as important and sensitive enough to warrant an inclusive interaction among all stakeholders, including the workers. The other lesson perhaps is to recognise that the administration of local governments in the country is presently saddled with many constraints that need to be addressed in the interest of the public.

Speaking under the umbrella of their association, the Nigerian Union of local Government Employees, NULGE, through their National President, Comrade Ambali Akeem Olatunji, warned that they are ready to mobilise their members and other Nigerians across the 774 councils to protest and resist what they called the "anti-people plot" by

the political elite to delist local governments as a tier of government. They threaten to shut down all 774 local governments if the National Assembly, particularly the House of Representatives persists with their plan.

Olatunji told journalists that NULGE has already written the leadership of the National Assembly, especially the House of Representatives, demanding that the union be invited for discussion on the issue within the next two weeks. Otherwise, he emphasised that a strike is imminent after a mass protest. The reason, he explained, is that removing local governments as a tier of government is fraught with many challenges, and would amount to virtually killing the system; as it will impact negatively on the welfare, employment and security of majority of Nigerians who may then be condemned to a life of poverty and enslavement in their country.

Without doubt, the practice of local government in Nigeria has been bedevilled with many controversies in the past, dating back to the military era. Local governments had been given wide powers, which had been promptly removed at will by higher authorities. At a time, chairmen and other representatives of local governments had been enmeshed in corruption, leaving a question mark as to how much

trust the country can bestow on the councils.

Nevertheless, everyone seems to agree that the third tier of government, ranked after the federal government and state governments, is vital to nation-building, which is probably why a good portion of the 1999 Constitution has been devoted to it. In particular, section 7 provides that: "the system of local Government by democratically elected local government councils is, under this Constitution guaranteed; and accordingly, the government of every state shall, subject to section 8 of this Constitution, ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of such councils."

The Constitution also provides for funding of the 774 local governments, listed in part ii of the First schedule to the Constitution, from the federation account, through a State/Local Governments Joint Account. In addition, the constitution lists functions of a local government in the Fourth Schedule. All these manifest the importance of the third tier of government in the present political dispensation.

However, to the dismay of many Nigerians, the average local government in the country has been reduced to a mere shadow of itself, through gradual but steady elimination of its powers, imposition

of leaders rather than the election of leaders prescribed by the constitution; starvation of funds and a general drive to make it completely dependent on the whims of state governors.

Much as the NULGE is right to be concerned about the plan of the House of Representatives to delist the tier from the constitution, the union also should be equally worried that the system of local government as presently constituted is warped, bastardised and has derailed from the intendment of writers of the constitution, as a tier best suited to deliver the dividends of democracy to the grassroots.

The House of Representatives do need to explain its rationale for its planned action. But it is important that the local government system is not scrapped, as that will most certainly deprive the ordinary Nigerians of some benefits they can otherwise get directly from the government. Rather, the National Assembly should work in close concert with NULGE as well as other stakeholders and relevant agencies to make local government work; to bring governance to the doorstep of Nigerians wherever they may be. That will be in accord with not just the letter of the 1999 Constitution, but also its spirit. Ultimately, a revert to true federalism is the panacea to the current undermining of local governments.

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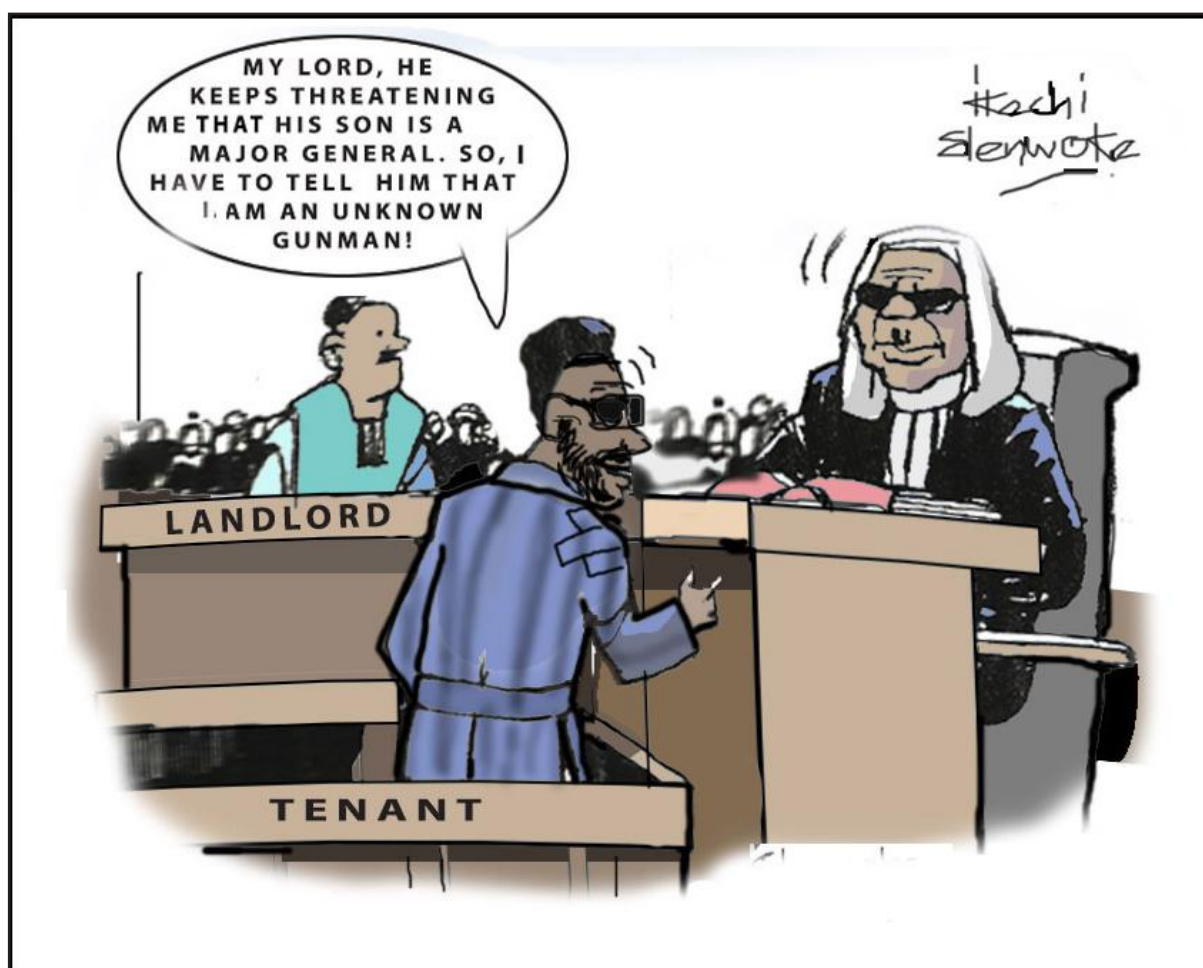
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World Press Freedom Day: How The Media Can Get Its Groove Back

YINKA ADEOSUN

It's that time of the year when the significance of a free press is brought to the fore. Globally known as World Press Freedom day, it is a day set aside to celebrate press freedom by reminding governments of the need to respect their commitment to press freedom, and as well remind media professionals of issues of press freedom and their respect for ethics.

As announced by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the theme of this year's commemoration is Information as a Public Good. This is an auspicious nudge for media professionals to acknowledge their importance in the society and take pleasure in their role as source of news and information in the society. As purveyors of a service that is classified as public good, journalists are obliged to pay serious attention to the veracity and relevance of information they dish out to the public.

The current state of the media is also aggravated by the weakening of the resistance by journalists to trends as permitted by the system. Here, truth is the victim. Lies, unverified claims have found their way into the prominent pages of

many publications. The decentralization of the media and the unrestrained access to air your views which technology provides with the social media should not repudiate time tested principles and values upon which journalism was founded.

Just recently, the story of Ojonuwa Onu, the amputee hawker, who was identified as Mary Daniel, went viral. It is strange that the story as published by the mainstream media and copied by other online media, was devoid of attribution and quotation by other persons that she mentioned in the story. Clearly, the reporter, who broke the news was plagued by emotions. A diligent reporter would have verified some of the claims in her story.

Under no circumstance should a journalist be overwhelmed by emotions. In fact, his emotional quotient should have suggested to him the need to seek for one or more relatives or institution, who were referred to in her unsubstantiated story. Sadly, none of the media organisations which reported the story did anything close to that. The story which attracted the goodwill of kind-hearted Nigerians ended on an uncharitable note of fudged claims.

Such shoddy reportage is our bane at the moment. They fuel the pitch of

anti-press sentiment, erosion of public confidence, mistrust and violence against journalist. How sad that social responsibilities and restraint are falling short of professional ethos, especially by mainstream media organisations. Gaffes by these respected media channels is fast eroding the trust and confidence we have placed in these organisations. Beyond the ordinariness of mediocrity and mad rush for breaking the news, the sanctity of professionalism and the sacrilege of publishing falsehood in any guise cannot be accepted.

Same is the release of the CCTV footage of the minor being molested by the popular entertainment personality. That video is awful and distasteful. Many claim that the video was released out of public interest. While it may have aided the believability of the claims of the accusers against the accused, it further lends to the victimisation and stigmatisation of the victim. The right place for that CCTV video remains the court of law where it is admissible as evidence.

As the fourth estate of the realm, the media wields a powerful influence in the society. In addition to reporting the society and holding governments account-

able, the media system, using its product - information - enables citizens to know their rights, duties and prerogatives, just as it also contributes to the general interest, and the service of sustainable development.

As the world celebrates and remembers world press freedom day, this year's theme is apt and timely for Nigerian media in particular, especially at a time like this. The role of media houses in enhancing the capacity of journalists to recognise and value the elements of information as a public good cannot be overemphasised. This will further help them to defend and promote the type of content which they gather, produce and disseminate for public consumption.

Information as Public Good underscores the irrefutable substance of verified, reliable and beneficial information to the society. Once again, it is a clarion call to the essential role of professional journalists in the gathering, production and dissemination of information, by trashing misinformation, and other contents which may be considered harmful in the society.

Adeosun wrote in from Akure, Ondo state.

Ortom: Between Leadership And Demagoguery

JEROME-MARIO UTOMI

From the political tragic-comedy that unfolded in the political topography called Nigeria, in the year 2017, the prevailing harsh economic situation in the country, a state of depression (or is it a recession) designed by yet to be established architects, and unfulfilled change premised, I published a piece in August that year, titled; Caging the demagogues in our political space.

Essentially, the piece in question was inspired by new orientation and shaped by fiscal, sociological, political and communal happenings in the country; coupled with the pockets of ethno-religious upheavals and misgivings from one region against another or powerful personalities against each other.

It reads in part; they were voted to provide good and qualitative leadership; elected to bring the nation's economy out of the woods and were chosen to bring democracy's dividends to the people. But, instead of providing the lavishly promised and highly expected leadership, they visited the masses with cluelessness and utopia. Instead of reviving the comatose economy, they threw it further down into recession and instead of bringing dividends of democracy, they democratised poverty, institutionalised unemployment and 'governmentalised' hopelessness and frustration. They are not authentic leaders but demagogues.

After about four years the piece was published, the questions that is as important as the piece itself are; how correct were those assertions/ issues/and concerns rose in the said piece? Have those factors that impeded political and socioeconomic development of our nation complained by the piece still alive and active? Do we truly have demagogues masquerading as politicians/public office holders? Are all politicians in the country guilty as charged. Observably, apart from the fact that those Nigerian who were initially deceived by the change mantra of the present administration have finally come to the realisation to the effect that

nothing has changed, the greater reality Nigerians now worry about, going by commentaries, is the way the present Federal and state Governments approach the job of leadership.

Predominantly, it has become obvious that greater number of the so called public office holders crave to be worshipped by everybody even when their impact is not positively felt, and their office devoid of service and almost responsibility free. This unrealistic expectation, wrong appreciation of leadership coupled with disordered approach designed to stand democracy on its head and undermine a government of the people by the people and for the people that are supposed to be generally open to public scrutiny, has created political shortcomings in the country. It not only disjoins the nation's amalgams but weakens the masses reverence for public office.

But there is an exception as there will always be an exception. From the ashes of leadership hopelessness and bye-gone years of strident public office hemorrhage in the country, came Samuel Ioraer Ortom, the incumbent Executive Governor of Benue state, a much more charming personality with singleness of purpose.

The Governor has been in the news not as a demagogue but an authentic leader that daily demonstrates a passion for his purpose, practice leadership values consistently, led and protected the people of Benue state with his heart as well as his head, established long-term relationship with his people/followers and have the self-discipline to get results.

At the moment, before diving further into comparative analysis to establish what qualifies him as exceptional among the bunch and why this opinion got fixated by his leadership qualities even at a time that the nation is going through the pangs of, and ravaged by security challenges (terrorism, kidnapping and banditry), it is necessary to first, underline who a demagogue is and what differentiates him/her from an authentic leader.

Demagogue as defined by Wikipedia "is a person or people who seek political support by appealing to the popular de-

sires and prejudices rather than by using rational argument. Merriam Webster sees a demagogue as a leader who makes use of popular prejudices and false claims and purposes in order to gain power.

From the above, one striking take is that demagogues are not restricted to our 774 local government areas or the 36 states of our federation, the demagogues are littered all over the earth's surface. They share one common denominator. They do not have the interest of the people at heart. They do not contemplate providing security and robust economy which are the two major responsibility of any democratically elected government but engrossed with holding on to the people's commonwealth. They are reputed for using people to further their own ends, their antics involves intimidation. Being sly, getting things done by lying or other dishonest means. They could be likened to an evil wind that blows no nation or state any good. The only attribute that is Nigeria-specific is that the ones that operate here are hyper unrefined, non-constructively brazen and stunning in audacity.

With this fact highlighted, the piece moves away from attributes that constitutes a demagogue to finding particulars that stands a creative leader like Ortom out. Fundamental is that at a time that everyone is keeping quiet in the face of the deteriorating security situation in the country, Ortom has become reputed for speaking the truth about the true picture of security situation to the government at the centre. He decided to be on the side of the people as he more than anything recognizes that sovereignty belongs to the people.

The reasons why this action by Ortom must be documented and celebrated by the watching world is barefaced. First, it is coming at a time when someone outspoken, with a different set of ideas, values, or organizing techniques, is often viewed as 'the enemy within'. Also making Ortom's action historic is that it is happening in a country where constructive debate is often seen as unnecessary, messy and divisive, where debate over differing political ideas and strategies is perceived as

destructive to the nation's interest.

Most essentially, by rising in stout defense of his people of Benue state from the hands of killer herdsmen, at a time when other state Governors have become more conservative and conscious in their political utterances and strategies, when open discussion is seen as a challenge to the nation's leadership hierarchy, Nigerians and, of course, the global community have come in agreement that Ortom has become an institution where the world can now learn the art and science of public leadership.

In truth, the name Ortom now means different things to different people. For other state Governors, the lesson Ortom is handing down to his contemporary is that that bearing the tag 'Excellency' does not confer excellence or greatness to anyone, but requires hard work for excellence to be outstanding, demands consistency for star to shine, and persistence for stardom to be recognized.

In the same vein, while Nigerians youths, presently sees him as a leader that they can trust and look up to emulate that the virtue which makes up values are the things we must exhibit in our behavior; attitudes/character such as; love, discipline, tolerance, respect for human life, peace, non-violence, honesty, integrity, loyalty, fairness, fidelity and other ethical values that promote mutual co-existence, the people of Benue state on their parts, views him as a unifying factor; particularly now that he has succeeded in uniting all the tribes/ethnic groups in the state against their common enemy-the killer herdsmen.

To some socio-political commentator, he is 'Ortom the Tough'. For me, I have learnt from the Benue state Governor that 'human relations must be encouraged in the right direction. That any act of negation or denial can lead society to anarchy, chaos and unwanted societal conflict which of course, would be detrimental to human peaceful co-existence'.

Utomi, is the Programme Coordinator (Media and Public Policy), Social and Economic Justice Advocacy (SEJA), Lagos.

MAN Moves To Revive Sub-Regional Manufacturers Group

SYLVESTER ENOGHASE
LAGOS

President of Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, Mansur Ahmed, has stated that the organisation is mobilising the various Manufacturers Association in West Africa to revive the Federation of West African Manufacturers Association (FEWAMA) with the active support

of ECOWAS.

He also said in conjunction with the African Union, MAN is leading the formation of the Pan-African Manufacturers Association.

He spoke at the symbolic cake cutting ceremony to mark the 50th anniversary of the association, where he said MAN is an active part of a continental private sector movement to bring the African Private under a single Umbrella – The

African Business Council where our President has been elected the Vice President of the Council.

He said MAN has evolved into the authentic voice of manufacturers in Nigeria - a credible platform for the private sector to formulate and articulate policy suggestions that complement government's efforts in the overall interest of the economy.

"This could not have been possible without the long-standing com-

mitment and immense support of our strategic partners, both local and international. Today, MAN's membership strength is over 2,500 which comprise the multinationals, large corporations, small and medium scale industries. These members are serviced through our fourteen (14) branches nationwide; ten sectoral (10) and seventy-six (76)

CRUDE OIL Prices			
WTI CRUDE	51.59	-1.00	-1.90%
BRENT CRUDE	60.48	-1.20	-1.95%
MARS US -2 days	55.29	-1.00	-1.78%
OPEC BASKET	59.48	+1.24	+2.13%
URALS	59.32	+0.52	+0.88%
LOUISIANA LIGHT	59.22	+0.33	+0.56%
BONNY LIGHT	61.65	-0.73	-1.17%
MEXICAN BASKET	52.40	+0.79	+1.53%
NATURAL GAS	2.945	+0.132	+4.69%

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DAILY INDEPENDENT

Business

TUESDAY, MAY 11, 2021

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Sylvester Enoghase +2348075038724 sylvester.enoghase@independentnig.com

●Mshelia Canvasses Professionalism In Airline Management

— 19

● P/H Refinery Will Work At 90% Capacity After Rehabilitation – NNPC

— 16

13

Lagos Free Zone
Special Project For
Promoting Indian
Investments In
Nigeria –Envoy

BABATUNDE APENA
LAGOS

The Indian High Commissioner to Nigeria, H.E, Mr. Abhay Thakur has stated that the Lagos Free Zone (LFZ) provides a unique and special ecosystem that all the Indian companies with growth aspirations must seriously consider for their businesses.

The High Commissioner gave this advice when he led a cross-section of top executives of Indian companies operating in Nigeria at the weekend for a visit to the Lagos Free Zone, a world-class industrial zone developed by Tolaram Group.

Thakur described the Lagos Free Zone, especially with its integration of the Lekki Deep Sea Port, as a defining project for Nigeria that would impact the economy positively and further open the country to the world as a preferred destination for foreign direct investment (FDI).

"I have been very impressed with the scale, size and potential of the Lagos Free Zone project that I have seen here today and I commend Tolaram Group for having put together such a defining Project in Nigeria.

"I would urge all the Indian companies globally to seriously consider the possibilities at Lagos Free Zone because it is difficult to find a better investment destination in Nigeria today," he said.

He assured the Lagos Free Zone team that the Indian High Commission in Nigeria would do all within its means to help promote and attract the much-needed investment into Nigeria.

"As you may already be aware, Nigeria remains the largest trading partner of India in Africa with total trade volume of about \$14b in 2020 and is also one of the leading investors in Nigeria with a cumulative investment base of about \$20b in Nigeria.

"We are trying to play a bigger role in Nigeria's growth story by creating a win-win relationship. In this context, Lagos Free Zone has a

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COMMODITIES				CURRENCIES			RATES		MARKETS				
BRENT	US\$68.28	COFFEE	US\$153.35		CBN	Parallel Market	MPR	11.5%	FMDQ – NIBOR			NSE	
									0/N	14.3333	-103 ▼		
GOLD	US\$1,831.3	SUGAR	US\$17.47	USD	380	483	INFLATION	18.17 %	1M	9.2027	-0.03 ▼	ASI	39,198.75
					POUND	528			672	3M	10.0677	-0.06 ▼	
COCOA	US\$2,469.00	N. GAS	US\$2.958	EURO	458	580			6M	10.7283	-0.39 ▲		

MOHAMMED SHOSANYA
LAGOS

This year's edition of the International Lubricants Conference (ILC) saw experts in the lubricants sector addressed some of the challenges posed by the COVID- 19 pandemic to the industry and the ways to achieve sustainable growth.

The two-day event which held virtually also honoured outstanding leaders in the lubricant industry with recognition awards.

Nigeria is the second biggest lubricants consumer in the continent. As a result, the impact of lubricants in the country's growth in relationship to Gross Domestic Products (GDP) cannot be over emphasised.

To recognise the efforts of industry leaders to the growth of the sector, the ILC set up a committee comprising leading industry experts from across the world with cumulatively over 100 years of hardcore industry knowledge.

Experts Chart Roadmap For
Lubricant Market Growth

Divided into four main categories, the award recognised organisations that have been impactful in the industry and by inference the economic growth in the country.

Amasco International Limited won the prime player award for its growth and contribution to the lubricants industry in Nigeria, while Adorva Plc got the impact award for its dynamism and creativity.

OVH Energy Marketing Limited bagged the service excellence award for its innovative and dynamic marketing which has helped to shape the industry in terms of service delivery and customer satisfaction. Seahorse Lubricants won the emerging brand award recognises for its phenomenal performance in the industry.

With the theme, "The future of

Africa's Lube market" panelists consisting experts across the world gave insights on the challenges of the Global Base Oils market in Africa, businesses patterns and pointers that would enhance formulating Lubricants for the future, based on demand and its impact on performance.

The International Lubricants Conference is the first of an annual series of conferences designed to raise technical awareness of the lubricant market while recognising exceptional industry stakeholders and enlightening them on innovative industry developments and the advancement of the lubricants market world-wide.

Dapo Keshinro, Consultant to the ILC, while speaking on the event,

reiterated the essence of the conference and how decisions made will impact stakeholders.

"The Lubricants market in Africa has been relevant to the growth of many sectors. We are concerned about the challenges in the industry in recent times which has resulted in a decrease in revenue.

"The dynamics of the Oil market keep changing with new trends and we need to prepare for this to enable us benefit from the market potentials. The International Lubricants Conference has created a viable platform to sustain growth and we are optimistic that the insights and ideas shared at the conference will go a long way in providing guiding actions to improve performance in the industry".



Temitope Oguntokun, Legal and Corporate Affairs Director, International Breweries Plc (left); Rotimi Odusola, Corporate Relations Director/Company Secretary, Guinness Nigeria Plc (second left); Ayo Jaiyesimi, Chief Executive Officer, Thespian Family Theatre & Production (third left); Jordi Borrut Bel, Chairman, Beer Sectoral Group (BSG) of Manufacturers Association of Nigeria & Managing Director/CEO Nigeria Breweries Plc (fourth left); Prof. Ivvara Esu, Deputy Governor, Cross River State (fourth right); Godwin E. Amanke, Commissioner for Education (third right); Mfon Bassey, Commissioner for Environment, Cross River State (second right), and Sade Morgan, Corporate Affairs Director, Nigerian Breweries, during the relaunch of SMASHED Project of the BSG, campaigning against underage drinking, in Calabar, Cross River State.

Business

Millionaires Emerge In UBA Savings Promo As 10 Customers Win N1m Each

United Bank for Africa (UBA) Plc, has rewarded 10 of its loyal customers with a total sum of N10million in the quarterly draws of the ongoing UBA Savings Promo.

This Promo which is held every quarter, is intended to appreciate loyal customers of the bank, who have stayed with the bank over the years, and offers fresh opportunities for potential and intending customers to join the growing number of UBA millionaires who have in the past benefitted from several Promo.

The virtual and transparent electronic draw which was held on Friday was transmitted live via zoom and the Facebook platform in strict compliance with social distancing rules as directed by the Federal and Lagos State Government.

Osita Ede, UBA's Head Personal

Banking, who addressed participants just before the draws, said there is no better time to give back and delight customers than this challenging economic period where people need all the support, they can get to make life more meaningful.

He said: "As a bank, UBA has been rewarding customers, we have been doing this for several years now; from the Wise Savers Promo, Bumper Draws, and now this. We have been doing this to touch lives and to show appreciation to our customers to tell them we are grateful for their business. This is also an opportunity to reward them for their loyalty to the bank.

Ede added that the promo is also a way of encouraging savings in a bid towards promoting financial inclusion, as statistics show that a lot of Nigerians are still largely underbanked.

"Our key objective is to encourage our customers to save regularly. We are here to support them and encourage them to save and ultimately grow as well, because we are aware that they are invaluable to all that we do," Ede explained.

A representative of the National Regulatory Commission, Peace Ibadie, who witnessed the draws, congratulated the 10 winners and commended the bank for its efforts at rewarding loyal customers especially in the tough economic and business environment.

"Congratulations to all the winners, I am glad to be a part of this; UBA is always transparent in their promos and we can fully attest to this. It is important that the bank is also actively encouraging the savings culture. Again, I say congratulations," she said.

The winners who cut across all

the zones of the country are Emeka Onyemauche; Ezeigbokwe Oluebube Purity; Omoniyi A Jaiyeola; Olawale Omotayo Idowu; Zaharadeen Yandaki Umar; Aliyu Yaro Bakari; Samuel Enan Esua; Joseph Eze; Deborah Folusho Adebayo and Lucia Chinyere Adim.

When contacted via their mobile phone, the winners expressed their gratitude to the bank as they said the winnings will go a long way in meeting their pressing needs especially in these trying times.

One of the winners, Samuel Enan Esan, who was delighted at the news that he just won N1m, was full of praises. "Thank you UBA," he stated.

Aliyu Yaro Bakari, who was extremely excited at the news, said, "Oh I am very happy, UBA is the best, you are the best, thank you very much," he remarked when he learnt he was also one of the beneficiaries of N1m.

To qualify for the promo, new and existing customers of the bank are expected to make a one-time deposit of at least N30,000; before each draw date. Savings account holders eligible for this draw include Target, Bumper, Next Gen, Savings, Teens & Kiddies.

Apart from the savings promo which is held every three months, the bank also has the UBA Bumper Promo which is held monthly, where the first three winning customers are rewarded with N2m, Rent for a year at N1.2m and N500,000 respectively; with 20 others winning N100,000 each as consolation prizes.

United Bank for Africa Plc is a leading Pan-African financial institution, offering banking services to more than twenty million customers, across 1,000 business offices and customer touch points, in 20 African countries. With presence in New York, London and Paris, UBA is connecting people and businesses across Africa through retail, commercial and corporate banking, innovative cross-border payments and remittances, trade finance and ancillary banking services.

MAN Moves To Revive Sub-Regional Manufacturers Group

CONTINUED FROM 13

sub-sectoral groups; The Abuja Liaison Office and the National Head Office in Lagos.

"As we celebrate our giant strides in the last 50 years, this cake cutting ceremony commemorates the immense contributions of our founding fathers: Late Chief Adeola Odutola, Chief Jerome Udoji, Late Babatunde Jose, Alhaji Hassan Adamu (Wakili Adamawa) and a host of others.

"I also sincerely wish to appreciate every member of MAN and the entire staff of the Association for their unalloyed support and commitment towards ensuring our noble Association continues to deliver on its mandate.

Lagos Free Zone Special Project For Promoting Indian Investments In Nigeria – Envoy

CONTINUED FROM 13

special place in furthering India-Nigeria collaboration," he added.

Addressing the High Commissioner and his entourage on the visit, the Managing Director, Lagos Free Zone, Mr. Dinesh Rathil disclosed that the first phase of the zone which represents about 45 percent of the 830 Hectare area would be completed by the year 2022 with the delivery of critical infrastructure such as the Lekki Deep Sea Port, the piped gas distribution network, completion of the ready-built industrial and residential buildings and take off of the Industrial Training Centre.

Highlighting the incentives of investing in the zone, Dinesh explained that investors will enjoy an attractive set of incentives as granted to Free Zone Enterprises (FZEs) under the NEPZ Act.

He stated further that up to 100% finished goods can be exported into Nigeria's Customs territory upon the payment of appropriate duties.

He also added that 100% foreign and private ownership of business is allowed in the zone.

Rathil stated that Nigeria with a population of over 200 Million people and projected to reach 350 Million by 2050 remains one of the strongest economies in Africa with potential for further economic & industrial growth owing to presence of raw materials, human capital, and favorable demographics.

Datti Danjuma, General Manager, Human Resources, Crown Flour Mill (left); Rauda Musa Umar, Wheat Development Programme Officer, Crown Flour Mill (second left); Chris Ngige, Minister of Labour and Employment (middle); Moshood Quadri, Head, Human Resources, Crown Flour Mill (second right), and Damilola Adeniyi, Corporate Affairs Manager, Olam Nigeria, during the company team's visit to the minister in Abuja.



FAAN To Acquire 20 Fire Tenders To Enhance Personnel's Performance

OLUSEGUN KOIKI
LAGOS

The Federal Airports of Nigeria (FAAN) has disclosed plans to acquire 20 new fire tenders in a bid to increase the performance of its fire personnel.

The agency also said that it would continue to take the training of fire personnel and other staff seriously in order to remain current in the discharge of the duties.

Capt. Rabiu Yadudu, the Managing Director, FAAN, disclosed this in Lagos, recently during the 2021 International Fire Fighters with the theme: 'Heroes Remembrance Ceremony/Parade.'

Yadudu informed that the agency already had 90 fire tenders across the airports in the country, stressing that the acquisition of additional 20 fire tenders would further increase its performance.

Besides, he said the agency would also refurbish all its fire stations in all airports, stressing that management was committed to providing all the equipment needed to handle emergencies.

He said: "We have over 90 fire tenders across the country and we are trying to procure at least 20 more to beef up our service. That is the plan now because some are aged, some are due for refurbishment. So, we will replace the ones that we feel that we are

going to be phased out.

"We are doing this in order to make sure that in the event of emergence, we do not stand in need of anything that is missing because they are our primary emergence response team."

On the refurbishment of the fire stations, Yadudu stated that the exercise would be carried out at two or three at a time, adding that training of fire servicemen was also on the table.

"Two months ago, we commissioned the Abuja training ground, even though the Federal Government procured fire simulator equipment in Zaria, which is ours entirely for FAAN to use. This is what we are doing and we are doing more.

"The simulator is here for all of

us to benefit from, the fire people from FAAN and aviation industry in general. We tend to be more and more aware of it and be appreciative of the initiative and equipment; it is essentially for the benefit of the whole industry.

"In the event of emergence, we need the fire fighters to come out and perform. We need them to be in top shape, we need them to be competent and we also need them to be fully aware of their responsibility."

The FAAN boss further called on all officers of the agency to be focused and show commitment to their duties and never allow challenges to weaken their resolve in putting in their best to the job.

TSI To Empower One Million Pupils Across Nigeria

The Stellar Initiative (TSI), a non-governmental organization with a core focus on alleviating poverty and educating children across Africa, has announced its plan to educate one million pupils on drug abuse, and give 5 million stationaries to students in disadvantaged communities across Benin, Kano, Oyo, Enugu, Kogi, and other states, through its Book tour and movie show project.

Launched on April 5, 2021 the TSI Book tour and movie show project was born out of the desire to not only see more underserved children in school but to ensure students are equipped with moral and mental

prowess to excel through school and upon graduation.

With this project, students will be thoroughly educated on drug abuse, bullying, self-esteem, leveraging a blockbuster movie; Nimbe - a film that addresses issues associated with drug abuse.

Students will also be provided with stationaries to ensure they stay in school.

Precious Eniayekan, Lead Volunteer and Founder of The Stellar Initiative, while speaking about the initiative, expressed her zeal about how the TSI book tour and movie show project will positively impact pupils

of low communities across Nigeria.

"Studies according to UNICEF have shown that one in every five of the world's out-of-school children is in Nigeria; this to us means that there's a need for a major and urgent intervention in the Nigerian educational sector.

"Every Nigerian child deserves the right to quality education irrespective of their financial capacities or geographical locations and this is why we do what we do. We are elated to extend our reach to other regions of the country and are extremely thankful to all our donors and volunteers who have made this possible"

she said.

She also expressed concerns on the need to increase intentionality on how children are raised especially within disadvantaged communities.

"Sadly, several communities continue to degrade due to several blue factors ranging from an economic downturn to financial instability, to lack of security and lots more. Raising children in communities like this without proper care, will not only hurt the child but ultimately deprive Nigeria, our dear country, of building a sustainable nation.

"It is therefore, important to pay

closer attention to how children are raised in disadvantaged communities. Having launched this project at Ijero Baptist Primary School, Ebutte Meta, and received positive feedback, we believe that expanding our reach to other regions is a step in the right direction towards instilling the kinds of character, beliefs, and support every child should have" she added.

Since its inception, The Stellar Initiative has continued to aggressively contribute its quota towards developing rural communities and the educational sector in Nigeria. They recently awarded a full academic scholarship to 20 pupils and provided micro-grants to women in rural communities to start businesses.



Motoring

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Bremer Partners Highways For Accident Victims

Bremer Good Fellows eV (BGF) has partnered On the Highway Accident Victims in a bid to ensure that financial relief are given to help cushion the pains and agony of people involved in road traffic crashes.

In an inaugural presentation, which took place at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH) recently, Julie Chi-Nwaoha, Founder, On the Highway Africa, the Project Director, on the Highway Accident Victims Relief appreciated the Bremer Good Fellows for the swift response towards partnering with the company on the project.

She explained that road traffic crashes are not accidents; they are predictable consequences of actions that are preventable.

She added that the global status report on road safety by World Health Organization (WHO) highlights that the number of annual road traffic deaths has reached 1.35 million, and attributed excessive and inappropriate speed as some of the primary causes of crashes on the roads.

She lamented that these avoidable crashes had led to injuries, permanent disabilities and most times untimely death of the victims.

Mr. Chukwudi Unachukwu, the President, Bremer Good Fellows eV (BGF), who spoke via zoom at the event, said his organisation was partnering the project due to its vision and mission, which is to show love by helping one another in need and to make the world a better place for everyone.

He lamented that the cost of treatment and hospital bills were high and most time out of the reach of the com-



Officials of the On the Highway Accident Victims with Bremer Good Fellows eV (BGF), Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) and management of the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH) at the hospital, recently.

mon man, hence the reason for their empathy.

He added: "When there is a road traffic crash the burden is disproportionately borne by pedestrians, motorcyclists and motorists, in particular those living in developing countries."

The BGF Charity Organisation was founded on October 3, 2014 by 12 friends who were currently working with DB SCHENKER (I PARK) Bremen-Hemelingen, and led by the passion of unity and the development of the community in order to provide for the less privileged, especially children.

Corp Commander Ade Fekoya, the Unit Commander, Ikeja, the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), while

speaking while presenting the cheque to one of the recipients of the fund relief for payments of the accident victim hospital bills, said the corps had a mandate to eradicate road traffic crashes and create a safe motoring environment for all.

Fakoya, however, described the mandate as enormous, but expressed optimism that the corps was equal to the task with landmark achievements in this past three decades.

She emphasised that the corps in achieving this mandate, had been able to engage all relevant stakeholders to synergise in the promotion of safety on the highways.

She added that FRSC had intensi-

fied education of the motoring public on the use of road via different platforms, increased rallies and visits to parks daily on sensitisation and checks carried out on vehicles before they proceed on their journey.

She explained that the corps also offer prompt rescue services, which has reduced road crashes by 15 per cent and fatality by 20 per cent in recent time, adding that intervention patrols mostly through joint patrols with sister agencies had ensured that unclashed containers are prosecuted, which had reduced incessant falling of containers from trucks and trailers.

She emphasised further that quar-

terly audit of roads and reports are sent to appropriate authority for repairs/update of such roads and highways, while the corps also ensured that obstructions are cleared out of the way to avoid vehicles crashing into them, training and retraining of staff to upgrade them with the challenges of present time.

Dr. Bamidele Ayodele, a neurosurgeon with LASUTH and a team of nurses at the teaching hospital, in his words expressed delight at the efforts of the two organisations to assist financially in the health sector.

Ayodele reiterated that government could not do it alone, hence contributions from private and individuals were appreciated.

He added that the Lagos State Government's bold leadership has continued to spur the sector in contributing to saving lives and appreciated the project initiative for the idea.

He also challenged other organisations to join in the crusade.

Already, the two recipients who were in coma as at the investigation stage have started recuperating and one was at the verge of being discharged from the hospital.

The recipients' relations were full of appreciation for the kind gesture offered to them.

Dedicated and commitment to road safety, where safer lives is promoted, Chi-Nwaoha urged other stakeholders to join this laudable cause of saving lives, while also commending the Lagos state Government and especially, Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu in his efforts at uplifting the health sector in the State.

Chip Crisis Gets Worse As Rental Companies Buy Up Used Cars

The semiconductor shortage has slashed vehicle production so much that rental-car companies can't get the new cars they need, so they have resorted to buying used vehicles at auction.

This is uncharted territory for the likes of Hertz and Enterprise, which have made their profits by purchasing new vehicles cheaply in bulk, renting them out for as much as a year, and selling them at auction.

In the past, they have bought some used cars to shore up an occasional unforeseen burst in demand, but rarely for the mainstays of their fleets.

"You would never go into auction to buy routine sedans and Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs)," said Maryann Keller, an independent consultant who used to be on the board of Dollar Thrifty Automotive Group, which is now part of Hertz.

"These are special circumstances. There is a shortage of cars."

The demand is sending used-car costs soaring. The Manheim Index, which measures prices at wholesale auctions, shows they're 52 per cent higher than they were a year ago.

"We expect to see records in the Manheim Index through June before demand softens enough to align with supply trends," said Jonathan Smoke, chief economist of Cox Automotive, which owns Manheim, the nation's largest used-car auction. "We expect retail prices to continue to rise into the summer, as retail trends tend to follow

wholesale trends with a six-week lag."

Vehicle production fell 4.6 per cent in the first quarter, and that's compared to 2020 when factories had already lost weeks of work when the Covid-19 pandemic caused shutdown, according to LMC Automotive.

Despite the acquisition expenses, the car crunch is a boon for rental companies, which likely will have strong profits because they'll rent out every car they own at much higher rates than they charged before the COVID-19 pandemic. But consumers will take a hit if they want to rent a car for vacation, Keller said.

Hertz is adding as many cars to its fleet as it can to support the travel rebound, including used cars, spokeswoman Lauren Luster said in an email.

A sign is posted at the Hertz Rent-A-Car rental lot at San Francisco International Airport on April 30, 2020 in San Francisco, California.

"The global microchip shortage has impacted the entire car-rental industry's ability to receive new vehicle orders as quickly as we would like," Luster said. "Hertz is supplementing our fleet by purchasing low-mileage, pre-owned vehicles from a variety of channels including auctions, online auctions, dealerships and cars coming off lease programs."

The same goes for closely held Enterprise, the nation's largest rental company. Avis Budget Group Inc. didn't immediately respond to a re-

quest for comment.

"Our fleet acquisition team is working hard to secure additional vehicles — both new and low-mileage used vehicles — through all channels to meet the ongoing increase in demand," Enterprise spokeswoman Lisa Martini said via email.

"Overall, though, both new and used car inventory remain low. Our teams will continue to do everything we can to help customers with their transportation needs."

Despite the acquisition expenses, the car crunch is a boon for rental companies, which likely will have strong profits because they'll rent out every car they own.

Hyundai's sales to fleet buyers fell 27 per cent in April as the company dedicated is production to satisfying retail dealerships, said Jose Munoz, chief operating officer.

"We made a strategy when I joined the company to prioritise retail versus fleet," Munoz said in an interview.

"We appreciate the fleet business, there is a very good fleet business there, and we try to support it as much as possible. But yes, we prioritize deliveries to the end customer."

The problem started a year ago, when the pandemic decimated travel. Rental companies sold hundreds of thousands of cars, said Neil Abrams, president of Abrams Consulting Group Inc., which works in the rental industry.

Ford To Revive Lightning Badge On Electric F-150 – Report

Ford Motor Co. is reportedly reconstituting an old name for one of its newest electric vehicles.

The automaker plans to call the electric version of its full-size pickup, and top-selling model, the F-150 Lightning, according to Car and Driver, which cited an internal document provided by a source. The vehicle is expected to go on sale in the middle of next year.

Ford previously used the Lightning name on two generations of V-8-powered F-150 performance variants. The first was sold from 1993 until 1995, while the second was sold from 1999 until 2004.

"We're excited to introduce the all-electric F-150 very soon, but we

don't comment on speculation about future products," Mike Levine, Ford spokesman said.

The automaker currently owns the Lightning name, according to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. It last registered the wordmark for "motor vehicles, namely, trucks" in 2018.

The performance-oriented name squares up with the pickup's stated purpose. Executives have positioned it as a workhorse known for its power and new capabilities that can be used on job sites.

Ford has a recent history of repurposing old monikers, such as the Bronco SUV. Its compact pickup due out later this year will revive the Maverick name.





P/H Refinery Will Work At 90% Capacity After Rehabilitation - NNPC

MOHAMMED SHOSANYA
LAGOS

The Port Harcourt Refinery will refine at least 90% of crude oil after its fully refurbished, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), has said.

The corporation's target came on the heels of the announcement of the commencement of construction work in the Port Harcourt Refinery rehabilitation project.

"It must be hitch-free and that is why we are engaging the host communities appropriately. 200 million Nigerians are looking up to us and we can't afford to fail. We've been on this journey since 2019," the NNPC Chief Operating Officer, Refineries & Petrochemicals, Engr. Mustapha Yakubu said.

Yakubu, who made the decla-

rations at the Technical Kick-off Meeting for the project which held at the Port Harcourt Refinery Complex, Alesa Eleme, Rivers State, also said everything about the project had been carefully worked out to ensure that the target of at .

He disclosed that the project would require 3,000 workers at the peak of activities, stressing that out of that number there would be only 70 expatriates while the balance would be sourced locally in line with the local content policy.

Speaking earlier through a message delivered on his behalf by the Chief Financial Officer of the Corporation, Mr. Umar Ajiya, the Group Managing Director of NNPC, Mallam Mele Kyari, assured Nigerians that the Port Harcourt Refinery Company (PHRC) would roar back to life on or before April 5, 2023, when repairs would have been completed on the old refinery also known as Area 5.

He said the target was to fix the old refinery first so that local refining can resume as soon as possible, adding that NNPC management would do everything to support the contractor, Maire Technimont SPA, to ensure prompt delivery of the project.

"We are happy we have the contractor onboard. With strong collaboration of all parties involved, we will achieve the desired results. We have both government and private sector financing. We have the finance ministry, NEITI, labour unions and other stakeholders on board this project. They want to see transparency so they can report same to Nigerians and this is one of the most transparent processes ever", he stated

Engr. Ahmed Dikko, the Managing Director of PHRC, in his presentation, said that all the process plants have been made hydrocarbon-free to enable the contractor to carry out the

rehabilitation work safely.

The representative of Maire Technimont, SPA, Mr. Masu Alberto, said that the rehabilitation journey started in 2017 with an integrity test of the refinery.

"In 2019, we did work on it, and then now. We're deploying a good number of engineers", he said.

He listed some of the key activities that will be carried out in the project to include refurbishing of the technical building, replacement of the fire-fighting and deluge sprinkler systems, refurbishing of 24 off-site tanks, replacement of electrical equipment in the substation, installation of primary earthing integration and a new lighting system.

He said the project would also involve the replacement of pumps, turbines, one expander, boilers, three compressor fans and blowers, tanks, vessel, and drums among other items equipment.

Agbami Parties Donate To Rivers State Communities

Star Deepwater Petroleum Limited, a Chevron Company and the operator of the Agbami field, together with its parties in the Agbami field - Famfa Oil Limited, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Equinor Nigeria Energy Company Limited, and Prime 127 Nigeria Limited, have donated a women skills acquisition center to Ogu community and a town hall to Onne community in Rivers state

The women skills acquisition center included a main hall, one office, one store room and toilet, seven electric sewing machines and five manual sewing machines, an electric generator, water borehole and accessories, office furniture, classroom tables and chairs with teachers' tables.

Besides, the town hall donated to Onne community was furnished with chairs as well as office furniture plus a power generator, water supply and public address system.

Robert Hulett, Director, Deepwater Production Sharing Contracts, Star Deepwater Petroleum Limited, thanked the Rivers State Government for its support on the project and noted that the Agbami parties have also implemented other projects in the past in Rivers state.

"Other Social Investments by the Agbami parties in Rivers State include execution and handover of a 2-kilometer waterfront street-light project to Ogu community in 2014; a Chest Clinic currently being executed at the General Hospital Eleme in Rivers State to benefit all the communities around the Onne Port Complex," he said.

According to him, the Agbami parties have also donated a 1000KVA CAT generator to the University of Port Harcourt and have instituted a specialised educational scholarship program in support of medical and engineering manpower development in Nigeria. About; 1,904 Rivers State indigenes have benefitted from the Agbami Medical and Engineering Professional Scholarship between 2009 -2019.

"In addition to the above projects, we have contributed to Local Community Content Development by empowering and building the capacity of some local community contractors," he said.

Onne community council of Chiefs as well as Chief L.T. Williams-Tubonibo-Iyama, Chairman Ogu Divisional council of Chiefs applauded the Agbami parties for the donation. "We commend the Agbami parties for this CSR project and are particularly happy on the focus of this project on infrastructure and education which areas critical for the development of a nation," Chief Williams said.



Mustapha Yakubu, Chief Operating Officer, Refineries & Petrochemicals, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (left); Masu Alberto, representative of Tecnimont S.P.A. (the contractor) (middle), and Ahmed Dikko, Managing Director, Port Harcourt Refining Company, during the technical kick-off meeting for the rehabilitation project of the refinery in Eleme, Rivers State.

Asharami Energy's Graduate Programme Targets Future Upstream Experts

Asharami Energy, a Sahara Group Upstream company, has commenced its 2021 Graduate Trainee Programme that is geared towards enhancing the sustainability and future of the sector through training of exceptional young talent.

Henry Menkiti, Chief Operating Officer, Asharami Energy, said the programme has been instrumental to the transformation of young engineers and others professionals into top talent

across the value chain at Sahara Group.

"At the heart of our operations lies unrivaled engineering expertise that is driven by innovation, responsible engineering, and an unwavering commitment to improvements aligned with global environmental, social and corporate governance standards. The Graduate Trainee Program is for enthusiastic and future thinking individuals desirous of becoming future leaders in the oil and

gas sector," he said.

Ivie Imasogie-Adigun, Group Head, HR at Sahara Group said the programme resonates with Sahara's human capital transformation strategy aimed at building a leading, nimble and agile organisation for optimal performance.

Imasogie-Adigun said the programme gives graduate trainees exposure to top-level responsibility early in their careers, with ample opportunity to hone their

potential across the Upstream value chain.

"Sahara's Graduate Trainee Programs are deliberately innovative and disruptive as we are always ahead on the curve of making a difference. The programme has over the years produced outstanding business leaders at Sahara and I enjoin graduates to apply for an opportunity to commence their journey towards excellence in the Upstream sector. "

Oil & Gas

Heirs Oil & Gas Promises To Transform Africa's Energy Needs

The new Chief Executive Officer of Heirs Oil & Gas, Osayande Igiehon has promised to use his wealth of experience in the industry to put the company in a sound pedestal that would fix Africa's energy needs.

Igiehon, who resumed office last week, made the pledge in a statement made available to Daily Independent at the weekend.

Heirs Holdings Limited's (HH) portfolio company, HHOG, completed the acquisition of OML17 in January 2021, in one of the largest oil and gas financings in Africa in more than a decade, with a financing component of US\$1.1 billion.

The transaction represents a further implementation of the HH Group strategy of creating the leading integrated energy business in Africa. Through a series of strategic portfolio holdings, HH is executing this strategy. Most recently, affiliate company, Transcorp made a \$300 million acquisition of Afam Power, increasing the Group's installed electricity generating capacity to 2,000MW.

Mr. Igiehon, who joins from the Royal Dutch Shell (Shell), where he was previously a Vice-President with the Group in the Hague, Netherlands, brings over twenty-seven years of experience and expertise in the oil and gas sector with Shell, where he held a series of senior management positions.

Mr. Igiehon previously served as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Shell Gabon, where he led the successful turnaround of the operational, safety and financial performance.

Commenting, Mr. Igiehon stated: "HHOG represents an extraordinary opportunity, to create Africa's first true integrated energy company, with a mission to ensure that Africa's natural resources are directed toward value creation in Africa, powered by sustainable, robust and abundant African energy. I am excited to join the Heirs Oil and Gas leadership team and look forward to the opportunity to transform the energy sector, purposefully address Africa's energy needs and improve the lives of people across Africa."

The company also announced the following senior industry leaders to the board: Sally Udoma who previously served as general counsel for Chevron Europe, Eurasia, and the Middle East Exploration and Production. Previously, she was general counsel for Sasol Chevron Consulting Limited and managing counsel at the London Legal Service Centre for Chevron Global Upstream and Gas. She has also served as general counsel and general manager for Chevron Nigeria Limited.

Anil Dua is a founding partner at Gateway Partners Limited, a private equity fund specialising in dynamic growth markets including Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Prior to this, Mr. Dua worked for over thirty-five years with Standard Chartered Bank in Asia, Africa, Europe and the US, where he held various roles including Regional CEO West Africa and Regional Head of Origination and Client Coverage, Africa.

Ahmadu Kida Musa, who previously served as Deputy Managing Director of Total Exploration and Production Nigeria Limited, has over thirty-two years of experience in the Oil and Gas industry and brings considerable expertise in Nigerian oil and gas.

Stanley Lawson currently serves on the board of Transnational Corporation of Nigeria Plc. He is Managing Partner at Financial Advisory & Investment Consultants Ltd. Dr. Lawson previously occupied the position of Group Executive Director-Finance & Accounts at Nigerian National Petroleum Corp.

Samuel Nwanze is the Chief Finance Officer at Heirs Oil and Gas. Prior to this he was the Chief Investment Officer at Heirs Holdings responsible for investment and capital management.



Dinesh Rathi, Managing Director, Lagos Free Zone (LFZ) (left); Rachit Rawat, Head of Chancery, High Commission of India in Nigeria (second left); Abhay Thakur, High Commissioner of India to Nigeria (middle); Tega Oscar-Ede II, Customer Service Manager, LFZ (second right), and Prem Krishna, Project Leader, Power & Gas, LFZ, during the high commissioner's visit to the Lagos Free Zone.

MOHAMMED SHOSANYA
LAGOS

Labour Flays FG Over Mismanagement Of Petroleum Sector

Organised labour under the aegis of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria (TUC) have flayed the Federal Government over the mismanagement of the nation's petroleum sector, saying the development was responsible for visible impacts of the industry on the lives of Nigerians.

The two labour centers in a recent May Day celebration in Abuja expressed worries that the petroleum downstream sector has continued to feature in the politics of market reforms.

They said the Federal Government has not ceased to accede to the International Monetary Fund's prescription of the total withdrawal of the subsidy on petroleum products, adding that the Britton hood inspired policy has been cloaked in the understatement of deregulation or under-recovery of costs expended in the importation of refined petroleum products.

They said: "In a commissioned research on petroleum pricing, it was revealed that the IMF economic policy preference for the import-parity pricing model against the production cost pricing model is fundamentally flawed. This is because the import parity pricing model discourages self-sufficiency in refining petroleum products supply to meet domestic demand. The import-parity model has bled Nigeria of humungous foreign exchange and is a major singular source of Nigeria's economic hemorrhage and instability.

"The agenda of the import parity pricing model is to service the neoliberal and neo-colonial wishes of those who want to keep Nigeria is economically subservient. It is truly funny that we are even having the conversation of importing refined petroleum products simply because we cannot manage our national refineries. It does not just make sense that we are the only OPEC country that cannot refine its crude oil.

"Talking about the fears of subsidy burden in the production cost pricing model, assuming our refineries are working, it is crucial to point out that 159 nations are subsidizing energy because of the security implications.

"In absolute terms, the top three subsidizers of petroleum prices across the world are the United States, spending about \$502 billion; China spends \$279 billion and Russia with \$116 billion.

"The production cost pricing method

assumes that the PMS prices are based on the cost of domestic crude oil production and refining in the domestic market. This method implies that crude oil is produced and refined in the country.

"The production cost pricing method is used in the USA, Russia and Saudi Arabia, and others to determine PMS prices. While the structures of PMS prices may be different, the major determinant of PMS prices range from taxes in Russia, which made up 62.9% of the PMS price; the cost of crude oil production in the USA is the major determinant, making up 59.4% of the total PMS price. And in Saudi Arabia, expensive refining cost accounts for 43% of the PMS price"

The labour centers said each country chooses the model that syncs with their developmental level, unique resources, development strategies, and nature of domestic energy markets, adding that Nigeria should moderate the production cost pricing model to fit into her developmental and market agglomeration goals.

The nation's workers' leaders said Nigeria has a captive market for refined petroleum products, adding that any serious refiner has no reason to worry about the market for the realisation of the products.

They reasoned that the supply chain could be extended to neighboring countries, which currently serve as the illicit destination of smugglers of even the imported products.

They implored the Federal Government, in line with the Agreement reached with Labour on September 28, 2020 to take very reasonable measures to ensure that all the four public refineries are rehabilitated and brought back fully onstream in good time.

They said Nigeria has already lost huge sums of money to phony contractors and their collaborators in government who had a huge meal importing refined products into Nigeria, feasting on the so-called subsidy and defaulted on their commitments for effective Turn Around Maintenance of our refineries.

"Another problem is the electricity sector crisis. We have engaged Government on the arbitrary electricity tariff

charged consumers. Our representatives in the Electricity Tariff Committee found that the multi-year tariff order (MYTO) was based on some strange assumptions. These are the Nigerian inflation rate; Exchange rate of the Naira to the United States Dollar standing at N383.8; inflation rate in the United States of America of 1.5%; price of Gas for generation at US\$2.50/MMBtu. Other items in the MYTO include generation cost of N4.646 per megawatt; average generation price between hydro and thermal stations put at N25.6; payment to Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) and sundry Administrative Charges of N7.80 per kilowatt. Then, there are the costs associated with the megawatt of electricity delivered to Discos and the aggregate Technical Commercial and Collection (ATC&C) Losses. The Organised Labour cannot accept these strange and fluid criteria in the electricity tariff regime.

'Organised Labour in Nigeria calls for adjustments to the gas price for the power sector and that gas price increases should be suspended for the next three years to support electricity tariff stability.

Accordingly, since gas supply for electricity generation accounts for 70% of local gas consumption, there has to be the security of supply.

"We support improved payment discipline – ensuring that Gas supply companies are paid on a first-line charge from the revenue accruing to the electricity sector and in a timely manner. With the savings made, the cost of the electricity tariff could be reduced by N10.50 across the high price bands. Comrades and fellow Nigerians, it is clear that the factors fuelling incessant hike in electricity tariff such as the dollarization of gas used by GENCOs to run our power stations are issues that government can control.

"As we speak, the promise by government to force DISCOs to mass deploy meters has been poorly pursued as pre-paid meters are still hoarded by DISCOs and sold at high price to frustrated consumers. It is on this premise that we say no to further increases in electricity tariff," they added

Companies & Markets

International Breweries To Train Over 500 Young Entrepreneurs At Kickstart Initiative

As part of its commitment to bringing people together for a better world and its objective of delivering impactful, developmental and sustainable projects, International Breweries Foundation launched the 6th edition of its Kickstart entrepreneurship programme to train over 500 youths.

The initiative is targeted at enterprise growth and development for young entrepreneurs between the ages of 18 and 35.

During a media briefing to update the public on the process of this year's edition, Hugo Rocha, Managing Director, International Breweries Plc, expressed delight that the Kickstart Initiative had evolved from the

regional programme it used to be, to an inclusive national programme that reaches the six geopolitical zones and 36 states of Nigeria.

"Over the years, we have held the conviction that the energy, zeal, and brilliance of the youths of Nigeria who constitute about 70 percent of the total population should be tapped and channelled to productive use. This is the logic behind Kickstart—to promote a culture of entrepreneurship among young people through training, provision of capital and mentorship," Rocha said.

Rocha, however, stated that: "as International Breweries celebrates its 50th Anniversary this year, I am pleased that the results of a 3-year impact assessment study that we

commissioned on Kickstart came out positive and gives us the confidence to continue to support young people to achieve their dream of entrepreneurship. We remain steadfast in our commitment towards the economic development of Nigeria"

Peter Bamkole, Chairman, Advisory Board of International Breweries Foundation, explained that International Breweries Plc and its foundation is dedicated to continuing to contribute its quota towards tackling the twin challenges of unemployment and poverty while promoting Decent Work and Economic Growth in line with Goad 8 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (UNSDGs).

"By creating Kickstart, Interna-

tional Breweries Foundation set out to be the nursery of innovation in business where budding enterprise managers are groomed—held by the hand and taken through the rigour of entrepreneurial work. We aim to produce well-rounded entrepreneurs who understand and are prepared to put in the work it takes to do business successfully in a unique climate like ours," Bamkole said.

Speaking on the mechanics of the award, Legal and Corporate Affairs Director, International Breweries Plc, Temitope Oguntokun revealed that the award is in three phases: the application phase, the training phase and the pitch fest phase which is the final selection of grantees by judges.

Mastercard Foundation's 'Young Africa Connect' Counsels African Youth To Thrive In Workplace

Professionals from diverse fields including Technology, Human Resources, Management, and entrepreneurship have tasked Africa's youth to take advantage of the unique opportunities around them to hone their skills if they hope to compete favourably in today's marketplace.

This was the consensus expressed during the Mastercard Foundation, Young Africa Connect series.

The virtual session, titled "Employable; Securing & Thriving in Work" was held on Thursday, May 6, 2021 and seeks to inspire, engage, and uplift young people, while amplifying the incredible work they are doing across the continent.

It is also a place for young people to discuss issues and topics relevant to them, and receive the information and resources they need as they strive to build dignified lives for themselves and their families.

Ekundayo Odele, a Human Resource Specialist, while speaking at the virtual roundtable, stressed the need for youth to discover themselves and be open to learning at all times.

Odele explained the need to find joy in our work as a successful work-life balance depends on an amalgam of both.

"The evolving workplace of the future cannot continue to ignore the realities and importance of parenting and family and the impact of these on individual lives, thus the workplace of the future will provide more leverage for women and downplay the biases with which she is stereotyped in the workplace", she added.



L-R: Temitope Oguntokun, Legal and Corporate Affairs Director, International Breweries Plc (left); Hugo Rocha, Managing Director, International Breweries (middle), and Peter Bamkole, Chairman, Advisory Board, International Breweries Foundation, during the launch of the 2021 Kickstart entrepreneurship programme by International Breweries Foundation in Lagos.

NDIC Partners CIBN To Improve Professionalism In Banking Industry

BAMIDELE OGUNWUSI,
JUSTUS ADEJUMOH
LAGOS

The Managing Director of Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), Bello Hassan has stressed the need for effective collaboration between regulators and operators in the banking system for the establishment of sound ethics and professionalism in the banking industry.

He made the call during the courtesy visit by the Executive Council members of the Chartered Institute of Bankers (CIBN), led by Mr. Bayo Olugbemi, the President of the Council.

The NDIC boss observed that although there have been improvements in risk management practices within the banking industry, he however, stressed the need for the institute to strengthen its efforts towards ensuring that banking professionals comply with the high standards expected of them in terms of ethics and professionalism which he described as critical to maintaining the safety and soundness of the banking system.

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Hassan explained that the vision and mission of the institute aligns with that of the corporation, which focuses on the protection of depositors through the provision of deposit insurance in licensed banks and deposit taking financial institutions.

He added that this is also assisting monetary authorities in formulating sound banking policies, which he alluded, contributes to the safety and soundness of the banking system.

"These mandates are consistent with the objectives of CIBN as the only professional body that is charged with the responsibility of regulation of banking profession within Nigeria. Therefore, we will continue to work together as partners in ensuring that the banking system in Nigeria remains safe, sound and stable," he said.

While acknowledging the CIBN's accreditation of the corporation's academy as a training service provider of the banking industry, Hassan enjoined the institute to continue to focus on attaining sustainable learning and professional development through creating alliances and partner with regulators, operators and

other relevant agencies and service providers for the mutual benefit of all stakeholders in the banking industry.

Speaking further, he assured the CIBN President of the corporation's commitment towards continued collaboration with the institute in its various programmes to contribute to the effective service delivery and stability of the banking industry.

Mr. Bayo Olugbemi, the CIBN President and Chairman of Council, acknowledged the corporation's active participation in the CIBN as a permanent member of the council and the membership of staff especially at various levels of the CIBN committees.

He added that the corporation had made substantial and valuable inputs to the amendment of the CIBN Act, which is before the National Assembly and solicited for the corporation's support in the amendment process.

He pledged the institute's commitment to use collaboration and advocacy through its vast network of stakeholders to promote the merits of deposit insurance and the critical role of the mandate and activities of the Corporation in the nation's financial system.

UPSL Receives ISO 9001: 2015 Quality Management System Certification

The International Organisation for Standardization has awarded its ISO 9001:2015 certifications for Quality Management Systems to Uruga Power Solutions Limited (UPSL), a member of the Honeywell Group and one of Nigeria's most reputable off-grid power generation companies.

This is in recognition of the company's quality management system's conformity with global best practices.

With this certification, the company has demonstrated its ability to consistently deliver high-quality world class services to its customers.

The ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems certification is centred on strong customer satisfaction, providing a framework that ensures that organisations can meet customers' and other stakeholders' requirements consistently.

Mr. Nick Hundozi, the Operations Manager at the certification agency, PECB Management Systems (PECB MS), in his congratulatory message to UPSL said: "I am pleased to an-

nounce that UPSL has met all the requirements for the PECB MS certificate.

"Your organisation has worked to develop and implement internal quality management systems that meet global standards and will ensure that UPSL delivers on its products and services at a consistent level of excellence."

Engr Seun Faluyi, UPSL Chief Executive Officer, while speaking on receiving the certification, confirmed that "The unwavering commitment of UPSL ensures that our processes are focused on uncompromisingly satisfying customers' needs.

"This has led to the upgrade of our quality management systems, and ensures that we will continue to design competitive solutions that are responsive to client needs and strive to meet the highest standards."

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is a globally acclaimed body based in Geneva and made up of over 160 national bodies, including the US, Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Nigeria.

Aviation

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Mshelia Canvasses Professionalism In Airline Management

Promoters of airlines in the country have been advised to allow aviation professionals to run their business professionally to ensure compliance to safety standards in the sector.

Capt. Ibrahim Mshelia, the Chairman, West Link Airlines gave the advice in Lagos during an interaction with aviation correspondents.

Mshelia argued that if professionals are allowed to manage an airline, safety violations would be minimal, stressing that it was high time investors allow professionals to take the centre stage.

He said: "To be an accountable manager or rather a key post holder in an airline for instance, you have to be qualified and even go through interviews. You have to understand the duty of an accountable manager. You have to understand the workings of an accountable manager for instance."

"There will be maintenance issues coming your way. The Nigerian

Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) as the regulator of the industry must make sure accountable managers are accountable and then when they come for meetings they do not have to go outside to call somebody to answer them or tell them how to answer a particular question posed on them.

These things happen, if you can get the owners to be business men and allow professionals handle the day-to-day affairs, I think there will be more improvement in the sub-sector."

Besides, Mshelia declared that aviation regulation world over is standard and internationally regulated, maintaining that the airline sub-sector was not over-regulated as claimed in some quarters.

He, however, said that the industry is one of the most regulated in the world, but pointed out that the sector had a process, which must be strictly followed by all players.

"It is one of the most regulated

industries in the world, but it is also the normal thing to do. Any aviator would readily acknowledge that it is the most regulated, but to say over-regulated, I don't think this is correct. Yes there is over-zealousness in some cases by individuals, but the regulation is very clear and when it's made, it is proposed to us and when amendments are made, we operators and our voices are taken into account.

"Even though, the current regulation needs more of our voices because when they were made, some of them were made in a hurry to enable approvals of certain requirements because of audits coming up and things like that. However, I don't know of anybody likes the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). I've operated in the United States; nobody likes the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). I've operated in Ghana and most of them don't like the Ghana CAA and other countries," he said.

Professionals Advocate Endorsement Of BSP To Enhance Airlines' Cooperation

Professionals in the Nigerian aviation industry have canvassed for the emplacement of a guaranteed payment process such as Bill Settlement Plan (BSP) for indigenous airlines to foster interline and codeshare arrangements.

The professionals also agreed that while interline and codeshare are business decisions, such should not to be initiated by regulatory fiat, rather said its endorsement was necessary by the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA).

These were parts of the communiqué reached at the end of the Aviation Safety Roundtable Initiative (ASRTI) webinar held recently with the theme: 'Utilising Interlining & Codeshare Agreements as Tools for Domestic Airlines' Profitability & Passenger Comfort.'

The communiqué, which was made available to aviation journalists by Mr. Olumide Ohunayo, Assistant General Secretary, ASRTI, stated that the Quarter 1 Business Breakfast Meeting (2021 Q1BBM), advised NCAA to use the regulatory inducements and other strategic policies in fostering interlining and codeshare among airlines without compromising the stipulated annual economic audit on all domestic airlines to determine their state of health as Part 18 of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Regulation (NCAR) stipulates.

Participants also advised airlines to embark on human capacity building for their staff on commercial agreements, negotiation, codeshare, revenue management and applicable work ethics.

"Participants acknowledged flight cancellation and the perishability of unused seats as



important challenges to trigger interlining and code-share agreements as tools for minimising hardship experienced by passengers and the enhancement of airlines profitability, quality of service and revenue generation.

"The webinar highlighted the expediency for Nigeria's aviation supervisory authorities to complement the safety with economic will, while airlines develop the willingness to embrace technical cooperation arrangements in order to exploit the huge profitability opportunities in the regional air transport market under such agreements.

"For Nigerian airlines to be attractive to foreign carriers for codeshare and other partnerships, it is recommended that operators be International Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) com-

pliant, develop attractive route networks, ensure good product quality, develop the requisite commercial acumen and understand the contract terms of their engagement," the communiqué added.

The professionals explained that partnership and cooperation models work amongst airlines that considered themselves peers, stressing that no single cooperation model fits it all and further canvassed for cooperation among domestic airlines.

Besides, the communiqué suggested for a local clearing system that addresses the current challenges of industry credit and place sales in a float account using solutions as the proposed One-Ticket solution where funds flow directly to the holder of the flown coupon.

Again, Passenger Capacity Slumps By 67.7% In March 2021

●Traffic Drops 73.7% In Africa

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has said that passenger traffic fell in March 2021 compared to pre-COVID levels; March 2019, but rose compared to February 2021.

IATA also disclosed that African airlines' traffic fell 73.7 per cent in March 2021 when compared to the same month two years ago, marking deterioration compared to a 72.3 per cent decline recorded in February compared to February 2019.

IATA said comparisons between 2021 and 2020 monthly results are distorted by the extraordinary impact of COVID-19, unless otherwise noted all comparisons are to March 2019, which followed a normal demand pattern.

Total demand for air travel in March 2021 (measured in revenue passenger kilometers or RPKs) was down 67.2 per cent compared to March 2019.

That was an improvement over the 74.9 per cent decline recorded in February 2021, compared to February 2019. The better performance was driven by gains in domestic markets, particularly China. International traffic remained largely restricted.

International passenger demand in March was 87.8 per cent below March 2019, a very small improvement from the 89 per cent decline recorded in February 2021 versus two years ago.

Total domestic demand was down 32.3 per cent versus pre-crisis levels (March 2019), greatly improved over February 2021, when domestic traffic was down 51.2 per cent versus the 2019 period.

All markets except Brazil and India showed improvement compared to February 2021, with China being the key contributor, as already noted.

"The positive momentum we saw in some key domestic markets in March is an indication of the strong recovery we are anticipating in international markets as travel restrictions are lifted. People want and need to fly. And we can be optimistic that they will do so when restrictions are removed," said Willie Walsh, IATA's Director General.

Meanwhile, IATA said that African airlines' traffic dropped by 73.7 per cent in March versus March two years ago, marking a decline compared to a 72.3 per cent fall recorded in February compared to February 2019.

March capacity contracted 61.8 per cent versus March 2019, while the load factor fell 22.3 percentage points to 49 per cent.

Brazil's domestic traffic was down 54.0% in March compared to March 2019, as the authorities tightened restrictions amid rising COVID-19 cases. This was drastically worse than the 34.9% decline in February over February 2019.

Asia-Pacific airlines' March international traffic was down 94.8 per cent compared to March 2019, barely better than the 95.4 per cent decline registered in February 2021



Willie Walsh

versus February 2019.

The region continued to suffer from the steepest traffic declines for a ninth consecutive month. Capacity was down 87 per cent and the load factor sank 48.6 percentage points to 31.9 per cent, the lowest among regions.

European carriers recorded an 88.3 per cent decline in traffic in March versus March 2019, just slightly ahead of the 89.1 per cent decline in February compared to the same month in 2019. Capacity fell 80 per cent and load factor fell by 35 percentage points to 49.4 per cent.

Middle Eastern airlines' demand fell 81.6 per cent in March compared to March 2019, improved over an 83.1 per cent demand drop in February, versus the same month in 2019. Capacity fell 67.2 per cent, and load factor declined 32.3 percentage points to 41.3 per cent.

North American carriers saw March traffic sink 80.9 per cent compared to the 2019 period, a gain compared to the 83.4 per cent decline in February compared to two years ago. Capacity sagged 62.6 per cent, and load factor dropped 41 percentage points to 42.9 per cent.

Latin American airlines experienced an 82.4 per cent demand drop in March, compared to the same month in 2019, a slight improvement compared to the 83.7 per cent decline in February compared to February 2019.

March capacity was down 77.4 per cent compared to March 2019 and load factor dropped 18.1 percentage points to 63.6 per cent, highest among the regions for a sixth straight month.

Brazil's domestic traffic was down 54 per cent in March compared to March 2019, as the authorities tightened restrictions amid rising COVID-19 cases. This was drastically worse than the 34.9 per cent decline in February over February 2019.

Japan's domestic traffic declined 58.3 per cent in March versus the same month in 2019, much improved from the 73.2 per cent decline in February compared to two years ago.



Interview

CIRDDOC Made Budget Process In Nigeria More Transparent – Ndigwe

Can you throw more lights on CIRDDOC recently released report of the 2020 Nigerian States Budget Transparency Survey?

Thank you for the question. The report shows a marked improvement in the level of budget transparency across the 36 states of the federation although participation has remained low.

With an average score of 42 out of 100 (up from 29 in 2018), Nigerian states provided some information on the budget and procurement processes although with limited spaces for public participation.

What can point to as being responsible for the successful report?

The success or rather the improvements were mainly due to the timely online publication of budget documents and the enactment of procurement laws meant to better guide the procurement process.

Can you in the same vein throw lights on details of the report?

With a score of 90, Jigawa performed best on the Index, as they did in 2018.

Jigawa state continued to provide citizens with extensive budget information, had mechanisms for public consultation throughout the budget process, and had an open and robust procurement process.

The majority of states scored between 20 and 60, meaning they provided minimal to some information on the budget, few spaces for public participation, and limited information on the procurement process.

The study which was designed to analyse how transparent, open, and participatory budget and procurement processes are in Nigerian states, covered the 36 states of the federation.

Giving further insight, the report shows that an overwhelming majority of states improved their 2020 scores on the State Budget Document Availability Index.

The average score in 2020 increased to 49 (from 32 in 2018).

While Jigawa state continued to be at the top of this sub-index, Ondo and Kano states ranked second and third with scores of 86 and 80, respectively while nine states had lower scores than in 2018.

The report also shows that while there were significant improvements in budget transparency in 2020, improvements in public participation in the budget process were not as extensive as the average score of the 2020 State Public Participation Index increased marginally to 26 from 17 in 2018.

However, it was observed that the majority of these improvements in opportunities for public participation occurred during the formulation stage of the budget process as spaces during budget execution and audit remained minimal, at best.

It was also found that the procurement process in Nigerian states continued to be more robust and open than in previous years.

The average score of the 2020 State Procurement Process Index increased to 40 (from 31 in 2018). This survey proves that all states can make significant improvements in the medium-term.

Do you think these reforms can be sustained in the long-term?

Engr. Ralph Ndigwe, national coordinator of the Civil Resource Development and Documentation Centre (CIRDDOC), in this interview with **SYLVESTER ENOGHASE**, speaks on how 36 states shows marked improvement in the level of budget transparency, although participation has remained low. Excerpt:



Ndigwe

I will say yes because CIRDDOC is known for its research, and analysis on budget Process is occupying a driver seat in ensuring that the budget is well planned and implemented in the country.

It is also committed to the protection and promotion of human rights and wom-

en's human rights and the strengthening of civil society.

CIRDDOC is committed to the institutionalisation of good governance, gender equality and the rule of law in Nigeria.

Without resort to boasting, we have in the bid of carrying out budget literacy, advocacy and monitoring functions, put performance appraisal system in place, and it is directed toward two fundamental goals: to create a measure that accurately assesses the level of government performance in terms of budgetary implementation and to create an evaluation system that will advance one or more operational functions among states.

In the bid to get it right, we have developed the Nigerian States Budget Transparency Survey (SNBTS) to analyse how transparent, open, and participatory budget and procurement processes are in Nigerian states and in the light of the foregoing, all 36 states are evaluated to see how much budget information is provided, spaces and mechanisms for public participation throughout the budget process, and how robust and transparent the procurement process is in the states.

Why the priority on budget monitoring by

CIRDDOC?

Monitoring the budget is important to ensure that the financial, operational and capital plans that were developed and approved for implementation as part of the budget processes are being implemented. Budget monitoring is crucial for states in Nigeria.

This is to enhance the enforcement of accountability that is related to spending. In addition, regular, comprehensive monitoring of the budget allows a government to evaluate service level provision, ensure any new initiatives are making expected progress towards goals/expectations, learn more about trends and other deviations that may impact future operations, and finally demonstrate transparency by sharing findings from this regular monitoring.

What can you point out as the dos and don'ts of Budget monitoring?

Budget monitoring must include examination of a broad set of functions in order to fully inform what actions need to be taken if significant deviations are found.

Comparison of budget to actuals is the starting point for budget monitoring,

The report on budget and procurement processes shows that an overwhelming majority of states improved their 2020 scores on the State Budget Document Availability Index

'Govt Lacks Transparency, Accountability In Public Finances'

← CONTINUED FROM 24

but it should be expanded to include how the organisation is performing related to service delivery and other programs/initiatives.

To ensure this, governments should clearly articulate not only the elements and who will analyse, but also how the analysis will be utilised. If conducted consistently, thoroughly and effectively, the budget monitoring process will provide information that may lead to corrective action or operational improvement.

Was there any observation noted in the course of carrying out the research, and which has been learnt from?

Yes! We observed that the budget process in Nigeria is more transparent but less participatory. In as much as the Report "shows a marked improvement in the level of budget transparency across the 36 states of the federation, the participation has remained low, and it is not an boastful to say that in spite of that that we are strongly committed to well-planned and credibly implemented budget.

As you might have seen in the report, with an average score of 42 out of 100 (up from 29 in 2018), Nigerian states provided some information on the budget and procurement processes although with limited spaces for public participation.

These improvements were mainly due to the timely online publication of budget documents and the enactment of procurement laws meant to better guide the procurement process, as I earlier noted in this parley.

What is your take on the performance of the state's that had their budgets researched into?

With a score of 90, Jigawa performed best on the Index, as they did in 2018. Jigawa state continued to provide citizens with extensive budget information, had mechanisms for public consultation throughout the budget process, and had an open and robust procurement process.

The majority of states scored between 20 and 60, meaning they provided minimal to some information on the budget, few spaces for public participation, and limited information on the procurement process.

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It also shows that while there were significant improvements in budget transparency in 2020, improvements in public participation in the budget process were not as extensive as the average score of the 2020 State Public Participation Index increased marginally to 26 from 17 in

2018.

But it was observed that the majority of these improvements in opportunities for public participation occurred during the formulation stage of the budget process as spaces during budget execution and audit remained minimal, at best.

It was further discovered that the procurement process in Nigerian states continued to be more robust and open than in previous years. The average score of the 2020 State Procurement Process Index increased to 40 (from 31 in 2018).

What elements can you say should be reviewed in a budget to mitigate errors?

In terms of revenues, governments need to carefully analyse sources of funds with particular attention to: Seasonality, and whether comparable to prior observations, any potential volatility and the resulting impacts trends and comparison to projections, one time sources and timing of receipts.

Also is the relationship to economic indicators and potential impacts, changes in policy/practice of overarching governments involved in disbursement of revenues, review of patterns at other similar/related governments.

Also, governments need to carefully monitor all expenditures as well, including one-time uses and also examining key aspects that cut across Personnel where there need to be examination of additional detail beyond just regular payroll expenses, including analysis related to hiring and vacancy information and also, depending on magnitude, analysis of part-time, overtime, leave pay out and special pay.

In addition, conduct analysis of re-class/promotions to see if on-track with expectations, and whether fringe benefit costs are within budgeted expectations as well.

On on-personnel monitoring, there are needs to include more than just current expenses. Governments need to analyse draw down of encumbrances, outstanding purchase orders, and its major contracts to develop a better picture of not only what was spent, but what remains to be spent.

On the area of operations, there is need to ask the questions, are services being provided as anticipated? Are any services being provided that were unanticipated? What trends are being observed that may impact whether or not spending remains on track?

On Capital, governments need to monitor the budgets of capital projects as well, and on Economic Trends, the question, how is the broader context of prices for labor, services, commodities and other items impacting expenses versus the budget, need to be asked.

On the area of Performance Measures, governments should incorporate into their budget monitoring process an examination of performance measures and linkages to financial outcomes. The analysis should include any changes to goals/initiatives since budget adoption and are there any new initiatives not initially included in the budget.

How should the elements you just mentioned in this parley be analysed?



Ndigwe

First and foremost, the root cause should be identified. Governments should move beyond just identifying deviations from budget versus actuals and work towards analysing and articulating why deviations occurred in order to move towards resolution.

In a similar vein, within the context of the time frame, questions such as, "Is it anticipated for any identified variance to continue or is there an underlying reason for the variance?" and "How does the current spending pattern impact the subsequent year's budget?" should be asked.

On a similar note, the budget monitoring should be structured to meet any interim reporting requirements that the government may have, if possible.

There should be basis of comparison. Monitored from this perspective, governments should also ensure that reference

points for comparison are logical and appropriate and account for any major organisational changes that would impact any comparisons.

In addition to comparison of current results to budget, government should expand their basis of comparison for more robust analysis to include: Previous year actuals, Averages of several prior year actuals and projections and forecasts.

What style of Communications can you suggest for the government during budget monitoring?

Well, the style of communication will vary depending on type of size of jurisdiction as well as the intended audience. For instance, regarding frequency of communication, it will depend on how often budget monitoring reports and information is generated, and this should be agreed upon, but may vary for different program areas.

On information delivery, the government should describe the point at which the monitoring process is achieved and how the information is communicated and to which stakeholders, both internally and externally, needs to be clearly structured. Again, the format for how information related to budget monitoring needs to be clearly established as well, including considerations for the audience and their level of expertise.

On transparency, how can the information be shared on a wide spread basis to the people and include the proper context to best inform the public and minimise additional request for more information is equally of paramount importance.

Also important to be mentioned in this context is that a government's budget monitoring process does not end at the time of communication. However, it is expedient to say that following the steps above that governments will conduct comprehensive monitoring and communication that will ensure timely corrective action and operational improvement.

Governments should move beyond just identifying deviations from budget versus actuals and work towards analysing and articulating why deviations occurred in order to move towards resolution

Port Harcourt Business

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Over 3000 Workers To Be Employed In Port Harcourt Refinery Rehabilitation Work –Mustapha

DANIEL ABIA
P/HARCOURT

Over three thousand jobless Nigerians would be employed during the 44-month rehabilitation of the Port Harcourt refinery valued at \$1.5billion which expected to begin this week.

Disclosing this much last week, Engr. Yakubu Mustapha, the Chief Operating Officer (COO), Refineries, said this shortly after a kick-off meeting for the commencement of the project in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

Mustapha said there would be progress report on a regular basis so as to have team enlightenment about the project objectives and scope, and added that the Port Harcourt Refinery Company (PHRC) would own the project to ensure that it was in line with the contract.

It would be recalled that the signing of the Engineering Procurement (EPC) contract, otherwise known as phase two for the PHRC was done on April 6, 2021.

"Today is a technical kick off meeting. What that means is, it signifies the start of the project. Starting from today, we will be having what is called progress report. The idea is to have team enlightenment about the project objectives, the project scopes.

"Then the scope that has been highlighted, the Port Harcourt Company has to own it, hold it to ensure it is in line with the contract.

"Furthermore, to also have understanding around the stakeholders' expectations and the project objectives that okay this refinery our expectation is to be rehabilitated to a minimum of 90 per cent NNPC capacity",



Port Harcourt refinery

Mustapha said.

He added that the meeting was to create awareness that the rehabilitation work has commenced.

Mustapha expressed the optimism that the project would create a lot of job opportunities, especially for the local communities where the company was situated.

"This job is going to create a lot of opportunities for our local communities. In terms of the manning, at peak we are going to have about 3,000 personnel working here.

"Out of that number, the expectation is that the number of expatriates should be about 70. So, when you put 70 over three thousand, you are taking about 2.5 per cent off expatriates to Nigerians.

"The project has started and by our project schedule, it is in three phases because we have the old Port Harcourt refinery here, which is 60,000 barrel capacity.

"Then the bigger one is 120,000 barrels per day. We have started and the first phase is 24-months and then we have 36. Ultimately the total completion about 44-months," he explained.

Engr. Ahmed Dikko, Managing Director of PHRC, while speaking, said the company has commenced stakeholder engagement with the host communities in order to have their buy in into the project.

"We want them to be partners in this project. And you can do this partnership in various ways. Yes,

employment, they will have priority around that.

"But then there are other things that they will require that we will do for them as we journey into this project.

"It is a different kind of arrangement. So, we will partner together with the contractor and then satisfy this community engagement in a way that we have a peaceful environment to do this project completely," Dikko added.

He said, so many activities have been done including town hall meeting with the communities, adding: "We have gone to visit the local government chairmen. I will personally go to visit the Kings of the communities very shortly."

DANIEL ABIA
P/HARCOURT

The Bonny Utility Company (BUC) has assured that it is optimising best practices to ensure the safety of residents while relocating strategic electrical assets in the affected areas of the construction of the Bonny/Bodo road project.

The company said utilities such as pillars, high tension wires, armored cables, and transformers, among others were being relocated along the Bonny-Bodo Road Right of Way.

Residents Assured Of Safety In Re-Electrification Of Bonny-Bodo Road Project

Hafis Ismaila, the General Manager, Bonny Utility Company (BUC), made the disclosure in a telephone chat with newsmen.

He stated that the safety of everyone involved directly or otherwise was critical to the operations of the company.

"The activity is being carried out in phases for safety of people, personnel involved and without pro-

long outage in the community", he was quoted.

Ismaila, therefore, appealed for understanding from residents of Bonny Island, adding that the situation would soon be stabilised.

The BUC, in conjunction with Riviera Technical Services Limited, has been working on the ongoing relocation project on the right of way for the construction work on the Bonny-Bodo

do Road to commence fully from the Bonny axis.

A source said it is expected that residents and commuters plying the affected areas would strictly obey the safety signs, and adhere to measures that were being deployed around the project site as a way of contributing their own quota in achieving the hazard-free completion goal, as envisaged by the job hazard analysis.

Rivers To Construct N25.9bn Cancer Treatment Centre, Ninth Flyover

DANIEL ABIA
P/HARCOURT

The Rivers State Government has approved the contract for the construction of Sir Peter Odili Cancer and Cardiovascular Diagnostic and Treatment Centre at the cost of N25.9 billion.

The Cancer and Cardiovascular Diagnostic and Treatment Centre, which will be sited in Rumuokuta Obio-Akpor Local Government Area is expected to be completed within fourteen months.

Professor Princewill Chike, Rivers

State Commissioner for Health, who briefed Journalists after the Rivers State Executive Council meeting presided over by Governor Nyesom Wike, explained that the Cancer and Cardiovascular Diagnostic and Treatment Centre is to be built, constructed and furnished by Julius Berger Nigeria Limited.

Prof. Chike further said that the centre will have modular theatres as well as necessary state-of-the-art medical equipment, radio therapy and other equipment for nuclear medicine.

"Julius Berger will be given 70 per-

cent of the total cost. The cost of the contract for the Cancer and Cardiovascular Diagnostic and Treatment Centre is N25,959,139,999.05."

The Commissioner for Health expressed optimism that when the Centre is completed, it will boost medical tourism in Rivers State.

Similarly, Elloka Tasie-Amadi, State Commissioner for Works, said his ministry had proposed and received approvals from the State Executive Council for the construction of a ninth flyover at Rumuepirikom; dualization of the first phase of the

Ahoada-Omoku Road as well as internal roads in Omerelu community in Ikwerre Local Government Area.

He said the construction of the ninth flyover at Rumuepirikom is necessitated by increasing vehicular activities and traffic gridlock at some entry points in Port-Harcourt, the State capital.

He said the flyover which will be completed in twelve months at the cost of N6.6billion, would be funded by the deduction of N400million monthly from State's Internally Generated Revenue.

Rotary Club Donates COVID-19 Sample Collection Kiosks To Rivers Govt

PETER IHEJIRIKA
P/HARCOURT

The Rivers State Government, through its ministry of health has received two COVID-19 Sample Collection Kiosks from the Rotary Club of Port Harcourt, District 9141.

In his address at the handover event held at the Rivers State Quarantine Center, Elekahia/Liberation Stadium, Rivers State; Rtn. Adeolu Okanlawon, President, Rotary Club of Port Harcourt, enumerated some of the challenges that were faced by Nigerians in the last one year as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The Rotary President, who lauded the proactive approach of Governor Nyesom Wike from inception of the pandemic, through the lockdown and the present state of virus, disclosed that over 2,065 Nigerians out of the 165,000 cases of infection lost their lives.

While acknowledging that 59 out of 2916 cases lost their lives in the state, Rtn. Okolanwon stated that 150 million people contacted the deadly virus, while 3 million people died globally.

He further noted that the club, as a result of the pressure mounting on testing, as evidence of being COVID-19 free, that the Rotary Club of Port Harcourt through the funding from District 9141, thought it wise to support the state health workers in preparing for the future, by constructing and donating the two COVID-19 Sample Kiosks.

Port-Harcourt Based Foundation Empowers 60 Women With Skills

PASCAL AIGBOGUN
PORT-HARCOURT

In a bid to reduce unemployment in Rivers state, a non-governmental organisation; Selfless Patriots Initiative, based in Port-Harcourt has successfully completed the training of 60 women in make-up artistry and fashion designing.

The non-governmental organisation, according to the Chairman, Mrs Acho Iyalla, is a body of like-minded careerists and professionals in various endeavours of life who have agreed to pool resources together to further the course of the vulnerable people, with emphasis on the girl child in the society.

She also informed all present at the colourful event that the gesture is an annual programme organised to coincide and mark the anniversary of the founding of the foundation, which has existed for four years now.

"We have a strength of forty members. We have an outreach programme every last Saturday of the month where we mobilise members time and financial resources to cater for the less privileged in the society, especially women and children".

She added that this is the fourth anniversary of the foundation and that this year's empowerment intervention shall come in two phases.

Articles/Opinions should be a maximum of 750 words sent with the writer's photograph to: Dailyindependentopinion@gmail.com

Your Views

Misreading Smart Adeyemi!

ABDULRAZAQ MAGAJI

Smart Adeyemi is not a clown and does not even behave like one. Unlike the man he replaced at the Senate, Smart is educated enough to know what it means to be a Senator. He is not given to histrionics. He is not a spook, he does not dress like one and he does not behave like a spook. That he rose to become president of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) is a mark of how serious and clearheaded he is. In a society where trust has become a scarce commodity, Smart is one Nigerian you want to have as a next-door neighbor.

Smart laughs big when he laughs! And he is always generous with his laughter. Still, Smart is human with blood running in his veins. He has emotions; he cries, not necessarily in public, when he has to. We all do, don't we? So, something must have snapped in Smart Adeyemi when he chose the floor of the Senate, a public place, to cry the other day. What snapped in Smart must have snapped in many Nigerians who must have also shed a few teardrops, in private, of course. If truth be told, the way the ship of state is tottering is enough to bring tears to the eyes of the lionhearted.

Let me make myself clear at the onset. I have been a lifelong admirer of President Muhammadu Buhari and I am not about to be a turncoat. I have always been in the trenches to promote what Nigeria is capable of becoming under his watch. The Buhari Project, a nonprofit organization which will launch after May, 2023, is aimed at promoting the President's ideals. Despite the sad turn of events, my faith in the Buhari/Osinbajo administration remains unshaken. Another Buhari fan there, right? Why not? After all, we are one way or the other, without exception, ardent followers and admir-

ers of some cause, an idea or some individual!

Back to Smart. Recall that the senator's emotional arousal happened in a week the ongoing carnage assumed, for want of a better adjective, a federal character. It was not the first time so many Nigerian lives were cut down by bloodthirsty bandits, insurgents and separatists but, for the first time the killings were coordinated. Sadly, aside boring reassurances and endless condolence messages, Nigerians saw no sign on the part of government to actualize its promise to check the carnage.

Recall also that the killings did not take place anywhere near Kogi West senatorial District which Smart represents. So, the senator was faced with two choices: to be typically indifferent or join the growing number of despairing Nigerians who rely on prayers to end the slaughter in the land. He acted otherwise and, in the belief that a Senator's voice should carry some weight, he decided to add his to growing calls on government to move the country away from the precipice. It was a gamble, and what did he get in return?

We shall return to the gamble but, first, we need to remind ourselves that Smart contested and lost the senatorial seat in 2015 as a member of the PDP apparently because he felt uncomfortable being in the same political boat with the eventual winner who contested under the APC. But the realignments ahead of 2019 led to reversal of roles and Smart returned to fly the APC flag and won with relative ease. As a senator, it is beyond contest that Smart is a senior member of the ruling APC party.

Now, to what Smart got for his gamble on the floor of the Senate. The first response to Smart's public display of emotions came from fellow APC senator, Oluremi Tinubu, wife of APC leader, Ahmed Bola Tinubu. No! The potential First Lady did not respond by handing a towel to Smart to dry his tears or, for that matter, offer

him a shoulder to lean on. Rather, she questioned Senator Adeyemi's loyalty and sought to know whether he is now a member of the opposition PDP. This was not meant to be a joke, as some Nigerians want to believe: it was an unkind cut.

Recall still that, on the floor of the last Senate, the same Senator Oluremi Tinubu was verbally assaulted by Senator Adeyemi's predecessor. On that occasion, Nigerians lined behind Senator Tinubu without asking whether she pulled a joke that went awry. Her assaulter, infamous for his disdainful clowning, got no respite from Nigerians for the vulgar words. Pause for a second to imagine the scene if Senator Adeyemi was another child trapped in the body of an adult.

Whatever the intent, Senator Tinubu leveled a grave allegation against a fellow senator and fellow party member. In essence, what the potential First Lady is saying is that Smart's action amounts to antiparty action because, being a top APC member, he should not be seen to be washing his party's dirty linen in public. If that allegation sticks, only God knows how many APC top shots would have to be similarly sanctioned. Few days back, Honourable Faruk Adamu Aliyu, a hard-nosed Buhari loyalist told a foreign radio station that he saw nothing wrong in the APC tendering an apology to Nigerians for performing below expectation.

It has been suggested by some Nigerians that Senator Adeyemi should have proffered solutions instead of boring Nigerians with details of the killings. Truth is, Smart repeated some of the solutions already suggested by well-meaning Nigerians. For instance, he called for immediate recruitment of more men into the nation's fighting force despite the fact that the new normal is for recruits to give bribes or have well-oiled connections to secure slots into the Nigerian Army. He also joined calls for proper kitting of troops and prompt payment

of their allowances. If words of top military and political officials are to be believed, only the meanspirited will accuse him of withholding his assent to these demands. What, then, if the President acted promptly on the demands?

What is lacking is effective superintendence. In a situation where insecurity has become a multibillion Naira business and when some highly-placed corrupt Nigerians prosper from its prolongation, issuing directives and expecting them to be carried out is like pouring water on the back of a duck. Consider these: A presidential order for the enlistment of 10,000 constables into the Police Force has been stalled for more than one year by a needless legal tussle between the Police Service Commission and the Force headquarters. Even the cerebral National Security Adviser, Mohammed Monguno, a retired Brigadier-General, recently alluded to the possibility of the purchase of military hardware being turned into drainpipe of sort. Strangely, nobody has been sanctioned for flouting presidential directives.

Let's for once forget Senator Adeyemi's tears and concentrate on accurate reading of his lips. By suggesting that the National Assembly shut down, Smart did not advocate for lawmakers to proceed on an indefinite recess or be divorced from their jobs. Rather, he sent a message to President Buhari, on behalf of Nigerians, that the buck must truly be seen to stop on the President's desk. And, if I may add, the only way to ensure this is for Mr. President to insist on accountability and, when necessary, sanction officials who revel in treating his directives with levity.

The way to go is not for us to misread Senator Adeyemi. The way to go is not for us to disingenuously make the President's friends look like his enemies.

Magaji wrote in from Abuja

A Bill For An Act To Curb The Powers Of Death

SOYOMBO OPEYEMI

It is high time the powers of Death were checked and circumscribed by legal instruments. But for equity, there should have been mass mobilisation for Death to be arrested, summarily tried and sent to life imprisonment or straight to the guillotine. There is a litany of injustices perpetrated by Death against citizens. A prima facie case can be established; his guilt can be proved beyond a reasonable doubt. But our laws do not permit a man to be tried for an offence that has not been so codified. Hence, there is the need for the national legislature to enact a law to curb the powers of Death.

There are mountains of complaints against Death. His predilection for arbitrariness, impunity, mischief, whim and caprice must be checked. No one should be invested with such an absolute power. As Lord Acton observed, *"Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely."*

I had developed some bond with Henry Boyo. Within weeks of our interactions on the Editorial Board of *Daily Independent*, we formed some chemistry. His passion for the economic prosperity of Nigeria was unrivalled. Here was a self-made man, who needed nothing from Nigeria. Although he belonged to the upper class, he identified with all classes of the society.

On a daily basis, he railed against the voodoo economics of the country. He did not exactly use the word 'folly' though every of his listener or reader would conclude with that word. Why should the Central Bank of Nigeria pump trillions of Naira into the system or wet the system with overflowing liquidity and then turn round to complain of too much money in the system, fuelling inflation? Then at one fell swoop, the same CBN decides to mop up the excess liquidity by borrowing back through the commercial banks the same Naira it, of its own volition, injected into the system, at

a colossal interest rates or loss to the public exchequer? It's like working for the commercial banks at the expense of the masses. Or it's more of working for the money bags at the expense of the masses through monetary instruments like the Treasury Bill.

If it was a one-off egregious act, it could be overlooked. But every month, the apex bank converts the dollar proceeds for the three tiers of government into Naira at an arbitrary rate, flooding the system with Naira, which keeps the Nigerian currency on the canvas against the dollar. Since virtually everything is imported in the country, you have truckloads of the same castrated Naira looking for the dollar! Hence the more the increase in our dollar-denominated revenue and external reserves, the more the Naira allocations pumped into the system, the poorer Nigerians become, as too much Naira chases a stronger dollar. And Henry Boyo would shout from the rooftops, in broadcast and print media, especially through his columns in the *Daily Independent*, *Punch* and *Vanguard*. His prescription was simple and unimpeachable.

Here is Henry Boyo's refrain: *"There is no greater instigator of excess liquidity than the constant substitution of Naira allocations for dollar-denominated revenue. This is the poison in our economic system. Truly, our nation's development will remain stunted for many generations if we do not tackle this problem. I will not be part of the band of deceit that will trumpet cures to symptoms of a disease rather than recommend a frontal attack to the real cause of the disease. Indeed, the evidence is clear that our people have become poorer despite increasing dollar revenue and reserves in the last three decades!"*

"Certainly, no economy can perform creditably when cost of funds to the real sector remains at over 20%, while stable consumer demand remains severely constrained with annual inflation rates of 8-12%. Sadly, CBN and our Economic Management Teams have never been able to con-

struct an appropriate growth model which supports low cost of funds (i.e. 3-6%), low inflation rate (1-3%), with a non-monopolistic and open forex market that will drive the elusive quest for economic diversification and inclusive growth. Systemic Naira supply, clearly also, is responsible for weaker Naira exchange rates, as CBN's weekly auctions of modest dollar rations, are pitched in a market against excess Naira supply, which invariably creates an imbalance in favour of the dollar! Surely, the adoption of dollar certificates for government allocations of dollar-denominated revenue will eliminate or critically reduce the burden of excess Naira liquidity and therefore give the Naira a fighting chance against the dollar in the Forex market."

Some of us have near pathological aversion to Lagos traffic. Any opportunity to escape the raucous city is lustily craved. A worse situation was thrown up by the endless construction on the Lagos-Ibadan highway, especially the blockage of a section of the road, which exacerbated the traffic-jam. Hence I avoided Lagos, as much as possible! My plan was to visit the *"Centre of Excellence"* in December 2019, when a section of the highway necessitating the closure, hopefully, would have been completed. Surely, I would visit Sir Henry Boyo in his Allen redoubt.

Alas, I was caught unawares. I was intensely embarrassed. It was sort of a double whammy - some melancholy occasioned by denial of legitimate entitlements in a previous employment. Boyo was not afflicted by any serious illness as to warrant the exercise of the powers of Death. It was arbitrariness and naked abuse of power by Death.

I still feel hurt. I feel intensely embarrassed by the indiscriminate, if not reckless action of Death. Boyo was a complete gentleman that could not hurt a fly. Although he was old enough to sire me, he related with me as a colleague and friend. He was a wealthy industrialist, completely self-retiring. But for his love for his country, regularly expressed in print and electronic me-

dia, you hardly would have noticed Boyo in any public space.

Again, in the early days of 2021, I had planned to call one of our aunts to express best wishes to her. Although she was 75, she was still full of life. Alas, it was again another abuse of power by Death. She only complained of a minor illness and within a few hours, Death, without any scruples, remorse or human feelings, exercised his unrestrained powers! Absolute powers corrupt absolutely. Gani Fawehinmi, Chima Ubani, Bamidele Aturu, Yinka Odumakin, Innocent Chukwuma! Haba, Mr Death! Please, what were their offences?! Why did you cut short their lives?

There must be procedures to guide Death in his choices. There must be A Bill for an Act to curb the powers of Death, to provide guidelines for the exercise of the powers of Death.

It is true Death cannot be held accountable for murders, accidents, killings or illnesses but the timing of the exercise of his powers must align with the law of natural justice. For instance, it's the height of injustice for Death to allow a sickness to linger for months and years, gulping thousands and millions of Naira in hospital expenses and still strike in the end.

The era of arbitrariness is over. Henceforth a life must run its full course before Death is permitted to exercise its powers. A good example of a life that ran its full course is to be found in the Great Book, in Genesis 49:33: *"And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people."* In effect, Death has no absolute power. His powers can be circumscribed by an Act of Parliament. After charging his children at an old age, Jacob literally invited Death to exercise his legal powers. There was no room for arbitrariness. No room for whim. No room for caprice.

Soyombo, media practitioner and public affairs analyst, wrote in from Abeokuta

Ndigbo

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Josephine Ozomadu, inductee, Life member, Enugu Diocesan Catholic Women Organization (left); Rev. Fr. Godwin Aniakor (second left); Ifeoma Ume, an inductee, Ambassador of Mary (second right), and Livinus Umeh, Chairman of the occasion, during the induction of some selected Catholic women as ambassadors by the Enugu Diocesan Catholic women organization at Holy Ghost Cathedral, Enugu on Sunday.



CHRISTIAN NWOKOCHA
ASABA

ASOPADEC Drives Community Development Projects In Abia

Abia State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission (ASOPADEC) has commissioned projects in various communities in Abia State, including Central Senatorial zone.

The chairman of the commission made the disclosure at the weekend.

The projects commissioned in Abia Central included construction of a water project at the Holy Rosary Girls Secondary School, Ugwunchara in Umuahia North LGA; renovation of a civic hall at Obi-Ikoro in Umuda Isingwu, Umuahia North LGA; construction of a classroom block with office accommodation at Umunevo Community Primary School, Isiala Ngwa South LGA, Construction of a modern Civic

Hall at Ihieorji Villa, Ehi Na Uguru Ward 5, Isiala Ngwa South LGA, Construction of an ultra modern Civic Hall at Okpu Umuobo, Osisioma LGA, drilling and reticulation of water borehole at Afor-Ukwu market, Isiala Ngwa South LGA, refurbishment of an electricity transformer and extension of low tension at Amaputa, Umuoha ward in Isiala Ngwa North LGA, among others.

The chairman said that the projects spread across six local governments of Abia Central Senatorial Zone.

He commended the state Governor, Okezie Ikpeazu, for empowering the board of ASOPADEC under his chair-

manship.

The ASOPADEC boss described the projects as life changing, while assuring the people in the rural communities of the resolve of the commission to continue to better their lives and initiate projects that would be of immense benefit to them.

He further tasked the communities to ensure that they deploy every means to protect the facilities from being damaged.

Speaking during the commissioning ceremonies held in the various communities, the traditional rulers of Isiala Okpu Autonomous Community and the Chairman, Osisioma Ngwa 'Traditional Rulers'

Council, HRM Eze Christian E. Iheme; the traditional ruler of Olokoro Autonomous Community, HRH Eze Linus Ndukanjo Onuoha; the traditional ruler of Amuzu Umunne Okpu Autonomous Community and HRH Eze Friday O. Onwukwe; were thankful for projects located in their respective communities and appreciated Ikpeazu and the board of ASOPADEC for initiating magnificent and people-oriented projects in their communities.

The traditional rulers noted that they were elated by the quality of jobs done and said that they have no doubt that the Governor would continue to deliver good infrastructure developments in the state.

Remove My Father's Name From Onitsha Stadium, Chuba-Ikpeazu's Son Urges Gov Obiano

CHINUA AGHADIUNO
ONITSHA

Owing to the dilapidated condition of the Justice Chuba-Ikpeazu Mini-Stadium, Onitsha, named after the first Nigerian private football club proprietor and former chairman of Nigeria Football Association (NFA), the son of the Late Justice Chuba-Ikpeazu, Odii Chuba-Ikpeazu, has appealed to the Governor of Anambra State to erase his late father's name from the stadium.

Chuba-Ikpeazu said it has become necessary for the state government not to associate his father's name with the stadium since the state of the stadium does not represent the aspirations of the family.

He noted that his father while alive left lasting legacies, which the current administration in the state was finding difficult to sustain.

Ikpeazu said that the government in Anambra State is a misrepresentation of all that his father stood for while alive.

The angry sports enthusiast told our correspondent in Onitsha that during a boxing tournament sponsored by a governorship aspirant on the platform of APC, Dr. Chidozie Nwankwo, at Washington Memorial Grammar School, Awka

Road, Onitsha, that the state of the stadium was a huge disappointment to the image his father who supported sports development and even rose to the position of a foremost soccer administrator in Nigeria.

He disclosed that severally he had petitioned the Sports Ministry in the state to remove his late father's name from the stadium located along Awka Road, Onitsha, but expressed surprise that till date it has not been carried out.

"If you go to Justice Chuba-Ikpeazu Stadium, you will shed tears because the level of devastation of sporting facilities there. This was a mini-stadium built by the administration of former Governor Peter Obi to aid the discovery of young sporting talents. But today the aim of such venture has been defeated.

"Several representations have been sent to the state government to revitalise the stadium to no avail. This is a great disservice to the memory of the man in whose name the stadium was named.

"So, I'm making an appeal to Gov. Willie Obiano to remove my father's name from the stadium and name it after another person. That will be fair to the memory of my late father and the entire family," he said.

Lawmaker Counsels Business Community On Insurance

EMEKA OKAFOR
UMUAHIA

Member representing Aba North and South Federal Constituency in the House of Representatives, Chief Chimaobi Ebisike, has advised the business community in his constituency to insure their business centres against unforeseen occurrences.

The lawmaker, who is bare-

ly two weeks in the House after being sworn in by the speaker of the House, gave the advice after visiting the scene of a recent explosion, which occurred in Aba South Council Area.

Ebisike explained that such insurance would enable the businessmen and women to access funds equivalent to any damaged property or business centres in the event of fire outbreak or other disasters.

The lawmaker urged Aba business community to take advantage of government insurance scheme to indemnify their businesses against any unforeseen occurrence.

The House member, however, advised members of his constituency to handle inflammable materials carefully to avoid explosions.

He later made a cash donation of N1million to the victims of the explosion, who included

an aged mother, who sustained serious injury and now in critical condition in the hospital while her daughter died in the incident.

Earlier, a witness, Mr Tochukwu Ihekoronye, explained that the fire outbreak was caused by lantern explosion.

He explained that the deceased and her aged mother were one week old in the apartment belonging to a widow, Mrs Virginia Nwosu.

Group Lauds Ikpeazu's Development Strides In Obingwa

UCHE NWOSU
UMUAHIA

The Ntighauzo Amairi Progressives (NAP) in Obingwa LGA of Abia State has lauded Governor Okezie Ikpeazu for his administration's infrastructure development, describing it as unprecedented in the history of Abia State.

In a statement signed by its president, Adindu Johnson, the group explained that some projects such as the Agalaba Ring Road were legacies that would outlive the Ikpeazu government.

The group stated that it was appreciative of the governor's benevolence, which has benefited sons and daughters of the community and urged him to extend the good works to

other parts of Obingwa LGA.

While the Ntighauzo Amairi Progressives prayed for the governor's intervention on the road linking Ukpakiri-Abayi- Ntighauzo with other neighbouring communities, it asked the governor to consider sons and daughters of the Ntighauzo Amairi town for key appointments in his government.

The road is a feeder road that links some Abia communities with some communities in Akwa Ibom State.

The group also thanked the governor for his support and cordial relationship with one their son and member representing Obingwa East State Constituency and Majority Leader, Abia State House of Assembly, Solomon Akpulonu.

Surveyor Blames Govt For High Housing Rents

CHINUA AGHADIUNO
ONITSHA

An Onitsha-based surveyor, Chief Donatus Chukwue-meka Enendu, has blamed government for the increasing housing rents across the country.

Enendu a former chairman, Trans-Nkisi Federal Housing Estate Landlords' Association, 3: 3 Onitsha, and fellow of Surveyors' Council of Nigeria, in a chat with Daily Independent in Onitsha at the weekend,

said that the inability of government to implement the existing laws on rents was adversely affecting the nation's civil servants and other low-income earners in the country.

He also noted that Federal Government lacklustre failure to subsidise imported building materials was another cause of arbitrary rent increase in the country.

The building expert, who recommended the reintroduction of the old Rent Control Board as was the case in the 1970's, however, argued

that there might not be justification for the reintroduction or implementation of the law.

He said the Federal Government should encourage local production of building materials to alleviate the challenges faced by Nigerians in search of accommodation or building houses of their own.

Enendu stated that allowing businesses the monopoly of cement importation further compounded the housing deficit in the country.

He argued that the situation would encourage privileged Nigerians to fix prices

of cement in the country.

While decrying lip-service paid by government on issues of housing policies in Nigeria, Enendu, a former president-general of Uke Development Union, Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State, lamented that civil servants whom those housing policies are being promulgated don't benefit anymore, adding that the low cost houses were usually secretly sold out to the rich and influential civil servants using their cronies as fronts.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **GLORIA UJU OGBATA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **GLORIA UJU OBILITE**. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. General public please take note.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AS **ZAKARIYAU TOHEEB OLALEKAN**, NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **ZAKARIYAU TOHEEB OLAMILEKAN**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AS **AJIBOYE TAOHEED AZEEZ**. NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **AJIBOYE TAOHEED AYODELE**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AS **AYORINDE OPEYEMI OLUWATOYOSI**. NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **AYORINDE TOYOSI OPEYEMI**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known and addressed as **CHUKWU AFAMEFUNA JOHNBOSCO**, now wish to be known and addressed as **UBABUKO AFAMEFUNA JOHNBOSCO**. This is for official and record purposes, General public, Banks and other relevant authorities concerned please take note. All former documents remain valid.

I formerly known and addressed as **ADON JULIUS**, now wish to be known called and addressed as **KAI JULIUS BAPELEWEI**. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. General public please take note.

That **AJIBOLA OLUSOLA** is the same person bearing **AJIBOLA SOLA**. now wish to be known called and addressed as **AJIBOLA OLUSOLA**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **Offor Friday Chukwutoike** now wish to be known called and addressed as **Igboanugo Joseph Chukwutoike**. All documents remain valid. General public take note

I formerly known and addressed as **Iradia Daisy**, now wish to be known and addressed as **Osayande Christabel Oseyaga**, all former documents remains valid, general public take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **MRS ESE EFE GODWIN**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **MISS DIANA ESEOGHENE ESADUWA**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I Formerly known and addressed as **EKE SABASTIAN ONYEWUCHI**, now wish to be known and addressed as **EKE ONYEKACHI JULIUS**, All former documents remain valid general public take note.

I Formerly known and addressed as **MISS NKWOGU CHINENYE VIVIEN**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS IMO CHINENYE VIVIEN**, All former documents bearing my former name still remain valid general public take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS AYODEJI ODUNOLA MARYAM** now wish to be known called and addressed as **MRS YUSUF ODUNOLA MARYAM**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I, **MISS UDUAKOBONG EDET UDOBONG**, HENCEFORTH BEAR **MRS UDUAKOBONG IMOH CHARLES**. DOCUMENTS BEARING MY FORMER NAME REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC PLEASE NOTE.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AS **AKINTOBI RUTH**. NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **AKINTOBI RUTH ABOSEDE**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AS **ADEBAYO COVENANT**. NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **ADEBAYO COVENANT PETER**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I, formerly known and addressed as **AKPATIFENE CLITON**, now wish to be known, addressed and called **EREJUWA COLLINS OLA** henceforth. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS ADA OKORIE KALU**, now wish to be known called and addressed as **MRS. ADA PETER NWOKE**. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. General public please take note.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **TIJANI ABDULAH**, NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **OMEJE INNOCENT CHIBUIKE**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. BANKS AND GENERAL PUBLIC SHOULD PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known and addressed as **Joseph okon martin** now wish to be known called and addressed as **joseph okon udeme**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **Miss Yusuf Naomi Ejura**, now wish to be known called and addressed as **Mrs Obike Ikehukwu Naomi Ejura**. All other documents remains valid. The general public take note.

This is to confirm that **ELIJAH, SAMUEL TOM** and **SAMUEL TOM** refer to one and same person, now wish to be known and addressed as **ELIJAH, SAMUEL TOM**. All former documents remain valid. Bank and general public should take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS PRINCESS ASIMETAMUNOPIRIME ANIYANGHA**, now wish to be known called and addressed as **MRS PRINCESS ASIMETAMUNOPIRIME ANIYANGHA MAURICE**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I Formerly known and addressed as **OKEREKE FELICITY ONYEDIKA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **OKEREKE ONYEDIKACHI MICHAEL**, All former documents remain valid general public take note.

I formerly known called and addressed as **JEKE EBUBECHUKWU CHINECHEREM** now wish to be known called and addressed as **CHUKWUJEKE EBUBECHUKWU PASCHAL**. That all former documents bearing **JEKE EBUBECHUKWU CHINECHEREM** still remain valid. That my correct date of birth is 15/10/1993

I formerly known and addressed as **MRS SHONIBARE IRETIOLA ANIKE** now wish to be known called and addressed as **MRS KASALI IRETIOLA ANIKE**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I, FORMERLY KNOWN AS **EKASO JOSEPH ETUKUDO**, NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN, CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **WEALTH MIRACLE JOSEPH**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. BANKS AND GENERAL PUBLIC PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AS **BABATUNDE HEZEKIAH ABIODUN**. NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **BABATUNDE H. ABIODUN OPEYEMI**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AS **OLWOOYE DAMILOLA GIFT**. NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **OLWOOYE OLUWADAMILOLA GIFT**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I, formerly known as **Salihu Usman Nureeni**, now wish to be known and addressed as **Salihu Olanunkanmi Nureeni**. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. General public please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **SULAIMON OLUWANISHOLA**, now wish to be known called and addressed as **SULAIMON OLUWANISOLA MUFUTAU**. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. General public please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **BOLATITO BILIKIS ADIGUN** now wish to be known called and addressed as **BOLATITO BILIKIS LAWAL**. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. General public please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **enofua emuvoke faith**, now wish to be known called and addressed as **dikrere emuvoke faith**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **ADJOBENA SUNDAY** now wish to be known called and addressed as **EJEBENAME SUNDAY**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **UDOEKPO NTIENSE JOHNSON**, now wish to be known and addressed as **EKPO NTIENSE JOHNSON**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **OKONWEGBO CHIJOKE**, now wish to be known called and addressed as **OKOH CHIJOKE**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I Formerly known and addressed as **MISS NKWOGU NKADINMA FLORENCE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS NGUBOR NKADINMA FLORENCE**, All former documents bearing my former name still remain valid general public take note.

I FORMALLY KNOWN, CALLED AND ADDRESS AS **ONUWULU CHINAZO IJEOMA** NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN, CALLED AND ADDRESS AS **CHUKWUDIMMA CHINAZO IJEOMA**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID.

I formerly known and addressed as **miss NWACHUKWU SOPHIA UCHENNA**; now wish to be known called and addressed as **MRS EZENWAGBO SOPHIA UCHENNA**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS DIDI ONYINYECHI GIFT**, now wish to be known called and addressed as **MRS OKECHUKWU ONYINYECHI GIFT**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS PRECIOUS OGECHI IBEKA**, now wish to be known called and addressed as **MRS NJOKU PRECIOUS OGECHI**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **OKECHUKWU JOSEPH**. NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **NWACHUKWU OKECHUKWU JOSEPH**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. BANKS AND GENERAL PUBLIC SHOULD PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known and addressed as **FAVOUR OMOVBIYA** now wish to be known called and addressed as **FAVOUR OTOGHAGUA**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I FORMERLY KNOWN AS **NASIR SULAIMAN**. NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **ABUBAKAR GRABA**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC AND TO WHOM MAY BE CONCERN TO TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known and addressed as **NWOGU SOLOMON KING** now wish to be known called and addressed as **NWOGU CHIGAMEZU SOLOMON**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS CHINWEODA NWAORISARA CHRISTIANA** now wish to be known called and addressed as **MRS VICTOR CHRISTIANA NWAORISARA**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **ONI MATHEW PERRY**. now wish to be known called and addressed as **ONI MATHEW SADIKU**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **OPEIFA BUNMI YEMI** now wish to be known called and addressed as **OLAKINTAN BUNMI OPEIFA**. My Date Of Birth is **12/06/1976**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known as **Miss Ekaette Eshiet Akpan**, now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs Ekaette Etimbuk Solomon**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should take note.

I, formerly known as **OYETUNJI TOYYIBAH ADETAYO**, now wish to be known and addressed as **RAJI-OYETUNJI TOYYIBAH ADETAYO**. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned, and the general public should take note.

That I formerly known called and addressed as **NWACHUKWU PETER CHIMA** now wish to be known called and addressed as **MMIRIKWE JOHN CHIMA**. All former documents remain valid. General public, concerned authorities should take note.

That my name was wrongly captured as **Ayah Ikechukwu Emmanuel**. And my date of birth **10/12/1966** on my BVN, NIN and account number. My correct name is **Ayah Ikechi Emmanuel**. My correct date of birth is **20/12/1964**. All former document remain valid general public, concerned authorities should take note.

We, the family of **Mr. ATUCHUKWU UCHENNA BONIFACE** of Akpu village, Ukpo in Dunukofia LGA, Anambra state wish to change our family surname from former **AMAMCHUKWU** to **ATUCHUKWU**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

This is to confirm and certify that **NWAFOR GEORGE CHIJOKE** and **NWAFOR GEORGE**, refer to one and same person. Now wish to be known and addressed as **NWAFOR GEORGE CHIJOKE**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note

Formerly known and addressed as **IJAGBA LONDON AND NIJABEA LONDON** Now wish to be known and addressed as **NIJAGBA LONDON**. All former documents remain valid general public please take note.

I, formerly known, called and addressed as **Miss Angela Rabi Izuagie** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **Mrs Angela Rabi Okenyi**. All documents bearing my former name still remain valid. NYSC and the general public, please take note.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **NNADI CHUKWUEBUKA VINCENT**. NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **NNADI CHUKWUEBUKA REMIGUS**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. BANKS AND GENERAL PUBLIC SHOULD PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **DUHU JULIET ESOMCHI**. NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **ODO JULIET ESOMCHI**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. BANKS AND GENERAL PUBLIC SHOULD PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known and addressed as **JOHN YOBOTOR ODOLU** now wish to be known called and addressed as **YOBOTOR JOHN ODOLU**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

My name was wrongly arranged on my BVN as **IGHO TOBORE JOSHUA** instead of my correct arrangement of name as **IGHO JOSHUA. TOBORE**. My date of birth was wrongly written as **20th September, 1995** instead of my correct date of birth as **24th September, 1995**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **OGANIRU GODWIN PHILIP** now wish to be known called and addressed as **OGANIRU GODWIN CHUKWUDALU**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS UBOEGBULAM CHINWENDU** now wish to be known called and addressed as **MRS CHIDIADI CHINWENDU**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS. IDOWU DEBORAH TOLULOPE** now wish to be known called and addressed as **MRS. AKWEWANU DEBORAH TOLULOPE**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **EKEBUI SI JOY CHINEDUM** now wish to be known called and addressed as **EMMAOBI JOY CHINEDUM**. My Date Of Birth is **19/04/1985**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known as **OKON ASUQUO ENEMA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **PROMISE ASUQUO ENEMA**. That both name belong to one and same person. All former documents remain valid. The general public should take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **Miss Victoria Opeoluwa Ayinla**, now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs Victoria Ayinla Saviour**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

THIS IS TO CONFIRM AND CERTIFY THAT **JULIUS OLADELE OGUNLEYE, OLADELE OGUNLEYE MUYIWA, AND JULIUS OLADELE**. ALL REFER TO ONE AND SAME PERSON. ALL OTHER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC, STERLING BANK, FCMB AND GTBANK TO PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS OLAYINKA FOLASHADE ADEBIYI** now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS IDOWU OLAYINKA FOLASHADE**. All former documents remain valid. Authority concerned and General public take note.

I, FORMERLY KNOWN AS **EGO EDITH OGOCHUKWU**, NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **UGWUOCHA EDITH OGOCHUKWU**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS STILL REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known and addressed as **Atilola Wahabu** now wish to be known as **Wahab Abdrasheed Babatunde**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

I Formerly known and addressed as **SUCCESS SAMUEL** Now wish to be known and addressed as **SUCCESS APKOS OKUKPORO**. All former documents remain valid general public please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **UGBOR CHIDINMA NNENNA** now wish to be known called and addressed as **ONU CHIDINMA UGBOR**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **ASOGWA NWANNEKA PRECIOUS**. NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **AWWEL MUNIRAT NWANNEKA**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. BANKS AND GENERAL PUBLIC SHOULD PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

Formerly known and addressed as **GLORY OKON** now wish to be known called and addressed as **GLORY EFFIONG OKON**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **AYAVORO OGHENEVOVWERO** now wish to be known called and addressed as **EKIREGHWO OGHENEVOVWERO OKEOGHENE**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **MRS OLOYEDE PEACE OLUBUKOLA** now wish to be known called and addressed as **MISS OGUNLANA PEACE OLUBUKOLA**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **OKEAFOR CONFIDENCE CHIDUBEM** now wish to be known called and addressed as **EKE CONFIDENCE CHIDUBEM**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **OKOROAFOR SYLVIA CHIKADIBIA** now wish to be known called and addressed as **ANOKWURU SYLVIA CHIKADIBIA**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

This is to inform the general public that I'm formerly known as **MISS AKINADE KIKELOMO RACHEAL** now wish to be known and address as **MRS FAGBEMI KIKELOMO RACHEAL**. All former documents remain valid NYSC, BANKS AND GENERAL PUBLIC SHOULD PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known and addressed as **Miss Afolayan Olajumoke Beatrice** now wish to be known called and addressed as **Mrs Ojo Olajumoke Beatrice**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known and addressed as **Koomson Shola Shalewa** now wish to be known called and addressed as **Salami Shola Shalewa**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note

I formerly known as **Orenubi Oluwakemi Veronica**, henceforth wish to be known and addressed as **Bakare Oluwakemi Adetutu Veronica**. All former documents remain valid. First Bank of Nigeria and general public please take note.

That I formerly known called and addressed as **Enoch Innocent Kelechi** Now wish to be known called and addressed as **Enoch Cent King**. Due to some misinformation I had wrongly used **31/12/1969**. My correct date of birth is **1/1/1970**. All former document remain valid, general public, concerned authorities should take note

I, **AMAO TOYYIBAH AJIBIKE** am the same person bearing **AMAO TAIBAT AJIBIKE**. Henceforth, I want to be known and addressed as **AMAO TOYYIBAH AJIBIKE**. All former documents remain valid. Authority concerned and General public take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **EMMANUEL CHIEMELA NNAYEREUGO**, now wish to be known and addressed as **EMMANUEL CHIEMELA AHARAUKA**. All former documents remain valid. Banks and general public take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS ONYEBUCHI NDIDI CHIKA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS NWAEZE ROSEMARY CHIKA**. All former documents remain valid. Banks and general public take note

I Formerly known and addressed as **MISS OBINECHE AMARACHI** Now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS AMARACHI UMOH**. All former documents remain valid general public please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as. **Williams David Okei**. Now wish to be known and addressed as. **Williams David Chidubem**. All former documents remain valid general public please take note.

I, formerly known, called and addressed as **MISS EJEBA ANITA SOPHIA-ABBA**. Now wish to be known, called and addressed as **MISS EHIMUAN OMUEKPEN SOPHIA-ABBA**. Banks and general Public should please take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **Hauwa Oluwaseun Uthman** now wish to be known and addressed as **Dr. Mrs Hauwa Oluwaseun Mene-Afejuku**. All former documents remain valid. General public note.

I, formerly known, called and addressed as **JIMOH FUNMILAYO SHAKIRAT** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **JIMOH OLUFUNMILAYO SHAKIRAT** . All former documents remains valid, the general public should please take note.

I formerly known as **MISS EZIMUOHA JESSICA CHINEMEREM**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS KENNEDY JESSICA CHINEMEREM**. All former documents remain valid any authority it may concern and general public to take note.

I formerly known as **IGORY HOSANNA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **IGORU HOSANNA**. All former documents remain valid any authority it may concern and general public to take note.

I, **Ogbonnaya Lilian Winnie-Ijeoma** of Amaokwe Item, Bende, Abia State hereby states that my correct name is **Ogbonnaya Lilian Winnie-Ijeoma** and not Willy. The public please note.

I formerly known called and addressed as **OJOMU PRAISE BUKEM** now wish to be known and addressed as **BUKEM PRAISE TERFA**. All former documents remain valid. General public note.

I formerly known and addressed as **KOGBARA, LEZOR PAMELA** now wish to be known and addressed as **MARCUS-LETON LEZOR PAMELA**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

I, Formerly known as **ESAKPAIDE MAGDALENE** now wish to be known as **ESAKPAIDE MARY MAGDALENE**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **LAWRENCE OLUWASEGUN** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **LAWRENCE OLUWASEGUN TEMIDAYO**. All former documents remain valid. FirstBank PLC, Banks, BVN, Authority concerned and general public take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS OJALATAN OLAYEMI MARY**, now wish to be known, called and addressed as **MRS. OLOWOLAYEMO OLAYEMI MARY**. All former documents remain valid. All authorities concerned and general public to take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **OMERI OFOR LOVITY**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **EMMANUEL OFOR OMERI**. All former documents remain valid. All relevant authorities and the public should please take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **GRACE IJOMA OLADELE**, Now wish to be known and addressed as **OLADELE GRACE IJOMA**. All former documents remain valid. All relevant authorities and the public should please take note.

Formerly known as **MISS CHUKWUDURUO AMARACHI CHINAZA** Now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS EZE AMARACHI CHINAZA**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **David Onyemaeze Ukaegbu**, now wish to be called and addressed as **Onyemaeze John David**. All documents bearing my former names remain valid.The general public please take note.

I Formerly known and addressed as **MISS OKORO EROWO FAITH** Now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS IFIJEN EROWO FAITH**. All former documents remain valid general public please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **GILBERT ADJERATA** now wish to be known and addressed as **BLESSED GILBERT ROBINSON** . All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

I, **ALONGE AMINAT MOBOLADE** wish to state that my BVN name was formerly captured as **ALONGE AMINAT**. I now wish to add **MOBOLADE** my middle name to my BVN name as **ALONGE AMINAT MOBOLADE**. The relevant authorities and to whom it may concern please take note.

I formerly known as **ADAGHOFUA ANTHONY**, now wish to be known and addressed as **COMMISSION ONAJITE BLESSING**. All former documents remain valid any authority it may concern and general public to take note.

I formerly known **ONOMUAKPOKPO PATIENCE EMUDIAGA and ONOMUAKPOKPO MUDIAGA PATIENCE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS DOMINIC MUDIAGA PATIENCE**. All former documents remain valid any authority it may concern and general public to take note.

I formerly known as **ETAGA ETAGA BARTHOLOMEW**, now wish to be known and addressed as **ETAGA BARTHOLOMEW**. All former documents remain valid any authority it may concern and general public to take note.

I formerly known called and addressed as **OKOTIE KELVIN ORITSEGBUBEMI** now wish to be known called and addressed as **AREREBO KELVIN ORITSEGBUBEMI**. All former documents remain valid. Banks, general public take note

I, formerly known and addressed as **MISS MERCY COSMOS EFFIONG**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS. MIRACLE EKEMINI ISEMIN**. All former documents remain valid, general public take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **Qadir Ibrahim Omolabi** with date of birth **16/5/1984** now wish to be known and addressed as **Abdulquadir Ibrahim Omolabi** with new date of birth **16/6/1987**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **ADEYEMI BLESSING OYINKANSOLA** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **ADEYEMI BLESSING ADEDOYIN**. All former documents remain valid. Banks, BVN, Authority concerned and general public take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS ATRIBOLARIN OLUWATOYIN ADUNNI** now wish to be known and addressed **MRS OLUWATOYIN ADUNNI DADA**. All former documents remain valid. The general public take note.

I formerly known as **SADIQ TINA ADIJAT**, with date of birth wrongly put as **1st of August 1985** instead of **1st of August 1987**. I now wish to be known, called and addressed as **OLOGEDE TINA ADIJAT**, and my correct date of birth is **1st of August 1987**, all former documents remain valid, all authorities concerned and general public to take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **CONFIDENCE JOHN**, now wish to be known and addressed as **CONFIDENCE JOHN NGEWE**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

Formerly known as **ANYADORO MOSES ARINZE** Now wish to be known and addressed as **CHRISTOPHER MOSES ARINZE**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **Egwuma Leonard Omelikam**, now wish to be called, addressed and known as **Okachie Leonard Ojode**. All documents bearing my former names remain valid.The general public please take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **COMFORT VICTOR BASSEY** now wish to be known and addressed as **BRIGHT OKON BASSEY**. Former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I Formerly known and addressed as **DICK FRIDAY** Now wish to be known and addressed as **DICKSON FRIDAY EBOH**. All former documents remain valid general public please take note.

I, formerly known called and addressed as **MAJEKODUNMI ABIMBOLA ADEOLUWA** now wish to be known and address as **MAJEKODUNMI ABIMBOLA BASIRAT**. All former documents remain valid. General public note.

I, formerly known, called and addressed as **ADEPOJU TITILAYO KAOSARAT** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **AYODELE TITILAYO KAOSARAT**. All former documents remains valid, the general public should please take note.

These names **OFIEMUNURE LUCKY and OFIEMUNURE OGHENEVWOGAGA**, belongs to the same person but now wish to be known and addressed as **OFIEMUNURE OGHENEVWOGAGA LUCKY**. All former documents remain valid any authority it may concern and general public to take note.

These names **MUOSOR CHRISTIAN and MUOSOR PAUL CHRISTIAN** belongs to the same person but now wish to be known and addressed as **PAUL CHRISTIAN**. All former documents remain valid any authority it may concern and general public to take note.

These names **EMBAAYS MIENS and EMBASSY MIENS** belongs to the same person but now wish to be known and addressed as **EMBASSY MIENS**. All former documents remain valid any authority it may concern and general public to take note.

I formerly known called and addressed as **AMAKA NWABUGWU** now wish to be known called and addressed as **SAMUEL CHINEYE ELISHA**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

I formally known and addressed as **MISS OKOLIE, SYLVIA UCHENNA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS OKPALIKE, SYLVIA UCHENNA**. All documents bearing my former name remain valid. general public to take note.

I FORMERLY **OMONIYI TOBILOBA MICHAEL** NOW, WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESS AS **OMONIYI TOBILOBA TIMOTHY**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GTB AND GENERAL PUBLIC PLEASE TAKE NOTE

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS. OMOLE FOLASADE OYINDAMOLA** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **MRS. KOMOLAFE FOLASADE OYINDAMOLA**. All former documents remain valid. Banks, BVN, Authority concerned and general public take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **Ofotokun Chris Ochuko** now wish to be know and address as **Ofotokun Ochuko** all former documents remain valid general public take note

I formerly known called and addressed as **AYODELE OLAMITIKUN GRACE**, now wish to be known called and addressed as **AKINGBELURE OLAMITIKUN**, all former documents remain valid, all authorities concerned and general public to take note.

I, formerly known, called and addressed as **MISS EJEBA ANITA SOPHIA-ABBA**. Now wish to be known, called and addressed as **MISS EHIMUAN OMUEKPEN SOPHIA-ABBA**. Banks and general Public should please take note.

PUBLIC NOTICE

THE IGHOMO OMOREGHA FOUNDATION

THIS IS TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE ABOVE NAMED HAS APPLIED TO THE CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION (CAC) FOR REGISTRATION UNDER PART "F" OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT, 2020.

TRUSTEES:

1. Oyo Vincent Von.

2. Oyo Zachary Ilerhunwa.

3. Omoruyi Benedict Osazoduwa.

4. Ibakhon Eki Elizabeth.

5. Kalesanwo Gladys Uyinmen.

6. Obahiagbon Osayomiwanbo Oluwaseyi.

7. Obanor Albert Imuetiyan.

8. Tama Izogie Bamisope.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To preserve, uphold and sustain the tradition of a closely knitted family bound in love as established and exhibited by Madam Ighomo Omoregha ("Ighomo") and her biological siblings.

2. To foster, build and develop a sustainable relationship among the descendants of Ighomo.

3. To provide a forum for the continued growth and unity of the children, grandchildren, great-grand children and subsequent lineal descendants of madam Ighomo Omoregha ("descendants of Ighomo").

4. To strengthen and promote love, peace and a sense of unity among the descendants of Ighomo.

5. To render financial and moral support to any of the descendants of Ighomo as the need may arise.

6. To render humanitarian assistance to members where possible.

7. To provide moral and financial support to bonafide members of the foundation on specific areas of need.

ANY OBJECTION TO THIS REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL, CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION, 420, TIGRIS CRESCENT, OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET, PMN 198, MAITAMA, ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF PUBLICATION

SIGNED: SECRETARY

Sanwo-Olu Gets Lagosians' Backing To Tackle Security Challenges

← CONTINUED FROM P5

would be taken on commercial motorcycles, which speaker after speaker described as a getaway means for criminals.

Its operators, they said, are unruly, uncouth, rude and brutal. But those who patronise them and the motorcyclists will not be left in the cold.

The government, Sanwo-Olu said, would be inaugurating next week the first and last mile buses, which would ply the routes the motorcycles are plying. Besides, those who have taken up *okada* riding for lack of jobs were advised to grab the opportunities in agriculture, wealth creation, poverty alleviation and other government programmes.

Sanwo-Olu said the meet-

ing was convened in response to the growing threat posed by some lawless activities to the safety and security of lives in the state.

The governor said the string of lawlessness daily witnessed from the confrontation between commercial motorcyclists and law enforcement agencies required an urgent action, stressing that the government would be announcing reforms in transportation, which will further make changes to the parameters of motorcycle and tricycle operations.

He said, "We have noted with dismay the fact that *okada* riders are disregarding and flouting the restrictions we imposed on their activities in certain areas of

the metropolis. We have also observed with dismay, the ongoing violent confrontation by commercial motorcyclists against our law enforcement agencies.

"Based on all that we have seen and experienced in the past couple of weeks, as well as the increasing threat posed by the activities of commercial motorcycle operators to the safety and security of lives, we will be announcing further changes to the parameters of motorcycle and tricycle operations in the state in the coming days. No society can make progress amid such haughty display of lawlessness and criminality."

Sanwo-Olu said the state government would be unveiling 500 units of first and

last mile mini buses next week as safer alternative means of transportation in checkmating activities of *okada* riders.

The governor also made it known that the government would fully implement the State's Urban and Regional Planning and Development Law of 2019 as amended, which will enable the government take over and demolish abandoned buildings and construction sites turned into safe haven for hoodlums and miscreants.

He added that the state would strengthen its clean-up exercise of shanties and spots unapproved for settlement, but which had turned to hideouts for criminals.

The state government,

Sanwo-Olu said, would be recruiting more personnel into the Lagos State Neighbourhood Corps (LSNC) to boost intelligence gathering at the community level.

The governor said the consultative meeting with the stakeholders was necessary to make the state's security strategy effective and sustainable, noting that all hands must be on deck to work with the government in collecting, sharing and evaluating credible intelligence that would strengthen security of lives and property in Lagos.

He said, "Lagos must continue to enjoy an atmosphere of peace, safety and all-encompassing security. We are determined to arrest the current security challenges being

faced in the state, and we will take every step necessary to deliver on our promises on a safe, secure and livable state. We will also continue to communicate regularly with key stakeholders, and all the residents for updates on the progress we are making."

Appraising security situation in Lagos, Commissioner of Police, Mr. Hakeem Odumosu, raised the alarm over rising security breaches resulting from the menace of *okada* operations in the state.

There was a panel of discussion chaired by an award-winning Television Show host, Babajide Kolade-Otitoju, in which residents aired their views on the current state of security in Lagos and across the country.

← CONTINUED FROM P5

enough problems with finding homes for the vast majority of Nigerians who cannot find a home. The people who are poorest who have no houses are the people we should target because that is what government should do. Let's focus on this social housing."

Already, 24 states have given over 2,000 hectares of land with titled documents for government's Social Housing programme.

Equally, agreement has now been reached with at least one major cement man-

FG Considers 228 Building Component Firms For Social Housing Projects

ufacturer in the country to sell at significantly discounted prices as low as N2,600 per bag of cement for the social housing projects.

Adewole stated that 17,584 units across 16 locations are now on the pipeline.

"We are having a successful push in assembling land to feed the housing construction. So far, about 2156.4ha have been assembled ready for development. This has the capacity to accommodate about 65,000 homes," he said.

Adewole further said that

under the ESP Social Housing programme, Nigerians would be given at least a 15-year period with a monthly payment at six percent interest rate to pay for each housing unit.

While the rates are significantly low, the MD noted that this period could also be extended through refinancing.

"This will help to improve access to housing for low-income people in the informal sector who (otherwise) will not have an opportunity to access a mortgage," he stated.

He further said that in addition to the typical 2, 3, and 4-bedroom housing units, the FHFL was considering a "Students and Young People's Housing – to address the needs of young people.

"An agreement with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has now been finalised and signed by Family Homes Funds," he disclosed, "while drawdown is subject to a guarantee from the Ministry of Finance."

The CBN had committed to a N200 billion facility with

a guarantee by the Federal Government via the Finance Ministry for the Social Housing Scheme.

Adewole added that the FHFL has signed a MoU with the ESP Solar Power project including three suppliers to provide low-cost solar panels to the homes.

He said the delivery of the units would be through SME Delivery Partners – who are being encouraged to register on the Housing Portal.

He said, "So far about 7,333 SME groups and individuals

are registered on the online portal. Up to 2,000 of these will be involved in current projects.

"We will be drawing from ongoing experience on our project in Yola where the construction of 3,600 homes are ongoing and a partnership between FHFL and the Ministry of Housing is implementing a large-scale youth employment scheme currently employing 1350 young people. The young people are manufacturing interlocking tiles, paving, among others."

← CONTINUED FROM P4

edge in the banking and other financial services sector is restored. Undoubtedly, insider abuse is a big threat to the banking industry.

"It is good that the CBN is aware of the need to strengthen its hands against insider abuse and to keep the banking sector in good stead. The sector cannot afford a repeat of the past banks indebtedness and collapse," he said.

Stephen Iloba, another

Banks Boards Jittery As CBN Moves To Clamp Down On Insider Abuse

analyst, is of the opinion that the Godwin Emefiele's leadership of the apex bank would do a lot of good for the country if the needed searchlights are beamed into the activities of managers and operators of banks.

He said, "The CBN under Emefiele will write its name in gold if it takes the bull by the horn by looking into the activities of banks boards and management

because any bank failure at this time will be untoward to the economy.

"Let me also add that strengthening the corporate governance code will breed trust and confidence, which in turn, will ensure that the banks are run efficiently and profitably."

Managing Director, Cowry Assets, Johnson Chukwu, said the first thing that banks should do to avoid

regulatory sanctions is to strengthen their corporate governance standards.

He said, "One way to strengthen corporate governance is to broaden the composition of the board of directors by increasing the number of independent directors who are truly independent of key stakeholders and who have established reputations, which they are not willing to compromise

for any material benefit.

"Banks should also ensure that one or two knowledgeable minority shareholders are voted into their boards as such minority shareholder directors in most instances serve as bulwark against undue influence of majority shareholders.

"Finally, banks should further improve on their corporate governance dis-

closure including publishing as part of their quarterly financial reports extracts of key board decisions that can impact on the strategic performance of the institution.

"Such publications should include how the directors voted just the same way that CBN publishes the votes of Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) members at their committee meetings."

← CONTINUED FROM P1

ba-Ahmed charged those who have constitutional responsibility to realise that the country is in a dire state, and do something other than just talking and making promises.

"One option we have is that the legislators will look at the record of the administration, understand the areas where the president

Buhari Should Be Impeached If He Can't Secure Us — NEF Spokesman

has failed, understand areas where there is clearly no evidence that they're going to do anything about it and refer to the constitution that says the whole purpose of government is to secure citizens and pursue their welfare.

"If Buhari fails to do that, for me, those are impeach-

able offences. In the last six months, two years, what has the president done to secure the country? Absolutely nothing has been done and yet you see increasing failure of the state to protect citizens," he said.

"Or, as our democratic system provides, those with the responsibility to get

them off, should impeach those who are failing. If the president can't deliver, he should be impeached.

"We don't have a National Assembly that appears to have the level of patriotism and concern beyond partisan politics to realise that when this roof falls, it also falls on their heads.

"Partisanship is so pronounced that the people we elected and sent to Abuja think they serve the president rather than the Nigerian people."

According to Baba-Ahmed, the second option is for citizens to get together and decide to do something.

He said the third option

is: "Those leaders who are failing will recognise the fact that they are the problem, and they will resign because they clearly have nothing to offer in terms of leadership."

Baba-Ahmed spoke few days after the presidency said some leaders were pushing for regime change.

← CONTINUED FROM P1

shoot on sight order to soldiers on Igbo youths is a call for another pogrom and genocide.

He, thereby, urged the Federal Government to refrain from the use of force in resolving the present national crisis.

He said, "History shows that military and violent means to solve the national question is bound to fail as it leads to further national fractionalisation, anarchy

Shoot On Sight Against Igbo Youths Call For Another Genocide — Ohanaeze

and eventual or inevitable disintegration, as in all empires or multi-national states or countries."

Obiozor warns, "The Sahara Reporters, May 8, elaborated on the new secret plan of shoot on sight order which by the grace of God has come to the public domain. The report further revealed that the exercise will commence from Orlu in Imo State, South East Nigeria.

"This is very disturbing. The pattern of deployment of northern military officers to the South-East lends credence to the above report.

"Sahara Reporters revealed that in preparation for the above, the Nigerian army has posted Northern Muslims as commanders over its operations and brigades in Anambra, Imo, Abia, Akwa Ibom, Enugu, Benue, Edo, Delta and Riv-

ers.

"In Anambra State, the Cantonment Commandant of the 302 Artillery Regiment, Onitsha, is Col Abdul-salam Abubakar Sambo, a Hausa-Fulani Muslim, while in Imo State, the Brigade Commander of 34 Brigade, Obinze, is Brig Gen Ibrahim Tukura, another northerner; in Abia State, the Brigade Commander of 14 Brigade, Ohafia, is Brig Gen M. Ibra-

him, still, a northerner; while in Akwa Ibom State, the Brigade Commander of 2 Brigade, Uyo, is Brig Gen Faruk Mijinyawa, another northerner. This is truly worrisome," he said.

The President General admonished the Nigerian government to "learn a lesson from history by not fighting an unwinnable war against nationalism but seek possible peaceful options that are

the only solution that guarantees national unity and peaceful coexistence."

Obiozor lamented that "subnational consciousness or ethnocentric nationalism which is a dangerous form of nationalism to national unity has taken over Nigeria." And that "the dream of Nigeria unity is receding and fading fast with violence, crises and conflicts."

News

A'lbom Govt Urged To Show Proof Of Installed CCTV Cameras

IDONGESIT ASHAMERI
UYO

The Akwa Ibom State Government has been challenged to show proof of the CCTV cameras it claimed to have installed at border communities across the state.

The Executive Director, COMPPART Foundation for Justice and Peace Building, Saviour Akpan, who threw the challenge while speaking with newsmen in Uyo on Monday, said such technology would have assisted the state in the fight against the current frequent attacks on security formations in the state.

Akpan, who is also the national chairman, Network of Police Reform in Nigeria, blamed recent frequent attacks on police stations and murder of police officers across the state on poor management of security information made available to the Force by members of the public.

He traced the foundation of the police' crisis in Nigeria to accumulate lacunae by successive governments whom he said failed to listen to civil liberty voices, a situation which he said alienated the civil populace from the Nigerian security forces.

Buhari Mourns Victims Of Niger Boat Accident

INNOCENT OWEH

ABUJA

President Muhammadu Buhari has expressed immense grief over the boat mishap in Tijana Village of Munya Local Government Area of Niger State and extended his heartfelt sympathies to the families of the dead and the injured.

According to the president, this incident is more disheartening as the victims were reportedly Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

Commending the life-saving work of the first responders and local divers at the scene of the incident, the president wished the wounded a speedy recovery and success on the search and rescue of some missing passengers on the capsized boat.

Buhari also called on the transportation authorities to ensure strict adherence to safety regulations on the nation's waterways and urges that lessons from this accident should help prevent a future occurrence.

He assured residents of Niger State that restoring long-term stability and peace remained a core objective of the Federal Government, saying it is working with the state government and other critical stakeholders in the local communities.

CHIDI UGWU
ABUJA

The Federal Government on Monday inaugurated a panel to probe Hadiza Bala-Usman, the suspended managing director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), over alleged non-remittance of N165.32 billion operating surplus by her agency.

Auwalu Dauda Suleiman, who is currently a member of NPA's board and the current Director, Maritime Services, Federal Ministry of Transportation, was named as the chairman of the panel.

Also Ben Omogo, Director, Organization Design and

FG Inaugurates Panel To Probe Suspended NPA Boss

Development, is the co-chairman, while Mr. Gabriel Fan, Director, Legal Services, is the Secretary of the panel.

Other members of the panel are Dr. Hussani Adamu, Director, Procurement, Mrs. Blessing Ozorbo, Director, Legal Services, (OHCSF) Mrs. Mercy Ilori, Director, Transport Planning Coordination, Mr. Muhiy-Deen Awwal, Director, Human Resources Management, and three staff of Human Resources Management to serve as the Secretariat.

Document obtained by

our correspondent during the event indicated that the terms of reference for the panel was to "examine and investigate the administrative policies and strategies adopted by the Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority and confirm compliance with extant laws and rules from 2016 to date.

"Examine and investigate issues leading to the termination of pilotage and other contracts of Nigerian Ports Authority and confirm compliance with the terms of the respective

contracts, court rulings and presidential directives,

"Examine and investigate compliance with the communication channel as obtained in the Public Service.

"Examine and investigate the procurement of contracts from 2016 to date.

"Come up with suggestions and advice that would strengthen the operations of Nigerian Ports Authority and forestall such occurrences in future, and any other matter that may be necessary in the course of the assignment."



Kirsten Voigt, Country Manager, British Red Cross (left); Abubakar Kende, Secretary General, Nigerian Red Cross Society (middle), and Monday Abiola, Chairman, Nigerian Red Cross Society, FCT, during the 2021 Red Cross Day celebration in Abuja at the weekend.
PHOTO: JIDE OYEKUNLE

OLUSEGUN KOIKI
LAGOS

FRSC Deploys 35,000 Personnel, 736 Patrol Vehicles, Others To Highways Over Eid El Fitr

The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) has deployed at least 35,000 of its personnel and 736 patrol vehicles to the highways following for the forthcoming Eid El Fitr holidays, slated for this Thursday.

The corps also said that 120 ambulances, 25 tow truck and over 200 bikes would be on the road during the special operation that would commence from 11 to 17 May, 2021.

A statement by Mr Bisi Kazeem, Corps Public Ed-

ucation Officer, said that the corps had already commenced massive mobilisation of its personnel and operational equipment for the holidays.

He stated that the deployment of the personnel and equipment would ensure safer road environment, before, during and after the festive period.

He said: "The mission of the special operation is to ensure free flow of traffic,

provide prompt rescue services and timely clearance of obstructions on all major roads and critical corridors across the country before, during and after the festive period as well as minimizing the occurrence of road traffic crashes on the nation's highways through effective patrol operations and sustained public enlightenment campaigns.

"FRSC has a tradition of always organising special

patrols during festive periods as a way of averting the chaos that characterise the road during the celebrations, as such; this year's Eid el Fitr would not be an exemption."

He appealed to motorists to eschew traffic violations and remain conscious of their safety to avoid not only arrest and prosecution by members of the corps, but falling prey to avoidable road crashes.

YAQOUB POPOOLA
ADO-EKITI

Insecurity: APC Govt Not Doing Enough – Aribisala

aspirants of the party in Ekiti State.

The former federal lawmaker noted that the ruling party lied and deceived voters in the country in 2015 and 2019 about bringing change, saying all socio-economic development indices are presently in the negative.

Speaking while unveiling Rotarian Bola Olu-Ojo, erstwhile chairman of the PDP in Ekiti as the Director General of his governorship campaign organisation, Aribisala said Nigerians bought the lies sold

to them by the APC

Aribisala added: "Today, we cannot say we want to travel without feeling apprehensive of being kidnapped; that's how bad our security set up is. The president and his team have completely lost it.

"They lied to Nigerians and we can see the damage they have done to our country across all sectors. There is poverty in the land and there is no hope because the Federal Government is not doing anything tangible to savage the country"

While lamenting the eco-

nomie and security situations in the state, Aribisala called on residents of the state to support his aspiration towards transforming Ekiti.

In his remarks, Olu-Ojo cautioned former Governor Ayo Fayose against derailing other aspirants opposed to his anointed candidates.

He maintained that the calibre of the ex-Governor Fayose should rather encourage PDP members to choose candidates of their choice in a free and fair primary devoid of intimidation or harassment.

Police Clamp Down On Imo Newspaper Vendors, Arrest Five

The Inspector-General of Police (I-G) Intelligent Response Team (IRT) on Monday arrested five newspaper vendors in Owerri for allegedly promoting activities of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB).

When contacted, the Commissioner for Police in Imo, Abutu Yaro, confirmed the arrest but added that the operatives were not from his command.

One of the arrested vendors, Onyebuchi Iwundu, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) at a police station that the IRT operatives arrested them at Rotibi Street, a popular newspaper circulation street, off Douglas Road in the early hours of Monday.

Iwundu said they were accused of circulating and promoting activities of the Indigenous People of Biafra.

He alleged that they were manhandled before being taken to the police station for detention.

The vendor also alleged that the operatives confiscated their papers and money, adding that they had been warned not to circulate newspapers that promote IPOB's activities.

He listed others arrested alongside him as Isinwa Blessing, Nelson, Micheal and Sakatan.

NAN also reports that the circulation manager of New Telegraph Newspaper, Mr. Chuck Ugwuibe, was arrested on Tuesday at Banana Junction in Orlu and has been in police custody.

ASMQMA, ACCIMA Collaborate For Aba Business Summit

EMEKA OKAFOR

ABA

The Abia State Marketing and Quality Management Agency (ASMQMA) and Aba Chambers of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ACCIMA) have concluded plans to organize a two-day summit for Aba business community.

The aim of the summit is to synthesize solutions that would ensure longevity of current successful businesses in the economic hub of the state.

Addressing newsmen ahead of the business summit at the ACCIMA secretariat in Aba, the Director General of ASMQMA, Sam Hart, said the agency would organise the summit in conjunction with the ACCiMA, saying its theme is 'transferring tested and proven business models to the next generation'.

The agency's DG who, was flanked by ACCIMA president, Sir Lawrence C. N. Obite, among other officers, said the two organizations were worried about the growing trend where successful businesses go into extinction soon after the death of their proprietors.

Sport

Tit Bits

Heartland FC Supporters' Club Pledges Allegiance To New GM

The Chairman of Heartland FC Supporters' Club, Eze Nkemka, says the group will work with the new management of the Owerri-based club to achieve a common goal.

Nkemka said this in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Owerri on Monday.

He said that it was imperative for the supporters' club to pay allegiance to the new General Manager of the football club, Promise Nwachukwu, for the club's success.

According to him, the supporters' club was supportive of Nwachukwu's appointment, contrary to claims in a section of the media that members "were against the removal of the former General Manager, Ifeanyi Chukwudi".

Cavani Signs New Man Utd Deal

Edinson Cavani has put pen to paper on a one-year extension with Manchester United, following talks with the clubs.

Manager Ole Gunnar Sol-skjaer had been forthcoming in recent weeks regarding his desire to see the in-form veteran continue at Old Trafford, and now an agreement has been reached.

Cavani has signed until the summer of 2022 after turning down an enticing offer from Boca Juniors in order to spend one more season in elite European football.

Missing Ex-Footballer, 35, Found Dead

An ex-footballer, whose body has been found four days after he went missing, was a "gentle giant" and a "goal machine", his teammates have said.

James Dean, who played for a number of clubs including Stalybridge Celtic, Chorley and FC Halifax Town, was last seen in Oswaldtwistle on Wednesday.

Lancashire Police said his death was "not being treated as suspicious".

Ex-Blackburn Rovers star Matt Jansen, who played with the 35-year-old at Chorley, said he was "devastated".

Paying tribute on Twitter, former Halifax captain Danny Lowe said he had been a "big gentle giant" and a "goal machine", while former strike partner Jansen added that he had been "such a great guy".

S'Falcons, Falconets, Flamingoes Get Tough Draws

AYOBADA
LAGOS

The draws for the African Women's Cup Of Nations, the FIFA U-17 and the U-20 Women's World Cup qualifiers were conducted on Monday and Nigerian Women teams got tough draws.

In the draw for African Women Cup Of Nations (AWCON) slated for Morocco in 2022, defending champion Nigeria's Falcons were drawn against fierce rivals, Ghana Black Queens in the first round.

Nigeria will host the first leg with second slated for Ghana. Loser in this qualifier will miss out in the 2023 FIFA Women World Cup slated for Australia and New Zealand, as semifinalists of the AWCON will represent Africa in

the World Cup.

In the U-17 draw Flamingoes were drawn bye in the first and second round due to their past exploits.

But in the third round Nigeria will play the winners between Egypt and Guinea Bissau, the match is fixed for mid June 2022.

There is no much difference in the draw for the U-20 as Falconets will play the winners between Egypt and Congo in the third round.

CAF will have two representatives for the final tournament of the FIFA U20 Women's World Cup Costa Rica 2022.

India will host the 2022 edition of the Women U17 while Costa Rica will host the U20 edition.

It will be recalled that the 2020 edition of both competitions was cancelled due to the Corona virus outbreak.



Asisat Oshoala, Falcons' captain

Wembley May Host Champs League Final

UEFA is set to decide by Wednesday whether to switch the Champions League final to Wembley from Istanbul because of travel restrictions.

European football's governing body met with UK government officials and the Football Association on Monday to discuss options for the final.

Chelsea face Manchester City in the final on 29 May. But fans have been told not to travel after Turkey was put on England's travel red list.

There is a fixture issue to resolve, as Wembley is scheduled to stage the Championship play-off final on May 29. However, it is understood the EFL would consider moving the match if asked by UEFA, and its board would make the final call.

UK citizens returning from red list countries are required to quarantine at a government-approved hotel for 10 days.

Such a quarantine would have an impact on players involved in Euro 2020, which starts on June 11. Moving the final to Wembley would require the UK

government to be flexible in allowing people into England, given the various stakeholders who would expect to attend.

It is understood one of the issues under consideration is possible quarantine exemption, but no decisions have yet been made.

On Friday, transport secretary Grant Shapps said Covid-19 red list countries "should not be visited except in the most extreme circumstances".

He added that the government was open to hosting the game in the UK.

UEFA had hoped to give both clubs a minimum of 4,000 tickets each for the game at the Ataturk Olympic Stadium.

Schapps said that the Football Association was in talks with UEFA about switching the game, but that it is "ultimately a decision for UEFA".

Chelsea Supporters Trust has said it will meet UEFA and will request that the final is moved to the UK, while Manchester City fan groups said they would be renewing their calls to move the game from Istanbul.

AFN Disowns Pepple, Denies Knowledge Of Any Congress

The Athletics Federation of Nigeria (AFN) says it has disowned one SY Pepple who is claiming to be the Director General of the federation when the position does not exist in the constitution of the governing body for track and field in Nigeria.

Athletics stakeholders including state athletics associations have thus been warned to disregard any letter sent by the said Pepple inviting them to an extraordinary congress in Abuja later this week.

"The attention of the Athletics Federation of Nigeria has been drawn to a letter written by one SY Pepple who claims to be the Director General of the federation to states Athletics Associations inviting them to a virtual Extraordinary Congress," the AFN said in a statement signed by Prince Adeniyi Beyioku, its Secretary General.

The federation referred to the reconciliation meeting held at the instance of the World Athletics and Confederation of African Athletics in April in Abuja where it was resolved that the constitution adopted on November 16, 2017 at the congress of the

AFN presided over by Mr Shehu Ibrahim Gusau is the only working document for the federation.

The AFN says the position of Director General, which Mr Pepple is laying claim to be was not enshrined in the Constitution.

"It is important to know that the Secretary General is the Chief Administrative and Chief Accounting Officer of the Federation. There is no nomenclature as the Director General in the AFN Constitution of 2017. It is only the Secretary General that has the sole authority to issue letters on behalf of the Federation. Articles 6.1.4 and 6.3.8 of the constitution made it very clear the role of the Secretary General in the convening and planning of the congress," the AFN affirmed in the statement.

The AFN also affirm that the said Mr Pepple is not even qualified to be the chief accounting and administrative officer of the federation as he is neither a graduate of Physical & Health Education nor Sports Administration or its equivalent and has thus not met the criteria for employment as the chief executive officer of the AFN as contained in the AFN constitution.

Coe Claims Athletes Want To Take Part In Tokyo Olympics

World Athletics President Sebastian Coe has insisted that athletes want to take part at the postponed Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games despite continuing concerns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Coe attended Sunday's Ready Steady Go Tokyo 2020 athletics test event at the National Stadium, which involved 420 competitors including nine foreign athletes.

"We are very empathetic to the need to be fully recognising that communities around the world are inevitably nervous about many things related to COVID-19," Coe said.

"We take those concerns very, very seriously.

"The COVID-19 protocols, particularly that World Athletics have developed over the last year and a half by our health and science teams have consistently helped deliver events in a safe and secure environment."

Coe, who revealed there had not been any positive COVID-19 cases stemming from last weekend's World Athletics Relays in Poland, said that athletes understood the rules and that the delayed Tokyo 2020 Games would be different to any other Olympics.

"I speak to the athletes all the time," Coe said.

"I am consistently bowled over by the way they are dealing with, by the day, some of these restrictions and some of these added challenges.

"Is it perfect? No.

"Are they accepting of that situation? Yes.

"The vast majority of athletes I speak to wanting to get into the Games are understanding that it will not be the type of Games they've experienced before.

"The athletes have demonstrated the most extraordinary resilience and fortitude over the last year or so.

"They are also understanding that this is not under any circumstances business as usual.

"I think everybody is in the same boat here.

"In track and field we know the athletes are not going to be in the Village until a few days beforehand.

"The chances of them being in holding camps are limited.

"But they still know they would rather be here than sit out the dance.

"It's important for them."

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Your time is limited,
so don't waste it living
someone else's life.

– Steve Jobs

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NPRGS: Doing First Things Last

The federal government has slapped together a grandiose plan to wrestle Nigeria's embarrassing poverty to the ground. Poverty in Nigeria is a man-made calamity. It derives its fangs from the monster known as income distribution system which leaves a disproportionate share of the country's enormous wealth in the hands of less than 5,000 politicians and top civil servants.

The three tiers of government are responsible for the abject poverty in Nigeria. Ironically, the poverty eradication plan slapped together by the federal government is expected to be largely funded by the private sector and endowment funds.

The National Poverty Reduction with Growth Strategy (NPRGS) is a strange contrivance expected to eradicate poverty by stimulating economic growth. Architects of the scheme expect to induce private investors to plough funds into strategic projects especially in agriculture where jobs would be created while at the same time mechanising Nigeria's primitive food production process in a bid to combat the shameful spate of starvation enveloping the land from the north.

The federal government is targeting the Sovereign Wealth Fund, insurance companies, pension fund and endowments as sources of funding the grandiose project. Architects of NPRGS believe that the embarrassing poverty in Nigeria is the product of lethargic economic growth which could be reversed with concerted job creation escapade.

There are fears that NPRGS is wrongly conceptualised and ineptly capitalised. Those who think that poverty would be eradicated in Nigeria with an economic growth strategy should cast their minds back to the boom years between 2008 and 2014.

Average oil price for that period was \$105 per barrel. During that period Nigeria's economy grew at an average of six percent per annum. Ironically, Nigeria pushed 100 million people below the poverty line during the economic boom and exceptional growth period.

Consequently, the perception that abject poverty is rooted in lethargic economic growth is a wrong concept and palliatives built on wrong concepts cannot engender the required soothing.

If the NPRGS is wrongly conceptualised, then its funding strategy is a calamitous misalignment of priorities. The federal government expects private investors to shell out funds for investment in key sectors of the economy like agriculture and manufacturing to create jobs, accelerate economic growth and above all, lubricate Nigeria's chaotic food chain and halt starvation and escalating food inflation which now stands menacingly at 23 percent.

With the 2020 harvest some five months behind and the next harvest four months away, economy watchers expect food inflation to climb perilously close to 30 percent before the next harvest.

Food inflation is the consequence of Nigeria's primitive farming process, extortion of motorists at hundreds of police check-points strewn across the nation and the high cost of evacuating scarce food items through dilapi-



Zainab Ahmed

dated roads from Nigeria's inaccessible rural farming communities.

The above anomalies conspire to price food items out of the reach of the poor, leaving millions on the throes of malnutrition. In October 2020, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), an agency of the United Nations warned that 9.8 million people in 16 northern states and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, were starving perilously close to malnutrition. The figure would have doubled by now.

Food inflation is at the root of the disastrous starvation as it prices food items out of the reach of the poor. Architects of NPRGS believe that the high cost of food items could be brought down as key investors plough funds into agriculture and produce more food items.

Unfortunately, there is something tragically wrong with the concept that NPRGS can combat poverty, drive down food prices and create jobs at the same time. Designers of the strange poverty reduction strategy probably did not factor in the destructive capacity of

Fulani herdsmen in their calculation of the productive capacity of the prospective investment in agriculture.

The herdsmen are huge disincentives to investment in agriculture. While Boko Haram has terrorised farmers in the north-east out of farms and drastically reduced agricultural output in the region, Fulani herdsmen are everywhere in Nigeria. They march their cattle into farms and watch them destroy crops cultivated by peasant farmers through hard manual labour.

The herdsmen are dreaded everywhere in Nigeria because of their blood thirsty demeanor. When owners of the crop destroyed by their cattle dare to protest, the herdsmen raid the villages at night, kill, maim, rape and raze down houses in revenge. Directors of a leading Nigerian conglomerate that recently ventured into ethanol production can easily tell architects of NPRGS that no sane investor would plough his funds into the scheme's agricultural project.

The company had a sad experience in Ekiti state where it cultivated 2,000 hectares of cassava farm for its ethanol project. The herdsmen turned the vast cassava farm into their cattle ranch and reduced it to one massive wasteland.

The company had invested N400 million in the ethanol project from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) intervention fund in the hope of reducing Nigeria's shameful dependence on imported ethanol. Now the project has been suspended. No one knows how they would raise money to pay back CBN's intervention fund.

Nigeria consumes 400 million liters of ethanol annually and produces less than 100 million liters locally at an abhorring rate of N450 per liter. Imported ethanol from the U.S. enters the market after import duty at a paltry N219 per liter.

Fulani herdsmen have repulsed not only

the adventurous conglomerate but other investors who would have taken the plunge if the pioneer investor had succeeded. The disaster of the conglomerate's ethanol project and the ones visited on peasant farmers is a huge disincentive for investment in Nigeria's tottering agricultural sector.

Architects of NPRGS committed a grievous error of omission by glossing over the dangers against investments in agriculture and expecting investors to flush their funds down the drain just like the unlucky conglomerate did.

Such grievous miscalculations put NPRGS in the realm of other grandstanding projects of government. It is dead on arrival because the investment environment is just too hostile.

No one expects serious investors to sink funds into NPRGS projects in the manufacturing sector either. Like it did to India on poverty in 2018, Nigeria has replaced DR Congo, Africa's melting pot of dissension, as the nation with the highest number of people without access to electricity. Africa's largest economy generates a scant 4,000 megawatts (mw) of electricity for 207 million citizens.

The generation companies have installed capacity for 12,000 megawatts (mw) but the transmission lines are simply too feeble to wheel that to the distribution companies (DisCos). Even if the transmission lines could grudgingly wheel half of the installed capacity of the GenCos, distribution facilities of the DisCos are just too archaic to distribute that quantity of electricity to consumers. On many occasions the DisCos reject power from the GenCos because they lack the facility to distribute it.

Even with the doubling of power tariff that makes a kilowatt hour of electricity in Nigeria slightly more expensive than what obtains in Ghana, there are no signs that power supply would improve in the next five years.

It simply follows that the investors expected to besiege the manufacturing sector with projects that would create jobs and drive away poverty are just not in a hurry to invest where they would spend half of the cost of the project on independent power generation. The investment environment in the manufacturing sector is even more hostile than agriculture.

Perhaps, the greatest foe of NPRGS is Nigeria's obdurate security crisis which is now putting the country in the throes of a civil war. Kidnappers in Kaduna, Katsina, Benue and Plateau states have turned schools into cheap targets for abductions. They are making millions from the strange business even as state governors vow that they would never pay ransom. Hundreds of students have been kidnapped and released on the payment of huge ransom.

Unlike the governments that own the schools where the students were kidnapped, investors value their staff and would not put them on harm's way for kidnappers. They simply would not invest where kidnappers reign supreme.

NPRGS is therefore a misadventure that puts the cart before the horse. Until insecurity, skewed income distribution and power problems are addressed, no one expects the scheme to reduce poverty.

Directors of a leading Nigerian conglomerate that recently ventured into ethanol production can easily tell architects of NPRGS that no sane investor would plough his funds into the scheme's agricultural project