Osinbajo: Nigeria Seeks $10bn Package from International Partners for Energy Transition Plan

●*World Bank, US Eximbank pledge $3bn*

Deji Elumoye in Abuja

The Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo has declared that Nigeria is seeking $10 billion from international partners to fund the nation's new Energy Transition Plan.

This was just as the World Bank and the US Exim Bank have pledged to assist Nigeria in its energy renewal efforts with $3 billion.

Speaking yesterday in Abuja, at the virtual launch of Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan, a roadmap to tackle the dual crises of energy

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Discos Insist FG Expropriating Power Distribution Assets in Breach of Extant Laws... Page 5

THISDAY

TRUTH & REASON

Thursday 25 August, 2022
Vol 27. No 9998. Price: N250

www.thisdaylive.com

Food Security: Sanwo-Olu Flags Off Logistics Hub in Epe... Page 36

Ayu: PDP'll Win 25 States, Majority in National Assembly Seats Despite Crisis

●*Dagogo plans 10 million-man march for Atiku in Niger Delta* ●*Lamido cracking PDP's unity wall, says Wike's aide*

Chuks Okocha in Abuja and **Blessing Ibunge** in Port Harcourt

National Chairman of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Dr. Iyorchia Ayu, yesterday, said despite the raging leadership crisis in the party, PDP would win over 25 states and majority seats at the National Assembly in the 2023 general election.

But in Bauchi State, the governor, Bala Mohammed, said he was not aware of any on-going reconciliation meeting between some members of

Continued on page 33

Wike, Tinubu's Pact is Real, He'll Work for Us, Says Ibrahim Masari

●*Confident deal with Rivers gov won't affect Amaechi* ●*Buhari: I'll not betray, undermine APC by supporting candidates of other parties* ●*Disowns defectors, those who sued party* ●*Warns govt officials against loose talk* ●*Dogara, Babachir meet IBB, Abdulsalami over Muslim-Muslim ticket*

Deji Elumoye and **Chuks Okocha** in Abuja

After weeks of speculation and moves shrouded in secrecy, former vice presidential placeholder for the presidential candidate of All Progressives Congress (APC), Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, Alhaji Ibrahim Masari, yesterday, confirmed that the much-talked about pact between Tinubu and Rivers State Governor Nyesom Wike was true and real. Masari disclosed that the two men agreed to work together without Wike necessarily leaving the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Masari spoke in an interview with BBC Hausa Service from London, where the talks between the APC presidential candidate and the Rivers State governor, allegedly, took place.

He said Wike would work for the emergence of the APC candidate as president in next year's election, but did not need to defect to the party.

Masari explained that the kind of understanding Tinubu and Wike

Continued on page 33



MAJEKODUNMI'S 10TH MEMORIAL LECTURE...

L-R: Managing Director/CEO, ST. Nicolas Hospital, Dr. Oladapo Majekodunmi; Chairman of the occasion, His Highness Muhammad Sanusi 11; Chairman, Moses Adekoyejo Majekodunmi Foundation, Mr. Desmond Majekodunmi; and Dr. Kofoworola Majekodunmi at the event celebrating the legacy of Chief (Dr.) Moses Adekoyejo Majekodunmi 10th year memorial held in Lagos... yesterday

PHOTO: SUNDAY ADIGUN



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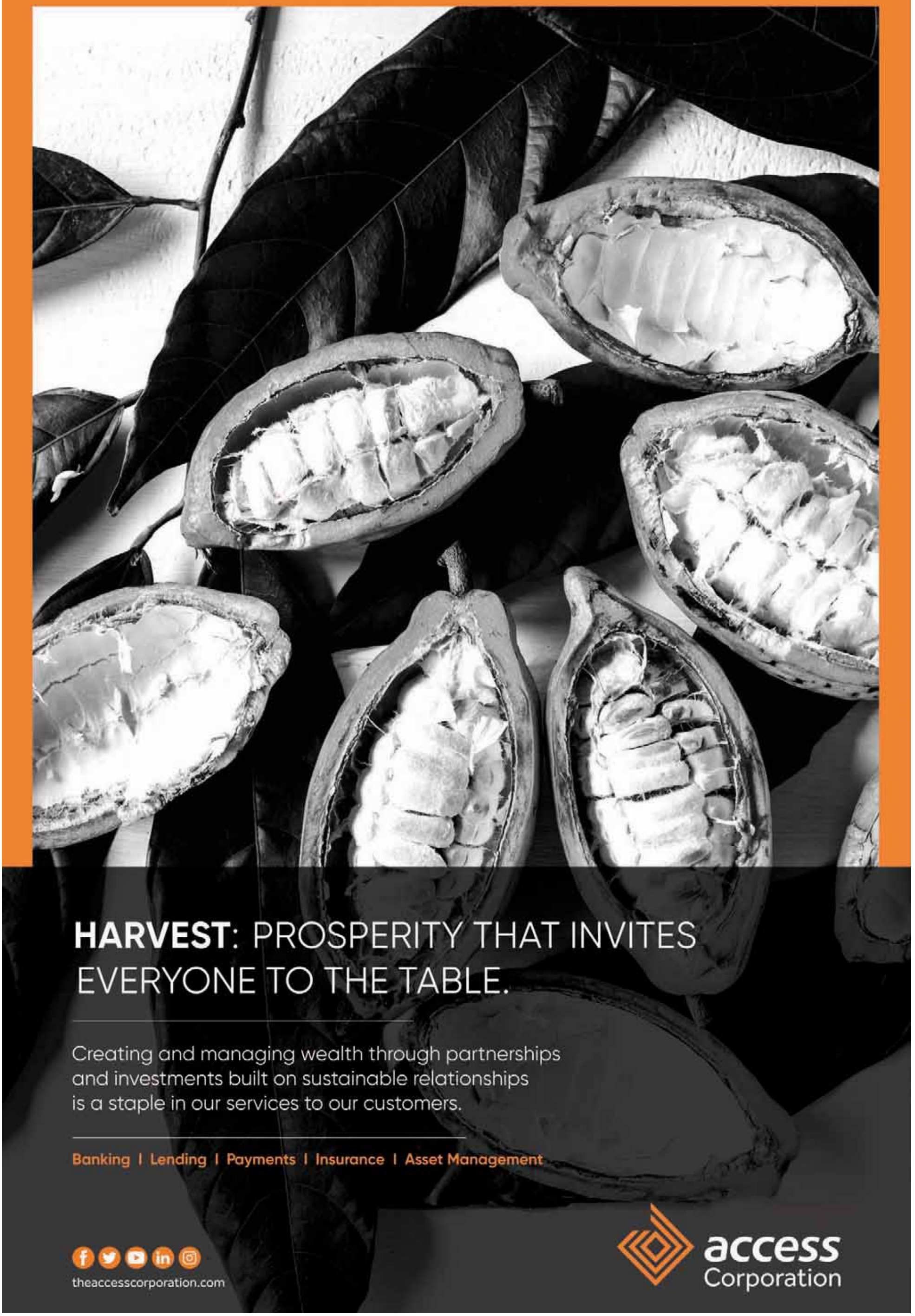
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INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL ON DIGITAL ECONOMY...

L–R: EVC/CEO, Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Prof. Umar Garba Danbatta; Edo State Governor, Godwin Obaseki; Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Dr. Isa Ali Ibrahim Pantami; and Imo State Governor, Hope Uzodinma, at the inaugural meeting of the Presidential Council on Digital Economy and E-Government at the Digital Economy Complex, Abuja....on Tuesday

Discos Insist FG Expropriating Power Distribution Assets in Breach of Extant Laws

●Decry 'thuggish' arrest of BEDC CEO ●Announce record N777bn Q1 revenues
●Say 129,352 transformers installed in first three months of 2022
●Benin Disco reacts to AGF's opinion on expiration of Federal High Court orders

Emmanuel Addeh in Abuja and **Peter Uzoho** in Lagos

The Association of Nigerian Electricity Distributors (ANED) has knocked the federal government over alleged illegal expropriation of five distribution companies (Discos), saying the action was worsening the failure of the power sector.

ANED added that with the federal government's 40 per cent share of Discos' assets through the Bureau of Public Enterprise (BPE), it was complicit in the sector's limited performance, warning that any attempt to resell the expropriated Discos would be nothing more than fantasy and an exercise in futility.

In a statement issued yesterday by its Director of Research and Advocacy, Mr. Sunday Oduntan, entitled, "Expropriation or Disregard for the Rule of Law is Not the Answer to NESI's Challenges," the Discos' body noted regrettably that recent events happening in the sector had continued to undermine an already fragile and moribund Nigerian Electricity Supply Industry (NESI).

The Director General of BPE, Mr. Alex Okoh, had announced a few days ago that the government had successfully concluded the takeover of struggling Discos, including Kaduna, Kano, Ibadan and Port Harcourt Discos, adding that the challenge in the takeover of Benin Disco was being addressed.

THISDAY had reported in July that the federal government had announced the restructuring and takeover of five Discos across the country by some banks following their inability to meet up with the repayment of their debt obligations.

However, in the statement obtained by THISDAY, yesterday, Oduntan stated that a long history of policy and regulatory inconsistency, which were significant contributory factors to the poor performance of sectoral operators was being worsened by a resort to violations of the rule of law through the expropriation of Discos outside the framework of the agreements reached under the privatisation of the assets.

He said the more recent example of such government's illegal action was the, "thuggish arrest or abduction of the Chief Executive Officer of the Benin Electricity Distribution Company (BEDC) by purportedly rogue elements of the law enforcement apparatus, in enforcement of this expropriation, on Monday, August 15th, 2022."

He added that the most recent related issue was a tussle between the federal government and BEDC on whether the restraining or Ex Parte order issued by a Federal High Court against the government on the expropriation, in favour of BEDC had expired.

Oduntan maintained that a continued absence of the respect for the rule of law and lack of policy and regulatory consistency cannot be what was envisioned under the National Electricity Power Policy (NEPP) 2001, which was the foundation of the Electric Power Sector Reform Act, 2005 (EPSRA), the statutory basis for the privatization.

The NEPP, according to him, envisioned an enabling environment that would encourage the mammoth private sector investment necessary to reverse historical government underinvestment in NESI, coupled with the injection of private sector ingenuity and expertise.

He lamented that the nine years since privatisation had largely been deficient of the enabling environment stated in the NEPP, pointing out that that had resulting in the limited performance of the Discos and the larger NESI.

"Disco performance cannot be divorced from the presence of an enabling environment or, particularly, a partnership with the federal government. Indeed, the shining moments in the evolution of the privatisation have come out of collaboration between the DisCos and the agencies of government," Oduntan said.

He noted that the Central Bank of Nigeria's (CBN) loan initiative to the Discos in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, BPE, the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) and the Ministry of Power established a successful template for addressing the thorny and difficult issues of the Discos' lack of access to capital and addressing the metering gap.

Additionally, Oduntan maintained that NERC, in tandem with CBN also worked with the Discos to address and reverse some of the historical regulatory challenges that had adversely impacted Disco performance, describing the move as a commendable partnership by all the parties.

He warned that the expropriation or forcible removal of investors' interest or persons from the Discos would not address the need to resolve the key fundamental deficiencies of the sub-sector.

Oduntan listed the deficiencies as, "a misalignment or misallocation of risk (government-owned risk of gas pipeline vandalisation, limited gas pipeline network and commercial framework, limited or constrained government-owned transmission network, government policy/ regulatory inconsistencies have all been wrongly passed on to the Discos – undermining a core predicate of the electricity business that risk should be borne by the party that can best bear it.).

"Non-payment of electricity liabilities by the Ministries, Departments and Agency (MDA), inconsistent and unsustainable electricity tariff modelling and implementation, electricity theft, etc."

He argued that it was the federal government's acknowledgement of its role in the non-performance of the Discos that resulted in the determination or declaration of the two years of mutual non-performance by the government and the Discos (2017 and 2018) under the Multi- Year Tariff Order (MYTO-2015).

According to him, the BPE's Performance Assessment of nine Discos Comprehensive Report of December 2021, had further stated that several commitments and investments had not been executed timely by government, leading to continuous structural issues impacting Discos.

Oduntan added that the same report further highlighted specifically, the following areas of government failure to meet its obligations and commitments including misallocation of liabilities on the books of Discos as market shortfall; inadequate electricity supply.

Others, he noted, included insufficient investment to address 30 years of historical underinvestment in the sector, apparent misalignment between assets (meters, number of customers) communicated to the Discos pre-privatisation; and clarification of roles between BPE and NERC not done at the time of privatisation.

In addition to persistent security breaches' impact on Discos' collection capacity, Oduntan

listed other deficiencies as lack of minor reviews from 2015-2019 despite dynamic variables, resulting in N2.4 trillion of tariff shortfall accumulating between 2015-2020 and unfavorable regulatory guidelines negatively impacting Discos' source of revenue.

He further said, "Significantly, these challenges were similarly identified in the final report issued by the National Economic Council's (NEC) Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of the Ownership Structure of the Partially-Privatised Electricity Distribution Companies (March 2020).

"It is important to also highlight that the Director General, BPE, as a board member who represents the federal government's 40 percent minority share in each of the Discos, is an integral participant in the board decisions that guide the operations of the Discos.

"How then is the 'restructuring' or expropriation of the five Discos justified, given the government's contribution to the challenges that have bedeviled Disco operations?

The Discos cannot reasonably be exempted from the issue of non-performance, admittedly.

"The Discos take and own responsibility for falling short of their performance objectives, thereby depriving their valued electricity customers a key contributor to improved quality of life. However, Disco investors and operators remain totally committed to improving service delivery to their customers."

Oduntan said the evidence of the commitment by the Discos had been progressing in areas such the establishment of a new revenue collection of N777 billion as of first quarter (Q1) 2022 and the reduction of average Aggregate Technical, Commercial and Collection Losses (ATC&C) estimated in excess of 56 per cent pre-privatisation to 46.3 per cent.

Other progress recorded by the Discos, according to the ANED director, were the increase in the number of registered customers from an estimate of less than two million customers pre-privatisation to 10.2 million, and the establishment of 1,035 customer centers.

Furthermore, he listed others as the creation of 32,573 jobs as against 23,515 at privatisation; increased metering from 2.3 million in 2013 to 4.7 million, representing a 100 per cent increase and the installation of 129,352 distribution transformers as of 2020 against 75,041 in 2013, a 72 per cent increase.

Continued online

Artefacts: Oba of Benin's Representatives, Others to Attend Berlin Humboldt Forum Arts Exhibition

Adibe Emenyonu in Benin City

The Humboldt Forum, a museum of art and culture would play host to arts collectors, enthusiasts, and researchers across the globe at the second opening of Humboldt forum in Berlin, Germany.

The museum housed non-European collections including thousands of artefacts looted from the palace of Benin Kingdom during the 1897 invasion would be on display at the celebration and commissioning of the last part of opening of Humboldt Forum.

It was learnt that the Benin monarch's representatives are to be led by his brother, His Royal Highness, Prince Aghatise Erediuwa.

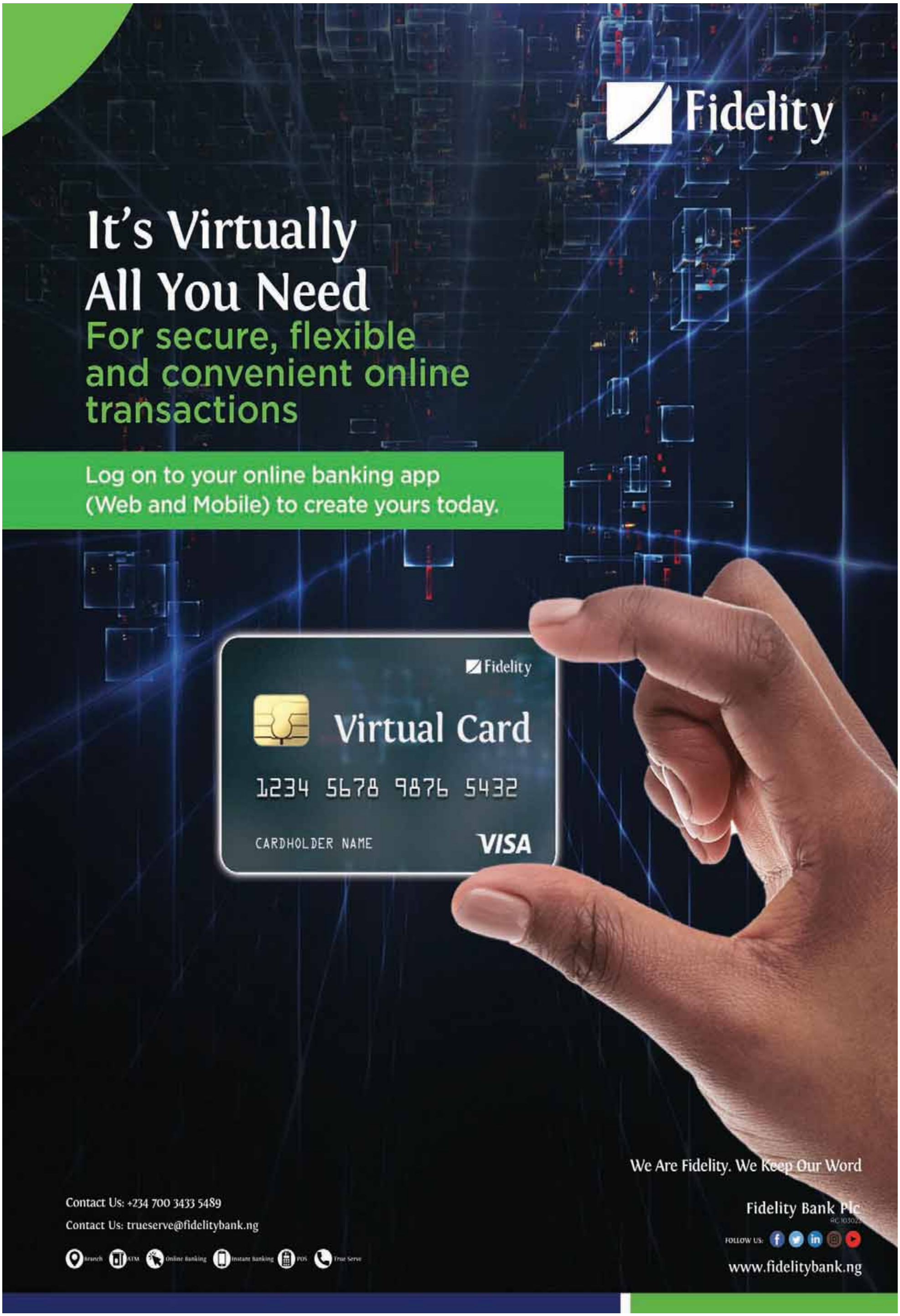
According to the invitation letter made available to journalists in Benin City, Edo State and jointly endorsed by Prof. Dr Hartmut Dorgerloh, General Director Humboldt and Prof. Dr. Lars –Christian Koch, Director Ethnological Museum, expected to take place on the 16th, September 2022, would also host friends, partners and colleagues.

The delegation of German ethnological museum led by Koch had in April 2022, interacted with the Benin Monarch on planned return and restitution of historic Benin artefacts.

Solomon Okuduwa who provided technical support had led the German ethnologists to the historic Igun streets where they also met with the association of Bronzes casters.

The Forum located in the heart of Berlin is a hub of exhibitions which attract researchers and arts lovers and aims to be the cultural destination compared with the London museum.

The museum had announced plans to pursue conversations with Nigerian officials regarding the repatriation of the Benin Bronzes in its collections and pledged to repatriate Benin Bronzes in its collections.


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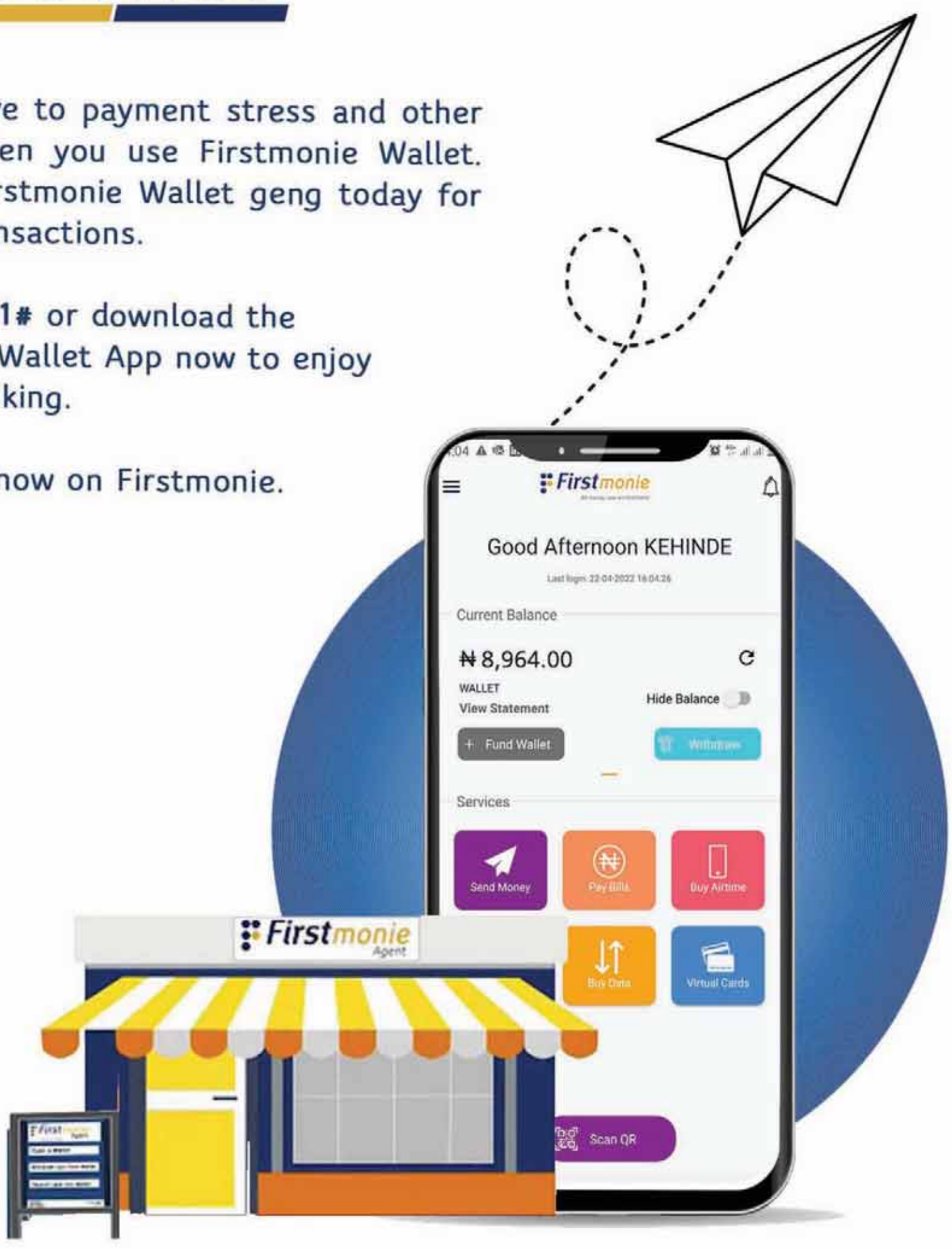
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NEWS



EU ERASMUS+ 2022 PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION FOR AWARDEES...

L-R: Deputy Executive Secretary, Administration, National Universities Commission, Chris Maiyaki; Deputy Head, Embassy of Spain Nigeria, Jean Jorres Reus; Portuguese Ambassador, Riberio Da Silva Barros; and European Union Ambassador, Samuela Isopi, during the EU Erasmus+ 2022 Pre-departure orientation for the awardees and study in Europe Fair in Abuja... yesterday PHOTO: KINGSLEY ADEBOYE

July Allocation Rises by N151.6bn as FAAC Shares N954bn to FG, States, LGs

●Marks highest monthly allocation under Buhari ●Excess Crude Account balance now $470,599.54

Ndubuisi Francis in Abuja

The recent increase in monthly distributable revenue to the three tiers of government continued in July as the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) yesterday shared the sum of N954.085 billion among the federal, state and local governments.

This represented an increase of N151.678 billion over the N802.407 billion shared in the preceding month of June.

It also indicated the highest monthly revenue shared by FAAC since the emergence of the incumbent administration under President Muhammadu Buhari.

Although no official explanation was given for the steady rise in monthly allocations in the last few months, facts on the ground point to significantly increasing haul in Companies Income Tax (CIT), Petroleum Profit Tax (PPT), Excise Duties and Oil and Gas Royalties.

In the same vein, the balance in the Excess Crude Account (ECA) which dropped from $35.37 million in the previous month to $376,655 in June, also rose to $470,599.54 in July.

A communiqué issued at the end of the FAAC meeting held in Abuja, yesterday, indicated that the N954.085 billion total distributable revenues for the month of July comprised distributable statutory revenue of N776.918 billion and distributable Value Added Tax (VAT) revenue of N177.167 billion.

The total deductions for cost of collection stood at N47.254 billion while deductions for transfers, savings and refunds was N255.762 billion.

Quoting the communique, the Director (Information, Press and Public Relations), Office of the Accountant General of the Federation, Henshaw Ogubike, stated that from the total distributable revenue of N954.085 billion, the federal government received N406.610 billion, states received N281.342 billion, while the local government councils received N210.617 billion.

The sum of N55.515 billion was shared to the relevant states as 13 per cent derivation revenue.

Gross statutory revenue of N1,066.845 billion was received for the month of July 2022. This was higher than the sum of N1,012.065 billion received in the previous month by N54.780 billion.

Also, from the N776.918 billion distributable statutory revenue, the federal government received N380.035 billion, states got N192.759 billion while the local government councils received N148.609 billion.

The sum of N55.515 billion was shared to the relevant states as 13 per cent derivation revenue.

In July, the gross revenue available from VAT was N190.256 billion, which was lower than the N208.148 billion available in the month of June 2022 by N17.892 billion.

From the N177.167 billion distributable VAT revenue, the federal government received N26.575 billion, the states received N88.584 billion and the local governments received N62.008 billion.

In the month under review, Companies Income Tax (CIT), Petroleum Profit Tax (PPT), Excise Duties and Oil and Gas Royalties recorded significant increases, while Import Duty and Value Added Tax (VAT) decreased considerably.

FG Urges States to Establish Digital Economy Ministries

Oghenevwede Ohwovoriole in Abuja

The federal government has urged the 36 states of the federation to establish ministries of digital economy in their respective jurisdictions.

The Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Isa Pantami gave the admonition in an interview with journalists on the sidelines of the inaugural meeting of the Presidential Council on Digital Economy and E-government (PCDEE), in Abuja.

According to him the federal government's advice for states to set up such ministries was to ensure the seamless implementation of the National Digital Economy Plan (NDEP).

The minister said: "The council proposed establishing ministry of digital economy in our states where the activities at the national level can be cascaded and implemented by our various states.

"With the accommodation of our sub-nationals and governors, I believe so many good things will come out of the sector.

"The secretariat has been directed to come up with a framework for the digital economy that can be implemented in our states. Many states have good initiatives on digital economy. However, there is lack of harmonisation to the activities. So, a framework is going to be developed, so that our sub-nationals will play their own role and federal government will continue to provide intervention where necessary."

The Governor of Imo State and members of the PCDEE, Hope Ozordima promised to create a ministries of digital economy as soon as they return to their respective states.

Uzodimma noted that part of the assignment given to the secretariat was to develop a framework that would enable the states align properly with the mandate of the Digital Economy Policy.

Another member of the PCDEE and Governor of Edo State, Godwin Obaseki, said he was happy that there was now a council in place to direct the states on the implementation of the national digital policy.

Obaseki stated: "I am glad that we finally have a council in this country that will set a direction on the digital economy as you know the world is about digitalisation and technology.

"For us in the states particularly in Edo state we have already initiated lots of initiatives and actions. As you know, for instance, Edo State educational platform runs on technology where all our 15,000 teachers have hand-held devices.

"We are implementing technology in our primary health care centres. We have technology hubs but we are doing it on our own .It is not connected or aligned with what is happening at the national so the Council essentially helps align the different initiatives from different states across the country so that we can reduce the waste that comes with the non-alignment and also gain momentum and speed in terms of implementing our digital strategy as a country."

The Minister of Trade and Investment, Adeniyi Adebayo, said they were in collaboration with the ministry and other agencies to promote Small Medium Entrepreneurs (SMEs)."

Nwaka: Why PDP Must Redress Lopsided Sharing of Party Offices

Emmanuel Ugwu-Nwogo in Umuahia

A former senator for Abia North in the third republic, Senator Emma Nwaka, has urged the leadership of the Peoples Democratic Party(PDP) to urgently balance the equation of its current power sharing arrangement in the party, which has sparked crisis in the party, if it intends to achieve success in the 2023 polls.

Nwaka told THISDAY that he totally agreed with the "impeccable position" of the Chairman of PDP Board of Trustees (BoT), Walid Jibrin, who had reportedly condemned the alleged marginalisation of the South in sharing of party's top posts.

The BoT Chairman was quoted to have voiced his concerns, saying, "To tell the truth, it will not be fair for the president of Nigeria to be from the north, the chairman of the party to be from the north and to talk of the BoT chairman to also be from the north".

While corroborating Jibrin's position, Nwaka said the main opposition party was sending a wrong signal to the southern part of the country by excluding them from the top echelon of the party at the national level.

His words: "The impression this situation creates is that the South is inconsequential in the political equation of PDP," adding that the lopsided sharing of top posts was akin to "rubbing salt to injury".

He stated that the PDP faithful from the south were still nursing the wounds inflicted on them when the presidential ticket went north, adding that the current arrangement of party offices was against the party's constitution.

"If the party is serious about chasing the non-performing APC out of power, the situation we find ourselves calls for sacrifice for us to get it right," he counseled.

"Any political party that thinks that it can do without any section of the country is digging its own grave. A stitch in time saves nine. Since we are chasing a black goat, it's good to make hay while it's still day," former Abia PDP chairman added.

Six Weeks After Surgery, Osinbajo Attends FEC Meeting

Deji Elumoye in Abuja

About six weeks after undergoing surgery on his leg as a result of injury sustained while playing squash, the Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo yesterday attended the weekly Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting with President Muhammadu Buhari presiding.

Osinbajo physically attended the meeting that held at the Council Chambers of the State House in Abuja, for the first time since he underwent the surgery at an Ikeja Hospital in Lagos on July 16, 2022.

He was discharged on July 25th and had been recuperating at home, attending official functions virtually.

The vice president was received by ministers and presidential aides, who took turns to welcome him back to the council chambers.

Those that physically attended the meeting included Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Boss Mustapha, Chief of Staff to the President, Ibrahim Gambari and the National Security Adviser (NSA), Major General Babagana Mongunu (rtd).

Also, the ministers that attended physically included Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed; Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami; Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Mohammed Bello; Communications and Digital, Isa Pataṅmi; Humanitarian Disaster Management and Social Development Affairs, Sadiya Umar Farouq; Environment, Mohammed Abdullahi; Works and Housing, Babatunde Fashola; Youth and Sports, Sunday Dare; Agriculture and Rural Development, Dr. Mohammad Mahmood Abubakar, Aviation, Hadi Sirika and Transportation, Mu'azu Jaji Sambo.

Others were Ministers of State for Finance, Budget and National Planning, Clement Agba; Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Ramatu Aliyu, Environment, Ademola Adegoroye and Education, Goodluck Nana-Opia

The Head of Service of the Federation, Dr (Mrs) Folasade Yemi-Esan and other ministers are participating virtually from their respective offices in Abuja.

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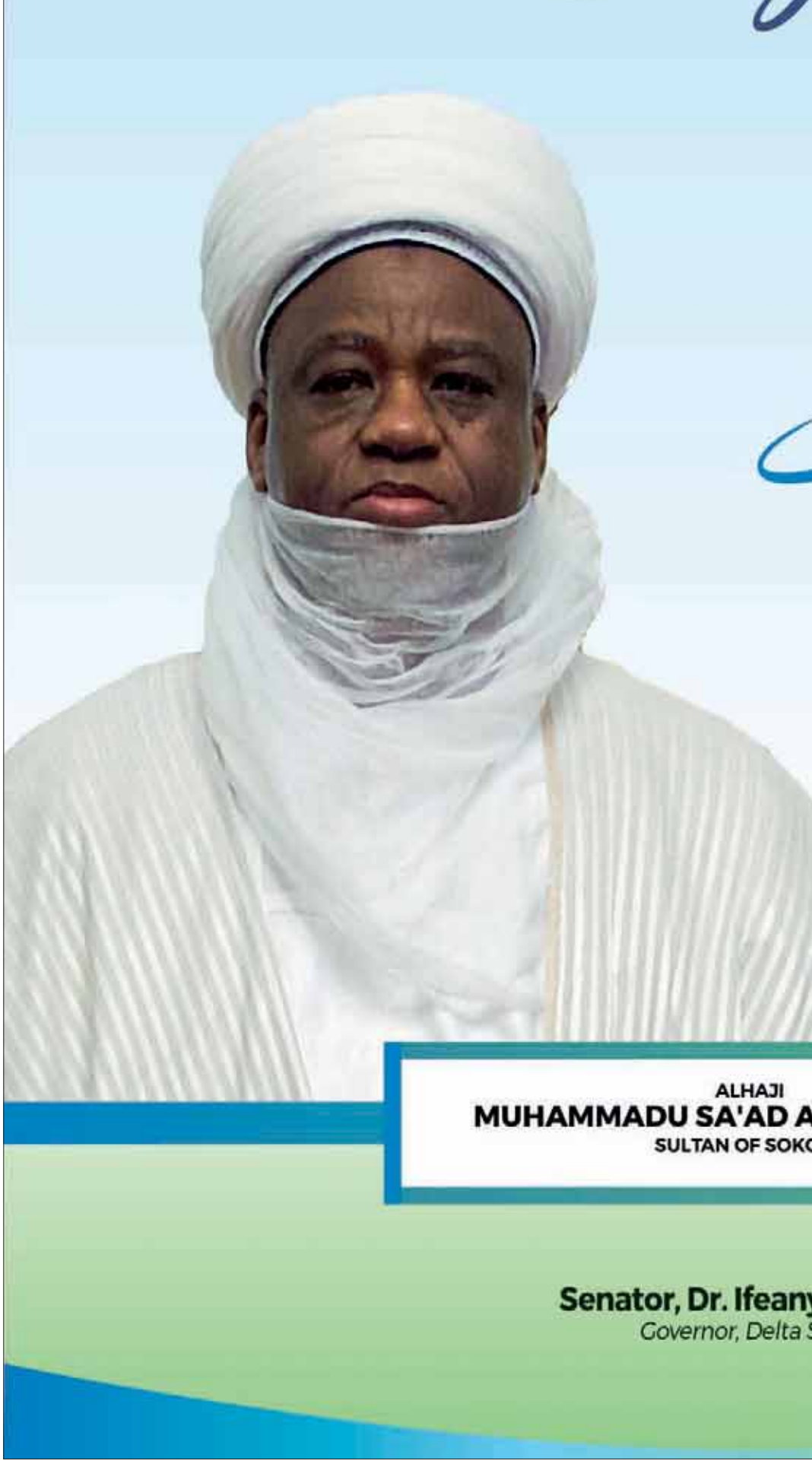
Adieu!

Signed:
Prince Dapo Abiodun, MFR
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NEWS



A CERTIFICATE OF AWARD TO UGWUANYI AS 'OCHENDO NDIGBO'...

Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi of Enugu State (right) receiving a Certificate of Award as "Ochendo Ndigbo" from the President, Ohanaeze Ndigbo, Enugu State Chapter, Prof. Fred Eze (left) and other leaders of the apex Igbo socio-cultural organisation, in recognition of his commitment, sacrifice and patriotism for the Igbo Nation, when the organisation paid a solidarity visit to the governor at the Government House, Enugu... yesterday.

Domestic Airline Operators Accuse Foreign Carriers of Ripping off Nigerians with Outrageous Fares

Chinedu Eze

The Airline Operators of Nigeria (AON) has accused foreign carriers operating in Nigeria of charging fares at prevalent parallel market foreign exchange naira to dollar rate and at the same time want to blackmail the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to exchange their revenue at the official market rate.

Speaking on Arise News Channel's 'The Morning Show,' spokesman of AON, who is also the Chairman/CEO of United Nigeria Airlines, Prof Obiora Okonkwo said the CBN had indicated that there is scarcity of foreign exchange, urging foreign airlines to source for the greenback where domestic airlines also source theirs.

Presently, an economy ticket for a Lagos-London flight is between N1.2 million to N1.4 million. But earlier this year, the air fare was about N400, 000. Also, a one-way business ticket now goes for about N4 million, while return flight ticket is about N7 million.

Okonkwo said: "Domestic airlines source their dollars from the parallel market. If local airlines can do that, foreign airlines should also do that. They can go to other sources to also obtain their dollars. The CBN is already helping the airlines.

"Last two weeks there was huge money made available to foreign airlines, especially Emirates. We need this money. Manufacturers are getting very little foreign exchange as well. Nobody said foreign airlines can't take their money out because their money is not confiscated.

"We understand what the International Air Transport Association (IATA) is saying. It has to protect member airlines, including our own airlines. We frown at the situation whereby you send desk officers of these airlines to go and negotiate with CBN.

"The foreign airlines can negotiate to pay their bills in naira to oil marketers and ground operation service providers, then they can use other sources of foreign exchange like Investors and Exporters' window to obtain foreign exchange."

Okonkwo however said there was no rivalry between Nigerian airlines and foreign carriers, just as he stressed the need to clarify misinformation in the media, emphasising the funds of the foreign airlines were never withheld by the CBN as some media reports had indicated. This, he said was aimed tarnishing Nigeria's image globally.

He insisted that foreign airlines have adjusted their tickets, which have gone so high and more than double the fares charged travellers in other African countries such as Ghana, Ivory Coast and others.

According to Okonkwo, "airlines fix fares; IATA does not fix fares for airlines."

He urged the federal government to step in and find out why the airlines charge Nigerian travellers higher fares compared to other countries in the continent, saying the AON would not want the foreign carriers to exploit Nigerian travellers.

"Everyone knows that foreign airlines charge exorbitant fares in Nigeria. I want the high fares to be part of the agenda government will look into. Government should review the Bilateral Air Service Agreement (BASA) with these countries and adopt the principle of reciprocity.

"If Air Peace is operating to UK, the fare will be around N500, 000 but foreign airlines are charging N1.4 million for six hours flight from Lagos to London," he said.

Okonkwo stressed the need to support indigenous operators, saying "if they are operating international destinations the exploitation of Nigerian travellers would be curtailed and the huge amount of money repatriated from Nigeria will reduce because domestic airlines will keep the money earned in the country."

Speaking in the same interview, the Managing Director, Flight and Logistics Solutions, Amos Akpan, said Nigeria signed BASA agreement with other countries and part of the agreement was that airlines could repatriate their earnings from Nigeria with exchange rate fixed by the CBN.

He said there was evidence that the airlines had made all their payments, including charges, taxes and services so they have to repatriate their revenue to fund their operations.

"Although this is not an issue limited to Nigeria because the global economy is diminishing, but this does not mean that Nigeria should not abide by the agreement it signed with these countries in BASA.

"I hope that government should meet with these airlines and assure them that they will be able to repatriate their money," Akpan said.

He also acknowledged that there had not been equity and fairness in the BASA Nigeria signed with many countries, noting that many of such agreements were skewed in favour of international operators. He recalled that Emirates was given 21 frequencies to Nigeria but Air Peace and Nigeria had to battle to get three weekly flights to Dubai.

"British Airways operates 14 flights a week from Nigeria, but no Nigerian airlines reciprocates and flies to UK. Air Peace was not allowed to fly to London. Our government facilitates foreign airlines to fly to other airports in addition to Lagos, but ideally if they fly to Lagos or Abuja, Nigerian carriers should distribute their passengers to other airports in the country.

"If this is not resolved it will continue to create friction in the industry. The Ministry of Aviation should drive the process to protect our airlines. The federal government has already given waiver on VAT and aircraft spares to Nigerian airlines," he said.

EFCC Arrests NDDC's Account Director over Alleged N25bn Fraud

NANS executive member bags one-year jail term over internet fraud, 39 others convicted in Ibadan

Kingsley Nwezeh in Abuja

The Director, Finance and Account of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Mr. Eno Ubi Otu, is presently undergoing interrogation by operatives of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in relation to a case of alleged diversion of over N25 billion tax remittances.

The suspect who arrived at the Commission's office in the early hours of yesterday, was still being interrogated as of press time.

A source told THISDAY that the arrest was part of a larger investigation of the forensic audit report of the NDDC.

Spokesman of the Commission, Wilson Uwujaren, could not be reached for confirmation.

Meanwhile, the Ibadan Zonal Command of the EFCC has secured the conviction and sentencing of Director of Logistics of the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), Federal University, Oye-Ekiti Chapter, Adeyemi Israel Abiodun, to one-year imprisonment for internet-related fraud.

He is among 40 persons convicted on separate one count charges before four judges of the Oyo State High Court, Ibadan.

A statement by EFCC said their offences bordered on impersonation, obtaining money under false pretence, obtaining property by false pretence and forgery contrary to Sections 419, 467, 484, 516 and 508 of the Criminal Code Law Cap 38, Laws of Oyo State, 2000.

The others that were convicted were Yekeen Azeez Ishola, Okeniyi Sanuel Akiniyi, Theophilus Ademola Bukola, Salami Mohammed Adetayo, Pelumi Ajayi Temiloluwa, Lawal Abdullateef Olalekan, Okusanwo Mayowa Daniel, Oluwole Oluwasegun Ayomide, Adedotun Omodele Yusuf, Monday Nnaemeka Samuel, Idowu Adeshina, Olowe Nifemi Ayomide, Adubu Olamiotan Sunday, Kehinde Olatunji Kehinde, Oguntuase Tope Francis, Elijah Isaac Wisdom, Ogbanaya Chukwu Chukwu, Adekola Adekunle, Odebode Temiloluwa Kehinde, Joseph Odunayo Clement, Andrew Adekunle Masika, Usman Mubarak Damilare, Isiaka Olumide Hammed, Uawu Osita Henry, Kareem Afeez Alabi and Ogunyemi Ayobami Samuel.

Others included Mimiola Victor Olamide, Adeeko Kolade Emmanuel, Egberongbe Adedayo Quam, Oyelaran Olayiwola Jeremaih, Hammed Rilwan Ishola, Adefowora Omotayo David, Adedeji Ibrahim Olamilekan, Emmanuel Timileyin Akinbowale, Michael Damola Olanrewaju, Ayanyemi Olaide Samuel, Boye Timilehin Emmanuel, Timileyin Ajibola Idowu and Azeez Tolulope Ayoade.

Abiodun was arraigned before Justice Iyabo Yerima while thirty-nine others were prosecuted before Justices Bayo Taiwo, Akintola Ladiran and Olusola Adetujoye between August 15, 2022 and August 23, 2022.

The one-count charge against Abiodun read: "That you, Adeyemi Israel Abiodun and Odaise Precious Abiola (aka Prezzy) (at large) on or about 30th March, 2022 at Ibadan, within the Ibadan Judicial Division did conspire to forge various United States of America Banks Cheques and purport same to be genuine and thereby committed the offence of conspiracy to commit forgery contrary to Section 516 and 467 of the Criminal Code Law, Cap 38, Laws of Oyo State, 2000."

Abiodun and the others pleaded "guilty" to the charges filed against them by the EFCC.

Pipeline Surveillance Contract: PANDEF Warns Northern Youths against Incitive Comments

Emameh Gabriel in Abuja

The Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF) has warned northern youths against what it described as unnecessary and misguided expressions and actions in order not to provoke a crisis in the Niger Delta region.

In a statement signed by its National Publicity Secretary, Ken Robinson, PANDEF said the warning was necessitated by reports that a faceless northern group, under the guise of Amalgamated Arewa Youth Groups, had demanded the termination of a pipeline surveillance contract awarded to a son of the Niger Delta region, Ekpemupolo (popularly known as Tompolo), during a protest at the headquarters of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) Limited in Abuja.

PANDEF cautioned that the threat by the group to paralyse activities at NNPC headquarters if the said contract awarded to Government Ekpemupolo was not revoked, was not only absurd and delusional, but capable of sparking severe consequences in the Niger Delta region.

Robinson said: "We are sending a serious warning to those misguided Arewa youths and their sponsors. Let it be known to them that the Niger Delta people will not tolerate such absurdity.

"Tompolo, and indeed any other capable son or daughter of the Niger Delta, for that matter, has the right to be awarded any contract by, any agency or company of the federal government, more so the NNPC Limited, whose core operations are carried out mainly in the Niger Delta region.

"Nigeria is reportedly losing billions of naira daily through organised, outrageous crude theft by criminals and corrupt officials, it, thus, won't be inapposite to infer that the so-called Amalgamated Arewa Youth Groups were mobilised by the 'organised oil thieves' to impede the renewed efforts of NNPC limited, to mitigate the stealing of our crude oil, and also, safeguard the nation's oil and gas assets."

He noted that the Niger Delta region has continued to suffer marginalisation and isolation in critical sectors of the country, especially in the oil and gas sector.

"While our people are denied adequate participation in, both the management and operations, of the oil and gas industry, including the ownership of oil blocks and marginal fields, the sad reality is that people from other parts of the country, some of who do not even know what crude oil looks like but for what they see in pictures, own the bulk of oil marginal fields and blocks.

"Whereas the Petroleum Industry Act provided a paltry three per cent of the settlor's operational cost for the Host Communities Development Trust Fund, it brazenly appropriated a humongous 30 per cent of NNPC's oil and gas profit for a nebulous Frontier Oil Exploration Fund.

"Critical infrastructural projects in the region have also continued to either suffer neglect or total abandonment."

He, therefore, noted that given such an, "unpleasant background in the Niger Delta, the reported protest by the said Arewa Youths over the surveillance contract awarded to High Chief Government Ekpemupolo is most insolent and annoying."

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IN THE FEDERAL HIGH COURT
HOLDING AT LAGOS

IN THE FEDERAL HIGH COURT
HOLDING AT LAGOS

SUIT NO: FHC/L/cp/1092/22

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT, 2020, THE COMPANIES WINDING UP RULES 2001, AND THE INSOLVENCY REGULATIONS 2022

AND

IN THE MATTER OF A PETITION TO WIND UP CHINMARK GROUP LIMITED BROUGHT PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 571 TO 573 & 649 TO 651 OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT, 2020

BETWEEN

NNAEMEKA UKPA
OKOLO ANASTASIA CHINASA **PETITIONERS**

AND

CHINMARK GROUP LIMITED **RESPONDENT**
(RC. NO.: 1659285)

PETITION BY UNPAID CREDITOR ON SIMPLE CONTRACT

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF **Nnaemeka Ukpa** of 17 Mustapha Street, Isolo, Lagos State, and **Okolo Anastasia Chinasa** of 25B Osuma Road, Inland Town, Onitsha North, Anambra State, Nigeria (whose address within jurisdiction is 74 Thomas Animashaun Street, Aguda, Surulere, Lagos State), show as follows: -

1. Your humble Petitioners are Creditors to the Respondent.
2. The Respondent – **Chinmark Group Limited** (hereinafter called "the Company") is incorporated in Nigeria under the Companies and Allied Matters Act as a Private Company limited by shares.
3. The registered address of the Respondent on the records of the Corporate Affairs Commission is at 79, Uto Ubong Street, Oron Road, Akwa Ibom State.

4. The nominal share capital of the Respondent is as contained in its Memorandum of Association.
5. The Respondent through its digital platform invited the public to invest in its so called partnership investment program alongside one FinAfrica Invest Limited in return for a 3.5% monthly return on investment (ROI) payable monthly on monies invested over a minimum periodic cycle of six months, with principal sum invested becoming payable at the expiration of the six months period, while investment may be renewed or 'topped-up' vide a Top-up Agreement for another six months at the end of the six months circle.
6. On the 2nd of June 2021, the 1st Petitioner was lured into investing in the Respondent company an initial sum of **N1,500,000.00 (one million five hundred thousand naira only)** at its Lagos office at 123 Ogba Road, Adjacent Mobil filing station, Oba Akran, Ikeja, on the promise that the 1st Petitioner will be paid a 3.5% monthly interest or ROI on his investment for six months, renewable for another six months. Attached as **Exhibit A1, A2, A3 and A4** are copies of the Partnership Agreement, Partnership Form, Proof of Payment and Confirmation of Partnership/Receipt of Payment dated June 2, 2021, respectively.
7. When the Respondent paid the 1st Petitioner the first three (3) months of ROI as agreed under the Agreement, the 1st Petitioner was deceived by the perceived act of goodwill by the Respondent to enter into a fresh Top-up Agreement with the Respondent for six months. As such, on the 11th of September 2021, midstream the life of the initial investment, the Respondent further enticed the 1st Petitioner at its Lagos office at 123 Ogba Road, Adjacent Mobil filing station, Oba Akran, Ikeja, into making an additional investment referred to as 'Top-Up' in the sum of **N1,500,000.00 (one million five hundred thousand naira only)** in return for a 4% ROI on the entire sum of **N3,000,000.00 (Three Million Naira Only)** invested, for another six months period, starting from the 11th of October 2021 and ending March 2022. Attached as **Exhibit B1, B2, B3, and B4** are copies of the Top-up Partnership Agreement, Partnership To-up Form, Proof of Payment and Confirmation of Partnership Top-up/Receipt of Payment dated September 11, 2021.
8. In total, the 1st Petitioner paid to the Respondent, the total sum of **N3,000,000.00 (Three Million Naira Only)**, as evinced in the foregoing paragraphs for which the said 4% ROI began to accrue on the 11th of October

2021 to end 11th March 2021. Payment from the Respondent however ceased after payment of ROI of December 11, 2021, leaving January 2022 to March 2022, outstanding.

9. On the 23rd of July 2021, the 2nd Petitioner was also lured into investing in the Respondent company the total sum of **N1,700,000.00 (one million seven hundred thousand naira only)** on the promise that the 2nd Petitioner will be paid a 3.5% monthly interest or ROI on her investment for the periods between July 2021 to March 2022, such that the ROI began to accrue on the 23rd of August 2021 to end on the 23rd of March 2022, and renewal for another term. Attached as **Exhibit C1, C2, C3 and C4** are copies of the Partnership Agreement, Partnership Form, Proof of Payment and Confirmation of Partnership/Receipt of Payment dated July 3, 2021, respectively.
10. Payment from the Respondent to the 2nd Petitioner however ceased after the payment of ROI of December 23rd 2021, leaving January 2022 to March 2022, outstanding.
11. As soon as the Respondent made some payments to the Petitioners as agreed under their respective Agreements, the Respondent stopped further payments of ROI since January 2022 till date, and also failed to return the principal investment sums due to the Petitioners at the end of the terms in March 2022, as agreed, despite several demands and enquiries.
12. Shortly after the Respondent's default in payments, news broke that the Managing Director of the Respondent, Mr Marksman Ijomah Chinedu has gone into hiding as a result of several petitions from several creditors to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission for fraud, soliciting investments from the public and diverting the investments for his private use. Copy of the Daily Post (online) Newspaper dated April 3, 2022, is herein attached and marked as **Exhibit C.**
13. It was after the news of the several petitions broke, that the Petitioners discovered that the Respondent had blatantly lied to them when the Respondent informed the Petitioners that the Respondent **had all the necessary licenses to operate its businesses as advertised to the public.**
14. Amidst the several demands for payments and Respondent's refusal to honour same, the Petitioners became even more apprehensive upon further hearing from

several sources that the Respondent owes monies running into billions of Naira to its creditors and is unable to repay. This is not minding an earlier publication of December 25, 2021 made on official webpage of the Securities and Exchange Commission proscribing/dismissing the Respondent as an Illegal operator, not having the requisite approval for its investment schemes. Attached as **Exhibit D and E** are Vanguard Newspaper (Online publication) dated March 22, 2022, and SEC Website publication on FinAfrica Investment Limited (Chinmark Group) dated December 25, 2021.

15. Further exacerbating the issue, whilst stringing the Petitioners along with a bogus proposal for settlement of its debts vide an invitation to sign a Memorandum of Understanding, the Respondent surreptitiously commenced a Members' Voluntary winding-up/Liquidation and appointed one **Mr. Chukwuma Wilson Ezeala Esq.** of Chancellor Chambers as Liquidator, without the congress of the Petitioners nor its other creditors in a bid to steal match and shut down the Respondent as a going concern before its creditors will come collecting, as evinced in a Notice of Members' Voluntary Winding-up and Notice of Appointment of Liquidator published by the Respondent at page 29 of the Leadership Newspaper of April 9, 2022. Attached as **Exhibit F and G** is a copy of the circulated Memorandum of Agreement and copy of Leadership Newspaper Publication of April 9, 2022.
16. Further to the above, the Respondent surreptitiously filed a Members' Special Resolution for Voluntary Winding-up dated April 5, 2022; a Statutory Declaration of Solvency deposed to by its Directors namely – Ijiomah Marksman Chinedu and Marksman Uhunoma Trinity, on the 5th of April 2022; Statement of Affairs of the Respondent as at December 31, 2022; and a Notice of Mr. Chukwuma Wilson Ezeala's accreditation to act as Insolvency Practitioner dated August 2nd 2021. Attached as **Exhibit H** are Certified True Copies of the aforementioned documents certified by the Corporate Affairs Commission on the 10th of May 2022.
17. Sequel to the penultimate paragraph, the Petitioners immediately wrote a demand letter to the Respondent via email (as the Respondent had already shut down all its known office addresses), demanding for the repayment of the sums invested in the Respondent's company but the Respondent failed to accede to the Petitioner's demand. On the 11th of April 2022, the 1st Petitioner sent a demand letter to the Respondent vide its official email addresses, while on the 11th of April 2022, the 2nd Petitioner also sent a Demand letter to the Respondent vide its official email addresses. Attached and marked as **Exhibit I1 and I2** are copies of the said demand letters.

18. Thereafter, pursuant to the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020, the Petitioners wrote a Statutory Demand Letter respectively dated April 22 2022 demanding the payment of the various investment sums of **N3,000,000.00 (Three Million Naira Only)** for the 1st Petitioner and **N1,700,000.00 (One Million, Seven Hundred Thousand Naira Only)** for the 2nd Petitioner. However, same could not be delivered at the Respondent's registered address of 79, Uto Ubong Street, Oron Road, Akwa Ibom State, after several attempts, as evinced by FedEx Courier delivery report sheet and online delivery tracking platform. It became clear to the petitioners that the Respondent was deliberately evading service and had also shut down other platforms of communications such as its other office addresses at 123 Ogba Road, Adjacent Mobil filing station, Oba Akran, Ikeja, Lagos State and 162 Ogui Road, Opposite Phone Village & Fire service Bus Stop, Enugu State. As such, same was also forwarded to the Respondent via emails of 29th April, 2022 for the 1st petitioner and 30th April 2022 for the 2nd Petitioner. Attached and marked as **Exhibit J, K1 and K2** are FedEx Courier Service delivery report sheet and Online delivery tracking sheet, Email Statutory Demand from the 1st Petitioner dated April 29, 2022 and Email Statutory Demand from the 2nd Petitioner dated April 30, 2022.
19. Notwithstanding the several demands to the Respondent, the Respondent has failed to repay the debt which it owes the Petitioners.
20. The Petitioners aver that the Respondent is insolvent and unable to pay its debts.
21. The Petitioners aver that although the Respondent was clearly aware of her inability to pay debt as at when due, the Respondent deliberately concealed these facts both to the petitioners and other investors, and to the Corporate Affairs Commission in a bid to surreptitiously contrive and use the statutory provisions in relation to winding up under the Companies and allied matters act 2020 (CAMA) to appoint a Liquidator of her own choice and perpetrate a fraud on the petitioners and other investors creditors lured into the Ponzi scheme and deceived.
22. In the circumstances, it is just and equitable that the Respondent should be wound up by this Honourable Court.

The Petitioner therefore humbly prays as follows: -

i. **AN ORDER** that **Chinmark Group Limited** be wound up by this Honourable Court under the provisions of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020 for winding up by this Honourable Court.

OR ALTERNATIVELY

ii. **AN ORDER** that **Chinmark Group Limited** -which has announced that she has purportedly entered into a voluntary winding up and appointed a Liquidator without the congress or concurrence of the petitioners or any investors/creditors the Respondent is owing funds in billions of Naira- be wound up **under the supervision of this Honourable Court** under the provisions of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020.

iii. **AN ORDER** appointing substantive liquidator as this Honourable Court may deem fit to immediately liquidate the Respondent pursuant to the provisions of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020

iv. **AN ORDER REMOVING** __Mr. Chukwuma Wilson Ezeala Esq. of Chancellor Chambers as liquidator of the Respondent in the best interests of all creditors of the Respondent in line with the just and equitable statutory and collective procedure of winding up by this Honourable Court pursuant to the provisions of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020

v. **AN ORDER** that the costs of this petition, costs of remuneration of Court appointed Liquidator and the cost of the liquidation proceedings shall be paid out of the assets of the Respondent.

vi. And for such other Order(s) as this Honourable Court may deem fit to make in the circumstances.

23. It is intended to serve this Petition on the Respondent at 79, Uto Ubong Street, Oron Road, Akwa Ibom State or such other means of service the Respondent as this Honourable Court may deem fit to make upon an application for substituted service.

This Petition is settled by **Okorie Kalu** of **PUNUKA Attorneys and Solicitors**, whose address for service is Plot 45, Oyibo Adjarho Street, Lekki Phase 1, Lagos

DATED the 26th day of May, 2022

CHIEF ANTHONY IDIGBE, SAN
NNAMDI ORAGWU
OKORIE KALU
ADEYINKA ABDULSALAM
NNAMDI BEN-IGWENYI
TOCHUKWU NWOBODO
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n.ben-igwenyi@punuka.com
Telephone: +234 1 270 4789, 01 270 4791; 08036892453; 08037003654

For Service
CHINMARK GROUP LIMITED
Registered address: 79, Uto Ubong Street
Oron Road
Akwa Ibom State.

OR

Lagos Office address:
123 Ogba Road,
Adjacent Mobil filing station,
Oba Akran, Ikeja;

OR

Enugu Office address:
162 Ogui Road
Opposite Phone Village &
Fire service Bus Stop
Enugu State

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NWAGWU C.N.N (MR)
CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
PRINCIPAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER
FEDERAL HIGH COURT
IKOYI, LAGOS
DATE 31/8/22

FEDERAL HIGH COURT
Cashier's Office
Date 31/8/22
LAGOS

HON. JUSTICE D.E. OSIAGOR
JUDGE

UPON READING the affidavit in support, the Exhibits attached dated 8th June, 2022 and filed on the 15th of June, 2022 in the Federal High Court Registry , deposed to by Nnaemeka Ukpa Male, Christian, Adult, Businessman and Nigerian citizen of N0. 17 Mustapha street, Isolo Lagos State.

AFTER HEARING
Emuobonuvie Mayemite for the Applicant with Nnamdi Ben-Igweyi move in terms of the motion paper.

IT HEREBY ORDERED AS FOLLOWS

1) **THAT AN ORDER OF MAREVA INJUNCTION** is granted restraining the Respondent by herself, her alter ego(s), her directors, officers, agents, servants, privies, trustees, nominees, proxies, subsidiaries, sister companies, parent companies, related companies, related business name or firm or otherwise any other person, natural or artificial (however derived or sourced) from giving any instruction, operating, demanding and or making any demand for withdrawal, or withdrawing from or otherwise tampering with any funds kept in the custody of any domestic or domiciliary account kept by the Respondent, and or through her known related individual alter ego and related sister company Marksman Chinedu Ijiomah and FinAfrica Invest Ltd under whatsoever name or guise in accounts in any bank or financial institution within Nigeria including but not limited to the banks listed as In Re: 1 – 34 on the face of the Motion Paper pending the **hearing and determination of the Winding up Petition.**

2) **THAT AN ORDER** is granted directing the banks listed as In Re: 1 – 34 on the face of the Motion Paper and/or any other financial institution within Nigeria to **SEGREGATE AND SEQUESTRATE** within 3 days of the receipt or service or publication of the Order of this Honourable Court, any and or all sums of money and negotiable instruments standing to the credit of the Respondent, her alter ego(s), her directors, officers, staff, management, agents, servants, privies, trustees, nominees, proxies, subsidiaries, sister companies, parent companies, related companies, related business name or firm, heirs and/or anyone claiming through her, jointly and/or severally or any other person or group of persons (whether natural or artificial) whatsoever under the Respondent's' authority or any other authority, (however derived or sourced including but not limited to the authority of her known related individual alter ego and related sister company Marksman Chinedu Ijiomah and FinAfrica Invest Ltd), up to the outstanding indebtedness of the Respondent owing to the Applicants and other investors/creditors who ought to be collectively protected in the present petition AND keep SAID SEGREGATED AND SEQUESTRATED SUMS in an Interest yielding account in the name of the Chief Registrar of this Honourable Court acting as an Official Receiver and or trustee of same pending the determination of the winding up petition filed herein.

3) **THAT AN ORDER OF MAREVA INJUNCTION** is granted restraining Marksman Chinedu Ijiomah and FinAfrica Invest Ltd (being the known direct alter ego and related sister company of the Respondent respectively who deceptively procured the receipt of funds from the petitioners and a myriad of other investors into the respondent and or Marksman Chinedu Ijiomah and FinAfrica Invest's domestic or domiciliary bank accounts with the banks listed as In Re: 1 – 34 on the face of the Motion Paper and/or any other financial institution they deal with) from giving any instruction, operating, demanding and or making any demand for withdrawal, or withdrawing from or otherwise tampering with any funds kept in the custody of any domestic or domiciliary account kept by Marksman Chinedu Ijiomah and FinAfrica Invest Ltd under whatsoever name or guise in accounts in any bank or financial institution within Nigeria including but not limited to the banks listed as In Re: 1 – 34 on the face of the Motion Paper pending the **hearing and determination of the Winding up Petition.**

4) **THAT AN ORDER** is granted directing the banks listed as In Re: 1 – 34 on the face of the Motion Paper and/or any other financial institution and/or cause to be filed, an affidavit of compliance within 3 (three) days of the service or publication of the Order of this Honourable Court disclosing the outstanding money balance in/attaching and exhibiting a statement of account (whether domestic or domiciliary) of each of the Respondent, Marksman Chinedu Ijiomah and FinAfrica Invest Ltd to said affidavit of compliance from June 1, 2021 till date pending the hearing and determination of the winding up petition filed herein.

5) **THAT AN ORDER OF MAREVA INJUNCTION** is granted restraining the Respondent by herself, her directors, officers (including a so called agent appointed as Liquidator by the Respondent), agents, servants, privies, trustees, nominees, proxies, subsidiaries, sister companies, related companies or otherwise any other person, natural or artificial (including but not limited to one company Marksman Chinedu Ijiomah and FinAfrica Invest Ltd -known related individual alter ego and related sister company respectively), however called from giving any instruction, demanding, accepting, receiving payments and/or transacting, moving, transferring, mortgaging or howsoever dealing in any manner with **beneficial or legal assets of** the Respondent or **beneficial or legal assets or funds belonging to investors and being held by the respondent pending the hearing and determination of the winding up petition.**

6) **THAT AN ORDER** is granted to the Applicants to serve the Winding-up Petition, Motion for leave to Advertise the Winding-up Petition and other requisite accompanying processes in this suit on the Respondent via substituted service by serving same on **Mr. Chukwuma Wilson Ezeala** of Chancellor Chambers 3/5 Adeyemo Alakija Street, Victoria Island, being the Liquidator purportedly appointed by the Respondent for the purpose of a **purportedly solvent** Company **Members** Voluntary Winding-up vide Special Resolution dated 5th day of April, 2022; **alternatively and or simultaneously,** by publishing same on a Weekday edition of the Guardian Newspaper or This Day Newspaper, which would bring same to the knowledge of the Respondent.

7) **THAT AN ORDER** is granted leave to the Applicants to publish or cause to be published all the orders of this Honourable Court granted on the face of the Motion Paper before this Honourable Court in any Weekday edition of the Guardian Newspaper or This Day Newspaper which newspaper(s) are published and circulated in Nigeria.

8) **THAT** case is adjourned to 5th Stepternber, 2022 for Report of service development.

ISSUED AT LAGOS, Under the Seal of the Court and the hand of the Presiding Judge this 28th day of July, 2022.

J.S. OGEDENGBE
REGISTRAR

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
NWAGWU C.N.N (MR)
CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
PRINCIPAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER
FEDERAL HIGH COURT
IKOYI, LAGOS
DATE 31/8/22

FEDERAL HIGH COURT
Cashier's Office
Date 31/8/22
LAGOS
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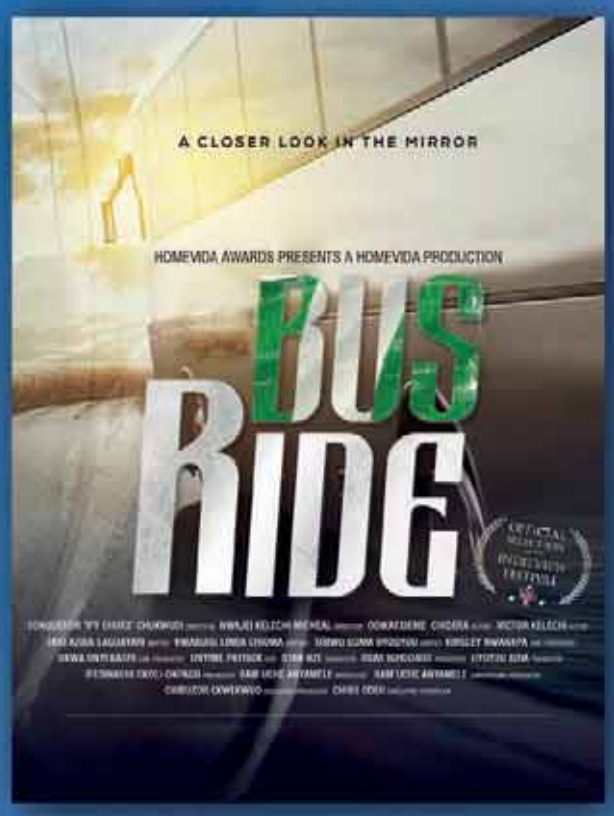
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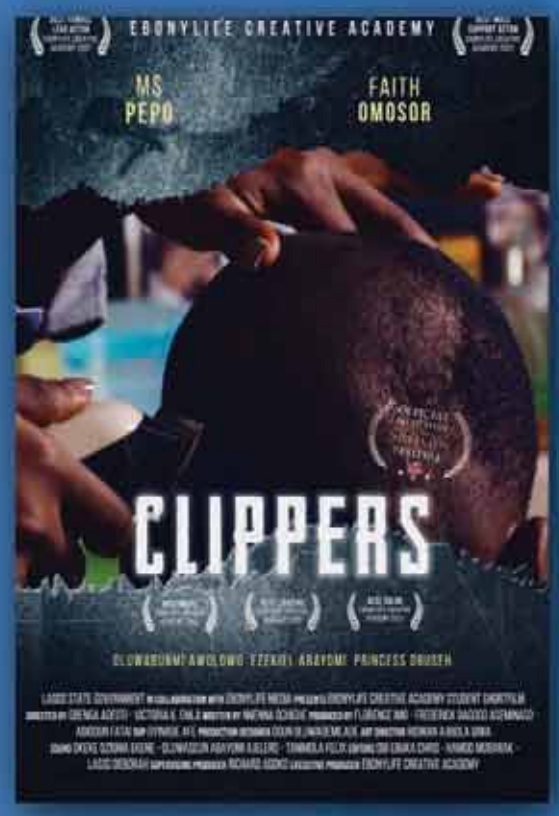
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FAAC SUB-COMMITTEE ON IPSAS IMPLEMENTATION IN NIGERIA

SECRETARIAT: OFFICE OF THE ACCOUNTANT- GENERAL OF THE FEDERATION, ABUJA

NATIONWIDE "CONTINUOUS CAPACITY BUILDING ON IPSAS IMPLEMENTATION" FOR OFFICERS INVOLVED IN PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN THE THREE TIERS OF GOVERNMENT

As a follow-up to our mandate to ensure seamless implementation of IPSAS Accrual Basis of Accounting in Nigeria, the Sub-committee is embarking on a Nationwide Capacity Building Programme for finance operators in Public Sector Entities (PSE) across the three tiers of Government. The Capacity Building Programme is scheduled to hold as follows:

GEO ZONE	STATE	DATE
FGN PSE in FCT & 36 States	FCT, Abuja	7/9/2022 - 9/9/2022
South-South	Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa & Delta	14/9/2022 – 16/9/2022
	Cross-River, Rivers & Edo	19/9/2022 – 21/9/2022
North-West	Jigawa, Kebbi & Zamfara	28/9/2022 – 30/9/2022
	Kano, Katsina & Sokoto	5/10/2022 – 7/10/2022
South East & Kaduna State	Anambra, Ebonyi & Imo	26/10/2022 – 28/10/2022
	Abia, Enugu & Kaduna	2/11/2022 – 4/11/2022
South-West	Lagos, Ondo & Oyo	9/11/2022 – 11/11/2022
	Ekiti, Ogun & Osun	14/11/2022 – 16/11/2022
North-Central	Benue, Kwara & Plateau	23/11/2022 – 25/11/2022
	Kogi, Nasarawa & Niger	28/11/2022 – 30/11/2022
North-East	Adamawa, Borno & Gombe	7/12/2022 -9/12/2022
	Bauchi, Taraba & Yobe	12/12/2022 -14/12/2022

Letters of Invitation have been sent to the under listed Ministries, Departments and Agencies in the three tiers of Government for nomination of participants:

* All Federal Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (except Government Owned Enterprises) in Abuja and across the 36 States
* States Ministry of Finance
* Offices of all State Accountants – General
* Offices of all State Auditors – General
* Offices of Auditors – General for Local Governments/Area Councils in the 36 States of Nigeria & FCT
* Ministries of Local Government and/Chieftaincy Affairs
* All Local Government Councils in the 36 States and FCT

COVID – 19: Participants are kindly enjoined to comply with all Covid-19 protocols

All enquiries on the Capacity Building Programme should be directed to:
The Secretary,
FAAC Sub-Committee on IPSAS Implementation in Nigeria
Office of the Accountant - General of the Federation
Treasury House, Abuja.
Or
Call
Mekela: 08063308811, Wisdom: 08024233772
Email:faacipsasabuja@yahoo.com/faacipsasabuja@gmail.com

Signed:
Mr. Sylva Okolieaboh, FCA
Director Overseeing Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation/
Chairman, FAAC Sub-Committee on IPSAS Implementation in Nigeria

FOCUS

X-raying Glo's Impact in Telecoms Sector at 19

The story of the rise of indigenous telecommunications company, Globacom, is like a fairytale.

I remember clearly, as if it was yesterday, when its promoter and self-effacing billionaire, Dr Mike Adenuga, appeared to have hit a blank in his attempt to venture into the telecommunications business in 2000.

His company, Communications Investment Limited (CIL), was first issued a conditional licence in 1999 to operate the Global System of Mobile telecommunications (GSM). This followed its emergence as one of four winners of the bid auction process. Adenuga paid the $20 million mandatory deposit. However, in the process of effecting the release of the balance payment of $265 million, the licence was unfairly revoked and he lost the $20 million deposit. It was a colossal loss, but the bullish businessman who is renowned for his tenacity was undeterred. The other three winners, MTN, Airtel (then known as Econet) and M-tel proceeded to roll out services.

Two years later, Adenuga went on to bid for the Second National Operator (SNO) license, and deposited another $20 million. This time, he was lucky. He won the bid in August, 2002, through Globacom Limited. Incidentally, the SNO has a wider range of operations as it gave Globacom the right to operate as a national carrier, operate digital mobile service, serve as international gateway for telecommunications in the country, and operate fixed wireless service.

Globacom was to roll out services a year later, precisely on August 29, 2003. The odds were heavily stacked against Adenuga because by then, the other operators already had a two-year head start over Adenuga's Glo. Secondly, he was venturing into a completely new terrain. Considering that MTN and Econet both had years of experience in the business in other countries, many expected Globacom to stutter.

However, the doubts soon evaporated. Not only did Globacom stun the industry by launching on per second billing, it also crashed the cost of acquiring a GSM line from N30,000 to N6,999 and later to N200. The older operators who, for two years boasted that it was not possible to launch operations on the billing platform as no operator in the world had done this before, were left playing catch up. Like a rampaging bull (which incidentally is Adenuga's totem), Globacom embarked on a massive rollout of facilities and operations in several towns and cities across the country, and within nine months amassed over one million subscribers. Consequently, it established a reputation as the fastest growing GSM network in Africa.

Since that remarkable feat by Globacom, it has been one endearing success after another for the Nigerian company. In an industry where it was expected to lag behind the established multinational operators, Glo is not just rubbing shoulders with them, it has, indeed, been the pacesetter. It has come to be regarded as a behemoth in Nigeria's telecom space.

It was the first operator to launch the 2.5 Generation technology, making the convergence of voice, data and multimedia technologies possible. Hence, Glo was able to launch such value added services as vehicle tracking, mobile internet, mobile banking, multimedia messaging service (MMS), voice SMS, and Text2email before the multinationals who were still running on 2G then.

Globacom also pioneered Blackberry Services in Nigeria, and the device was for a long time the rage among business executives and in social circles.

The introduction of the 3G Plus technology marked the second time that Globacom has been in the forefront of pioneering the latest transmission network in Nigeria. With this technology, Glo was able to carry out a much faster transmission of data, voice, broadband internet and multimedia services over a range of frequencies. It also allowed customers to do video call, video streaming and high-speed mobile internet access, amongst others, from their 3G mobile handsets.



Adenuga

Globacom was not done yet in setting the pace yet as it also become the first network to launch a nationwide 4G-LTE network in Nigeria. The technology offers efficient broadband internet to millions of Nigerians at speeds that are several times faster than the 3G network. Subscribers on the network are able to download ultra-high definition videos in seconds.

But perhaps one of the most audacious projects undertaken by Globacom was the construction of an international submarine cable, Glo 1. Launched in 2010, the project was said to have cost over $800 million. It was the first time a gigantic project of this nature had been undertaken by a single company.

The facility which has brought unprecedented bandwidth from Europe to Nigeria and other West African countries marked the beginning of the crashing of bandwidth costs in Nigeria and the rest of West Africa, thereby facilitating more access to broadband internet. With this intervention by Globacom, almost everyone who can afford a smartphone is able to use data. Also, according to industry sources, Glo 1 is currently providing the much needed connectivity to critical sectors of the economy. Companies in the Oil and gas, manufacturing, banking, commerce, education and health sectors as well as several multinational companies, including telecom operators and internet service providers (ISPs), are said to benefit from Glo 1.

Glo 1 has also played a major role in Nigeria's broadband penetration which currently stands at 44.5 per cent. The penetration is principally driven by major players in the telecom sector, such as Glo 1. Globacom has also invested generously in the infrastructure to deliver the last mile to end-users, while also breaking the cost barrier by introducing affordable tariffs.

While commenting on the impact of Glo 1, Globacom sources said, "With the 4G expansion to tier 2 and 3 cities, Glo1 acts as the catalyst in propagating broadband penetration in Nigeria and acts as an enabler for enterprise customers to provide world class connectivity to all their offices and factories across Nigeria. Many cloud computing companies who cater to the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMES) are setting up shop within the Glo partnered data centers. Using Globacom's robust terrestrial infrastructure, Glo1 has seized this opportunity to backhaul their traffic to other data centers across the world."

It is remarkable that it is a Nigerian company that has pulled off this ambitious project. One of Adenuga's close associates said the idea of building a submarine cable berthed when the entrepreneur went on a business trip to Paris, the French capital, sometime around 2008. While there, he found out that telephone calls to Nigeria were epileptic unlike the connection between France and other parts of Europe. When he made enquiries about what could be done to solve the problem, he was told it was to have an international submarine cable. There and then, Dr Adenuga decided to build Glo 1, and the rest is now history. The project is a testament to the entrepreneurial spirit and foresight of the man behind Globacom.

For those who know Adenuga well, it was not surprising that Glo was able to quickly established itself as the pacesetter in the industry, despite commencing business two years after MTN and Airtel (then called Econet).

Other areas Globacom has effectively set itself apart are customer-empowerment, sustainability and promotion of Nigeria's arts and cultural heritage. From 2003 when it commenced operations to date, no company has affected the lives of its subscribers and, indeed, the Nigerian people the way the telecommunications company has done.

Over the years, the company has launched series of promos through which different types of empowerment prizes including millions of naira in cash prizes, luxury cars, tricycles, sewing machines, generators, television sets and grinding machines have been won by Nigerians across the country.

For so many years, it supported the development of Nigerian sports through the sponsorship of the Nigerian Premier League and the national football teams of Nigeria when no other corporate organisation wanted to touch the assets. The company spent billions of naira in developing the Nigerian league and national teams, and this culminated in Enyimba Football Club winning the prestigious Champions League twice in a row, while the Super Eagles won the Nations Cup in 2013.

Nigeria's entertainment industry has also received a massive boost from the telecom operator. It has so far brought two of the world's biggest reality television shows to the country. They are X-Factor, which produced DJ Switch as winner, and the Battle of the Year which was held between October last year and April, this year.

In addition to this, Globacom has over the years also held its own music and comedy shows across different cities and campuses across the country. The shows, including Rock 'n' Rule, GloNaija Sings, Laffta Fest, Slide and Bounce concert, and Glo mega Music, were some of the platforms through which Globacom entertained and delighted Nigerians. But more importantly they helped deepen the entertainment industry by giving budding talents in music and comedy and platform to showcase their abilities.

Similarly, the nation's art and culture have also been positively touched by Globacom. From Ojude Oba in Ijebu-Ode, Ofala in Onitsha, Lisabi in Abeokuta, Imeori in Abriba, Oru – Owerri in Imo state, amongst others, the company has through sponsoring the festivals not only brought theme to international limelight, but has also turned them into major tourist attractions.

There is hardly any aspect of life that has not been positively touched by the telecommunications company.

Looking back at the gigantic milestones it has recorded, one would find it difficult to believe that it is just 19 years old. But would any less be expected from a company founded by Dr Mike Adenuga? He made clear his intention from the beginning with a very bold vision statement, "Building Africa's biggest and best telecommunications network". He is known to think and dream big – a very tenacious and dogged entrepreneur who likes to grow his businesses to dominate the sectors he operates in. Globacom has not only matched the multinational operators pound for pound, but it has, indeed, dominated Nigeria's telecommunications sector these past 19 years.

POLITICS

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Keyamo: Tinubu's Track Record Stands Him Above Atiku, Obi

In this interview with **Emameh Gabriel**, Minister of State for Labour and Productivity, and the spokesperson for APC 2023 presidential election campaign, Festus Keyamo speaks on the criticisms trailing the party's one faith presidential ticket and the party's chances of winning 2023 presidential election. Excerpts:

It's almost four years after your appointment as a Minister, would you say you have done well enough in your ministry to justify your appointment?

It is always immodest and I consider it inappropriate to judge yourself and give yourself a score in all circumstances. The only thing you can do is just to lay bare what you have done and allow people to judge. That is what I try to do in a number of times.

In my portfolio as Minister of State, Labour and Productivity, I have been given a few assignments to perform and I can say that I have tried to criticize myself on a number of occasions. I welcome criticism. I can only reel out some of the things I have done and allow people to judge for themselves.

For instance, in my schedule of duty, the President has said I should supervise the agency they called the National Directorate of Employment. The President has also said that I supervise the Labour Institute in Ilorin. Those were the assignments given to me by the President. Since I was appointed the Minister, the National Directorate of Employment has tried its best within its mandate to execute the programme under its belt and I have supervised those programmes. Those programmes has to do with employment generating platforms. There are so many of them, some has to do with training, skills accusations and in many cases also after training, they give them starting packs in individual trade. As of today, we have done thousands of thousands across the country.



Keyamo

Including employment?

One thing I know the public would want me to talk about is the public works, which has to do with the 774,000 jobs and I am sure everybody is waiting to hear me talk about that. As I speak with you, we have executed the programme and we have reported back to the President. We have also evaluated those we have paid and we achieve about 97 to 98 percent success. We paid everybody. In the payment schedule, I have created a transparency system to the extent that the name of those who were paid, their local government, their bank account numbers, their BVN numbers are all available for public scrutiny. I have asked the NDE to make it available for known journalists so that the public will come and dispute or interrogate.

It's one of the rare programmes under government and when we did that, the balance that was left, I wrote to Mr. President to permit me to refund the money to the Federation Account and the President permitted me and we refunded the money to the Federation Account. It is there.

How much did you refund to the government?

It is over N400 million that we returned to the federation account. This is one among many issues concerning employment. But let's look at other issues. You were appointed. Is your appointment a reward for executing your job diligently in 2019? Do you compensate a person for giving him a hard work back to back?

Would you call that a difficult job if your party has done well?

To be a spokesperson for a presidential campaign? That is one of the hardest work on earth because it is not whether you are doing well or not because you are under public scrutiny. You are trying to market a presidential candidate before the whole country. So if they pick on you back to back, it is not compensation. But guess what, I am extremely excited to have been appointed to the same role.I do not take it for granted. The significance is also not lost on me. I want to tell all my leaders that I deeply appreciate the confidence they reposed in us and because of that, we are prepared to do the utmost for the party and sacrifice for my party and do everything for free of charge. I do that in 2019 free of charge.

For those who are insinuating, you know I don't respond to some comments but for the purpose of this interview, I have to respond, especially to some spokesmen of the opposition party. You know when they want to divert attention from issues, they keep attacking your person. They say Keyamo is stomach infrastructure, Keyamo is stomach politician. I heard them said that and I laughed. The only thing that gets you annoyed is when they are saying the truth. But when they say anything that is so far away from the goal, just laugh and let it go.

Not paying full attention to my practice as a senior advocate to serve my party, is the deepest form of patriotism I have expressed because I am sure you know how much I love my profession. But at a point, I felt the focus should be getting access to power to help the people. You cannot do so much as a private person. As a private person I could not have suggested to the president for example that we need to give people after the pandemic some money in their pockets, which is the 777, 400 Jobs, N60,000 to each individual.

NOTE: Interested readers should continue in the online edition on www.thisdaylive.com

Nwafor: New Electoral Act Will Enhance Positive Polititical Change in Nigeria

The Young Progressives Party (YPP) candidate in the 2023 governorship election in Abia State, Sir Enyinnaya Nwafor, a renowned entrepreneur at a recent session with journalists explained his development agenda for the state and the capacity of the 2022 Electoral Act to engender positive changes nationwide, among others. **Gboyega Akinsanmi** brings excerpts:

As a private sector actor, you have done well in your business. What is your political experience that qualifies you to want to contest the governorship election in Abia State?

I come from a politically conscious family. My father, Dr. Chima Nwafor, was the first Deputy Governor of Abia State. He served under Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu. I see myself as someone with enough political background. What we are experiencing in Abia State today is not just about having a political background. It is mainly about having political will - I mean the passion, the spirit, the exposure and the competence - to drive development in Abia State. As someone that provides jobs for over 1,500 persons in the state, I have been able to make very difficult and hard decisions. I do not have political experience per se. But there is no place where we do not play politics. Even in our homes, we play politics. Now, what we really need in my state is having a governor with a clearer sense of direction and investment to drive much-needed development. It is having the passion to drive development rather than having a political background. I am not the one that will do it alone. We are a team of concerned people determined to develop the potential of Abia State. Some of us have superb political exposure. I will bring in my corporate exposure. We will work together as a team and towards the development of our state.



Nwafor

Political structure - both personal and party - is very important. Now, you are contesting on the platform of the Young Progressives Party (YPP). How will you be able to wrestle with the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) that has been ruling Abia since 1999?

I agree that PDP has ruled the state for many years. I do not like talking about what has happened. I am aspiring to serve as the governor of Abia State. Now, the youth are at the forefront of what is going on in our state. They really want a change. Our party, YPP, is largely a platform for the youth. They know my concern for the people of the state. They know my exposure, experience and passion to meet their needs and aspirations. They know what I stand for. They know that if they give me the opportunity, to the glory of God, I will drive development in the state and realise the Abia of their dream. It does not really matter whether I am contesting on the platform of the YPP or any other party. The waves are strong. The demand for a change is high. For now, that is the spirit of the Abia people.

The people of Abia State are conversant with the reign of PDP in Abia State for 23 years. In a way, they are politically acculturated. With this entrenched political culture, do you think people are ready for the change you intend to bring to the state?

If you ask any person in Abia, they will tell you what is happening there today. When they sleep, they sleep for a change. When they eat, they yearn for a change. When they dream, they dream for a change. The people of our state do not just want a change, but a positive change that drives development with a young man that is competent, energetic and exposed at the helm of affairs. And that person is me.

What really inspired their quest for a change? Is it because they are tired of the PDP?

Like I said, Abia is a state blessed with several mineral resources. The people want a change that will drive development. They want a change that will bring about restoration of the dignity of our people. They want a change that will make the youths add values and be resourceful. They want a change that will attract investors to the state; create wealth among the youth and position the state for sustainable development. This is at the cornerstone of our development agenda.

To put it in direct language, does the quest for a change suggest that the previous governments have failed?

Honestly, the previous governments have done their best. But their best might not be good enough for the youth of 21st century in Abia State. This better explains the quest for people-driven change that we are currently witnessing in all local government areas in Abia today.

There are some issues in Abia State. We have the Abia Charter of Equity. What part of Abia are you from? Do you think the zoning arrangement will favour your governorship aspiration?

That is true. We have the Abia Charter of Equity. If you ask the Abia people what they need now, they will tell you they need a man that will drive high-level development in the state and be able to give them the Abia of their dream. The people of Abia no longer care about where who governs comes from. To me, as a person, I am the governorship candidate of the YPP with all humility. I am not talking for other people. But for us, we are after competence, exposure and commitment to the development of our people and state at large.

NOTE: Interested readers should continue in the online edition on www.thisdaylive.com

FEATURES

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Master of Meditation's Pursuit of Peace

Master of Meditation, Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar recently urged Nigerians to pursue peace at Culture Festival 2022, **Precious Ugwuzor** reports



L-R: His Royal Majesty, Oba Olumuyiwa Ogunbekun, the Onilekki of Lekki Town; His Royal Majesty, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi (Ojájá II), the Ooni of Ife; Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Global Peace Ambassador and founder, Art of Living Foundation, and former president of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR, at the Culture Festival 2022 organised by Art of Living Nigeria at the Eko Convention Centre in Lagos



Dance troupe captivate attendees

Global peace ambassador and founder, Art of Living Foundation, Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar emphasised the need for Nigerians to key into the principles of love in order to achieve national unity and harmonious society. This, he said at the Culture Festival 2022 which was held on Sunday 21 August at Eko Hotel & Suites, VI, Lagos.

The festival opened with awe-inspiring performances from local and international artists including the Drum Ensemble, Syrian Dancers and the National Troupe.

This was followed by a wholesome session of deep meditation led by Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

Following the relaxing session of meditation, Gurudev addressed questions fielded by attendees, during which he stressed upon love and meditation as key components of achieving a harmonious society and peace within oneself.

"I tell you, deep inside you is a fountain of bliss, a fountain of joy. Deep inside your center core is truth, light, and love, there is no guilt, and there is no fear. Psychologists have never looked deep enough," Gurudev Sri Sri Ravishankar said on the power of meditation.

"When celebration comes from a place of enthusiasm and joy, it can uplift and unite all around us, bringing freedom from our traumatic past and sparking hope for the future. This type of celebration is service. It is sacred. Turn your celebration into a sacred offering for society," Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar told attendees.

One of the distinguished guests at the event, former president of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR, in his remarks, urged Nigerians to embrace love and community. "Two words that cannot be separated - Love and Peace. Where there is love, there is peace. Where there is peace, there is love, prosperity, happiness, discipline... If you want to live a good life, you must live a disciplined life and a life of love," he said.

Other dignitaries who delivered goodwill messages at the festival included the Ooni of Ife, His Royal Majesty, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi (Ojájá II); founder Centre for Values in Leadership, Professor Pat Utomi; Director, Art of Living Nigeria, Akshay Jain, amongst others.

Kaffy, Lovn, Timi Dakolo, Naomi Mac, Esther Benyeogo, Dare Art Alade, Waje and Brymo delivered memorable performances at the festival.

Themed Vibrant Africa: The Rising Rhythm, the Festival aimed to build a compassionate and harmonious society by bringing the people of Nigeria together in celebration through song, dance, meditation, and dialogue.

The event featured over 3,500 attendees who shared and explored their rich cultural diversity while honouring the underlying spirit that connects us all as one global family. The Culture Festival 2022 served as the crescendo of a packed three-day event specially designed to cater to various sectors of society. The Culture Festival 2022 was hosted by Art of Living Nigeria.

Operating in 156 countries, The Art of Living Foundation (AOLF) is a non-profit, educational and humanitarian organisation founded in 1981 by the humanitarian and spiritual leader Gurudev Sri Sri Ravishankar.

All of AOLF's programs are inspired by Sri Sri's philosophy of creating world peace through a stress-free and violence-free society. AOLF has touched over 400 million lives through numerous educational and self-development programs and tools that facilitate the elimination of stress and foster deep and profound inner peace, happiness and well-being for individuals.

Gurudev Sri Sri Ravishankar is a global humanitarian and a spiritual leader who has rekindled traditions of yoga and meditation that have helped millions achieve personal and social transformation by relieving stress and discovering inner peace in daily life.

Named one of the "Seven Most Powerful People in India," by Forbes, he has been credited in bringing opposing parties together to facilitate meditation and peace talks in Colombia, Iraq, Côte d'Ivoire, and India. The Culture Festival 2022 saw Gurudev visit Nigeria for the first time.

Folayemi Joshua Fashion Combines Simplicity, Comfort and Elegance in Its New Look Henley Shirts

Folayemi Joshua Fashion, also known as FJ Fashion, is a brand synonymous with simplicity, comfort and class. Every man desires to be comfortable while looking stylish in their outfit and it is sometimes difficult to find an outfit that ticks all the boxes.

According to Olusegun Odejobi, FJ Fashion's henley shirts are designed for individuals who want to maintain their simple looks in a comfy outfit whilst looking classy.

He said: "Henley shirts are casual wears that are known for their simplicity and comfort. The fashion trend today has seen a departure from this mindset as people are now more conscious of their outfit, regardless of how casual it looks.

"They want to look good in casual wear and appear in places where casual wear may seem inappropriate. FJ Fashion has rebranded its henley shirts, taking the simplicity and comfort to another level and combining it with excellence and



elegance.

"FJ Fashion's new look henley shirts are high-quality shirts designed to make you look simple and sophisticated in one breath. This is the desire of every individual and FJ Fashion gives you just that. More attention was given to the tailoring and quality of the shirt to achieve a simple and classy feel.

"The weight of the shirt is lighter, which makes it more comfortable and gives you that casual feel. The packaging of the shirt for the customer is classier with a branded paper bag and a transparent plastic bag that contains the shirt.

" FJ Fashion places a premium on its customers which is why they have gone the extra mile to ensure that you get the classy treatment you deserve. You do not need to worry about the shirt slacking, fading or fraying. The quality is that good. The new FJ Fashion's henley shirts combine Simplicity, Comfort & Class.

"Simplicity – Henley shirts are naturally designed to be simple and casual. FJ Fashion henley shirts have redefined simplicity and casual wear by adding a touch of class. It is a slip-on shirt that gives you that classy casual look desired by every individual out there. It comes in both short and long sleeves.

"Comfort – The new FJ henley shirts have an improved fabric quality and a lighter feel. Customers are guaranteed to feel comfy wearing not just any henley shirt, but a quality henley shirt that is comfortable and gives you the confidence needed in any atmosphere you find yourself in.

"Class – FJ Fashion is a classy brand that will continue to evolve to maintain that reputation. The new FJ henley shirts ooze class. It starts from the packaging. When you order an FJ henley shirt, you receive an FJ branded black paper bag that gives you that classy feel. Black is a symbol of sophistication and elegance.

"The shirt itself is packed in a transparent and easy-to-open plastic bag that sets your order apart from the regular shirts. The henley shirt itself is simple and casual, and the quality of the shirt makes it the right shirt for different occasions.

"The newly released henley shirts are now available to shop. It comes in both short and long sleeves. They are available now in Black colour only and in sizes M - XXL.

"Folayemi Joshua Fashion or FJ Fashion is a Nigerian eponymous clothing label. It's owned by Folayemi Joshua Limited and has a local focus with global standards with a capacity to deliver nationwide as well as in other countries of the world."

THISDAY

Thursday August 25, 2022
Vol 27. No 9996

OPINION

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THE CASE AGAINST ASUU…1

ASUU is living in the past, writes ***OLUSEGUN ADENIYI***



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GAME CHANGER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BASHIR IBRAHIM HASSAN writes that GBB's Tier IV Datacentre will deepen digital services and improve efficiency and productivity



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EDITORIAL

RAVAGES OF FLOOD IN JIGAWA



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Sierra Leone is in need of selfless and pragmatic leadership, writes ***MONDAY PHILIPS EKPE***

THE RECENT SIERRA LEONE PROTESTS

They seemed to happen in a flash. In a matter of hours, as against weeks or months or even years feared by some watchers, the protests that erupted in parts of Sierra Leone two weeks ago have fizzled out. Some relief and good news for Sierra Leoneans and other lovers of the country, no doubt. There are, however, no justifiable reasons to beat the drums of jubilation immediately as the violence, injuries, destruction of property and death of dozens of security personnel and civilians have been replaced by uncertainty and apprehension in many circles. The demonstrations had innocuous beginnings. Hundreds of female shop owners went out to express their frustrations about the worsening economic conditions in the country and the inability of the government of President Julius Maada Bio to arrest the astronomic inflation that seeks to completely cripple the people's socio-economic wellbeing. As if waiting for that chance all along to vent their own angst, the crowd swelled spontaneously around the country, a place known for relative peace since the end of the civil war that lasted from 1991 to 2002. Calls for government change were soon added to the list of demands.

It promptly became convenient for government officials to frame the resultant mayhem as terrorism. As the nation's Youth Minister, Mohamed Orman Bangura, put it, "Those people aren't protesters. There is a difference between protests and riots and acts of terrorism. Protesting is different from acting as a terrorist… going against the state, killing young police officers." Those conversant with real terrorism would easily dismiss Bangura's categorisation. From experience, in countries ruled by outright despots and pseudo democrats, where weak institutions are saddled with the maintenance of law and order, government officials often voice such misjudgements as a prelude to crackdown on political opponents. There are now allegations of ethnic cleansing and existence of government-backed killer squads in Sierra Leone. Proving the truth between these claims and the rebuttal that the accusations are politically-motivated is a matter of time.

Without doubt, the nationwide curfew imposed by the government which checkmated this month's potentially combustible conflicts is a masterstroke but it is doubtful if President Bio's attempts afterwards to reassure his compatriots of responsible leadership have struck the right chord. Consider these lines from his interview with BBC World News the other day: "We have been conscious of our obligations…human rights, protection for everyone in the country. I have a duty to provide security; to deliver development to the country and I pay attention to that. Little braggarts who attack me on the social media, I never care about them." That was his direct response to the poser on what he knew about a popular critic of his who was murdered in questionable circumstances. The tone of that television outing revealed someone struggling to suppress his hatred for dissent.

It is interesting to note that agitations against deteriorating conditions of living, occasioned largely by disasters with global dimensions like the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war, have been recorded on various continents and, therefore, not peculiar to Sierra Leone. Sri Lanka, Ecuador, Ghana and others have witnessed violent ones too. Yet, Sierra Leone's instance cannot be explained away as merely another episode in a near-universal drama of hopelessness and pain. Here is why. In May this year, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS) sent a high-powered delegation to Sierra Leone as part of their mandate to prevent crises and also prepare for the general election there next year. Most of the findings are enough signals that point to bumpy times ahead.

"The security situation in Sierra Leone is characterised by incidents of criminality, violence, intra and inter party clashes, which are fuelled by the high number of unemployed youths - 70 per cent of the population - who have easy access to cheap drugs," the report reads in part. "The increased cost of living in Sierra Leone, which has been worsened by the Russia-Ukraine Crisis, has resulted in increased hardship for the population, and there is a likelihood that crime rates, violence and protests might also increase leading up to the 2023 elections." Not a surprising summation, actually. According to the United Nations Human Development Index, Sierra Leone ranks 182th among the comity of nations, sitting in the midst of the world's poorest countries. The setback that Ebola brought to it between 2014 and 2016, dwindling commodity prices, trade, investments, not to mention corona virus and the war in Europe, have all conspired to perpetuate this despondent profile. Political brinksmanship in this situation is, clearly, not a luxury but mandatory.

The best place to start from is for the present national administration to win the confidence of all the people of Sierra Leone, citizens of, arguably, one of Africa's most scenic and naturally endowed countries. That is not happening at the moment, unfortunately. Again, the UNOWAS-ECOWAS paper is unambiguous in its remarks about the nation's jaundiced pursuit of social justice: "The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) is increasingly perceived as partisan due to persecution of the allegations of corruption mainly concerned with opposition politicians… lack of trust and confidence in the police and security services…. lacking the required competence and training to de-escalate and fairly handle incidences of civil unrest."

The world is now presented with a recipe for chaos. The least President Bio should do now is to show true statesmanship and impartiality and also achieve national tranquillity - Koroma's loudest legacies - as his country marches towards a critical transition

Regrettably, intense, sometimes acrimonious, incumbent-opposition party rivalries are not new to this part of the globe. In Sierra Leone, efforts that appear to give the current government edge over its opponents in the forthcoming polls are underway. For two decades, power has been rotated between the ruling Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) and the All People's Congress (APC). The latter, led by former President Ernest Bai Koroma at the time, gracefully passed the baton to Bio in 2018, an action welcomed in Africa and elsewhere as exemplary. Remarkably, Koroma's democratic credentials have given him an enviable, well-earned seat among the African Union (AU) and ECOWAS' heads of delegation to elections in member states and other critical assignments. His latest duty is in Kenya. Bio's efforts to investigate his predecessor and team as soon as he assumed power are viewed by many analysts as witch-hunting. The revocation of mining licences, cancellation of the new airport project and halting of other developmental steps taken by Koroma are also regarded as vindictive. Members of the APC have continued to accuse the SLPP-led government of nepotism, undue harassment, biased allocation of resources and weaponisation of the judiciary and security agencies.

This sad picture is corroborated by the UNOWAS-ECOWAS viewpoint: "The 2023 general elections are expected to take place in a highly volatile atmosphere with a strong likelihood of clashes between the ruling party, SLPP, using the power of incumbency to secure its position in the presidency, and the opposition APC, which aims to reclaim its control over the government." Satisfaction with the Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone (ECSL) and the Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC) is now at its lowest. To compound an already charged atmosphere, the government conducted national census in December last year, contrary to the provisions of relevant statutes, allegedly for constituency re-mapping to favour the SLPP strongholds. International organisations, some of which initially endorsed the scheme, have since withdrawn their support. The world is now presented with a recipe for chaos. The least President Bio should do now is to show true statesmanship and impartiality and also achieve national tranquility - Koroma's loudest legacies - as his country marches towards a critical transition.

Dr Ekpe
is a member of THISDAY Editorial Board



ASUU is living in the past, writes
OLUSEGUN ADENIYI

THE CASE AGAINST ASUU…1

Continued from backpage

When I was in secondary school at Government College Kaduna, fees were charged, based on perceived income of your father. The highest was £36 per annum. The lowest was £3. Three pounds was the price of two sacks of groundnuts at the harvest time. £33 was the cost of two fully mature bulls if you were a cattle owner. Salary earners' income was visible, so the charges were easy. Our parents paid according to their abilities. We valued the education we obtained at all levels. The person who claimed that education in Europe is free should contend with Brexit. Britain always charged foreigners while citizens enjoyed the fruit of their parents' taxes. Some of the Scandinavian countries that are reputed



to have free education like Finland also have the highest taxes in the World. So, it is not free per se. Someone is paying for it. Who pays tax in Nigeria? Mostly people in the services and the formal sector. But our informal sector is perhaps larger than the formal sector. It is not taxed. How can anybody run a country based on allocations from one source, the Federation Account?

A PERSONAL EXAMPLE

I took over a university where 15,000 students were cramped in a Teachers Training College compound meant for 2,500 students. Meanwhile, there was an ongoing permanent site, 12 kilometres away but abandoned because of lack of funds. In addition, there were backlogs of arrears promised to unions by government and a monthly shortfall of salaries of between N5 million and N8 million. With these problems, the university was always in crisis either from staff or students. Where could I get funds to complete the permanent site and move out, balance my monthly salaries, pay arrears promised unions and run my laboratories and lectures?

President Olusegun Obasanjo gave me a letter saying I was in charge, and he sent envelopes to the National University Commission (NUC) to distribute as it pleased. But we also had university laws and statutes of dos and don'ts. The students were paying N15,000 per annum to the university as charges including N90 per annum for hostel which they leased to fellow students at N15,000. I decided to hike the various charges. My leap was to charge N50,000 for regular students and N60,000 for remedial students with additional N20,000 for absorption of those who passed the remediation. Most students claimed they were from poor families and could not afford it, but I had my data based on the schools they attended. Many of them came from fee paying secondary schools like El Amin, New Horizon, Hikma, to cite those around Minna. The fees there started from N500,000 and ran to over N1 million. They even played polo in their schools!

To cut the story short, every student found a way of paying the charges. Niger State offered to pay for its students, I refused to accept the offer. I asked the governor to give scholarship to his students. I would take my money direct from them. Nobody would step on the campus without clearance from our various banks. It worked. Niger State paid only once and never again. The governor who was a student at the period I was a lecturer in the same university thought he could trick me by wasting my bursar's time, chasing his commissioner of finance like a contractor.

The students paid us, and we had money to run the place. Over the years we completed our buildings and started new ones. Departments were getting enough money to run their services. The most highly subscribed department was Computer Electronic Department. In addition to the allocation in their budget, they received N800,000 per quarter from charges and N250,000 from DTLC. In short, they had over N1.5 million quarterly to run their services. There was prosperity not because of government but despite government.

Can you imagine my shock when I returned to my base at ABU Zaria to find out that my department with over 600 students was receiving N50,000 per quarter from one joker calling himself a vice chancellor! The most surprising aspect of the maladministration was that ASUU officials were made directors, deputy directors or heads of some units.

WHERE ASUU GETS IT WRONG

For the five years I served at Minna, I never had serious problems with either the students or unions. In fact, ASUU was so cooperative that we often asked for exemption because prior to my arrival the university had lost cumulatively almost two years as a result of students' union crises and staff strikes. Funds are the magic wand that drives the university system.

When ASUU insists that no contribution should come from parents and students to run a university, let them visit our permanent site at FUTMIN. We even had a dedicated power line from the Shiroro substation, eight kilometres away at the cost of N50 million completed that time. Parents will appreciate your efforts if you use their resources judiciously. I never had problems increasing my charges at the CBN inflation rate every year. Because we discussed it with the students and outlined what we intended to do the following year. All this posturing and 'open-close' syndrome on our campuses will take us nowhere.

By 2007, I left N1.27 billion in the kitty for the incoming VC to continue with what we started. Surprisingly, someone advised the VC that since he was taking over from a popular VC if he removed some of the charges, he would be more popular. And he did. But after clapping for him, the students told him to ensure that he worked like his predecessor. He didn't realise that it was the very charges he removed that made them proud of their university and made me popular at the end.

ENDNOTE: To be concluded ■

Adeniyi
is Chairman, THISDAY Editorial Board

BASHIR IBRAHIM HASSAN writes that GBB's Tier IV Datacentre will deepen digital services and improve efficiency and productivity

GAME CHANGER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



With the remarkable achievements recorded in the last two to three years in the drive towards Nigeria becoming a fully digitized economy, the news that Nigeria is set to launch a world class and tastefully built Tier IV Datacentre is a welcome development. Coming at a time when so much data is being generated across corporate organisations and industries at an alarming rate, Nigeria Galaxy Backbone is spot on in aligning with national aspiration to being an active player in global digitization.

And in all this, we are not just talking of data in its raw sense, but personal and corporate information of individuals, organisations and governments being daily created, that if not protected and documented properly, will be a recipe for disaster. We are talking of data with the potential to make or mar the development of any nation and the people within it.

Galaxy Backbone (GBB) is set to launch its Tier IV Datacentre into the public and private sector space of Nigeria. For an organization that was set up only in 2006 by the federal government as a Limited Liability Company for the benefit of Nigeria as a whole, it has in the last seven to eight years, successfully run the only Tier III Datacentre in the nation's public sector space, a great feat indeed. It is now deploying state-of-the-art digital infrastructure and applying international best practices to backstop public sector organisations with sensitive data and a growing number of private sector organizations to provide services. The level of professionalism on offer has become a reference point for other organisations that are considering getting on the platform.

GBB's Tier IV Datacentre is positioned to attract organisations looking at deepening their digital services at vastly reduced cost of technology infrastructure, improved efficiency and productivity. It has also enhanced business continuity through Cloud and Disaster Recovery services. The infrastructure has been specifically built to respond to the desire of its growing base of customers and stakeholders. GBB Tier IV Datacentre storage has capacity of about 2.2 petabytes. This translates to huge amounts of data that can be securely stored.

GBB's responsibility to the agencies of the federal government of Nigeria consists of providing shared services from its ICT Infrastructure that will enhance and promote government's digital services in a smart, secure and sustainable manner. The huge investments that have gone into this infrastructure are for the benefit of public and private establishments and the experience of GBB in building, deploying and providing infrastructure as a service, is a testimony to its ability to manage and continue in this line of business.

This Infrastructure, the first Tier IV Datacentre in the nation's public sector and the only of its kind, built out of the nation's commercial city, Lagos and situated in another commercial hub of the country, Kano, for disaster recovery, back-up and redundancy purposes will in no small measure enhance and deepen Nigeria's Digital Economy drive towards becoming one of the most recognized digital economies of the world as envisioned by President Muhammadu Buhari and institutionally led by the Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Professor Isa Ali Ibrahim (Pantami).

It is also worth recalling that, in 2020, the vision driven by the Honourable Minister to get Nigeria to become a fully digitalized economy by the year 2030 was put together in the document called the National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (2020 – 2030) and was launched by the President. In this document, eight pillars were identified as key instruments to help drive Nigeria towards digital transformation. One of the pillars is Solid Infrastructure. This TIER IV Datacentre feeds directly into the execution of that pillar from just being a policy to reality and further moves Nigeria greatly on its journey towards becoming a digitally transformed nation. It also forms a huge achievement for the Minister, the President and the nation at large being able to have such an expansive structure with the capacity and ability to store securely, huge amounts of data being generated by small businesses, government and other organisations across the country.

The role of the GBB is crucial to the development and enhancement of the standard of living of the people, when one thinks of how important data is today in the life of Professionals in Nigeria and across the globe. It has been widely reported that, worldwide, people generate, on a daily basis, over five quintillion bytes of data. Significantly, 51% of this will, by 2025 be stored in datacentres and 49% will be in the public cloud. However, according to the IDC, 46% of the world's stored data will reside in public cloud environments.

What is interesting about these statistics is the reality that this data will be generated by individuals and organisations across sectors. That is why Professor Muhammad Bello Abubakar, GBB's Chief Executive is very passionate about correcting the narrative that the organization is in competition with other private sector ICT companies. According to Abubakar, "Our goal is to collaborate with other private sector ICT companies to enhance digital transformation in Nigeria. So, I invite all of us, to leverage this Tier IV Datacentre for the collective benefit of our customers and stakeholders'.

It is important to realise that it is only through such initiatives and partnerships that the benefits of data sovereignty are attained. This is because at the heart of this, we all deserve to know where our data is stored, what it is being used for and how quickly we can access it.

One big lesson we ought to have learnt from the last pandemic and how it has transformed our lives even up till today is the power of data-driven by digital platforms that enabled people to connect with one another, build relationships, transact business and solve problems without any physical contact. The trust and confidence placed on GBB at that time, gave it the opportunity to play a formidable role which yielded great achievements and continues to propel it to raise the bar in its provision of digital services across the country. ■

Hassan
writes from Abuja

Editor, Editorial Page **PETER ISHAKA**
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EDITORIAL

RAVAGES OF FLOOD IN JIGAWA

The states should do well by heeding warnings from NiMet



There were also man-made major factors uncovered by a study which include deforestation and lack of flood embankment. Others were poor waste disposal, lack of drainage network and infrastructure in flood-prone areas

Jigawa State Government last week confirmed the death of no fewer than 50 persons as a result of flooding in some parts of the state. Hundreds of homes are reportedly submerged or destroyed while thousands of people have been displaced. Yet, the serial tragedies across the state could have been minimised if the residents had heeded the warning of the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet) which produces the Seasonal Climate Prediction (SCP) annually, and the Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NIHSA). Both had warned of serious flooding in Jigawa in the 2022 Flood Outlook published at the beginning of the year.

NiMET's forecast is to advise the government and people of Nigeria on all aspects of weather and climate by providing outlook of various climate variables, such as rainfall and temperature patterns for the year. The information presented in the SCP publication is relevant for policy formulation, planning and decision making by operators, stakeholders and individuals in both private and public sectors in Nigeria. Scientists insist that the state government and other policymakers ought to trust the data produced by these agencies and use the information to save lives by proactively putting in place strategies for mitigation and disaster risk reduction.

Jigawa, like other states in the country, is affected by extreme weather conditions triggered by climate change. The state's dire position was captured in a publication, Dutse Journal of Pure and Applied Sciences, in December 2021.The research stated that flooding in Auyo and Miga local government areas is worrisome, particularly because communities in these areas are on the northern bank of Hadejia River, and many of them are at risk of flooding when it rains heavily. This study findings showed that the current trend in the frequency of flood was on the increase, and that the year 2012 (59%) and 2018 (61%) marked the worst with floods occurring four times.

In Jigawa State, River Hadejia, which splits into three channels flows into the Nguru Lake, the old Hadejia River which joins up with the Jama'are River and the relatively small Burum Gana River, have been known for overflowing seasonally. In the 2018 rainy season, not less than 30 people died following a flood, wind and rainstorms that ravaged several local government areas within the River basin and destroyed over 68,000 hectares of farmlands. About 421 communities across Jahun, Miga, Auyo, Kafin Hausa, Guri and Hadejia LGAs were severely affected.

Floods have been confirmed to continuously cause huge socio-economic and environmental losses, particularly in Auyo and Miga LGAs, which are on the northern bank of Hadejia River. A seasonal tributary of the Komadugu Yobe, which flows into Lake Chad, many communities within the area are at the risk of seasonal flood. There were also man-made major factors uncovered by the study which include deforestation and lack of flood embankment. Others were poor waste disposal, lack of drainage network and infrastructure in flood-prone areas. There have been no reports of any remediation efforts.

The 2022 Outlook predicts that there will be coastal flooding due to tidal surge and rise in sea level in many of the states. These ominous signs are gradually becoming a reality, considering the intensity of the rains so far and reports of whole communities being submerged in stormwater. Many Nigerians are still trying to recover from the 2012 floods which killed 363 people and displaced over 2.1 million people, with estimated damage and losses put at N2.6 trillion, by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). Thirty of the 36 states were affected by the floods, believed to be the worst in 40 years. We should do everything to avert a recurrence of that tragedy.

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Letters to the Editor

Letters in response to specific publications in THISDAY should be brief (150-300 words) and straight to the point. Interested readers may send such letters along with their contact details to **opinion@thisdaylive.com.** We also welcome comments and opinions on topical local, national and international issues provided they are well-written and should also not be longer than (750-1000 words). They should be sent to **opinion@thisdaylive.com** along with photograph, email address and phone numbers of the writer.

LETTERS

SUSTAINABLE HEALTHCARE FINANCING IN NIGERIA

As required by the 2014 National Health Act, the government should allocate at least 1% of its Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) to the Basic Healthcare Provision Fund. This is geared towards the financial management of primary healthcare in Nigeria with the aim of providing a basic minimum package of health services to low-income and vulnerable Nigerians, particularly in underserved communities. However, in the 2020 budget, the Fund was reduced by over ₦44.4 billion.

Worse still, according to a performance report released by ONE Campaign, since 2001, Nigeria has consistently committed less than 7% of the total annual national annual budget to health, leaving a major gap in the financial resources required to drive the health system. In fact, according to data from the World Bank, the current health expenditure in Nigeria is a paltry 3.89% of our total Gross Domestic Product (GDP). But this cannot continue. A lot is at stake, as a lot of people die because the government is not spending enough on the health sector.

To increase budgetary allocation for healthcare and achieve quality health outcomes for vulnerable and poor Nigerians, we need to advocate for innovative and sustainable health financing mechanisms. And we must continue to demand for the full implementation of the BHCPF. As well as pro-health fiscal policies like the 2021 Finance Act's Sugar-Sweetened Beverages (SSB). While this said tax that imposed a 6.75% excise duty of ₦10 ($0.02) per litre on all non-alcoholic, carbonated, and sweetened beverages is below the recommended 20% by WHO, it is still a way to start from and go. Experts even say pro-health taxes do not only improve the health of Nigerians, but also alternatively expand the country's weak tax base and boost revenue generation.

From the foregoing, I believe we can achieve sustainable healthcare financing with multidimensional approaches germane to rallying the support of relevant government institutions, stakeholders and private-sector investors. But this starts with citizens and activists demanding strong political will from our leaders at all governance levels to boost spending on the health sector.

As a developing and low-income country, the existing Basic Healthcare Provision Fund and Sugar-Sweetened Beverages (SSB) tax are key to ensuring that the Nigerian government finances and builds a comprehensive, PHC-oriented health system to achieve universal health coverage. With advocacy efforts, policymakers at high levels will be committed to open, fair and inclusive processes for health financing to advance their full implementation and ultimately increase the allocation for health.

Advocacy will also facilitate citizens to engage in the implementation framework and as well hold the government accountable. This will be done by tracking and monitoring how funds from the BHCPF and pro-health taxes are invested and spent for their intended use by the concerned health authorities and government agencies for primary healthcare development and preventive health systems at sub-national levels. Particularly to the benefits of residents' prevention and treatment of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) that have a negative toll on our national productivity and whose treatment costs disproportionately affect poorer people in underserved communities.

For example, Ekiti State has disbursed over ₦80 million to 122 PHCs across wards in 16 local government areas to ensure operational funds are available for their facilities. Other states have also made tangible progress, while some are still far behind in the implementation of health financing programs.

Ayomide Agbaje,
a ONE Champion in Nigeria, writes from Ekiti

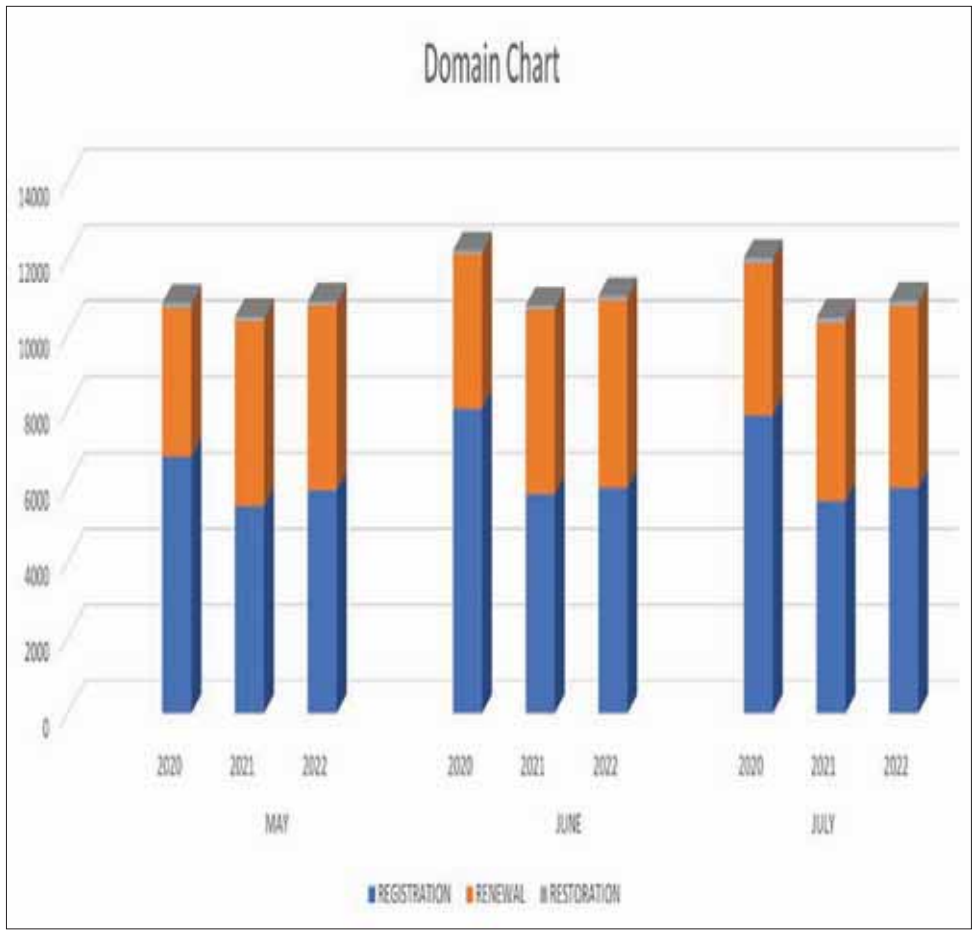
BUSINESSWORLD

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RATES AS AT AUGUST 17, 2022

MONEY MARKET		REPO		S & P INDEX		S & P INDEX		EXCHANGE RATE
OPR	11.25%	CALL	10.25%	INDEX LEVEL	613.31%	1/4 TO DATE	-0.85%	N416.86/1 US DOLLAR*
OVERNIGHT	11.50%	1-MONTH	9.56%	1-DAY	0.16%	YEAR TO DATE	7.64%	*AS AT LAST FRIDAY
		3-MONTH	10.52%	MONTH-TO-DATE	0.44%			

Nigeria's Active Domain Name Users Increased from 178,813 in June to 180,162 in July



DOMAIN COUNT AT A GLANCE

	MAY			JUNE			JULY		
DESCRIPTION	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022
REGISTRATION	6,755	5,453	5,866	8,013	5,760	5,926	7,838	5,584	5920
RENEWAL	3,921	4,884	4,863	4,068	4,873	4,936	4,013	4,701	4,781
RESTORATION	125	106	112	105	105	127	139	130	156
ACTIVE DO 3RD LEVEL	137,252	143,947	114,647	140,311	142,153	111,351	144,817	141,924	110,047
2ND LEVEL	19,820	37,229	64,773	19,965	39,439	67,462	19,725	40,585	70,115
GRAND TOTAL	157,072	181,176	179,420	160,276	181,592	178,813	164,542	182,509	180,162

Emma Okonji

The number of Nigeria's active .ng domain name users picked up slightly to reach 180,162 in July, after sliding in June this year to as low as 178,813, according to the recent statistics released by the Nigeria Internet Registration Association (NiRA), the body responsible for managing Nigeria's country code Top Level Domain (ccTLD).

The statistics, which THISDAY obtained from the official website of NiRA, showed that in June 2022, total registration, renewal and restoration was 178,813, but the figure increased in July to reach 180,162, which showed the number of active .ng domain name users in the country.

The increase in figure came from the active 2nd level domain name users, which rose from 67,462 in June to 70,115 in July.

From the statistics, fresh registration of .ng domain name in July was 5,920, renewal was 4,781, while restoration was 156, up from 127 in June.

The .ng domain name figure had dropped in June 2022 to 178,813, showing a decrease in the total number of active .ng domain name users in June this year.

Details according to the released statistics, showed 5,926 domain name registration, 4,936 domain name renewal, with 127 domain name restoration in June this year, while the active third level domain name was 111,351, and the active second level domain name was 67,462, which brought the total number of active domain name users in June 2022 to 178,813, which is a decrease from the 179,420 active domain name attained in May this year.

The statistics however showed an increase in the number of active domain name users in July, which is put at 180,162.

The ccTLD .ng domain name is Nigeria's identity in cyberspace, which has the .ng at the suffix of every official email address that originates from Nigeria. In the United Kingdom, all official email addresses end with .co.uk, in United States of America, they end with .com, while in South Africa, official email addresses end with .co.za.

In Nigeria, NiRA has carried out several campaigns to sensitise Nigerians on the need to populate .ng domain name, which is Nigeria's identity in cyberspace.

Reacting to the increased number of active .ng domain name users in the month of July, the President of NiRA, Mr. Mohammed Rudman, told THISDAY that Nigerians were beginning to understand the need to identify with .ng domain name for every online transaction and communication.

In his opening remarks in the 200th edition of the NiRA e-Newsletter, Rudman said: "It feels good to look back at what we have achieved in disseminating information about the growth of .ng domains and providing insight as to the impact of our work on the nation at large. The overall thrust of our efforts has been to increase the adoption of .ng

Continued on page 25

H1 2022: 8 Banks Generate N234.97bn from Account Maintenance, Other Commissions

Nume Ekeghe

A total of eight Deposit Money Banks (DMBs) generated N234.97billion for maintaining customers' accounts, Electronic-banking commission, and credit-related fees, among other commissions in the first half (H1) of 2022.

This represents an increase of 14.7 per cent from N204.84 billion fee and commission income generated by these eight DMBs in H1 2021.

The eight banks are: Ecobank Transnational Incorporated (ETI), FBN Holdings, FCMB Group Plc, Sterling Bank Plc, Union Bank of Nigeria Plc, Unity Bank Plc, Wema Bank Plc and Jaiz Bank Plc.

A breakdown revealed that ETI generated a sum of N112.21billion or $269.1million fee and commission from customers, representing an increase of 21 per cent from N92.84billion or $228.58million in H1 2021.

The pan-African bank in a recent presentation maintained that increase in fee and commission was driven by significantly higher spending on cards, cash management fees and credit-related fees responsible for hike in fee and commission.

Another Tier-1 DMB, FBN Holdings reported N70.69billion fee and commission in H1 2022, representing an increase of 2.4 per cent from N69.08billion reported in H1 2021.

The Chief Executive Officer, First Bank of Nigeria Limited, the banking subsidiary of FBN Holdings, Dr. Adesola Adeduntan said the financial institution would continue to strengthen dominate digital banking capabilities in provision of best-in-class services to all segments of its customers across all footprint in sub-Sahara Africa and beyond.

Meanwhile, FCMB Group and Sterling Bank generated N22.07billion and N10.5billion as fee and commission income in H1 2022 from N16.62billion and N8.4billion generated in H1 2021, respectively.

FCMB Group in a presentation to investors/analysts stated:

Continued on page 25

MARKET DATA AS AT WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2022

BONDS

DESCRIPTION	Price	Yield	Change (%)	Updated Time
^14.20 14-MAR-2024	104.55	10.98	-0.01	August 12, 2022 ▼
13.53 23-MAR-2025	103.05	12.12	0.00	August 12, 2022 —
^12.50 22-JAN-2026	99.28	12.76	0.41	August 12, 2022 ▲
^16.2884 17-MAR-2027	112.10	12.72	-0.15	August 12, 2022 ▼
^13.98 23-FEB-2028	104.50	12.82	0.00	August 12, 2022 —

BILLS

MATURITY	Dis-count	Yield	Change (%)	Updated Time
NTB 10-Nov-22	3.90	3.94	0.00	August 12, 2022 —
NTB 26-Jan-23	9.80	10.26	2.49	August 12, 2022 ▲
NTB 9-Feb-23	10.00	10.52	0.00	August 12, 2022 —
NTB 9-Mar-23	10.05	10.66	-0.01	August 12, 2022 ▼
NTB 27-Apr-23	4.90	5.08	0.00	August 12, 2022 —

CPS

MATURITY	Discount	Yield	Change (%)	Updated Time
FDHP CP III 17-MAR-23	14.77	16.18	-0.01	August 12, 2022 ▼
VHPL CP III 1-APR-23	18.64	21.14	-0.01	August 12, 2022 ▼

OTC FX FUTURES

CONTRACT TENOR (MONTH)	Contract	Current Rate (₦/$)	Updated Time
1	NGUS AUG 31 2022	433.54	August 12, 2022
2	NGUS SEP 28 2022	435.39	August 12, 2022
3	NGUS OCT 26 2022	437.24	August 12, 2022
4	NGUS NOV 30 2022	439.09	August 12, 2022
5	NGUS DEC 28 2022	440.94	August 12, 2022

Battle against Hike in Telecom Service Delivery

The persistent call to hike telecom services by telecom operators and the federal government, is gradually drawing a battle line for the telecom industry regulator, the operators and the government, writes **Emma Okonji**



Telecom operators and the federal government have consistently pushed for an increase in the cost of delivering telecom services, a development that is gradually drawing a battle line between the telecom industry regulator and the telecom operators on one hand and with the federal government on the other hand.

It first started in April this year, when telecom operators, under the aegis of the Association of Licensed Telecom Operators of Nigeria (ALTON), wrote the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), demanding for a 40 per cent hike in voice call, Short Message Service (SMS) and data services, after they had reviewed the high cost of buying diesel to power their base stations, among others, but NCC turned down the request with a view to maintaining cost-effective regulation across the telecom sector.

Next, was the proposed five per cent excise duty on telecom services by the federal government, through the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning.

Last month, the Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, announced the plan of the Finance Ministry to begin the implementation of five per cent excise duty on telecom services, which she claimed had been in the Finance Act: 2020 but has not been implemented. Shortly after it was announced, the NCC aligned with the Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy to resist any move by the federal government to impose five per cent excise duty on telecom services, insisting it will lead to hike in the cost of telecom service delivery.

NCC, from inception, has been a vanguard of consistent reduction in the cost of telecom services amid rising cost of telecom operations faced by the telecom operators. NCC had over the years battled various state governments over multiple taxes in telecom operations, which has yielded results. Analysts have said that the telecom sector is the only sector that is experiencing continuous reduction in cost of service delivery, when other sectors have maintained consistent rise in the cost of service offerings and sales.

Proposed 40% Hike

Telecom operators, through its umbrella body, the Association of Licensed Telecommunications Operators of Nigeria (ALTON), have called for increase in the cost of delivering voice calls, short message services (SMS), and data services by 40 per cent.

They expressed their worries over the negative impact of the economic and security issues on the Nigerian telecommunications industry, which they said had adversely affected the cost of telecoms service delivery across networks.

To drive home their points, they wrote a letter to the NCC in April this year, asking for upward review of the cost of delivering most telecom services to subscribers.

The telecom operators (Telcos) made their intention for an upward review known to NCC in a letter dated April 25, 2022, which was received and acknowledged by NCC on April 27, 2022.

According to the letter, "The cost of diesel required to power operators' Towers, Base Stations and offices rose by a staggering 233 per cent from N225 per litre in January 2022 to over N750 per litre in March 2022. Additionally, the introduction of new lines of fiscal obligations via the recent Excise Duty of 5 per cent on telecommunications services further exacerbates the burden of multiple taxes and levies in the sector. The power sector under the supervision of the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission ("NERC"), in November 2020 undertook a review of electricity tariffs to cater for the economic headwinds."

In the letter, the telcos demanded for upward review of the price determination for Voice and Data and SMS. They said: "Given the state of the economy and the 40 per cent increase in the cost of doing business, we wish to request for an interim administrative review of the Mobile (Voice) Termination Rate ("MTR") for Voice; Administrative Data floor price and cost of SMS as reflected in extant instruments. With respect to Voice and SMS cost, ALTON respectfully requests the commission to consider a mark-up approach to address the upward price adjustment desirable for industry."

The 5% Excise Duty

The excise duty is a special form of tax imposed on specific kind of goods, like alcohol beverages, tobacco and fuel. They are specifically imposed by government on products, during production and distribution stages, but it is being considered for services rendered in the telecom sector by the Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, which telecom subscribers have described as detrimental to the telecom sector, since telecom operators do not manufacture, but only offer telecom services.

Aside the 7.5 per cent Value Added Tax that all sectors of the economy pay for goods and services rendered, the five per cent excise duty, when fully implemented, would compel telecoms subscribers to pay additional five per cent tax, in addition to the 7.5 per cent VAT, which they are already paying.

With the planned introduction of five per cent excise duty, it means that for every call made by telecom subscribers, they will pay five per cent of the total cost of the voice call, which will be deducted from the subscriber's account by the telecom operator, and remit same to government.

The Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, revealed its plan to impose five per cent excise duty on telecoms services during a stakeholders' meeting, organised by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC).

"It is public knowledge that our revenue cannot run our financial obligations, so to that effect we are to shift our attention to non oil revenue. The responsibility of generating revenue to run government lies with us all," Finance Ministry said.

Multiple Taxes

The NCC had in the past, intervened on behalf of telecoms operators to stop state governments and federal parastatals from imposing arbitrary taxes on telecoms operations, amounting to multiple taxes on telecom operators..

Telecoms operators had raised the concern over what they described as imminent shutdown of telecommunications facilities in Kogi State as a result of disputes arising from unusual taxes and levies demanded by the state government through the Kogi State Internal Revenue Service (KIRS).

ALTON, the umbrella body for all licensed telecom operators, had in a statement, said the issue could lead to a total shutdown of telecoms facilities in the entire Kogi State, that would affect parts of Federal Capital Territory in Abuja, with possible impact on service availability in nine other states close to Kogi State, which include Nassarawa, Benue, Enugu, Anambra, Edo, Ondo, Ekiti, Kwara, and Niger states. The states listed are sharing borders with Kogi State.

ALTON listed some of the charges from the statement government to include: Annual Right of Way (ROW) renewal; Social Services contribution; Employee Economic Development Levy; Mast site premises renewal; and Fire service yearly renewal, among others.

NCC had to intervene and addressed the situation.

NCC's Resistance

In all of the agitations from telecom operators, the state and the federal government to hike cost of telecom services, NCC has continued to show some resistance, in a bid to protect the telecoms industry and the subscribers from undue taxes, levies and planned hike, and to also make its position known to all that it is a consumer-centric regulator.

Reacting to ALTON's letter that called for 40 per cent rise in the cost of telecom service delivery, the NCC, in a statement, allayed subscribers' fears over the suggested hike.

NCC's statement read in part: "Consistent with international best practice and established regulatory procedures, the NCC ensures its regulatory activities are guided by regular cost-based and empirical studies to determine appropriate cost (upper and floor price) within which service providers are allowed to charge their subscribers for services delivered

"The Commission ensures that any cost determined, as an outcome of such transparent studies is fair enough as to enhance healthy competition among operators, provide wider choices for the subscribers as well as ensure sustainability of the Nigerian telecoms industry."

For the avoidance of any doubt, and contrary to MNOs' agitation to increase tariffs for voice and Short Messaging Services (SMS) by a certain percentage, the Commission wishes to categorically inform telecoms subscribers and allay the fears of Nigerians that no tariff increase will be implemented by the operators without due regulatory approval by the Commission, the statement further said.

NCC noted that tariff regulations and determinations are made by the Commission in line with the provisions of Sections 4, 90 and 92 of the Nigerian Communications Act (NCA) 2003, which entrusts the Commission with the protection and promotion of the interests of subscribers against unfair practices including but not limited to; matters relating to tariffs and charges.

The Executive Vice Chairman of NCC, Prof. Umar Garba Danbatta, said the current tarriff regime being administered by the service providers had been a product of NCC's determination both for voice and SMS in the past.

He however said while there could be justifiable reasons for MNOs' demand for tariff increase, it should be noted that they are not allowed to do such either individually or collectively without recourse to NCC, following the outcome of a cost study.

Minister's Opposition

The NCC, in agreement with the Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Dr. Isa Ibrahim Pantami, has also opposed to the planned five per cent excise duty in telecom services, insisting that such plan is detrimental to the growth of telecom in Nigeria.

NOTE: Interested readers should continue in the online edition on ***www.thisdaylive.com***

Hero Launches 10th Anniversary Campaign to Reward Consumers

Kayode Tokede

O'Mpa, as Hero Lager is fondly called, especially in the South-East, launched the "Ka Anyi Wa Oji" campaign to celebrate its teeming loyal consumers who have patronized the premium brand for the past 10 years.

As part of the consumer celebration, Hero Lager a product of International Breweries, a proud part of the world's biggest brewer, AB InBev, unveiled O'Mpa Kola, the largest kola in the world, and will be engaging in a series of consumer reward activities that will cause the brand to visit consumers in various cities across Nigeria.

The Hero Lager 10th Anniversary was used to launch the "Ka Anyi Wa Oji" campaign which means "let's break kola".

The launch of the campaign and unveiling of the O'Mpa kola nut took place amidst a large crowd of Hero Lager consumers who converged at the International Breweries Plc (IBPLC) Onitsha Plant. The cultural unveiling of the giant O'Mpa Kola which revealed a large bottle of Hero lager was done by representatives of the Obi of Onitsha: Chief Samuel Okechukwu Chukwudebe and Chief John Abutu.

Speaking on the brand's impact on consumers over the years, Marketing Director, International Breweries Plc, Tolulope Adedeji, said "Hero Lager is a deeply cultural and altruistic brand. For 10 years, Hero Lager has been at the forefront of recognizing and rewarding its consumers who are passionate about working hard and leaving a legacy. Hero Lager is saying let's break kola. We are here on behalf of the brand to celebrate its 10th Anniversary, a big milestone. Ten years ago, a Hero Lager was born and has now grown to become the pride of the east, the people's HERO and we are so thankful to our consumers all over Nigeria."

Nollywood legend, known as "Osuofia", said "Hero Lager has done a lot of amazing and impactful campaigns Igba Boi, Nwanne Connect, Echefula among others.

"As an influencer before promoting any product, I must test it to experience the quality. For Hero Lager, I find it near perfect, I am the brand ambassador of the brand because I endorse quality. I want consumers to keep patronizing Hero Lager so that the brand can do more for the consumers."

Unlimint Launches Banking Service API Solution

Emma Okonji

Unlimint, a global fintech, has announced the launch of its Banking as a Service (BaaS) product, called Unlimint Banking and Cards (UBC), which a one-stop payment accounts and card issuing and processing solution.

The new offering allows companies globally to launch and embed digital payment products for their customers based in the EEA, UK, and LATAM.

Unlimint is an award-winning global Fintech offering advanced payment capabilities through an evolving financial interface to startups and businesses across the globe, operating from five continents.

According to the Fintech company, Unlimint Banking and Cards is a flexible, white-label solution with software and licenses for a boutique approach. It enables clients to customise and embed payment solutions directly into their own platforms without the need to build complicated payment systems, overcome regulatory obstacles or manage the complexities and difficulties of payment network membership.

Commenting on the product launch, the Managing Director BaaS at Unlimint, Jovi Overo, said: "The BaaS product also offers crypto to fiat conversion and over 150 APIs that enable clients to customise all elements of their programme. In addition to this, UBC provides businesses globally the ability to accelerate their geographic footprints in existing and new market verticals in Europe, UK, and LATAM. High-growth markets, like next-generation banking, and fintechs can unlock borderless accounts and payments with UBC's physical and virtual debit card API solutions. UBC provides an end-to-end offering that can seamlessly integrate banking and payment services via a single account: BaaS, corporate accounts, acquiring, and crypto, all under one roof."

Fintech has been growing consistently over the past few years and companies are more aware of how important it is to offer a variety of payment solutions to clients. KPMG's Pulse of Fintech report revealed that fintech investments in 2021 recorded $210 billion USD. According to Finastra's Banking as a Service Outlook 2022 report, almost 85 percent of respondents are already implementing or planning to implement BaaS over the next 12 to 18 months, Overo said.

"We are delighted to announce the launch of our innovative new solution UBC, Banking as a Service API Platform. With UBC's powerful, real-time, cloud-based platform, businesses get a complete toolkit that gives them the flexibility and control they need to build new financial products quickly and efficiently," Overo added.

Maintaining Advertising Rules in Political Campaigns

Raheem Akingbolu writes on the need for Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria and the Independent National Electoral Commission to further regulate political messages ahead of the 2023 general election

Political advertising in the country has been amorphous in nature with politicians, political parties and their consultants throwing caution to the wind in exposing their advertising materials to the electorate.

Interestingly, the Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON) has embarked on sensitisation programmes on political advertising through what it tagged; 'Leadership Responsibility and Compliance with the Law of Nigeria'. This is coming on the heels of more regulatory responsibilities and power given to the body in the new ARCON Act, recently signed into law by President Muhammadu Buhari.

This new Act repeals the Advertising Practitioners Registration Act, Cap. A7, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004 and enacts the Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria Act, 2022 to establish a Council for advertising, advertisements and marketing communications as the apex regulatory authority for the Nigerian advertising industry. It also makes provision for the regulation and control of advertising, ensure the protection of the general public and consumers, promote local content and entrench the best international practices.

Notwithstanding the provisions in any other Act, ARCON has exclusive power to determine, pronounce upon, administer, monitor, and enforce compliance by persons and organizations on matters relating to advertisements, advertising, and marketing communication in Nigeria, whether of a general or specific nature.

THE KNOTTY AREAS

Over the years, advertising has become fundamental tools in the hands of politicians and political parties before, during and after elections, in order to influence the electorate to support, accept, or reject any political party and its ideologies. It is also obvious that political advertising in the country is more propagandist in nature with positive and negative political advertising, employing descent and foul language respectively to sell political parties and their ideas and ideologies.

Invariably, most political advertisements, year in, year out, are usually informed of hate speeches which Nigerians have said portend danger for the unity of the country as the nation starts its political journey to usher in a new administration to pilot the affairs of the country.

Also, many Nigerians believe that if hate speech is not properly addressed it is capable of setting the country on fire especially now when the country is going through a turbulent period.

Setting the tone to address the issue of hate speech in political advertising, Mr. Akin Orebiyi, the guest speaker at a recent forum, said: "The Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON), the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and other agencies whose functions are directly or otherwise connected with the forthcoming elections have been given responsibilities to address hate speech."

He further said: "These agencies, in fulfilment of their functions under the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, have also put in place guidelines to enable them perform their functions appropriately."

He added: "These particular guidelines or enabling laws are to ensure a smooth democratic process culminating in the successful conduct of the general elections next year.

"With the references from ARCON's Nigeria's Advertising Code and INEC's Electoral Act, it is obvious that these laws have been instituted for the peaceful, smooth, seamless and orderly conduct of the election process especially during the 150 days permitted by law for political campaigns as enshrined in the Electoral Act 2022."

He said that if politicians and political parties would comply with these laws, it would help to avoid conflicts, a breakdown of law and order, perceived injustice which could lead to chaos and violence. He said: "This confirms the fact that the overall intention of these laws is to seek the goodness of the Nigerian society and the growth of democracy, and invariably to seek the goodness of all the stakeholders - the candidates, the political parties, the media, the regulatory bodies and the electorate."

STAKEHOLDERS' VIEWS

Director General of APCON, Dr. Olalekan Fadolapo, in his address at the forum, said that the forum was important as Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) would soon flag off campaign and political advertising, and that if proper actions and enlightenment programmes were not taken, there could be possibility of having serious crisis in the country.

Resident Electoral Commissioner of INEC in Lagos State, Mr. Olusegun Agbaje, who was represented at the forum by Adebisi Ajayi, said: "As the Presidential and National Assembly campaigns start across the country on September 28th 2022, the game of electioneering should be done in accordance to the law, as INEC is ready to conduct credible elections in 2023."

He said that INEC has done a lot by making sure that measures are put in place to enable success in the election.

He added that political entities needed to work with INEC to make sure that their conducts were within the ambit of the law, adding that all political parties are also given a level playing field to carry out their campaigns.

Director General, Centre for Media Law and Development, Charles Odenigbo, said, to ensure compliance, there must be adequate education for the political class. He added that sanctions and prosecution should be taken by the regulatory bodies as the last resort.

Adding her voice to other stakeholders, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Lady Bird Communications Limited, Mrs. Bunmi Oke, said although laws were put in place to help grow the profession, there are lots works to be done by educating political parties and politicians to ensure that the standard Nigerian want to set is for the good of all.

According to Member House of Representatives, Abuja, Honourable Aniekan Umanah, INEC needs to educate the political parties about law guiding elections in Nigeria, and also place stiffer punishments in place for those who disobey the law.

Considering the number of pressures ARCON will face, Chairperson, Advertising Standard Panel, Mrs. Omowunmi Owodunni said that the panel was up to the task, and also getting ready for the deluge of pressure that the body would face. She added that the long arm of the law is well enhanced to take care of any erring individuals and organisations that contravene the law.

OVERVIEW

To have a commendable electioneering process in 2023, experts have unanimously agreed that all political parties should comply with electoral laws as outlined by INEC and ARCON. They hold that ARCON should sensitise political parties, advertising practitioners and general public on law guiding electoral campaigns, and that all campaigns should be issue based and devoid of attacks and hate speeches.

They advised regulatory bodies and media houses to provide level playing field for all political parties and politicians, adding that Nigerians must also inculcate the attitude of rendering selfless services to the country whether in positions of authority or not.

NIGERIA'S ACTIVE DOMAIN NAME USERS INCREASED FROM 178,813 IN JUNE TO 180,162 IN JULY

domain names. Without a doubt, we still have a lot to do this year, but we are closer to the achievement of our strategic goals than we have ever been."

This quarter will be particularly busy for us as we collaborate with various associations such as the Nigeria Bar Association and the Nigeria Medical Association to inform members about the value of .ng domains. In addition, NiRA as the current Chairperson of the Nigeria Internet Governance Forum will be leading the Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group to host the Forum on the 15th of September 2022, where we hope to further ramp up campaign for the adoption of .ng domain name, Rudman further said.

H1 2022: 8 BANKS GENERATE N234.97BN FROM ACCOUNT MAINTENANCE, OTHER COMMISSIONS

"Non-interest income also grew by 29 per cent Year-on-Year (YoY) largely driven by growth in service fees and commissions and trading income despite a decline in Foreign Exchange revenues. Trading income grew 132per cent YoY from higher volumes of fixed income instrument trades during the year."

The most common commissions DMBs generate for non-interest income includes: Electronic-banking commissions and current account maintenance fees.

Union Bank of Nigeria reported N8.16billion fee and commission in H1 2022; a decline of 8 per cent from N8.83billion in H1 2021, Wema Bank grew its fee and commission by 39 per cent to N7.5billion in H1 2022 from N5.39 billion reported in H1 2021.

In addition, Unity bank reported N3.2 billion fee and commission income in H1 2022 from N3.07 billion in H1 2021, as Jaiz bank announced N662.8million fee and commission income in H1 2022, representing an increase of 2.6 percent from N646.06million reported in H1 2021.

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in its guide to charges by banks, other financial and non-bank financial institutions" circular released January 2022 stated that Current Account Maintenance Fee (CAMF) is applicable to current accounts only in respect of customer-induced debit transactions to third parties and debit transfers/lodgments to the customer's account in another bank.

According to the circular, the CAMF is not applicable to Savings Accounts and negotiable subject to a maximum of N1 per mille.

The apex bank defined CAMF as the monthly fee chargeable on current accounts based on the level of customer-induced debit transactions that occurred in the account during the month.

"This fee is not applicable to all bank-induced debits and customer-induced transfers to other accounts in the same name and in the same bank," the CBN stated.

As regarding Electronic Funds Transfer, the CBN fixed N50 for transactions done above N50, 000, N25 for N5, 000 – N50, 000 and N10 charge for below N5, 000.

Meanwhile, THISDAY can report that electronic-banking transactions and current account maintenance fees are two major drivers of the eight DMBs fee and commission income.

For instance, FBN Holdings in H1 2022 generated N25.5billion from electronic banking fees as against N28.82billion in H1 2021, while income from its account maintenance rose by 15 percent to N9.1billion in H1 2022 from N7.93billion reported in H1 2021.

In the move, FCMB Group reported an increase of 53 percent for maintaining customers' current accounts to N3.4billion in H1 2022 from N2.2billion in H1 2021, while electronic fees and commissions closed H1 2022 at N6.69billion from N6.68billion in H1 2021.

In addition, Sterling Bank reported an increase of 37 percent in its current account maintenance fee to N1.85billion in H1 2022 from N1.35billion in H1 2021.

The bank's E-business commission and fees rose by nine per cent to N3.9billion from N3.39billion reported in H1 2021.

Despite the competitive environment as regarding CBN licensing more Fintech companies to operate in the electronic-banking transactions, the eight DMBs have maintained stronger earning from non-core banking operations.

Analysts at Vetiva Research in a report titled, "Nigeria H2'22 Outlook: A strange labyrinth" stated: "We anticipate some erosion of banks' Non-Interest Revenue once the two leading telcos (MTN Nigeria and Airtel) begin the operations of their Payment Service Banks (PSBs).

"MoMo and Smartcash launched in May and have enjoyed strong early adoption, offering zero transaction fees. We expect the attraction of seamless transactions, with little to no fees, to draw many users of USSD and Digital banking platforms, thus we predict a slowdown in transaction volume growth.

"In order to fight the new competition, some banks may be forced to lower transaction fees or offer free transactions in order to entice customers back to their platforms. However, we do not expect this to be sustainable in the long run. Thus, we expect electronic- Banking income to grow at a slower rate in H2 2022."





PRODUCT LAUNCH...

L-R: BusinessDevelopment, Roseline Oduleke; COO/Co-founder, Benjamin Adeyemo; HardwareSpecialist, Pelumi Anthony and CTO/Co-founder, Udo Nwaogbo, all of SmartParcelLimited, during the launch of its Premier Digital Smart Locker solution for logistics in Lagos... recently

Elumelu: Nigeria Needs Regulations that Encourage Business Growth to Rejig Economy

Raheem Akingbolu

The Founder and Chairman, Heirs Holdings, Mr. Tony Elumelu has highlighted four critical areas that will significantly impact Nigeria's push towards poverty alleviation in Nigeria.

In his keynote speech at the ninth Lagos Public Relations Stakeholders' Conference on leadership and poverty eradication in Lagos recently, Elumelu gave the areas to include, Positioning SMEs to thrive; Leadership, Governance and Structure; Promoting Financial Literacy and Inclusion; and Tackling Unemployment.

Elumelu who was represented by the MD/CEO, Heirs Life, Mr. Niyi Onifade, explained that everyone needed to be involved in the fight against poverty in the country.

On SMEs, he explained that "Government must create an environment and structure to enable capital flow freely across the country. The best way to do this is to incentivize the free movement of capital through the growth and development of small business enterprises."

According to him, "SMEs are the lifeblood of any economy, and countries that prioritise the success of SMEs position themselves for wealth creation. For instance, the development of countries like China, Germany, France, and others can be attributed to the success of their SMEs."

Available data show that SMEs in Nigeria contribute up to 48 per cent of national GDP. SMEs account for 96 per cent of businesses, and provide 84 per cent of employment. In a country of over 200 million people with 40 per cent of the population classified as youths below the age of 35 years, SMEs can create meaningful employment opportunities that will stall the alarming talent drain across the country. SMEs have the capacity to create opportunities for people to feed themselves and care for their families, Elumelu said, while noting that the success of any country is a testament to its leadership and its governance structure. "To drive financial inclusion, regulators and our leaders have a key role to play. Restrictive policies should be relaxed to encourage more people, especially rural dwellers, to access financial services. Regulatory requirements should be flexible and favourable to financial providers, which would then allow them to create more value-adding products and services for people.

"More importantly, our leadership must create rules and regulations that encourage growth and not stifle creativity. Poverty alleviation must consist of deliberate programmes that reach the grassroots, and dogged commitment to implementing and tracking the plans, must not be the same as usual," Elumelu further said.

On the need for promotion of financial literacy and inclusion, he said: "Financial inclusion and social welfare programmes have been identified globally as panacea for poverty eradication.

"When people have access to financial services such as credits, loans, savings, life insurance, and others, they can fend for themselves and run sustainable businesses that would create a ripple effect in the country's GDP."

He noted that access to these financial tools remains limited in Nigeria. According to him, Nigeria is still one of the top three unbanked countries in the world with 40 per cent of our population living without access to financial services.

Elumelu further said: "Statistics show that the unemployment rate in Nigeria has increased from 27.1 per cent in the second quarter of 2020 to an estimated 33 per cent in 2022. This is alarming.

"Unemployment is undoubtedly a root cause of poverty. When people have no jobs, they get hungry and angry. They also become easy tools for criminal activities."

Koolboks Closes $2.5m Seed Round to Scale Solar Refrigeration across Africa

Emma Okonji

Koolboks, the sustainable cooling company providing accessible cold storage solutions to businesses across Africa, has closed a $2.5 million seed funding round, led by Aruwa Capital Management and with participation from Acumen, Blue Earth Capital, All On, GSMA and other investors.

This brings the company's total investment to-date to $3.5 million. Koolboks will deploy the capital to scale its expansion across Nigeria, including building its team to support its growing B2C business and construction of a local assembly facility in the country. The company also opened an affiliate office in Kenya in July this year.

Founded in 2018 in France, Koolboks, combines Africa's abundant supply of the sun with water to create a solution that is able to generate refrigeration for up to four days in the absence of power and sunlight. Through efficiently harnessing natural resources, Koolboks has made it affordable to access continuous refrigeration by integrating a pay-as-you-go technology that enables individuals and small businesses to pay as low as $10 a month to own an off-grid solar refrigerator. The Koolboks unit works as a refrigerator, freezer, or lighting for households and shops. It also comes with 2 LED lighting bulbs and USB ports for charging mobile phones - making the product invaluable to users in off-grid areas. Koolboks currently sells across 16 countries, 13 of them in sub-Saharan Africa*.

Koolboks hopes to help reduce food waste and GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions drastically.

The company's ice thermal refrigeration technology reduces CO2 emissions, displacing the use of diesel, and by incorporating R600a, an environmentally friendly refrigerant. The off-grid refrigeration market is worth $4.4 billion, and is growing at a rate of 7 per cent, according to the Efficiency for Access Coalition. With 770 million people across SSA lacking proper access to electricity, and only 17 per cent having access to refrigeration, Koolboks is striving to close the gap in equitable access to clean, readily available energy.

Commenting on the opportunity to empower more small businesses with access to affordable cold storage solutions, the CEO of Kooboks, Ayoola Dominic, said: "Poor energy access, high costs of buying and running generators, and the relatively high cost of cooling prevent many African businesses and households from accessing refrigeration when it's most critically needed. We believe that people can make their livelihoods and feed their families by relying on energy from natural resources - energy from the sun, wind and water that are abundant around us. It's a win for the people, a win for us, a win for our investors and a win for the planet."

Founder at Aruwa Capital Management, Adesuwa Okunbo Rhodes, said: "We have been impressed with Koolboks's innovative solution which goes far beyond food waste reduction - the team's laser focus on ensuring clean renewable energy in off-grid areas is crucial to the survival of many small businesses and sectors as well as fostering economic gender equality. Equitable access to clean and reliable energy is key to closing the gender economic gap across rural areas and we are excited to see Koolboks' expansion continue to make economic equity a reality for millions more women across Africa."

With 17.92% Contribution to GDP, ICT Has Consistently Enhanced National Growth, Says Pantami

Emma Okonji

The Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Dr. Isa Ali Ibrahim Pantami has applauded the consistent growth in ICT contributions to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which hit 17.92 per cent in the last quarter of 2020, and in the first quarter of 2021, and continued on an impressive trajectory.

The Minister gave the figures recently, during the opening of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU's) Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) roundtable, and technical workshop on Building Capabilities for Sustainable and Inclusive Digital Transformation in Nigeria.

According to the Minister, this "percentage is unprecedented, and this is only the contribution of ICT to our GDP without calculating digital services."

Pantami said digital access and connectivity have become a necessity, as they play an increasingly vital role in our everyday lives and have become key drivers of the fourth Industrial Revolution.

The Minister assured the audience, including representatives of ITU, FCDO, and other international agencies, embassies, and the Executive Vice Chairman of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Prof. Umar Garba Danbatta, that the "Federal Government understands that enormous private sector support, as well as support from International Organisations, are essential to enable Nigeria to realise her lofty goals for its digital economy and this has informed the country's decision to partner key international organisations like the ITU and FCDO."

Pantami said: "The digital age is upon us, and all relevant stakeholders must be prepared for the enormous but inevitable change that will occur."

The Minister also assured of the federal government's commitment to the development of the digital economy, with a promise that "the Nigerian government will ensure that all critical infrastructure are made available for the facilitation of digital connectivity, transformation and ultimately, the realisation of a robust digital economy."

Danbatta, in his speech, revealed that the federal government's policies in the communications and digital economy sector were already yielding positive results including a reduction in the access gap, improved digital financial inclusion and a steadily increasing contribution to the GDP.

He stated that the sector had remained the most resilient in the country while stressing that the Commission recognises the need to do more in strengthening the telecommunication sector and improving internet penetration.

"As of the end of 2021, the estimated population of people living in the underserved areas declined from 31.16 million in 2019 to 28.87 million in 2021, and the access gaps reduced from 227 to 114," he said.

Danbatta assured that the Commission would not rest on its oars in supporting internet penetration and digital skills to give concrete expressions to policies and initiatives to close identified gaps.

Rack Centre Achieves ISO 45001 Certification, Promises Better Operating Environments

Emma Okonji

Rack Centre, an Actis majority owned data centre and the leading carrier and cloud -neutral Tier III data centre in West Africa, has obtained the BSI ISO 45001 certification.

The BSI ISO 45001 Certification is an international standard for health and safety work developed by national and international committees, independent of governments.

The BSI ISO 45001 is designed to help organisations of all sizes and industries put in place a safe working environment for their employees and will among other benefits, enable Rack Centre to reduce workplace injuries, illnesses and create better, safer working conditions.

Rack Centre is one of the few data centres in the region to obtain the BSI ISO 45001 certification and this is in addition to previous ISO certifications obtained by Rack Centre, which include the ISO 9001-2015 Quality Management System; the ISO/IEC 27001:2013, an Information Security Management System and the ISO 22301-2012, Business Continuity Management Certification. The certification also covers Rack Centre's data centre campus expansion which increases the current data centre capacity from 1.5MW to 13MW and is slated for delivery in 2023.

Chief Operating Officer for Rack Centre, Mr. Ezekiel Egboye, while speaking about the BSI ISO 45001 certification, said: "We welcome this new addition to our array of BSI ISO certifications as it demonstrates vividly Rack Centre's commitment to the safety of its workplace and a conducive environment for the workforce. We are concerned about the physical and mental wellbeing of our workforce and so dedicated to creating a favourable and internationally benchmarked environment for them. We will continuously evaluate and improve our practices, to ensure we provide a safe environment for our workforce, clients, and community."

Rack Centre is the only carrier and cloud neutral Tier III Constructed Facility Certified data centre in Africa and focuses solely on providing best in class data centre colocation services and unrestricted interconnect between carriers and customers. This gives customers a technically superior, physically more secure and lower cost environment for their information systems.

Curbing Smuggling, Revenue Loss in Katsina

Francis Sardauna writes on how the Katsina Area Command of the Nigeria Customs Service is suppressing smuggling and preventing loss of government revenue in the state.

When the federal government banned the importation of rice through Nigeria's land borders as part of efforts to make the country self-sufficient in terms of food production, local producers and rice farmers' unions in the country were in joyful mood because local industries will be revamp and utilised by the government.

Being the 11th highest consumer of rice in the world after Brazil, makes the Nigerian market a passport to wealth for every farmer. But businessmen argue that as long as the country is unable to control its rice smuggling problem, development in the industry will continue to be weighed down.

This underscores why the Katsina Area Command of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) has intensified the fight against smuggling in order to protect local industries, create employment and prevent the use of the nation's markets as dumping ground for fake, substandard and unwholesome prohibited items.

A rare combination of intelligence and swift enforcement by officers and men of the command led by Comptroller Dalha Wada Chedi, is yielding results as heavy blows are dealt on the unrepentant smugglers with massive seizures and arrests of suspects in connection with the seized contraband.

Chedi, who took over the mantle of leadership of the command on 23rd March, 2021, has made the Area Command to be known for not only seizing smuggled contraband or products, but also nabbing the 'men behind the mask' which has drastically reduced the spate of smuggling and enhance revenue generation.

The comptroller's unflinching efforts of suppressing smuggling activities in the state had exposed those behind the act and ensured timely prosecution of those apprehended in connection with the intercepted smuggled goods. The conviction of the smugglers in courts obviously become an imperilment to the economic saboteurs.

The anti-smuggling combatant's resolving strategies and transparency in curbing smuggling and other activities of the criminals in the state has led to the blockage of the four recognised border posts with the Niger Republic —Magama in Jibia, Kongolom in Mai'Adua, Babban-Mutum in Baure and Dankama in Kaita Local Government Area of the state.

For instance, illegal routes in Sabon-Garin, Mai-Dabarau, Gadirge, Korama, Alele, Bayan Bariki, Raini and Wayo communities in Jibia local government which were hitherto used by smugglers to ferry in contraband into Katsina, the state capital, have been blocked due to the relentless effort of Comptroller Dalha Wada Chedi.

In Kongolom, Mai'Adua Local Government Area, investigation revealed that most smugglers of rice were using unapproved routes from Maimaje, Botsotsuwa, Tsatsumburum and Yekuwa communities from Niger Republic to ferry in their smuggled commodities into the country, but the illegal routes have been shut down by the anti-smuggling crusader. This noble gesture of stemming smuggling is also applicable in communities and villages across Babban-Mutum and Dankama.

The anti-smuggling move of the comptroller of the Nigeria Customs Service in the state has yielded tremendous success as seizures of contraband are being recorded on daily basis while the smugglers and other economic saboteurs crippling the federal and state governments' quest for a viable and sustainable economy development, are now on the run in the state.

The number of seizures recorded under the leadership of Comptroller Chedi has been unprecedented in the last 17 months and this is due to the proactive measures undertaken by Chedi who has zero tolerance for smuggling activities being orchestrated by the marauding smugglers and some unscrupulous elements in the state.

Investigation by THISDAY revealed that between January to December 2021 alone, the command has seized over 15,000 bags of smuggled foreign rice, thousands of cartons of spaghetti, macaroni, jerricans of vegetable oil, bales of second hand clothing, hundreds of fairly used vehicle imported into the country without customs duty and other unregistered goods worth N474,443,150.

Chedi is equally deploying all necessary tools to ensure that the core mandate of the Service (revenue generation, facilitation of legitimate trade and suppression of smuggling) amongst others, is vigorously achieved because revenue generation and legitimate trade facilitation solely depend on how smuggling activities are aggressively suppressed.

To this end, the command under the watch of Chedi has generated over N104.7 million from export and import duties as revenue for the federal government between May and June 2022 after the reopening of the Jibia/Niger Republic border. Also, N38.5 million was realised from seized items such as rice, vehicles, spaghetti, among others within the period under review.

In spite of incessant attacks by bandits on its corridors of operations, the command has generated N99,777,343.00 revenue for the government between 1 July to 11 August, 2022. While 10,827.40 metric tonnes of cement, hibiscus flower, chilli peppers, beverages, animal feeds and tamarind with free on board (FOD) of N538,406,126. 45, were also exported within the timeframe.

Within the period under review, 447 bags of foreign rice, 337 cartons of foreign spaghetti, 120 bags of foreign flour, 450 bags of potash, 1,000 pieces of hide and skin, nine vehicles and other contraband were intercepted by the men and officers of the command with duty paid value (DPV) of N73,675,024.00.

The unprecedented number of achievements being recorded by the command is as a result of the re-strategize of its operational procedures by Comptroller Dalha Wada Chedi on anti-smuggling activities, constant patrols, surveillance and reconnaissance as well as cooperation of other security agencies and stakeholders at the border communities in the state.

However, Chedi is apparently not satisfied with the achievements recorded so far because in his recent media chat in Katsina, he warned unrepentant smugglers operating in the state that the command now has all that is required to clamp down on their activities and bring them to face the wrath of the law.

According to him, "I am sorry for smugglers because a new strategy has been put in place to checkmate smuggling, and we will follow them from nooks and crannies of the state. We will make things very uncomfortable for them, and what they are thinking of gaining, I am sorry for them, instead of gaining it they will lose because the country must definitely win this fight."

He urged the business community in the state to utilize the business opportunity provided by the federal government by converting the intended informal exports into the formal export procedures and renewal of old Customs License Agencies as well as the opening of new ones.

The NCS comptroller has resolved to continually suppress smuggling and prevent loss of government revenue through the land borders and warehouses across the four recognised border posts in the state.

He noted that the command would continue to serve as one of the layers checks and defence against infractions as approved by the management of the Nigeria Customs Service in accordance with extant laws.

He added that, "The remaining people that are still in the old system of smuggling should come forward and embrace the change for their personal, community, state and the nation's economic development at large. Our men and officers are ready to heat the ground running in the quest to suppress smuggling and enhance revenue collection".

With this milestone achievements in less than 18 months on assumption of office as the Comptroller of the Katsina Area Command of the NCS, Dalha Wada Chedi is suppressing smuggling and preventing loss of government revenue through the land borders and warehouses across the four recognised border posts in the state.

LUCAV GLOBAL RESOURCES LIMITED

CONSUMER CODE OF PRACTICE

INTRODUCTION

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES:

1. LUCAV GLOBAL RESOURCES LIMITED ("LUCAV"), Consumer Code of Practice (the "Code") made in pursuance of Section 106(2) of the Nigerian Act 2003("the Act") and Regulation 4(1) of the Consumer Code of Practice Regulations 2007 ("the Regulations").

DEFINITIONS:

2. Terms used in this Code are given their ordinary meaning within the framework of the business or LUCAV's document. Clause headings are inserted for convenience of reference only and shall not affect the interpretation of this Code. Words importing the plural shall, except where the context otherwise requires, include the singular and vice versa: references to the masculine gender shall include the feminine or neuter genders and vice versa; and references to persons shall be construed as references to an individual firm, company, body corporate, statutory board, government body, incorporated body of persons, association or trust as the context may require

APPLICATION OF CODE:

3. The Code shall govern the provision of services to consumers by LUCAV. In the event of a conflict between the Code and the General Code, to the extent that the terms of the codes are not less favorable to the Consumers than the General Code, this Code shall apply.

4. LUCAV shall provide Consumers with information on their services that is complete, accurate, and up-to-date and in simple, clear language. This would be made available to both the customer service department of the company, web portal and also in the welcome message after opting in for a service

5. LUCAV shall endeavor to respond in a timely manner to Consumer requests for information on their services and such information shall be provided free of charge and shall include at least the following :

Current service, arrangements, including information about the services and tariff for all services offered to the public, shall be readily available via appropriate media including electronic format on LUCAV web site.

Any request in tariff changes would be done under the auspice of LUCAV in consultation with the Service provider. Approval shall be gotten for any tariff change and also adequate information with an option to opt out shall be given to the user/subscriber.

LUCAV shall also endeavor to ensure that subscribers have good Service Level Agreement.

SERVICE CONTRACTS AND DURATION:

6. LUCAV shall supply, or make available on request, a copy of the contract or agreement for the provision of services, and such contracts shall be written in plain and clear language.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES:

7. LUCAV offers General VAS infotainment content Services. These services caters to the customer's need for entertainment and lifestyle indulgence.

SERVICE SUBSCRIPTION:

8. Customers may subscribe to the service via a convenient electronic or web channel. LUCAV upon receipt of subscription will issue email or Short Message Service confirmation.

CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITION:

9. All terms and conditions of a contract regarding the provision of any of our services shall be clearly stated in the contract or agreement. Furthermore, contracts entered into by LUCAV with its customers shall have a specific duration which shall commence on a definite date to be stated in the contract and shall terminate on a certain date albeit in accordance with the termination provisions in such contract.

AVAILABILITY OF SERVICE:

10. LUCAV services are available on all mobile networks , however our services are network dependent, services will be restricted to certain areas within Nigeria where mobile network service is available as contained in promotion materials.

ADVERTISING OF PACKAGED SERVICES:

11. (1) Where LUCAV represents in advertising materials that a service is provided as part of a package, LUCAV shall ensure it is able to supply all components of the service package. In the event that LUCAV is or may be unable to supply any component of the package, appropriate information about this limitation shall be included in the advertising materials.

(2) Where advertising materials indicate the price of a component of a service package, LUCAV shall include in the advertising materials a statement of the minimum total charge for the package, and indicate any Conditions that may apply to obtain the component at the stated price.

COMPLAINT PROCESSES:

12. LUCAV GLOBAL RESOURCES LTD operates a customer service desk which is reachable during working hours from 8:00am to 5:00pm and outside working hours via e-mail. All consumers can contact the help desk via telephone; +2348155585558, Email: Info@lucav.com.ng and address at Block C6, Heirs Park Residence,Amadasun Street,Ologolo Lekki,Lagos. Before you contact our support desk, please make sure that you have details of the transaction initiated, your mobile number,) and summary of the complaint. This will enable us process and resolve your complaints quickly.

FURTHER RECOURSE:

13. In the event that the complaining customer remains dissatisfied with the outcome/resolution of the complaint, has the right to refer the complaint to Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC).

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF COMPLAINTS AND OUTCOME:

14. An appropriate recording system for complaints and their outcome/resolution shall be set up and such system shall have all complaints and resolution stored in a discernible manner for easy identification.

RETENTION OF RECORDS:

15. Any information collected and recorded as part of complaint handling processes shall be retained for at least twelve (12) months following the resolution of complaints or as directed by NCC from time to time.

OPT-IN AND OPT-OUT:

16. Upon request for any service, LUCAV shall provide the consumer with Opt-in and Opt-out options in clear, simple and understandable terms

17. LUCAV shall provide the consumer with access to a HELP function to obtain information on services they are at the time of request, subscribed to and how to opt out in clear plain English.

BILLING INFORMATION

18. LUCAV shall ensure that, at a minimum, the following information is included in any billing or charging notifications issued by it or on its behalf:

(a) The name of the service for which the consumer has been billed

(b) The type of the service for which the consumer has been billed and the service delivery medium

(c) The period over which the service associated with the charge will be provided

(d) The total amount billed or charged to the consumer's prepaid account

ITEMIZATION OF CHARGES

19. LUCAV shall ensure that each consumer has access to itemized details to all charges pertaining to subscribers on that mobile network and LUCAV shall ensure that all such itemized details are available for 12 months after the billing/charges effect has occurred.

TIMING FOR ISSUANCE OF BILL:

20. LUCAV shall bill Consumers at the point of activation and shall equally ensure that in instances where a service for which a consumer has been billed cannot be delivered, the consumer will be subsequently offered the service at no extra cost for a period of time equal to the period over which the service should have been delivered but was not. Where the circumstances will not permit the service to be delivered (due to circumstances beyond the reasonable control of LUCAV, such as an event of force majeure or a technical system failure at the mobile network resulting in service interruption), LUCAV shall liaise with the mobile network operator to establish a suitable resolution path that will ensure that consumers do not lose any value and are appropriately refunded and compensated.

PAYMENT CONFIRMATION:

21. LUCAV shall ensure that Consumers are able to verify their bill payment by acknowledgment of payment on the next bill issued, with such appropriate and accessible methods as may be made available by LUCAV.

BILLING FREQUENCY:

22. LUCAV shall provide Consumers with advance written notification of any proposed changes in billing before any such changes are implemented via any channel over which LUCAV services are offered. Consumers shall be informed in all such notifications of how to opt out of the service to avoid experiencing the proposed changes in billing.

SIGNED: MANAGEMENT

HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

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Stakeholders' Dialogue on Pro-health Tax Implementation

In a bid to deliberate on the implementation of Sugar-Sweetened Beverage, SSB, taxation and its potential as a means for increasing healthcare financing, Nigeria Health Watch, in partnership with PharmAccess Foundation, and the World Bank, recently hosted global health stakeholders at its Health Financing Policy Dialogue, themed, 'New Health Financing Approaches in Nigeria: Implementation of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages, SSB, Tax in Nigeria. **Sunday Ehigiator** reports



Head, Health Financing Unit, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, Joe Kutzin



Country Director, PharmAccess Foundation, Njide Ndili



Director General, Budget Office of the Federation at Federal Government of Nigeria Budget and Mational Planning, Mr. Ben Akabueze



Director General, National Health Insurance Authority, Prof. Mohammed Nasir Sambo

In January 2022, the Federal Government (FG) hinted at the imposition of N10 per litre tax on Sugar-Sweetened Beverages (SSB) as part of the critical policy thrusts of the Finance Act 2021.

The SSB tax was passed in the Finance Act on 31 December 2021 and was thereby implemented on June 1, 2022.

The Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs Zainab Ahmed explained that the tax became inevitable to discourage excessive consumption of sugar in beverages, which had continued to imperil the lives of Nigerians.

Specifically, she said, "This new sugar tax is introduced to raise excise duties and revenues for health-related issues and other critical expenditures. It is in line with the 2022 budget priorities."

POSITIVES

The SSB tax implementation is seen as a win-win situation by the government which hopes the tax will trigger shifts in consumption and purchasing behaviour, incentivise product reformulation, and increase government revenues to fund public services and goods.

It was equally celebrated by stakeholders, particularly by the health sector operators who hoped that the revenues generated would help to provide infrastructure in the country's health sector, and among other things cater to the victims who had been afflicted by sugar-related health challenges, such as weight gain, overweight, obesity, type-2 diabetes, dental caries, metabolic syndrome, cancer, etc.

However, the implementation of the SSB tax remains at the baby stage and is yet to transcend the aspirations of both the government and every other concerned stakeholder

EXPLORING PRO-HEALTH TAXES

As other concerned stakeholders continue to await the visibility of the projected positive outcome of the SSB, the global healthcare stakeholders at the event sought to explore various strategies to utilize pro-health taxes as an additional source of health financing for Nigeria, while leveraging on the SSB taxes.



Senior Health Specialist, World Bank, Dr. Olumide Okunola

"The Sugar-Sweetened Beverage tax and National Health Insurance Scheme provide Nigeria with a revolutionary chance to attain better healthcare services that will decrease Nigerians' suffering in accessing healthcare"

In her remarks, the Country Director, PharmAccess Foundation, Njide Ndili, commended the Minister of Finance on the prompt implementation of the SSB tax following intense advocacy which was supported by critical stakeholders in the country's healthcare sector.

She stressed the importance of increasing health financing and ring-fencing the proceeds from the pro-health taxes as another avenue to funding the health sector in Nigeria.

"The COVID-19 pandemic significantly reduced the external funding from other countries as development aid, because they focused on retaining their funds to manage the effects of the pandemic on their health systems.

"This is, therefore, a turning point for low and middle-income countries in Africa, including Nigeria, to focus on innovation and local resource mobilisation to fund the healthcare sector."

"With the recent passing of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) law making health insurance mandatory, it is imperative that we mobilise enough resources to fund health service delivery, especially for those who cannot afford to pay for themselves."

In her goodwill message, the Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Lagos, Sonia Odije-Fajusigbe, suggested that "Nigeria's Health Insurance Scheme should be decentralised to meet the growing need of the nation and to see that there is more funding for the health sector of Nigeria."

Similarly, the Director General of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA), Prof. Mohammed Sambo, noted that the cost of treating mild to moderate diabetes has become an additional financial burden for individuals affected, as it ranges from N300,000 to N500,000 per annum, and could run into millions in very severe cases.

He said over 82 million Nigerians live on less than $1 per day. "If we must achieve Universal Healthcare Coverage (UHC), we must then prioritise health financing, especially through additional taxes or mandatory insurance.

"This is what many developed nations have done. The SSB tax and National Health Insurance Scheme provide Nigeria with a revolutionary chance to attain better healthcare services that will decrease Nigerians' suffering in accessing healthcare."

Earlier, while welcoming the stakeholders, the Managing Director, Nigeria Health Watch, Vivianne Ihekweazu, expressed gratitude to the federal government for implementing the SSB tax.

She however expressed concerns about the compliance with the SSB tax by the concerned companies, and therefore premised the importance of exploring the pro-health tax option on the perceived shortcomings of the SSB.

Also speaking, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, Senator Ibrahim Oloriegbe, spoke on the difficulty of collecting these taxes.

He noted that one of the major challenges with the SSB taxation is the problem of the collection as the payers are always complaining that they are being taxed in multiple ways.

"Apart from that, we are all aware of the struggle over our federalism as to who is to collect or not collect value-added taxes (VAT). This is also a major obstacle that is stifling our efforts."

He, therefore, stressed the effective utilisation of funds into channels that will create lasting solutions in the country's health sector.

In his remarks, the DG of the Budget Office of the Federation, Mr Ben Akabueze, stressed the importance of SSB taxation implementation. He noted that 54 countries in the world and five in Africa have introduced SSB taxes.

He, therefore, expressed hopes for the effectiveness of the SSB tax as a tool to improve the quality of life of Nigerians, especially in the area of health.

LASG to Support LASHMA Health Insurance Plan for All Residents

Rebecca Ejifoma

The Lagos State Government, through the Ministry of Health, Thursday, promised to provide every support needed to LASHMA to ensure that all residents are covered under the ILERA EKO Social Health Insurance Plans.

The State Commissioner for Health, Prof Akin Abayomi noted this at the Lagos State Health Management Agency (LASHMA) ILERA EKO Customer Apps and USSD Gateway Launch on Thursday in Ikeja.

According to Abayomi, the launch of the application and USSD will provide improved access to affordable and quality care through increased uptake of Health insurance in Lagos State.

He added: "The event is apt and supports Lagos State Government's T.H.E.M.E.S Agenda particularly health and technology," highlighting that the state government continues to support and encourage the Agency to deliver the dividends of democracy, improve and prevent catastrophic health spending for residents.

"This commitment from Mr Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu and his Deputy Dr Obafemi Hamzat is remarkable and this has again shown Lagos State is indeed the Centre of Excellence," Abayomi commended.

While acknowledging this as another milestone achievement by LASHMA, the commissioner insisted that the state ministry of health and the state government, as this occasion marks an era of digitalisation in the operations of the Social Health Insurance space in Nigeria.

With the penchant for always being the first amongst other states, says Abayomi, Lagos State is once again poised to lead in the digital space of Social Health Insurance in Nigeria through the deployment of a customised App that will enable residents easier access to health insurance coverage.

He said: "The need for technology innovations in enhancing the efficiency of LASHMA operations as a tool towards achieving universal health coverage is imperative and as such the launch of ILERA EKO customer APP and USSD channel is a step in the right direction."

On his part, LASHMA Board Member, Mr Ayo Adebusoye described the ILERA EKO Social Health Insurance Plans as a social protection plan designed to support health.

He emphasised: "LASHMA has been at the forefront of enrolling residents on ILERA EKO through the deployment of multiple channels across all local governments. The need to accelerate enrollment and deploy quicker and seamless means of registration and enrollment with technology-enabled platforms has become imperative.

"The technology platform will provide Lagos residents with the ease of uptake of Health Insurance. It will provide seamless access and provides a gateway for residents to meet the mandatory enrollment demands of the new National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) Act which has made the State Social Health Insurance mandatory for all Nigerians (Lagos residents inclusive) with emphasis on state-administered schemes."

INTERVIEW

Tristate Hospital Celebrates Successful Open Heart Surgery on 13-day-old Baby in Nigeria

Rebecca Ejifoma

Interventional Cardiologist and Professor of Medicine, Professor Kamar Adeleke and his team of medical experts have successfully carried out a life-saving procedure on a 13-year-old baby (name withheld) at the Tristate Hospital in the Lekki area of Lagos.

The baby, according to the expert, was born with a rare congenital abnormality called transposition of the great arteries and hence needed an arterial switch operation. It is known as a complex type of pediatric cardiothoracic surgery that took place from 10:15 am to 5 am.

The MD/CEO of Tristate Healthcare system Adeleke explained to newsmen at a conference that the medical condition is a transposition of the great arteries where the two major arteries leaving the baby's heart were transposed (wrongly connected) to the lower chambers of the heart (ventricles).

The US-trained medical expert with over 34 years of experience continued that the arterial switch operation is an open-heart procedure that is done within two weeks of life or it will be too late. "As a result of the abnormality, blood containing oxygen from the baby's lungs was being pumped back into the lungs, while blood that lacked oxygen was pumped throughout the body.



Adeleke

"Normally, the heart has two sides; the right side takes in blood from the organs of the body. This blood is devoid of nutrients, and from here the blood is pumped into the lungs where it is oxygenated and purified and then transported into the left side of the heart where it is pumped to all parts of the body."

While noting that the left side of the heart pumps out four to six litres of blood every minute, the intervention cardiologist, explained that "This baby was born with a badly structured heart.

"What happened to this baby was that the left and right structures were switched, so the baby was not getting any purification of the blood. The mortality of this condition is 100 per cent."

According to Adeleke, he and his medical team had to restructure the heart in addition to a bypass. All the blood vessels coming from the wrong sides were correctly repositioned. He said, admitting that it was a complex surgery of 19 hours.

In cases of congenital heart defects, the Tristate CEO insisted that these cases are usually hopeless except flown abroad for surgery and they may still die eventually. "It is a huge achievement we have done here, if we can achieve this in Nigeria, there is nothing that we cannot do medically.

While describing it as a significant feat for the hospital and the country, the president said th defect occurs in about 0.01 per cent of the nation's population.

Advice to women on pregnancy

"Fortunately, this type of abnormality is very rare in pregnancy," says Adeleke. "The human heart is very complex and is completely formed at six weeks of gestation even before the woman may realise she is pregnant."

He cautioned women, "We advise women that when you know you're likely to get pregnant, you don't do certain things."

The cardiac psychologist dissuaded them from things like smoking cigarettes, and taking drugs carelessly, adding that they should try to stay away from stress, and eat well.

"However, the abnormality may not even be because the mother did something wrong. It could just be an unfortunate occurrence," he clarified.

Notwithstanding, he called for an urgent need to establish paediatric cardiac centres in Nigeria, and said the best time to prevent any type of congenital anomaly is before conception.

"It is important that we investigate every pregnant woman at multiple levels. There is what is known as the level three ultrasound that detects all these abnormalities. Some congenital heart defects can be detected and corrected before the baby is born, but if it cannot be done before birth, the mother must, at least know, and be prepared for it.

"What we need to do is reduce infant mortality by paying attention to the care of the mother so that before and during pregnancy, abnormalities can be detected and addressed early. If we invest in the mothers, we are going to be saving a lot of money in the future."

Adding the Tristate CEO said things as simple as lacking the right vitamins and developing a nutrient deficiency could cause neurological problems after delivery. "But if these nutrients are given during pregnancy it will avoid potential anomalies."

Evaluating every newborn

Every newborn, he insisted, must also be properly evaluated. "Take your stethoscope, examine the baby and if you detect a heart murmur, then you can quickly do the ultrasound. It takes just 30-45 minutes to do this you can then follow up on the baby.

"All we need is proper evaluation of the baby. Let's take care of the mother during pregnancy. The routine should be that any woman that is pregnant should be automatically covered by insurance. By doing that, we are investing in the baby even before it is born."

Through Tristate Healthcare System, a conglomeration of best-in-class super-speciality healthcare providers, Adeleke is changing the narrative in the nation's healthcare system.

World Breastfeeding Week: Lagos Harps on Early Initiation after Child birth

Omolabake Fasogbon

The Lagos State government has encouraged health workers to embrace mother friendly care towards promotong and supporting proper breastfeeding.

It particularly urged nurses and other health workers to support mother in carrying out early initiation within first hour after birth, in line with World Health Organisation, WHO recommendation.

Lagos state Nutrition Officer, Mrs. Olubunmi Braheem who was speaking at a symposium organised by the State Ministry of Health in conjunction with FHI360 Alive & Thrive, maintained that early initiation decreases risk of newborn infant mortality by about 45% and strengthen bonding between mother and child.

The programme was held as part of activities to commemorate 2022 World Breastfeeding Week, themed- 'Stepup Breastfeeding: Educate & Support' , with health workers from across private and public health institutions in attendance.

Braheem noted that the programme was an avenue for stakeholders in the health sector, including community members to rub minds on how to improve infant and young children nutrition outcomes in Lagos state.

She stated that in line with the theme of the week, health workers have a duty to inform, anchor, engage and galvanise to strengthen breastfeeding.

On her part, Director, Nursing Service, Health Service Commission, Mrs Cole Adebukola emphasized early initiation, exclusive and continuous breastfeeding for at least 2 years, while dissaproving feeding of babies with cow milk, especially at the beginning of their life.

She charged nurses and community members to up their game in protecting, promoting and supporting proper breastfeeding.

Defending the action, Adebukola said, "There is a link between breastfeeding duration and subsequent development, cognition, mental,psychomotor and behavioural functioning of the infant. Proper breastfeeding also played a major role in the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals."

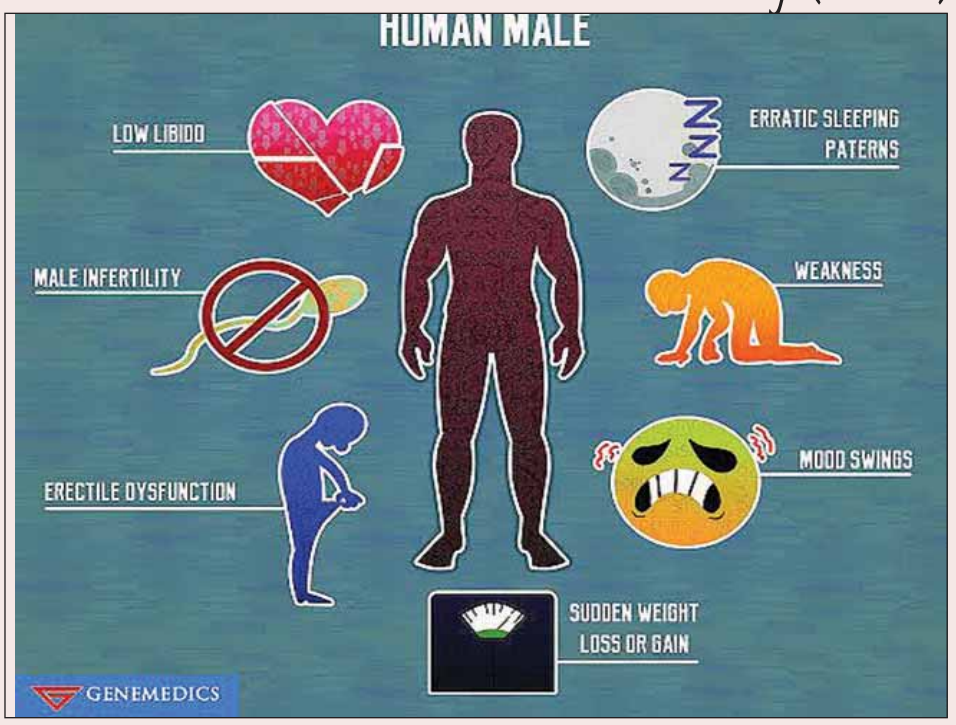
Also present at the event, representative of NAFDAC, Mrs Chinyere Ikejiofor urged nurses to avoid displaying any item that could subtly or overtly advertise formula products in the maternity ward.

FERTILITY

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Hormonal Imbalance And Infertility (Part 3)



Last week, we concluded the discussion on the impact of female hormones on fertility. We then explained some of the causes of hormonal imbalances in women, their signs and diagnosis. This week, we shall be discussing the male hormones and their effect on fertility. Treatment of hormonal imbalances in the human body will also be explained

MALE HORMONES AND THEIR EFFECT ON FERTILITY

The male hormones are not as complex as that of the female but even as simple as they may appear its fluctuation can cause serious fertility issues if left unchecked.

• ***Testosterone:*** This hormone is responsible for controlling sexual and reproductive health. Testosterone is released by the Leydig cells in the testicles and stimulates the production of sperm. If the level of testosterone is low, it causes hypogonadism(a condition in which the body does not produce enough of the hormone that plays a key role in masculine growth and development during puberty (testosterone) or enough sperm or both). If the level of testosterone is high, it can be converted to the female hormone estrogen which causes shrunken testicles, mood swing and breast enlargement. All of these impact the fertility of the male.

• ***Luteinizing Hormone(LH):*** This is a gonadotropic hormone that is released from the pituitary gland and stimulates the production of testosterone in the testicles. If there is an imbalance in the level of luteinizing hormone, it can cause diminished sperm production leading to infertility in men.

• ***Follicle stimulating hormone (FSH):*** This hormone interacts with the sertoli cells to stimulate the production of sperm. If the level of FSH is high, it is a sign of testicular failure and also means the level of testosterone levels are low. This prevents the healthy production and maturation of sperm. Also having low levels of FSH can limit the production of sperm and making fathering child really difficult.

• ***Gonadotropin releasing hormone(GnRH):*** This hormone prompts the pituitary gland to produce FSH and LH respectively. If the level of GnRH is low, it causes loss of sperm production and lower hormonal production from the testes.

CAUSES OF HORMONAL IMBALANCE IN MEN

Men are also at risk of developing different hormonal imbalances than women because they have different endocrine organs and cycles. Some of the causes of hormonal imbalances in men include the following;

• ***Hypogonadism (low testosterone):*** Testosterone being a primary sex organ and playing a key role in the development of testes and prostate when reduced causes hormonal imbalance among others such as low libido and reduced muscle mass and in some cases causes andropause which is male.

• ***Being overweight:*** This is mostly as a result of excess estrogen which is a major cause of hormonal imbalance in men thereby leading to more worrisome issues such as erectile dysfunction, low libido and eventually infertility.

• ***Underactive or overactive thyroids:*** Thyroid function generally affects the testosterone and growth hormones and any alteration with it will lead to hair loss, gynecomastia and low libido which are major signs of hormonal imbalance.

• ***Poor functioning endocrine glands:*** The endocrine glands are responsible for the production of hormones and when it's not functioning properly will ultimately lead to an imbalance in the hormones.

• ***Abuse of anabolic steroid medications (Performance enhancing medications):*** these medications when prescribed by a physician for health conditions are not bad but the excessive use of these medications and over the counter usage causes testicular shrinkage thereby leading to hormonal imbalance and ultimately infertility.

• ***Poor diet or nutrition:*** The overall functionality of the male fertility hormone has everything to do with diets. An improper diet such as those with high glucose intake can cause an imbalance in the fertility hormones

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF HORMONAL IMBALANCE IN MEN

It is okay for men to experience hormonal imbalances once in a while during their lifetimes as a result of aging. Although when they have medical conditions such as hypogonadism and prostate cancer they will experience fluctuations in their hormonal levels. The different signs and symptoms experienced by men during hormonal imbalances include:

• Urinating more than usual; increased urination during the day and night can be a cause of low testosterone levels. Treatment might include a hormone replacement therapy.

• Low Libido (that is lack of sexual interest):This is not feeling the need to be active with one's partner. This can happen if the level of testosterone in the body is low.

• Sudden weight gain.
• Erectile dysfunction.
• Low sperm count.
• Problem maintaining muscle mass.
• Fatigue.
• Over development of breast tissue.
• Reduced body hair growth.
• Bad mood or depression.
• Sleeping issues.
• Brittle bones also known as osteoporosis.

TREATMENTS OF HORMONAL IMBALANCES

Treatment options are wide and varies depending on the root cause

This may include:

• Stress management.
• Eating healthy food.
• Getting enough rest.
• Exercise regularly.
• Try hormone replacement therapy.
• IVF techniques and drugs are given to women with PCOS who are trying to conceive.

CONCLUSION

Hormonal imbalances can really affect your fertility but be rest assured it can be restored by using natural remedies, medications or both. The earlier we begin to acknowledge some signs that come with hormonal imbalances the easier it will be to regain control of the fertility and overall health.

UNDP Launches $1bn Startup Financing Facility for Africa

Oluchi Chibuzor

The timbuktoo initiative, sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Regional Bureau for Africa has been launched in Nigeria with the aim of mobilizing and investing $1 billion in public and private funding over the next decade to help spur the startup revolution across Africa.

In view of this, 8 private-sector-driven pan-African timbuktoo hubs, each focusing on a different priority area and housing a Venture Builder and a Venture Fund will be developed across Africa.

Speaking at the launch event, UNDP Africa Chief Innovation Officer, Eleni Gabre-Madhin, said; "Timbuktoo is a big, innovative, and unique initiative to overcome the present vacuum in early-stage risk capital, to better integrate African innovation stakeholders from universities to corporates to investors, and to enable startups to embrace the African market opportunity. We're opening a timbuktoo hub in Lagos and we hope to utilize Africa's youth brilliance to make it a worldwide knowledge and innovation powerhouse."

According to her, the exciting goal of timbuktoo is to foster and create One Africa Market and beyond startups that receive best-in-class assistance, collaborations, and local and international investment.

She noted that each pan-African center will draw top startup talent from all over the continent as the launch of timbuktoo in Nigeria is a significant milestone underpinned by a commitment to galvanize Africa's tech-enabled startups.

In her presentation to participants, she revealed that the goal is for more than 1,000 startups to grow to a significant size and have a positive effect on more than 100 million people's lives and the environment, generating a ten-fold return of over ten billion dollars in wealth and value creation for Africa's economies.

In his remarks, the UNDP Nigeria Representative, Mohamed Yahya, said because they prioritize innovation UNDP will continue to invest.

"So, it wasn't hard to convince the Timbuktoo team to setup a hub here in Lagos, Nigeria. This initiative is based on the belief that to achieve the SDGs, we must work hand in hand with the private sector and embrace a bold and innovative reality in which the future will be driven by technology and innovation.



- L-R: Financial Services Innovators (FSI) Advisory Board member, Wole Odetayo; President, Nigeria Association of Computing Students (NACOS), Comrade Olamilekan Abolade; Dean, Faculty of Computing and Informatics Academy, City University College, Ghana, , Prof. Olumide Babatope Longe; Executive Director, Financial Services Innovators (FSI), Aituaz Kola-Oladejo, and President Nigeria Computer Society, Prof. Adesina Simon Sodiya, at the 2022 Financial Inclusion for All Hackathon competition held during the Nigeria Association of Computing Students (NACOS) national conference at Chrisland University, Abeokuta, Ogun State... recently

Datapro Upgrades African Foundries to A+, Maintains Stable Outlook

DataPro, a technology-driven credit rating agency (CRA) has upgraded African Foundries Limited's long-term rating to "A+" with a Stable Outlook for the year 2021/2022.

The rating agency, in a statement explained that the "A+" indicates low risk and shows very good financial strength, operating

performance and business profile when compared to the standard established by DataPro.

The statement signed by the agency's Client Services Manager, Mr. Kehinde Rasheed affirmed the ability of the company rated to meet its obligations.

"African Foundries Limited, in our opinion, has a strong ability to meet its

ongoing obligations," the statement said, pointing out that "DataPro Rating Committee approved the rating after assessment of the company's financial performance, corporate governance and risk management, regulatory environment, risk factors and future outlook of its current healthy profile in the medium to long-term period."

Rasheed said the company continues to enjoy a wide market share and increased revenue underpinned by the steady upgrade of operating capacity.

He added that a revenue growth trend of the company gained traction during the year under review. For instance, he said African Foundries' total earnings went up by 106% from N59.8bn (Yr.20) to N123b (Yr.21), pointing out that total liabilities, which comprised current and non-current liabilities decreased by 22% from N71.7bn(Yr.20) to N56bn (Yr.21).

According to him, this was largely due to a decline in current liabilities by 33% from N58.5bn (Yr.20) to N39.3bn (Yr.21).

Winners Emerge in FSI Financial Inclusion Hackathon

Winners have emerged in the 2022 Financial Inclusion for All Hackathon competition held during the Nigeria Association of Computing Students (NACOS) national conference at Chrisland University, Abeokuta, Ogun State from August 16-18, 2022.

Financial Services Innovators (FSI), a non-profit organisation committed to discovering tech talents in tertiary institutions and enabling start-ups within the technology and financial services space, organised the hackathon challenge in partnership with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), NIBSS, GDG Lagos, Flourish, AXA Mansard, and Yellow Cowries.

According to the Executive Director, FSI, Aituaz Kola-Oladejo, the hackathon challenge is borne out of her desire to groom young talents in technology. "We believe that once we start grooming young talents in technology, we'll be able to create employment opportunities. We also want to change the narrative. We have seen youngsters coming out of Nigeria doing great stuff like Flutterwave, Paystack etc., but there is still a lot to do. What the young innovators need is support. So, we are providing them with the ladder to grow and achieve their goals and dreams. That's exactly what we are doing with this Financial Inclusion for All Hackathon challenge," she submitted.

Welcoming the participants to Chrisland University, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. (Mrs) Chinedum Peace Babalola, who was represented by Prof. Temidayo Akinbola, not only wished them a successful deliberation but also implored the visitors to explore the many tourist attractions in the ancient city.

NACOS president, Olamilekan Abolade, in his opening remarks emphasized the uniqueness of this year's conference, saying it was put together to discover the power of revitalizing the economy through technology.

Prof. Adesina Sodiya, President of Nigeria Computer Society, thanked FSI for organising the event and lending its support to NACOS.

On his part, keynote speaker, Prof. Olumide Longe, Dean & Head of School, Faculty of Computational Sciences & Informatics, Academic City University, Accra, Ghana, challenged the young scholars to come up with computing innovations that

Imo State Governor commends NBC on Youth Empowered Initiative

The Governor of Imo State, Senator Hope Uzodinma, has commended the Nigerian Bottling Company (NBC) Limited for its commitment to empowering Nigerian youths through programs that enable them to contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic development of the nation.

He gave the commendation while declaring open the Company's Youth Empowered Program held in Owerri, the Imo State capital.

In his keynote address, he thanked NBC for hosting the 2022 edition of the Youth

Empowered program in the state, noting that the initiative consolidates the government's efforts in accelerating youth development.

He said: "The program

is greatly needed in this present day and age marked by a major shift from the traditional workforce and I believe that it will not only

benefit the young people in attendance today but also Imo State and the

Nigerian economy at large."

This year's edition marks the successful continuation of NBC's Youth Empowered initiative which commenced in 2017 and has since impacted over 22,000 youths.

Earlier in his remark, the Corporate Affairs & Sustainability Director at NBC, Ekuma Eze, said: "We are pleased to continue this exciting journey to expand the vista of opportunities for millions of youths across Nigeria. Not only are we happy to provide these youth with the vital tools they need to thrive in our increasingly competitive world, this program also represents a major step towards the fulfillment of our goals to build a world where youths can discover themselves, understand their strengths and bolster their confidence to succeed."

MARKET INDICATORS

MONEY AND CREDIT STATISTICS (MILLION NAIRA)

	JUNE 2022
Money Supply (M3)	**48,865,823.53**
-- CBN Bills Held by Money Holding Sectors	**167,956.2**
Money Supply (M2)	48,797,867.32
-- Quasi Money	28,405,330.1
-- Narrow Money (M1)	**20,392,537.22**
---- Currency Outside Banks	**2,722,785.91**
---- Demand Deposits	17,669,751.32
Net Foreign Assets (NFA)	**6,242,394.29**
Net Domestic Assets(NDA)	**42,623,429.24**
-- Net Domestic Credit (NDC)	57,267,178.05
---- Credit to Government (Net)	**17,996,690.06**
---- Memo: Credit to Govt. (Net) less FMA	**0.00**
---- Memo: Fed. and Mirror Accounts (FMA)	**0.00**
---- Credit to Private Sector (CPS)	39,270,488
--Other Assets Net	5,566,430
Reserve Money (Base Money	11,320,304
--Currency in Circulation	3,259,269.15
--Banks Reserves	11,320,303.72
--Special Intervention Reserves	384,377.56

• Source - CBN

Money Market Indicators (in Percentage)

Month	June 2022
Inter-Bank Call Rate	11.10
Minimum Rediscount Rate (MRR)	
Monetary Policy Rate (MPR)	13.00
Treasury Bill Rate	2.45
Savings Deposit Rate	1.38
1 Month Deposit Rate	3.48
3 Months Deposit Rate	4.55
6 Months Deposit Rate	4.97
12 Months Deposit Rate	5.30
Prime Lending rate	12.29
Maximum Lending Rate	27.61

• Monetary Policy Rate - 13%

OPEC DAILY BASKET PRICE AS AT THURSDAY, MAY 7

The OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up of the following: Saharan Blend (Algeria), Girassol (Angola), Djeno (Congo), Zafiro (Equatorial Guinea), Rabi Light (Gabon), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran), Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE) and Merey (Venezuela).

MARKET NEWS

Investors in Interest in Nestle, Others Lift Stock Market by N65bn

Kayode Tokede

The stock market of the Nigerian Exchange Limited (NGX) yesterday recovered from five straight sessions of losses to appreciate by N65billion amid investors renewed interest in Nestle Nigeria Plc, among others.

In summary, the NGX All-Share Index (ASI) grew by 120.48 basis points or 0.25 per cent, to close at 48,675.24 basis points. Consequently, the overall market capitalisation value gained N65 billion to close at N26.254 trillion.

The market positive performance was driven by price appreciation in large and medium capitalised stocks which are; Nestle Nigeria, Stanbic IBTC Holdings, Ecobank Transnational Incorporated (ETI), BUA Cement and NEM Insurance Plc.

Also, market breadth closed positive as 16 stocks gained relative to 11 losers. NEM Insurance recorded the highest price gain of 10 per cent to close at N4.84, per share.

Stanbic IBTC Holdings followed with a gain of 8.93 per cent to close at N30.50 and ETI went up 8.00 per cent to close at N10.80, per share.

Cutix up by 7.37 per cent to close at N2.04, while Japaul Gold and Ventures appreciated by 6.90 per cent to close at 31 kobo, per share. On the other hand, Fidson Healthcare led the losers' chart by 9.80 per cent to close at N9.11, per share. FTN Cocoa processors followed with a decline of 9.09 per cent to close at 30 kobo, while Unity Bank lost 2.33 per cent to close at 42 kobo, per share.

FCMB Group declined 2.19 per cent to close at N3.13, while AIICO Insurance shed 1.79 per cent to close at 55 kobo, per share.

However, the total volume traded decreased by 17.92 per cent to 167.569 million units, valued at N3.374 billion, and exchanged in 3,751 deals.

Transactions in the shares of Access Holdings topped the activity chart with 27.898 million shares valued at N231.144 million. United Bank for Africa (UBA) followed with 22.949 million shares worth N160.909 million, while FBN Holdings traded 22.507 million shares valued at N241.975 million.

Guaranty Trust Holding Company (GTCO) traded 16.088 million shares valued at N323.988 million, while Zenith Bank transacted 11.860 million shares worth N261.112 million.

Analysts at GTI Securities Limited stated that, "the domestic market closes the day positive to reverse a two day bearish sentiment. All sector recorded positive performance.

"We expect mixed sentiments to continue in the following trading days, as more companies release their Q2 results."

PRICES FOR SECURITIES TRADED AS OF 24/8/2022

MAIN BOARD	DEALS	MARKET PRICE	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE TRADED (N)
FINANCIAL SERVICES				
S/N BANKING	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
1 UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC	239,395.95	7.00	-0.71	176 22,948,561
2 ZENITH BANK PLC	690,722.86	22.00	-0.23	299 11,859,784
BANKING				475 34,808,345
S/N OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
3 ACCESS HOLDINGS PLC	291,470.85	8.20	-1.20	262 27,897,677
4 FBN HOLDINGS PLC	385,874.40	10.75	-1.40	91 22,507,150
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS				353 50,404,827
FINANCIAL SERVICES				828 85,213,172
ICT				
S/N TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
5 MTN NIGERIA COMMUNICATIONS PLC	4,070,902.61	200.00	-	262 3,626,225
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES				262 3,626,225
ICT				262 3,626,225
INDUSTRIAL GOODS				
S/N BUILDING MATERIALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
6 DANGOTE CEMENT PLC	4,174,924.31	245.00	-	61 41,063
7 LAFARGE AFRICA PLC.	386,587.09	24.00	-	48 281,038
BUILDING MATERIALS				109 322,101
INDUSTRIAL GOODS				109 322,101
OIL AND GAS				
S/N EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
8 SEPLAT ENERGY PLC	764,977.93	1,300.00	-	30 130,082
EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION				30 130,082
OIL AND GAS				30 130,082
AGRICULTURE				
S/N CROP PRODUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
9 ELLAH LAKES PLC.	8,000.00	4.00	-	0 0
10 FTN COCOA PROCESSORS PLC	660.00	0.30	-9.09	13 1,244,336
11 OKOMU OIL PALM PLC.	179,621.25	188.30	-	66 107,623
12 PRESCO PLC	142,600.00	142.60	-	15 5,394
CROP PRODUCTION				94 1,357,353
S/N LIVESTOCK/ANIMAL SPECIALTIES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
13 LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC.	3,720.00	1.24	-	9 45,257
LIVESTOCK/ANIMAL SPECIALTIES				9 45,257
AGRICULTURE				103 1,402,610
CONGLOMERATES				
S/N DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
14 JOHN HOLT PLC.	346.34	0.89	-	0 0
15 S C O A NIG. PLC.	1,137.19	1.75	-	0 0
16 TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATION PLC	42,273.91	1.04	0.97	52 2,135,815
17 U A C N PLC.	31,118.00	10.80	-	12 143,968
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIES				64 2,279,783
CONGLOMERATES				64 2,279,783
CONSTRUCTION/REAL ESTATE				
S/N BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
18 ARBICO PLC.	152.96	1.03	-	1 2,900
CONSTRUCTION/REAL ESTATE				
S/N BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION				1 2,900
S/N INFRASTRUCTURE/HEAVY CONSTRUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
19 JULIUS BERGER NIG. PLC.	41,440.00	25.90	-	19 168,685
INFRASTRUCTURE/HEAVY CONSTRUCTION				19 168,685
S/N REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
20 UPDC PLC	18,931.17	1.02	-	0 0
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT				0 0
CONSTRUCTION/REAL ESTATE				20 171,585
CONSUMER GOODS				
S/N AUTOMOBILES/AUTO PARTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
21 DN TYRE & RUBBER PLC	954.53	0.20	-	0 0
AUTOMOBILES/AUTO PARTS				0 0
S/N BEVERAGES--BREWERS/DISTILLERS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
22 CHAMPION BREW. PLC.	30,535.04	3.90	-	11 226,601
23 GOLDEN GUINEA BREW. PLC.	829.98	0.81	-	0 0
24 GUINNESS NIG PLC	183,992.16	84.00	-4.76	88 1,188,444
25 INTERNATIONAL BREWERIES PLC.	139,682.76	5.20	-	28 373,347
CONSUMER GOODS				
S/N BEVERAGES--BREWERS/DISTILLERS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
26 NIGERIAN BREW. PLC.	387,615.71	47.15	-	71 1,531,828
BEVERAGES--BREWERS/DISTILLERS				198 3,320,220
S/N FOOD PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
27 BUA FOODS PLC	972,000.00	54.00	-	17 166,569
28 DANGOTE SUGAR REFINERY PLC	194,350.05	16.00	-	41 145,293
29 FLOUR MILLS NIG. PLC.	119,116.03	29.05	-	49 121,844
30 HONEYWELL FLOUR MILL PLC	23,552.69	2.97	2.77	104 9,250,014
31 MULTI-TREX INTEGRATED FOODS PLC	1,340.10	0.36	-	0 0
32 N NIG. FLOUR MILLS PLC.	1,336.50	7.50	-	6 22,721
33 NASCON ALLIED INDUSTRIES PLC	29,143.82	11.00	-	5 21,114
34 UNION DICON SALT PLC.	2,446.38	8.95	-	1 190
FOOD PRODUCTS				223 9,727,745
S/N FOOD PRODUCTS--DIVERSIFIED	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
35 CADBURY NIGERIA PLC.	25,167.91	13.40	-	29 72,139
36 NESTLE NIGERIA PLC.	1,032,831.10	1,303.00	0.23	20 219,169
FOOD PRODUCTS--DIVERSIFIED				49 291,308
S/N HOUSEHOLD DURABLES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
37 NIGERIAN ENAMELWARE PLC.	1,231.72	16.20	-	0 0
38 VITAFOAM NIG PLC.	28,143.99	22.50	-	21 66,129
HOUSEHOLD DURABLES				21 66,129
S/N PERSONAL/HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
39 P Z CUSSONS NIGERIA PLC.	31,962.34	8.05	-	34 122,505
40 UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC.	77,557.57	13.50	-	15 20,534
PERSONAL/HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS				49 143,039
CONSUMER GOODS				
CONSUMER GOODS				540 13,548,441
FINANCIAL SERVICES				
S/N BANKING	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
41 ECOBANK TRANSNATIONAL INCORPORATED	198,175.15	10.80	8.00	15 207,232
42 FIDELITY BANK PLC	87,793.63	3.03	0.66	63 1,949,947
43 GUARANTY TRUST HOLDING COMPANY PLC	591,566.70	20.10	-0.50	309 16,087,931
44 JAIZ BANK PLC	30,050.82	0.87	-1.14	84 5,053,704
45 STERLING BANK PLC.	43,761.44	1.52	1.33	21 1,300,326
46 UNION BANK NIG.PLC.	174,724.52	6.00	-	27 226,466
47 UNITY BANK PLC	4,909.52	0.42	-2.33	18 2,614,937
48 WEMA BANK PLC.	45,003.54	3.50	-	22 434,518
BANKING				559 27,875,061
S/N INSURANCE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
49 AFRICAN ALLIANCE INSURANCE PLC	4,117.00	0.20	-	0 0
50 AIICO INSURANCE PLC.	20,132.90	0.55	-1.79	31 1,144,438
FINANCIAL SERVICES				
S/N INSURANCE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
51 AXAMANSARD INSURANCE PLC	16,650.00	1.85	-2.70	25 526,158
52 CONSOLIDATED HALLMARK INSURANCE PLC	6,636.79	0.62	-1.59	20 2,812,500
53 CORNERSTONE INSURANCE PLC	12,716.47	0.70	-5.71	15 1,199,439
54 CORONATION INSURANCE PLC	9,596.67	0.40	5.26	27 926,224
55 GOLDLINK INSURANCE PLC	909.99	0.20	-	0 0
56 GUINEA INSURANCE PLC.	1,228.00	0.20	-	0 0
57 INTERNATIONAL ENERGY INSURANCE PLC	487.95	0.38	-	0 0
58 LASACO ASSURANCE PLC.	1,741.91	0.95	-	0 0
59 LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC	7,280.00	0.52	-	3 708,775
60 MUTUAL BENEFITS ASSURANCE PLC.	6,219.10	0.31	6.90	17 2,001,972
61 NEM INSURANCE PLC	24,279.75	4.84	10.00	50 1,662,730
62 NIGER INSURANCE PLC	1,547.90	0.20	-	0 0
63 PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC	6,891.33	0.52	-	6 180,932
64 REGENCY ASSURANCE PLC	1,667.19	0.25	-	5 16,600
65 SOVEREIGN TRUST INSURANCE PLC	3,068.41	0.27	-3.70	23 1,564,500
66 STACO INSURANCE PLC	4,483.72	0.48	-	0 0
67 STANDARD ALLIANCE INSURANCE PLC.	2,582.21	0.20	-	0 0
68 SUNU ASSURANCES NIGERIA PLC.	2,033.78	0.35	-	3 14,000
69 UNIVERSAL INSURANCE PLC	3,200.00	0.20	-	0 0
70 VERITAS KAPITAL ASSURANCE PLC	2,773.33	0.20	-	2 42,725
INSURANCE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES				227 12,800,993
S/N MICRO-FINANCE BANKS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
71 NPF MICROFINANCE BANK PLC	9,988.34	1.65	-	5 16,850
MICRO-FINANCE BANKS				5 16,850

MAIN BOARD	DEALS	MARKET PRICE	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE TRADED (N)
FINANCIAL SERVICES				
S/N MORTGAGE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
72 ABBEY MORTGAGE BANK PLC	17,261.54	1.70	-	0 0
73 ASO SAVINGS AND LOANS PLC	7,370.87	0.50	-	0 0
74 INFINITY TRUST MORTGAGE BANK PLC	5,296.48	1.27	-	0 0
75 RESORT SAVINGS & LOANS PLC	2,265.95	0.20	-	0 0
FINANCIAL SERVICES				
S/N MORTGAGE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
76 UNION HOMES SAVINGS AND LOANS PLC.	2,949.22	3.02	-	0 0
MORTGAGE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES				0 0
S/N OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
77 AFRICA PRUDENTIAL PLC	11,200.00	5.60	-	25 150,696
78 CUSTODIAN INVESTMENT PLC	39,408.49	6.70	-	17 801,261
79 DEAP CAPITAL MANAGEMENT & TRUST PLC	300.00	0.20	-	0 0
80 FCMB GROUP PLC.	61,982.48	3.13	-2.19	35 605,557
81 NIGERIAN EXCHANGE GROUP	38,594.88	19.65	0.26	15 546,151
82 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLC.	5,248.28	1.02	-	0 0
83 STANBIC IBTC HOLDINGS PLC	395,188.41	30.50	8.93	177 2,838,964
84 UNITED CAPITAL PLC	71,400.00	11.90	-0.42	68 781,485
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS				337 5,724,114
FINANCIAL SERVICES				1,128 46,417,018
HEALTHCARE				
S/N HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
85 EKOCORP PLC.	2,886.90	5.79	-	0 0
HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS				0 0
S/N MEDICAL SUPPLIES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
86 MORISON INDUSTRIES PLC.	2,166.26	2.19	-	1 88
MEDICAL SUPPLIES				1 88
S/N PHARMACEUTICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
87 FIDSON HEALTHCARE PLC	20,907.42	9.11	-9.80	19 267,261
88 GLAXO SMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIG. PLC.	7,175.26	6.00	-	26 374,178
89 MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC.	6,693.91	3.88	-	51 1,863,280
HEALTHCARE				
S/N PHARMACEUTICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
90 NEIMETH INTERNATIONAL PHARMACEUTICALS PLC	2,867.73	1.51	-1.31	25 596,958
91 PHARMA-DEKO PLC.	379.44	1.75	-	0 0
PHARMACEUTICALS				74 899,497
HEALTHCARE				77 900,991
ICT				
S/N COMPUTER BASED SYSTEMS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
92 COURTEVILLE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS PLC	1,704.96	0.48	9.09	7 181,444
COMPUTER BASED SYSTEMS				7 181,444
S/N COMPUTERS AND PERIPHERALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
93 OMATEK VENTURES PLC	588.36	0.20	-	0 0
COMPUTERS AND PERIPHERALS				0 0
S/N IT SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
94 CWG PLC	2,272.34	0.90	-	3 54,500
95 NCR (NIGERIA) PLC.	388.80	3.60	-	0 0
IT SERVICES				3 54,500
S/N PROCESSING SYSTEMS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
96 CHAMS HOLDING COMPANY PLC	1,174.02	0.25	-8.00	18 1,271,000
97 E-TRANZACT INTERNATIONAL PLC	15,126.81	2.28	-	0 0
PROCESSING SYSTEMS				18 1,271,000
S/N TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
98 AIRTEL AFRICA PLC	7,160,781.88	1,905.40	-	24 1,199
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES				24 1,199
ICT				52 1,508,143
INDUSTRIAL GOODS				
S/N BUILDING MATERIALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
99 BERGER PAINTS PLC	1,912.83	6.60	-	18 61,417
100 BUA CEMENT PLC	1,823,595.47	53.85	-	67 530,371
INDUSTRIAL GOODS				
S/N BUILDING MATERIALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
101 CAP PLC	13,400.41	17.00	-	9 4,209
102 MEYER PLC.	1,205.91	2.27	-	2 405
103 PREMIER PAINTS PLC.	1,230.00	10.00	-	0 0
BUILDING MATERIALS				96 596,402
S/N ELECTRONIC AND ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
104 AUSTIN LAZ & COMPANY PLC	2,192.12	2.03	-	0 0
105 CUTIX PLC.	6,693.02	1.90	-	24 245,959
ELECTRONIC AND ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS				24 245,959
S/N PACKAGING/CONTAINERS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
106 BETA GLASS PLC.	30,718.28	51.20	-	2 202
107 GREIF NIGERIA PLC	232.39	5.45	-	0 0
108 TRIPPLE GEE AND COMPANY PLC.	430.61	0.87	-	2 20,464
PACKAGING/CONTAINERS				4 20,666
S/N AGRO-ALLIED & CHEMICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
109 NOTORE CHEMICAL IND PLC	100,754.14	62.50	-	2 178
AGRO-ALLIED & CHEMICALS				2 178
INDUSTRIAL GOODS				126 863,205
NATURAL RESOURCES				
S/N CHEMICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
110 INDUSTRIAL & MEDICAL GASES NIGERIA PLC	3,721.23	7.45	-	6 4,816
CHEMICALS				6 4,816
S/N METALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
111 ALUMINIUM EXTRUSION IND. PLC.	1,583.68	7.20	-	0 0
METALS				0 0
NATURAL RESOURCES				
S/N MINING SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
112 MULTIVERSE MINING AND EXPLORATION PLC	895.01	2.10	-	29 336,467
MINING SERVICES				29 336,467
S/N PAPER/FOREST PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
113 THOMAS WYATT NIG. PLC.	77.00	0.35	-	0 0
PAPER/FOREST PRODUCTS				0 0
NATURAL RESOURCES				35 341,283
OIL AND GAS				
S/N ENERGY EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
114 JAPAUL GOLD & VENTURES PLC	1,816.18	0.29	-	31 763,252
ENERGY EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES				31 763,252
S/N INTEGRATED OIL AND GAS SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
115 OANDO PLC	60,043.72	4.83	-0.41	123 3,883,043
INTEGRATED OIL AND GAS SERVICES				123 3,883,043
S/N PETROLEUM AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTORS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
116 ARDOVA PLC	15,955.39	12.25	-	22 174,647
117 CONOIL PLC	18,008.06	25.95	-	15 12,348
118 ETERNA PLC.	8,607.35	6.60	-	14 184,281
119 MRS OIL NIGERIA PLC.	4,920.40	14.35	-0.69	11 121,037
120 TOTALENERGIES MARKETING NIGERIA PLC	79,617.87	234.50	-	16 5,663
PETROLEUM AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTORS				78 497,976
OIL AND GAS				232 5,144,271

MARKET NEWS

FUND MANAGERS ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA

A Mutual fund (Unit Trust) is an investment vehicle managed by a SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission) registered Fund Manager. Investors with similar objectives buy units of the Fund so that the Fund Manager can buy securities that willl generate their desired return.

An ETF (Exchange Traded Fund) is a type of fund which owns the assets (shares of stock, bonds, oil futures, gold bars, foreign currency, etc.) and divides ownership of those assets into shares. Investors can buy these 'shares' on the floor of the Nigerian Stock Exchange.

A REIT (Real Estate Investment Trust) is an investment vehicle that allows both small and large investors to part-own real estate ventures (eg. Offices, Houses, Hospitals) in proportion to their investments. The assets are divided into shares that are traded on the Nigerian Stock Exchange.

GUIDE TO DATA:
Date: All fund prices are quoted in Naira as at 23-Aug-2022, unless otherwise stated.

Offer price: The price at which units of a trust or ETF are bought by investors.
Bid Price: The price at which Investors redeem (sell) units of a trust or ETF.

Yield/Total Return: Denotes the total return an investor would have earned on his investment. Money Market Funds report Yield while others report Year- to-date Total Return.
NAV: Is value per share of the real estate assets held by a REIT on a specific date.

DAILY PRICE LIST FOR MUTUAL FUNDS, REITS and ETFS

MUTUAL FUNDS / UNIT TRUSTS

AFRINVEST ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD			aaml@afrinvest.com
Web: www.afrinvest.com; Tel: +234 818 885 6757			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Afrinvest Equity Fund	187.14	188.29	12.12%
Afrinvest Plutus Fund	100.00	100.00	7.14%
Nigeria International Debt Fund	311.16	311.16	8.12%
Afrinvest Dollar Fund	105.07	106.22	6.50%
AIICO CAPITAL LTD			ammf@aiicocapital.com
Web: www.aiicocapital.com, Tel: +234-1-2792974			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
AIICO Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
AIICO Balanced Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
ANCHORIA ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED			info@anchoriaam.com
Web:www.anchoriaam.com, Tel: 08166830267; 08036814510; 08028419180			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Anchoria Money Market	100.00	100.00	6.38%
Anchoria Equity Fund	138.19	139.75	-0.76%
Anchoria Fixed Income Fund	1.18	1.18	3.32%
ARM INVESTMENT MANAGERS LTD			enquiries@arminvestmentcenter.com
Web: www.arm.com.ng; Tel: 0700 CALLARM (0700 225 5276)			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
ARM Aggressive Growth Fund	20.90	21.53	3.01%
ARM Discovery Balanced Fund	502.86	518.02	11.46%
ARM Ethical Fund	42.14	43.41	8.16%
ARM Eurobond Fund ($)	1.08	1.08	-0.02%
ARM Fixed Income Fund	1.06	1.06	4.13%
ARM Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	8.94%
AVA GLOBAL ASSET MANAGERS LIMITED			info@avacapitalgroup.com
Web: www.avacapitalgroup.com; Tel 08069294653			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
AVA GAM Fixed Income Dollar Fund	91.75	91.75	-7.42%
AVA GAM Fixed Income Dollar Naira	1,091.40	1,091.40	9.11%
AXA MANSARD INVESTMENTS LIMITED			investmentcare@axamansard.com
Web: www.axamansard.com; Tel: +2341-4488482			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
AXA Mansard Equity Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
AXA Mansard Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
CAPITAL EXPRESS ASSET AND TRUST LIMITED			info@capitalexpressassetandtrust.com
Web: www.capitalexpressassetandtrust.com; Tel: +234 803 307 5048			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
CEAT Fixed Income Fund	2.09	2.09	2.67%
Capital Express Balanced Fund(Formerly: Union Trustees Mixed Fund)	2.34	2.39	10.15%
CAPITALTRUST INVESTMENTS AND ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED			halalfif@capitaltrustnigeria.com
Web: www.capitaltrustnigeria.com; Tel: 08061458806			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Capitaltrust Halal Fixed Income Fund	1,014.97	1,014.97	4.91%
CARDINALSTONE ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED			mutualfunds@cardinalstone.com
Web: www.cardinalstoneassetmanagement.com; Tel: +234 (1) 710 0433 4			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
CardinalStone Fixed Income Alpha Fund	1.01	1.01	5.44%
CHAPELHILL DENHAM MANAGEMENT LTD			investmentmanagement@chapelhilldenham.com
Web: www.chapelhilldenham.com, Tel: +234 461 0691			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Chapelhill Denham Money Market Fund	100.00	100.00	9.73%
Paramount Equity Fund	19.11	19.46	9.66%
Women's Investment Fund	147.97	149.75	2.84%
CORDROS ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED			assetmgtteam@cordros.com
Web: www.cordros.com, Tel: 019036947			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Cordros Money Market Fund	100.00	100.00	8.90%
Cordros Milestone Fund	130.95	131.88	5.26%
Cordros Dollar Fund ($)	110.92	110.92	5.13%
CORONATION ASSETS MANAGEMENT			investment@coronationam.com
Web:www.coronationam.com, Tel: 012366215			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Coronation Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Coronation Balanced Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Coronation Fixed Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
EDC FUNDS MANAGEMENT LIMITED			mutualfundng@ecobank.com
Web: www.ecobank.com Tel: 012265281			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
EDC Nigeria Money Market Fund Class A	100.00	100.00	8.98%
EDC Nigeria Money Market Fund Class B	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	9.40%
EDC Nigeria Fixed Income Fund	1,112.44	1,130.90	0.06%
EMERGING AFRICA ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED			assetmanagement@emergingafricafroup.com
Web:www.emergingafricagroup.com/emerging-africa-asset-management-limited/, Tel: 08039492594			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Emerging Africa Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	7.99%
Emerging Africa Bond Fund	1.03	1.03	8.74%
Emerging Africa Balanced Diversity Fund	1.03	1.03	2.77%
Emerging Africa Eurobond Fund	103.09	103.09	1.94%
FBNQUEST ASSETS MANAGEMENT LIMITED			invest@fbnquest.com
Web: www.fbnquest.com/asset-management; Tel: +234-81 0082 0082			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
FBN Bond Fund	1492.64	1492.64	11.40%
FBN Balanced Fund	192.01	193.24	9.56%
FBN Halal Fund	122.69	122.69	10.69%
FBN Money Market Fund	100.00	100.00	9.45%
FBN Dollar Fund (Retail)	125.44	125.44	6.01%
FBN Nigeria Smart Beta Equity Fund	156.29	158.39	3.60%
FCMB ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED			fcmbamhelpdesk@fcmb.com
Web: www.fcmbassetmanagement.com; Tel: +234 1 462 2596			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Legacy Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Legacy Debt Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Legacy Equity Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Legacy USD Bond Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
FSDH ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD			coralfunds@fsdhgroup.com
Web: www.fsdhaml.com; Tel: 01-270 4884-5; 01-280 9740-1			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Coral Balanced Fund	4,045.39	4,104.94	6.12%
Coral Income Fund	3,606.43	3,606.43	6.18%
Coral Money Market Fund	100.00	100.00	10.14%
FSDH Dollar Fund	1.11	1.11	4.01%
INVESTMENT ONE FUNDS MANAGEMENT LTD			enquiries@investment-one.com
Web: www.investment-one.com; Tel: +234 812 992 1045,+234 1 448 8888			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Abacus Money Market Fund	100.00	100.00	7.97%
Vantage Balanced Fund	2.89	2.94	1.30%
Vantage Guaranteed Income Fund	1.00	1.00	6.00%
Kedari Investment Fund (KIF)	142.34	142.34	3.90%
Vantage Equity Income Fund (VEIF) - June Year End	1.25	1.28	2.29%
Vantage Dollar Fund (VDF) - June Year End	1.06	1.06	0.72%
LOTUS CAPITAL LTD			fincon@lotuscapitallimited.com
Web: www.lotuscapitallimited.com; Tel: +234 1-291 4626 / +234 1-291 4624			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Lotus Halal Investment Fund	1.59	1.62	12.15%
Lotus Halal Fixed Income Fund	1,164.66	1,164.66	6.09%
MERISTEM WEALTH MANAGEMENT LTD			info@meristemwealth.com
Web: http://www.meristemwealth.com/funds/ ; Tel: +234 1-4488260			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Meristem Equity Market Fund	11.98	12.05	10.03%
Meristem Money Market Fund	10.00	10.00	9.59%
NORRENBERGER INVESTMENT AND CAPITAL MANAGEMENT LIMITED			enquiries@norrenberger.com
Web: www.norrenberger.com, Tel: +234 (0) 908 781 2026			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Norrenberger Islamic Fund (NIF)	102.04	102.04	9.64%
Norrenberger Money Market Fund (NMMF)	100.00	100.00	8.14%
PAC ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD			info@pacassetmanagement.com
Web: www.pacassetmanagement.com/mutualfunds; Tel: +234 1 271 8632			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
PACAM Balanced Fund	1.64	1.67	4.54%
PACAM Fixed Income Fund	11.77	11.80	5.26%
PACAM Money Market Fund	10.00	10.00	7.25%
PACAM Equity Fund	1.45	1.46	1.44%
PACAM EuroBond Fund	117.30	120.23	2.81%
SCM CAPITAL LIMITED			info@scmcapitalng.com
Web: www.scmcapitalng.com; Tel: +234 1-280 2226,+234 1- 280 2227			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
SCM Capital Frontier Fund	130.04	132.63	4.74%
SFS CAPITAL NIGERIA LTD			investments@sfsnigeria.com
Web: www.sfsnigeria.com, Tel: +234 (01) 2801400			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
SFS Fixed Income Fund	1.06	1.06	9.22%
STANBIC IBTC ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD			assetmanagement@stanbicibtc.com
Web: www.stanbicibtcassetmanagement.com; Tel: +234 1 280 1266; 0700 MUTUALFUNDS			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Stanbic IBTC Balanced Fund	3,538.68	3,573.98	4.49%
Stanbic IBTC Bond Fund	241.14	241.14	2.36%
Stanbic IBTC Ethical Fund	1.39	1.41	11.11%
Stanbic IBTC Guaranteed Investment Fund	324.86	324.87	3.75%
Stanbic IBTC Iman Fund	255.41	259.72	9.61%
Stanbic IBTC Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	7.07%
Stanbic IBTC Nigerian Equity Fund	11,565.27	11,726.68	6.02%
Stanbic IBTC Dollar Fund (USD)	1.33	1.33	3.28%
Stanbic IBTC Shariah Fixed Income Fund	119.46	119.46	2.18%
Stanbic IBTC Enhanced Short-Term Fixed Income Fund	111.58	111.58	4.89%
UNITED CAPITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD			unitedcapitalplcgroup.com
Web: www.unitedcapitalplcgroup.com; Tel: +234 01-6317876			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
United Capital Equity Fund	0.94	0.96	6.20%
United Capital Balanced Fund	1.33	1.35	2.04%
United Capital Wealth for Women Fund	1.12	1.13	8.27%
United Capital Sukuk Fund	1.08	1.08	4.62%
United Capital Fixed Income Fund	1.91	1.91	4.07%
United Capital Eurobond Fund	122.82	122.82	3.67%
United Capital Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	10.15%
QUANTUM ZENITH ASSET MANAGEMENT & INVESTMENTS LTD			service@quantumzenithasset.com.ng
Web: www.quantumzenith.com.ng; Tel: +234 1-2784219			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Zenith Balanced Strategy Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Zenith ESG Impact Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Zenith Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Zenith Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
VETIVA FUND MANAGERS LTD			funds@vetiva.com
Web: www.vetiva.com; Tel: +234 1 453 0697			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Vetiva Banking Exchange Traded Fund	3.79	3.89	-5.37%
Vetiva Consumer Goods Exchange Traded Fund	5.79	5.89	-0.98%
Vetiva Griffin 30 Exchange Traded Fund	17.62	17.82	-0.35%
Vetiva Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	9.24%
Vetiva Industrial Goods Exchange Traded Fund	17.53	17.73	-12.23%
Vetiva S&P Nigeria Sovereign Bond Exchange Traded Fund	148.41	150.41	-5.89%

REITS

Fund Name	NAV Per Share	Yield / T-Rtn
SFS REIT	118.56	4.66%
Union Homes REIT	51.93	2.11%

EXCHANGE TRADED FUNDS

Fund Name	Bid Price	Offer Price	Yield / T-Rtn
Lotus Halal Equity Exchange Traded Fund	14.31	14.41	2.27%
SIAML Pension ETF 40	127.64	130.89	0.42%
Stanbic IBTC ETF 30 Fund	98.32	100.48	-1.44%
MERGROWTH ETF	16.40	16.50	-5.28%
MERVALUE ETF	17.10	17.20	16.02%

INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

Fund Name	NAV Per Share	Yield / T-Rtn
Chapel Hill Denham Nigeria Infrastructure Debt Fund	107.59	0.00%

The value of investments and the income from them may fall as well as rise. Past performance is a guide and not an indication of future returns. Fund prices published in this edition are also available on each fund manager's website and FMAN's website at *www.fman.com.ng*. Fund prices are supplied by the operator of the relevant fund and are published for information purposes only.

WIKE, TINUBU'S PACT IS REAL, HE'LL WORK FOR US, SAYS IBRAHIM MASARI

had was such that would not affect the place of former governor of the state and immediate past Minister of Transportation, Chibuike Amaechi.

The revelation came as President Muhammadu Buhari, in an attempt to allay the fears of some members of the ruling APC, said he would not betray or undermine his party by supporting candidates other than those fielded by APC in next year's general election. Buhari said this in a statement by his Senior Special Assistant on Media and Publicity, Mallam Garba Shehu.

The president promised to support all APC candidates in 2023. He denied maintaining any connection with persons who defected from the party as well as those, who had dragged APC to court.

The president warned presidency officials against loose talk that could heat up the polity.

However, the political discourse and political debate surrounding the controversial Muslim-Muslim presidential ticket of APC continued yesterday, as former Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon. Yakubu Dogara, and erstwhile Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Babachir Lawal, met with two former military leaders, Generals Ibrahim Babangida and Abdulsalami Abubakar, as part of consultations on the options open to northern Christians.

Masari, while affirming that the arrangement with Wike would not affect the APC leader in Rivers State, Amaechi, said, "The meeting was basically on the 2023 presidential election and, by God's grace, we are going to work with His Excellency, Governor Nyeson Wike; he will assist and we are going to win the election with ease, by the will of God."

On whether Wike would defect to APC to work for Tinubu, Masari said, "This is because Wike is a big politician, a governor and has control in some other states apart from his state. He is good to the people and has associated with his people peacefully. By the grace of God, he will be of help to us."

Addressing the finality of the working agreement, given the equal desire by the Atiku Abubakar camp to make peace with the Rivers State governor, Masari said, "Well, only God knows what would happen next. But what we are seeing now, what has transpired is that we are going to work with Wike and he will be useful to us.

"If you could remember, it was APC that caused the failure of APC in Bauchi; it was members of the party that led to the defeat of the governor from their own party. In Adamawa, too. So, what I want people to understand, someone can still assist you even without joining your party if he wants to.

"Furthermore, with the widespread acceptance of His Excellency Bola Ahmed Tinubu to Nigerians, I can assure you, by the will of God, he is going to win the election, with or without help. But there is the Hausa adage, which says even if you're beautiful, you should add to it by taking bath. So, it's not only about Wike, we are also talking with many other governors."

Masari also spoke on the effect of the Tinubu, Wike agreement on the political structure of APC in Rivers State, with Amaechi as leader. He said the political alliance with Wike would not side-line Amaechi and other APC members in the state.

"Nobody will do anything that will hurt Rotimi Amaechi. He is a party member, a formidable member of the APC," Masari said.

Meanwhile, the presidency, in a statement by Buhari's media assistant, said it wished to put it on record, and reassure faithful party members that the president remained a "disciplined soldier" of APC, who will, in all the coming elections, support only candidates fielded by the party.

According to the release, "This is a warning to decamped party members and some others, who are still in court against official candidates of the APC that, they are on their own and nobody outside the party tent should link what they are doing to President Buhari.

"The president wishes to be quoted as saying that, he is the 'occupant of the high office of the President by the Grace of God, who used the instrumentality of the APC to bring him to power with a historic verdict in 2015.' In 2019, he was returned with a bigger majority.

"For the first time, a non-PDP government came to power with a huge majority after 16 years of the Fourth Republic. His constant refrain is: 'I will not betray or undermine my party by supporting candidates other than those of the APC.

"This statement is not against any particular candidate. However, our stand is clear that only those candidates fielded by the All Progressives Candidates (APC) will enjoy the support of the president and they are the ones he will campaign for. However, we welcome support for our candidates at all levels by other parties.

"The president says he will continue to support the party at all levels to enforce discipline, synchronisation, and coordination.

"He also directs officials in and around the Presidential Villa and all those engaging in loose talk to resist making controversial statements that eventually end up hurting the party and the government, thereby providing a weapon for the opposition to use against the administration, the party or its candidates in the coming elections."

Regarding the meeting with two former Nigerian leaders, a source told journalists that the two leading opponents of APC's Muslim-Muslim presidential preference were accompanied on the visit by former deputy governor of Kogi State, Simon Achuba.

The trio met separately with Babangida at his Hilltop residence in Minna and Abubakar, also in the Niger State capital.

The source said though the meeting was held on Monday behind closed doors, some of the details had begun to emerge.

Dogara and Babachir were in Minna to felicitate with IBB on his 81st birthday and also consult with him on their stance on the APC Muslim-Muslim ticket.

The duo had recently convened a summit of APC Northern Christian Forum in Abuja, where representatives and delegates from the 19 Northern States and the Federal Capital Territory vehemently rejected the Muslim-Muslim ticket of APC.

An inside source said Babachir, Dogara and other northern Christian leaders in APC "are consulting ahead before they can take decision on which of the presidential candidates they will adopt and support ahead of the 2023 general election."

The source, however, stressed, "The choice is now between Atiku Abubakar of the Peoples Democratic Party, Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso of the New Nigeria Peoples Party, and Peter Obi of the Labour Party."

In a related development, a political support group, Asiwaju Project Beyond 2023, confirmed talks between Tinubu and Wike, and called it a good omen for the party ahead of 2023 the elections.

Director-General of the group, Realwan Okpanachi, in a statement in Abuja, yesterday, said the Tinubu-Wike alliance was a good omen for APC, adding that Wike's step is justified.

Confirming the talks between the two sides, Okpanachi said, "We can confirm to you authoritatively that Wike and his team met with Tinubu in London to discuss strategic alliance ahead of the 2023 presidential election. Both leaders appreciate the need to work together to ensure that Tinubu becomes the president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 2023.

"The question is, is Wike justified to take this particular step? The answer is capital yes. What do you expect from a governor that has given everything to sustain the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) only to be slighted, compromised and embarrassed by the same party and its leaders/officers?"

Okpanachi further said that Wike was equally taking the step to ensure his political survival after 2023 election.

According to Okpanachi, "Wike is old and politically experienced and savvy enough to make his decisions. He is entitled to take any necessary step or measure that will guarantee his political survival after 2023 elections. There's no better way to do it than forming a strategic alliance with Tinubu ahead of 2023 general election.

"There is nothing in PDP for Wike anymore. He has lost his bearing and goodwill in the party. The political conspiracy against him in PDP is huge and unprecedented."

Wike had on Monday, with some of his allies, reportedly travelled to London to meet Tinubu for talks on their political future. The talks with Tinubu were sparked by the internal crisis in the PDP following the party's presidential primaries, which Wike believed was skewed against him after one of his rivals endorsed Atiku Abubakar.

Wike was also said to have recently given the party some conditions for amicable resolution of the crisis, following failure to emerge the choice for vice president.

AYU: PDP'LL WIN 25 STATES, MAJORITY IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SEATS DESPITE CRISIS

the party and Rivers State Governor Nyesom Wike.

Relatedly, a PDP member of the House of Representatives from Degema/Bonny Federal Constituency in Rivers State, Hon. Farah Dagogo, assured the presidential candidate of the party, Atiku Abubakar, and his running mate, Governor Ifeanyi Okowa of Delta State, of the unflinching support of the Niger Delta people. Dagogo said a 10-million-man march for the presidential hopeful was being planned in the region.

However, Special Assistant on Media to Wike, Mr. Kelvin Ebiri, lambasted former Governor of Jigawa State, Sule Lamido, over what he described as Lamido's disdainful remarks against his principal on Channels television.

Speaking at a meeting with the 28 PDP governorship candidates, Ayu said, "We are happy that the members of the party are very determined that we don't just win at the national level. State Houses of Assembly, National Assembly, state governorship, we want to return about 25 state governors or more as we used to have. So, the mood in the party is excellent."

Ayu said the governorship candidates came to express their concerns in their various states. He stated , "They briefed us on the efforts they are making in their various states to win the election. As you know, the elections will be won in the states not just at the national level.

"I am very happy with the progress that they have made so far in various states and some of the little issues that we have clarified and it was an extremely useful meeting."

Speaking on the outcome of the meeting, Mohammed, who is seeking re-election said, "I am not aware of the meeting between other party members and Governor Wike", adding that the PDP chairman has already spoken, and that the governorship candidates were loyal party members.

According to the governor, "We believe in the supremacy and sanctity of the party and he has already told you that the mood is very excellent. The candidates are coming together, uniting the party to discuss, even issues of reconciliation.

"So, it is a very democratic party. He is open and we have asked him all the questions that we need to ask about how to win the elections and then the strategies are ours. We don't have to relate it to the media now, but, certainly, we are on course."

Speaking also, the Kaduna State governorship candidate and chairman of PDP Governorship Candidates' Forum, Isa Mohammed Ashiru, said, "We are here on a consultative meeting with our leaders on the way forward and we have extended discussions and views, regarding the 2023 elections. We are home and dry. We don't have crisis in PDP. I don't know where you got this information."

Dagogo Plans 10 Million-Man March for Atiku in Niger Delta

Dagogo assured Atiku and Okowa of the unwavering support of the Niger Delta ahead of the 2023 presidential election. The former governorship aspirant in Rivers State, spoke through his Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Ibrahim Lawal. He noted that such support would be demonstrated in the coming days.

Lawal said a 10-million-man march for Atiku and Okowa was already at an advanced stage and would be held in the coming days across the Niger Delta states, to further galvanise the people and prove to naysayers that the region was for PDP.

The federal lawmaker dismissed fears of protest votes from the region against the party as a fallout of the PDP presidential primaries, saying the Niger Delta has been a traditional stronghold of the PDP from 1999 till date and 2023 would not be an exception.

He said the people of the region remembered and held the PDP in awe as the only party that ensured the region produced the president of the country through Goodluck Jonathan.

According to Dagogo, "Let no one be deceived, conducting elections in Nigeria has metamorphosed, the voting power is with the people. No one can order anyone around, on who to vote or not, no matter how highly placed, because the people are the deciders with their PVCs and votes.

"PDP has been true and fair to our people. It was by the means of this party that we clinched the president seat in this country through our son, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, among several other benefits.

"We are at an advanced stage in plans for a 10-million-man march for Atiku and Okowa across the states of the Niger Delta, particularly, Rivers State. We have spoken with the people, those that will vote, the real voters with PVCs, not political sycophants, and we have been able to galvanise a lot of them."

Lamido Cracking the Wall of Unity in PDP, Says Wike's Aide

Special Assistant on Media to Governor Nyesom Wike of Rivers State, Mr Kelvin Ebiri, criticised Lamido, over disdainful remarks against Wike on Channels television.

The former foreign affairs minister had during his appearance on national television insisted that nobody offended the Rivers State governor and, therefore, no basis for reconciliation.

But Ebiri, in his reaction, noted that Lamido had a right to his opinion, but had no right to malign Wike, whose immense contribution, he said, had sustained PDP. He said Lamido should rather proffer solution to the peace of the party than making speeches capable of inciting grievances and division.

The statement said, "We have observed with disgust the disdainful remarks made by the former governor of Jigawa State, Alhaji Sule Lamido, about Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, during his recent interview on Channels television.

"While, we cannot deny that Alhaji Lamido has an inalienable right to his personal opinion, we wish to declare that he, however, lacks the right to malign Governor Wike, whose immense contributions to the sustenance of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), is not in dispute.

"It is rather appalling that at a time, when concerted efforts are being made by lovers of true democracy and the unity of the party to resolve some inherent contradictions plaguing the PDP, Alhaji Lamido and his cohorts, who have since lost their relevance in the polity, are busy creating friction and schism.

"Governor Wike, has never claimed to be custodian of the over three million votes in Rivers State. But as the leader of the PDP and good people of Rivers State, anyone who underrates the governor's political pedigree or dares to ignore his influence in the state and beyond, will be doing so at his own peril.

"We wish to remind Alhaji Lamido that Governor Wike has never left anyone in doubt about his capacity to sway the voters in Rivers State in a direction that benefits the people and the state, in the overall. When he speaks, Rivers people will listen, no doubt.

OSINBAJO: NIGERIA SEEKS $10BN PACKAGE FROM INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS FOR ENERGY TRANSITION PLAN

poverty and climate change, Osinbajo stated that Nigeria is currently engaging with partners to secure an initial $10 billion support package ahead of COP27 along the lines of the South African Just Energy Transition Partnership announced at COP26 in Glasgow.

"Nigeria would need to spend $410 billion above business-as-usual spending to deliver our Transition Plan by 2060, which translates to about $10 billion per year."

According to him, Africa's increasing energy gaps require collaboration to take ownership of the continent's transition pathways and the action should be decisive and urgent.

He said, "for Africa, the problem of energy poverty is as important as our climate ambitions. Energy use is crucial for almost every conceivable aspect of development. Wealth, health, nutrition, water, infrastructure, education, and life expectancy are significantly related to the consumption of energy per capita."

The vice president highlighted the significant scale of resources required to attain both development and climate ambitions.

"The average $3 billion per year investments in renewable energy recorded for the whole of Africa between 2000 and 2020 will certainly not suffice," he added.

Making reference to the Nigeria Energy Transition Plan, the vice president said the plan was designed to tackle climate change and deliver SDG7 by 2030 and net-zero by 2060, while centering the provision of energy for development, industrialisation and economic growth.

According to him, "we anchored the plan on key objectives including lifting 100 million people out of poverty in a decade, driving economic growth, bringing modern energy services to the full population and managing the expected long-term job losses in the oil sector due to global decarbonisation.

"Given those objectives, the plan recognises the role natural gas must play in the short term to facilitate the establishment of baseload energy capacity and address the nation's clean cooking deficit in the form of LPG.

"The plan envisions vibrant industries powered by low-carbon technologies; streets lined with electric vehicles and livelihoods enabled by sufficient and clean energy."

On other aspirations of the roadmap, Osinbajo explained that the plan has the potential to create about 340,000 jobs by 2030 and 840,000 by 2060. It also presents a unique opportunity to deliver a true low-carbon and rapid development model in Africa's largest economy.

"We are currently implementing power sector initiatives and reforms focused on expanding our grid, increasing generation capacity, and deploying renewable energy to rural and underserved populations."

Aside from the transition plan, the vice president announced the launch of the Universal Energy Facility, "an innovative, result-based, finance programme that focuses specifically on scaling up electricity access for productive uses."

He explained that, "the Universal Energy Facility will provide grant payments to enable solar companies to expand their operations to small and medium-sized enterprises across Nigeria, while crowding-in additional private capital.

"Projects supported by the Universal Energy Facility will help grow businesses and create jobs, making them key contributors to our Energy Transition Plan.

"I'd like to encourage solar companies in attendance today to engage with this innovative financing opportunity, which is being managed by Sustainable Energy for All."

Speaking on the effects of Climate Change in Africa, Osinbajo explained that, "climate change threatens crop productivity in regions that are already food insecure, and since agriculture provides the largest number of jobs, reduced crop productivity will worsen unemployment.

"It is certainly time for decisive action, and we just cannot afford to delay. African nations are rising to the challenge. All African countries have signed the Paris Agreement and some countries, South Africa, Sudan, Angola, and Nigeria have also announced net-zero targets."

Giving more details on energy poverty in Africa, the VP noted that, "the current lack of power hurts livelihoods and destroys the dreams of hundreds of millions of young people.

"And although Africa's current unmet energy needs are huge, future demand will be even greater due to expanding populations, urbanisation and movement into the middle class.

"It is clear that the continent must address its energy constraints and would require external support and policy flexibility to deliver this. Unfortunately, in the wider responses to the climate crisis, we are not seeing careful consideration and acknowledgement of Africa's aspirations."

Underscoring the importance of collaboration, the vice president also noted that, "we developed our Energy Transition Plan to engage with the rest of the world in a serious, thorough and data-backed manner."

Osinbajo explained that, "there is a clear need for African nations to engage more critically and vocally in conversations on our global climate future.

"More importantly, we need to take ownership of our transition pathways and design climate-sensitive strategies that address our growth objectives. This is what Nigeria has done with our Energy Transition Plan."

At the virtual event, Nigeria Country Director for World Bank, Mr. Shubham Chaudhuri announced that the multilateral institution plans, "to commit over $1.5 billion towards the Energy Transition Plan on renewable energy, on power sector reforms, on clean cooking, and wherever opportunities arise."

Speaking in the same vein, the CEO, Sun Africa, Mr. Adam Cortese posited that, "the launch of Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan has further accelerated our efforts, proving Nigeria to be fertile grounds for investments in the sector.

"We are in the final stages of discussion with US EXIM Bank on a $1.5 billion financing package."

Other speakers at the event commended Nigeria's leadership and pioneering role in the region, emphasising the need for data-driven country-level energy transition plans that recognise the unique pathways each country would need to take in order to achieve a just, inclusive and equitable energy transition for all.

The launch also featured remarks from Nigeria's Ministers and officials, including, Ministers of Environment, Mr. Mohammed Abdullahi; Power, Engr. Abubakar Aliyu; Power (State) Goddy Jedy Agba; Works and Housing, Mr. Babatunde Fashola; Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs, (Dr.) Zainab Ahmed; Group Managing Director of Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) Limited, Mr Mele Kyari; Managing Director, Rural Electrification Agency, Engr. Ahmad Salihijo.

Other speakers included the Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations, Amina Mohammed; Minister of Petroleum and Energies from Senegal, Dr. Aissatou Sophie Gladima; Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy from Egypt, Prof. Dr. Mohamed Shaker El-Markabi, UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Climate Ambition and Solutions, Mr. Michael Bloomberg, as well as representatives of the United Nations, Sustainable Energy for All, The World Bank, African Development Bank, The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), The Rockefeller Foundation and the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet.

NEWS



SAGAMU GETS MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR FILMS PACKAGING PLANT...

L-R: Group President, SkipperSeil DMCC, United Arab Emirate, Jitender Sachdeva: President, Flex Films Africa PVT Limited, Sushil Ramchandani; Governor Dapo Abiodun and Chairman/Managing Director of the company, Ashok Chaturvedi at the inauguration of the multi-million dollar films packaging plant at Sagamu Interchange…yesterday

Masari: Atiku, Obi Will Lose to Tinubu in 2023 Presidential Elections

Admits former VP remains formidable force, dismisses Obi as inconsequential

Emmanuel Addeh in Abuja

The Governor of Katsina State, Mr Aminu Masari, yesterday maintained that the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) presidential candidate, Mr Atiku Abubakar and the Labour Party (LP) presidential standard bearer in next year's presidential poll, Mr Peter Obi, do not stand a chance in the 2023 election.

Speaking with veteran journalist and presenter, "Journalists Hangout", Mr Babajide Otitoju, Masari, the former House of Representatives Speaker, particularly took a swipe at Obi, noting that nobody knows him in the north, especially in Katsina.

Masari stressed that anybody aspiring to become Nigeria's next leader must be willing to operate beyond ethnic and religious inhibitions.

"I don't know him (Obi). He was somebody who was governor of Anambra state. Go and ask a Katsina man how many politicians know Peter Obi. We need a presidential candidate of Nigeria that has gone beyond all barriers whether tribal, ethnic and religious or regional etc," Masari maintained.

The governor of President Muhammadu Buhari's home state admitted that Atiku remains a formidable force in the run-up to the poll, but stated that the political clout of the APC's candidate, Bola Tinubu, far outweighs whatever Atiku brings to the table.

Describing Atiku as a perennial contestant, Masari pointed out that the former vice president will still lose this time , same way it has happened in the past.

"Atiku is a force, but our force is greater than him and he knows it. He's a veteran at contesting elections and also a veteran loser," Masari declared

Told that this perhaps remains the best chance for an Atiku presidency, Masari stated that it had been said in the past that each opportunity presented the best chance for Atiku to win, insisting that the perception was not new.

He maintained that like in the last couple of elections where the former vice president contested, Atiku's aspiration to rule Nigeria will fall flat again in 2022, insisting that Tinubu will emerge Nigeria's next president.

Masari stressed that the north had already bought into that thinking that Tinubu will take over from Buhari, with the region's current unshaken support for the former Lagos state Governor.

" Bola is not a new name," he said, urging Nigerians to point to a better candidate than the APC presidential candidate as the build-up to the election intensifies.

Controversy Trails Documents Submitted to INEC By Delta PDP Guber 'Candidate'

The controversy surrounding the discrepancies in some documents submitted to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), by the Speaker of the Delta State House of Assembly, Mr Sheriff Oborevwori, has further deepened the uncertainty over the governorship race in the state.

Court documents sighted by THISDAY, showed that after a forensic investigation of the qualifications claimed by Oborevwori, several distortions were discovered by the investigators.

It further indicated that the politician, a member of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), may be facing a case of identity theft, impersonation and forgery.

The case questioning the veracity of the qualifications of Oborevwori, was brought before the court by one Evance Ivwurie, at the Federal Capital Territory in Abuja.

The court had directed the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Intelligence Response Team (IRT) to look at the complaint and get back to it within two weeks.

The complainant noted that in the course of his advocacy for good governance, he noticed some discrepancies in the records of the defendant.

He stressed that whereas the defendant's record with INEC showed that his claim of birth is June 19, 1963, the date of birth contained in the West African Senior School Examination Certificate (WASSCE) of 1999 presented by the defendant was November 12, 1979.

In addition, the court documents showed that whereas the names on record with INEC were Oborevwori Sheriff Francis Orowhordor, the name in the said WASSCE Certificate was Oborovweri O. Francis.

The applicant argued that the above mentioned apparent discrepancies regarding the age and name in the WASSCE certificate presented by the defendant, when compared with the record of the defendant with INEC, caused the complainant to believe that a crime may have been committed by the speaker.

According to the court papers, the suspicion made the complainant to commence an investigation into the credentials of the defendant.

In the course of the investigation, the documents stated that certain students who attended Oghareki Grammar School, and graduated in 1999, the same period the defendant allegedly attended and graduated from the school, voluntarily gave statements to the investigation team and also deposed to affidavit.

"None of the students in the school remembered the attendance of the defendant in the school at any time whatsoever," the complainant stated.

The court papers further showed that the said students in their statements and affidavits stated that the defendant was not at any time a member of their class up and until they graduated in 1999.

He further contended that forensic investigation showed that that it was not the same photograph in the school documents that was presented to INEC in Oborevwori's submissions.

" The defendant represented himself and stole the identity of one Oborevwori O. Francis and used the same stolen identity and false representation to become a member of the Delta State House of Assembly in 2015 and 2019," the applicant noted.

In the meantime, the police in one of the documents, showed that they have now begun investigations into the matter.

The court materials indicated the security agencies had commenced their own forensic analysis of the photograph on Oborevwori's WASSCE certificate submitted to INEC as well as the one on his form to the electoral body.

One of the documents showed that the police at their forensic science laboratory were examining a case of identity theft, impersonation and forgery against Oborevwori.

The security agencies are to determine if the photographs were the same and whether any of the photos were superimposed.

Aside the case of alleged fraudulent documents, a Court of Appeal in Abuja last week reserved judgement in a suit filed by Oborevwori, challenging a lower court judgement disqualifying him.

During the PDP governorship primary in May, Oborevwori had polled 590 votes to beat his closest rival, David Edevbie, a former commissioner for finance, who purportedly polled 113 votes.

Edevbie prayed the court to restrain INEC from receiving or recognising Oborevwori as duly nominated as the party's standard bearer and a restraining order barring him from parading himself as the governorship candidate of the party in the forthcoming election.

Sambo: It'll Be Insensitive for FG to Resume Abuja-Kaduna Train Service

Says route reopening will be clearer in a month

Deji Elumoye in Abuja

The federal government yesterday ruled out the possibility of resuming the Abuja-Kaduna train service at the moment, saying it would be insensitive on its part to do so.

Addressing newsmen at the end of the weekly Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting presided over by President Muhammadu Buhari at the State House, Abuja, Transportation Minister, Muazu Sambo, stressed that it would be insensitive for the government to restart the train service while many Nigerians were still traumatised over their loved ones who are still being held captives by terrorists from an attack that occurred on the train service.

He explained: "For goodness sake, wouldn't it be insensitive of us to resume these services, even if security surveillance was in place, as long as some citizens of this country spend days and nights weeping over their loved ones that are held in the bush."

He, however, disclosed that besides efforts being made to free the remaining train attack victims from captivity, the federal government was also working round the clock to find technology-based solutions that would make the nation's railway services more secure and prevent a recurrence of the Kaduna-bound train attack.

The minister stated specifically that in the next one month, the government would come up with when the suspended Abuja-Kaduna railway service would resume operations again.

Sambo added: "I have said it in the past that it is better to save the life of one Nigerian. I mean to save the life of one Nigerian than risk the lives of many Nigerians. There are two core matters at the heart of the resumption of the Abuja-Kaduna rail services and these core issues are: Families are traumatised over their loved ones that are still in captivity.

"Two, we need to have a surveillance and monitoring system on the rail track that would ensure that such incidents never happen again. So, we are pursuing these two things at the same time, trying to get the victims of the kidnap released and at the same time looking for the best solution in terms of surveillance.

"We are looking at so many options, we want to go for the best one, a sustainable one and don't forget, ultimately, whatever we have as a template between Abuja and Kaduna, that succeeds, would also serve the thousands of kilometers of rail lines across the country. I think this is as much as I will give," he said.

When asked to be specific as to when Nigerians should expect to see the trains back on their tracks, the Minister said, "If I give you a timeline now, I'll be lying to you, but I can tell you one thing, we are working day and night. We are looking at solutions that are technology-based and you know technology changes every day.

"There is a solution that the Kano State government has employed for the Felgore Forest, sanctioned by the DSS, we are looking at that. We are also mindful of costs. Now, if for example, you're going to spend between N3 billion and N9 billion, just to provide surveillance or monitoring system along the Abuja-Kaduna rail line alone, how much is government going to spend for the entire country?

"So, we are also looking at the PPP options. For example, there are notable companies that have solved this thing outside this jurisdiction, where we give them the right of way, the infrastructure and the personnel and then we pay as we go, which is a more attractive option for me I think the direct answer to your question, maybe in another one month, we should be back to you with a solution", he explained.



SUPPORTING CAPACITY BUILDING...

L-R: Patron/Past President, Nigerian-British Chamber of Commerce (NBCC), Mr. Akinola Akintunde; President/Chairman of Council, Mrs. Bisi Adeyemi; Deputy President, Mr. Ray Atelly, and Vice Chairman Programmes Committee, Mr. Tajudeen Ahmed, during the launch of Standard Chartered Bank Training Room at NBCC Plaza… recently

For Obi's Sake, APGA Warns Members in Anambra against Campaigning for Other Parties

●No squabble between Obi, Utomi, Abure, says Labour Party ●Party tells APC to prepare handover note

David-Chyddy Eleke in Awka and **Emameh Gabriel** in Abuja

The leadership of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) in Anambra State, has warned its members against campaigning for candidates of other political parties, ostensibly in support of the presidential candidate of Labour Party, Peter Obi.

The Anambra State chairman of APGA, Sir Nobert Obi, who handed the warning in a press release circulated among members of the state working committee members and all the Local government area and Ward chairmen, said it amounted to anti-party to do so.

THISDAY learnt that the warning might have come as a result of the wide acceptance Obi was gaining across political parties in the state.

The chairman said his attention had been drawn to several unwholesome activities of certain members of the party (APGA), who were campaigning for candidates of other political parties.

He therefore, noted that, "You may wish to know that it is wrong for any member to campaign, solicit votes, or attend any activity organised by other political parties or their candidates other than our great party, APGA.

"Such development is considered anti-party activity and an act of indiscipline in breach of Article 21, General Code of Conduct of our great party.

"There are several cases of members belonging to WhatsApp, Facebook and other social media platforms that promote and campaign for candidates of other political parties. Not a few even go as far as sharing posts that promote candidates, who are not APGA members," he pointed out.

The Chairman emphasised that such action was inimical to the overall interest of APGA, which has the intention to sweep the 2023 general elections especially in Anambra State, where the party is fielding candidates in all elective position.

He said such activity shall be visited with severe disciplinary action as stated the party's constitution.

It also advised the APC to write down its handover note, saying its days in power were numbered.

The statement followed reports in some print media of an alleged crisis between Obi and Utomi over campaign funds for the 2023 presidential election and also allegations of Obi's attempt to sideline the national chairman of the party.

Ayobami said: "The attention of Labour party was drawn to the coordinated attacked launched by agents, miscreants and misfit political characters loyal to the would soon defunct APC led administration.

"According to the said unknown source, he went further to assert that the squabble over who should be in charge of campaign funds, as well as Prof. Utomi's distrust of Benji Uba, prompted the creation of an alternative fund-raising platform, "tagged" FUND40MB, as inaugurated recently by Prof. Pat Utomi.

"The National Chairman of our great party, Julius Abure, the presidential candidate of Labour Party, Mr. Peter Gregory Obi and Prof Pat Utomi are one united, indivisible political families that enjoy cordial relationship that aims to extinct the present clueless administration of President Buhari led APC and confined them to dust bin of history

"That the National Chairman, Julius Abure has not convened any meeting of the National Working Committee or National Executive Council where the formation of Peter Obi/Datti Campaign Council would be formally discussed before inauguration

"There was never any Labour Party's campaign donation account in existence nor an alternative fund-raising platform, tagged FUND40MB that was known to Labour party

"Mr. Peter Obi has never instigated any war through proxies in Labour Party as he was busy with how to fix Nigeria from a consuming nation to a productive one, where Nigerians will take back their country from the present administration that has put our country on autopilot."

The statement added: "Having set the record straight, it is important that this long empty epistle of calumny written here by this 'unknown source' is a manifestation that he substantially lacks the capacity to correctly understand the complexities in rational thinking needed to be a responsible public commentator.

"Finally the tasked of rescuing our country and her people from the hand of oppressors, economy strangulators and decimators is our presence pre-occupation and we hereby advise the outgoing APC administration to prepare their hand over note to the incoming president, Mr. Peter Gregory Obi come may 29th 2023 rather engaging miscreants to peddle rumors that has no source."

No Squabble Between Obi, Utomi, Abure, Says Labour Party

Meanwhile, the Labour Party has described as "epistle of personal bitterness and ignorance," the news making the rounds of fight between the party's presidential candidate, Peter Obi and one of its frontline stakeholders, Prof. Pat Utomi as well as its the National Chairman, Julius Abure.

The party in a statement signed by its National Publicity Secretary, Arabambi Abayomi, accused the ruling All Progressive Congress (APC) of an attempt to misinform the public to its own advantage.

Enugu 2023: Ohanaeze Ndigbo Backs Ugwuanyi's Choice of Successor, Zoning

Members of Ohanaeze Ndigbo, Enugu State Chapter yesterday reiterated their solidarity and support to Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi and the declarations by various groups and senatorial districts mandating the governor to choose his successor as was done by his predecessors.

Members of the apex Igbo socio-cultural organisation who made their position known when they paid a solidarity visit to Ugwuanyi at the Government House, Enugu, reassured the governor of their unalloyed support and solidarity.

Ugwuanyi, who is the candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) for Enugu North Senatorial District in the 2023 general election and the leader of the PDP in Enugu State and the South East geo-political zone, had endorsed the party's governorship candidate in the state, Peter Ndubuisi Mbah, to succeed him in office, in 2023.

Speaking on behalf of the members of the Ohanaeze Ndigbo, Enugu State Chapter, including the state and local government executives, the youth and women wings, the national officers from the state and Presidents-General of Town Unions, the President of Ohanaeze Ndigbo in the state, Prof. Fred Eze, was quoted in a statement to have commended Ugwuanyi for his numerous achievements in all spheres of development despite avalanche of challenges confronting the country.

Eze applauded the governor for the enduring peace he has entrenched in Enugu State, stressing that "it is not surprising that your remarkable signature of peace is emblematic of everything you touch including the ever contentious party politics"

The Ohanaeze Ndigbo President told Ugwuanyi that members of the organisation were impressed with the, "thousands of kilometers of asphalted roads criss-crossing the nooks and crannies of Enugu State with state of the art bridges and drainages you have constructed."

He pointed out that the governor, "constructed new hospitals and courts of justice more than any other governor in the history of Enugu State," adding: "You have also empowered thousands of Enugu State youths through exposure to training and skill acquisition."

Further enumerating Ugwuanyi's remarkable achievements, Eze said: "Our governor has capped it up with a world-class flyover bridge at T-Junction, Nike Lake Road; a new stadium at Nsukka and a brand new State University of Medical and Applied Sciences (SUMAS), Igbo-Eno, Enugu State which has been fully licensed for operation by the National Universities Commission (NUC).

"We also acknowledge with gratitude the take-off of the Federal Polytechnic, Ohodo which you attracted from the Federal Government."

The Ohanaeze Ndigbo President stated that the members of the organisation in Enugu State "voluntarily and deliberately" visited Ugwuanyi "to come and honour you and express our solidarity with you."

Speaking on Ugwuanyi's achievements in the education sector, Eze revealed that the group was exceedingly delighted at the governor's investments in the sector which he said had started yielding bountiful results.

NLC Seeks Downward Review of Media Operating Licence

Onyebuchi Ezigbo in Abuja

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has urged the federal government to urgently review downwards the operating licences of media organisations in the country in response to the prevailing harsh economic condition.

The Nigerian Broadcasting Commission (NBC) recently notified the management of 52 electronic media organisations in the country of its decision to withdraw the licences of 52 media houses for their inability to pay for their license renewal.

Owing to this, the NLC in a statement signed by its President, Ayuba Wabba, stated that the order by NBC smacks of insensitivity to the welfare of the staff of the media houses and Nigerians as a whole.

It described information dissemination as a social service, adding that for the media organisation to ensure uninterrupted transmission required a lot of sacrifice and resources.

"It was with disbelief that the Nigeria Labour Congress received the news of the withdrawal of the licences of 52 media houses including both electronic television and radio media houses.

"In defence of the media, democratic and economic rights of Nigerians, we call on the NBC to rescind this decision to withdraw the operating licences of the affected 52 media houses.

"In light of our foregoing concerns, we urge that the media operating licence be reviewed downwards as information dissemination is a social service," it said.

While expressing relief on the new reasoning by the NBC to allow the affected media houses to continue to operate, the NLC stated that though the move was commendable, it still maintained the position that the original action lacked merit.

"While we understand that the NBC has a regulatory duty to ensure rules keeping, we believe that the action taken by the NBC is a little too drastic, dramatic, draconian, and debilitating not only for the affected media houses but also for their staff and indeed millions of Nigerians who follow programs from the affected media houses," it added.

The NLC stated that the most palpable reason for the failure of many of these media houses to pay for the renewal of their operating licences could be the deteriorating economic conditions in Nigeria.

It also stated that given the severe stress and strain that businesses in Nigeria have been subjected to owing to fallout of the COVID 19 lockdown in 2020, the ongoing disruption in global and domestic energy supply, the foreign exchange volatilities, and the associated hyper-inflation, many media houses are managing to stay afloat.

"Largely to blame for this sad state of affairs is government which mismanagement of the economy has ensured that a litre of diesel is now knocking at the borderline of N1000.



FOOD SECURITY SYSTEMS AND CENTRAL LOGISTICS HUB...

The 3D design of the Lagos State Food Security Systems and Central Logistics Hub at Ketu-Ereyun, Epe, flagged off by Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, on Wednesday, 24 August, 2022. Inset (l-r): Representing Kosofe Constituency 1 in Lagos Assembly, Hon. Ganiyu Okanlawon Sanni; Managing Director/CEO, Providus Bank, Mr. Walter Akpani; Chairman, Origin Group, Prince Joseph Samuel; Member, Federal House Of Representatives, Epe Federal Constituency, Hon Wale Raji; Oloja of Epe Land, Oba Kamorudeen Animashaun; Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu; Commissioner for Agriculture, Ms Abisola Olusanya; Chairman, Ikosi Ejinrin LCDA, Hon. Wale Anomo; Alara of Ilara, Epe, Oba Olufolarin Kayode Ogunsanwo and Chairman Lagos House of Assembly Committee on Agriculture, Hon Kehinde Joseph, during the flag-off ceremony.

Food Security: Sanwo-Olu Flags Off Logistics Hub in Epe

Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, yesterday, flagged off the construction of what might come to be known as the largest Food Security Systems and Central Logistics Park in sub-Saharan Africa, in Epe, Lagos.

Sanwo-Olu performed the sod turning at the site of the facility being built on 1.2 million square metres of land in Ketu-Ereyun, Epe.

Establishment of the food park is a component of an audacious five-year Agricultural and Food Systems Road Map (2021–2025) launched last year by the Sanwo-Olu administration to enhance food sufficiency in Lagos.

When completed, the central food and logistics hub is expected to create direct wealth for more than five million traders in the agricultural value chain, while guaranteeing uninterrupted food supplies to more than 10 million Lagosians, at least, 90 days, in a period of scarcity.

The hub will have storage facilities for more than 1,500 trucks that will daily service the needs of thousands of operators within food value chain throughout the year, while large commercial transactions would be processed in the facility.

Aside this, Sanwo-Olu also visited the site of the State-owned Neuro-Psychiatric Hospital in Ketu-Ereyun, where he inspected the level of construction work on the project.

Transactions on food items in Lagos are estimated to be N5 trillion yearly, just as farmers daily lose 40 per cent of produce worth millions due to lack of post-harvest storage system.

Sanwo-Olu, however, said the central food hub would guarantee greater returns for farmers and investors in the agro-allied sector, as the facility would cut out several layers of middlemen and facilitate improved access to modern processing and packaging services.

He said market matrix generated from the facility would help the government generate useful data for public planning and for the use of private sector players to project investment.

"Today's flag-off of the Food Security Systems and Central Logistics Park is proof of our administration's commitment to addressing the challenges of stakeholders in the Agri-space and giving hope to the people through improved quality of life.

"I make bold to say this is one of the most important interventions in agricultural sector that Nigeria has ever seen. The fact that this project is taking off in Lagos, the fastest- growing sub-national entity, means that it is bound to have significant national, regional, and continental impact.

"This hub will provide a better buying experience for consumers, help achieve a reduction in logistics costs, while guaranteeing the standardisation of quantity and quality for agricultural products. It also will improve productivity, guarantee greater returns for farmers, by cutting out several layers of middlemen.

"It will facilitate improved access to modern processing and packaging services for farmers and generate useful data for the use of government agencies, private sector players, and multilateral agencies."

Sanwo-Olu said the choice of the location for the project was strategic, given its easy access and proximity to agrarian settlements, adding that, the state had secured a well-thought out funding scheme to kick off the project, which he promised would be delivered in the last quarter of 2024.

Lagos agricultural road map, the governor said, sought to take full advantage of all value chains in which the state has competitive and comparative advantages, with a view to scaling-up self-sufficiency in food production from 18 to 40 per cent.

He explained that, the hub, when completed, would add to the catalogue of life-changing projects sited within Epe Division, which include 32-metric tons per hour Rice Mill in Imota, Agbowa-Ikosi Timberville, and Ketu-Ereyun Psychiatric Hospital, among others.

"The development of this all-important Central Logistics Hub will be achieved through a collaboration between the State Government and the private sector and will be implemented through a Design-Build-Finance-Operate-and-Transfer model. At every step of the way, we will be counting on the contributions of the private sector, in terms of financing and technical advisory and support," Sanwo-Olu said.

Commissioner for Agriculture, Abisola Olusanya, said the current global food shortages were parts of the harsh consequences of climate change and global warming, which, he said, had led to economic instability in some countries.

The Commissioner stressed that a continuous disruption in food distribution sequence could portend catastrophic consequences on security of the people, and that Lagos initiated the agricultural plan to protect its residents from the effects of food shortages, stressing also that the only way forward was to build a resilience that will protect Lagos.

Keyamo Explains Refund of N400m Special Works Fund to Federation Account

Declares before election, Peter Obi euphoria will die down

Says APC'll make inroads into south-east

Emameh Gabriel in Abuja

The Minster of State, Labour and Productivity, Festus Keyamo has disclosed that his ministry refunded over N400 million from the fund budgeted by the federal government for special works under the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) designed to cushion effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the citizens.

Kayamo disclosed this in an exclusive interview with THISDAY, while giving account of President Muhammedu Bubari's stewardship in the last seven years in power.

This was just as he boasted that his party, the All Progressive Congress (APC) would make good inroads in the south-east in the 2023 presidential election going by its track records.

According to Keyamo, the refund was not just a testimonial of Buhari's efforts to restore public confidence in governance, but also to establish a standard as against what was being practiced in the past.

"One thing I know the public would want me to talk about is the public works, which has to do with the 774,000 jobs and I am sure everybody is waiting to hear me talk about that.

"As I speak with you, we have executed the programme and we have reported back to the president. We have also evaluated those we paid and we achieved about 97 per cent to 98 per cent success. We paid everybody.

"In the payment schedule, I created a transparency system to the extent that the names of those who were paid, their local governments, their bank account numbers, their BVN numbers are all available for public scrutiny.

"I have asked the NDE to make it available for known journalists so that the public will come and dispute or interrogate.

"It's one of the rear programmes under government and when we did that, the balance that was left, I wrote to Mr. President to permit me to refund the money to the federation account and the president permitted me and we refund the money to the federation account.

"In the past, you cannot run such programme in Nigeria without allegations of fraud. But I said no, no matter how poor you are, go and open a bank account"

"It is there. It is over N400 million that we returned to the federation account," said Keyamo who sounded optimistic about the APC's chances to win some south-east states in 2023.

According to the minister, before the election the Peter Obi Euphoria would have died naturally because of Buhari's achievements in the region.

He said: "Frankly speaking, we have always had challenges in the south-east, agreed in 2015 and 2019. However, our popularity has been growing steadily since the 2019 general elections. Between 2019 and now, we have produced two governors in the south-east.

"All these are not happening by chance. These are happening because, many in the south-easterners are beginning to see that their leaders are misleading them. The facts on ground does not support the assertion that President Muhammadu Buhari or APC does not like the south-east."

Keyamo said the president has done for the south-east, what no leader has since done since 1999.

Ned Nwoko Sues Governors' Forum for Libel

Demands $40 million for alleged malicious damages

Chuks Okocha in Abuja

Ned Nwoko one of the consultants in the infamous $418 million Paris Club refund has dragged the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) to court for defamation of character.

He is demanding from the NGF the sum of $40 million for allegedly claiming that he had an issue that affects his status as practising lawyer with the British law society.

In a suit filed by Paul Philip from the Rolls Law Firm based in Abuja, Nwoko complained of a statement by Abdulrazaque Bello Barkindo, wherein, he said, "It is curious that in the introduction of himself, Mr. Ned Nwoko said nothing about his current status with the UK Law Society and the widely held belief that he was disbarred for fraudulent activities."

Owing to the statement, Nwoko's lawyers said, "the above quoted statement is profoundly malicious and false as our client has never been disbarred from legal practice in the United. Kingdom."

The lawyers to Nwoko further said the above statement lowered their client before his business partners, friends, members of his constituency and well-wishers.

The lawyers demanded from the NGF, "a publication in two national newspapers as well as in your online news media statements retracting the libelous publications of 21st August, 2022, with an unqualified apology within 48 hours from the receipt of this letter.

"You pay the sum of $40,000,000 to our client as compensation for the malicious, false and disparaging publications. This letter should also be taken as a pre-action notice to you peradventure you choose not to heed to our client's demands."

According to Nwoko, the quote from the NGF's statement was to damage his reputation, cast him as a dubious, manipulative, dishonest and fraudulent person of questionable character.

"The implication and innuendos from the false allegations is to abuse the minds of the public and rouse public support against your refusal to pay his consultancy fees instead of addressing the issues in controversy.

"It is common knowledge that our client attended universities of Keele and Kings College, University of London, two world renowned institutions where he obtained his first degree and masters.

NEWS

Industrialisation: Abiodun Inaugurates Packaging Films Plant in Ogun

The Ogun State Governor, Dapo Abiodun, yesterday inaugurated a multi-million United States dollar packaging films plant, Flex Films Africa PVT Limited, in the state, with a charge to companies to engage more in corporate social responsibility(CSR) programmes.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony along the Lagos-Ibadan expressway, Abiodun charged the company to contribute its quota by either adopting a school or primary health care centre for rehabilitation.

The governor explained that CSR programmes when rendered, would further motivate the host communities and the people to support the growth and success of such a company.

He said: "What I want to charge you is that area of CSR. It is good for you to come here, employ our people, but you must also look after them because the more you look after them, the more they are willing to take ownership and be part of what you do and also protect it

"Please ensure that you wrap up on that CSR by adopting one of our schools around here, our primary health care centre, providing subsidised transport for your staff. You know that whatever it is that you can do to support the welfare and well-being of these people, I am sure that they will also in turn appreciate that by being very motivated and dedicated and support your growth."



LAWYERS'CONFERENCE IN LAGOS...

L-R: Philip Orpin, Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) Lafia branch; Abdullahi M. Barde, Lafia Branch; Teslim Adewuyi of Citipoint Chambers; Haruna Musa Ivrahim, NBA Lafia Branch; Ilori Folorunso; Raphael O. Adakole, all of NBA Abuja Branch; Bayo Alabidun, Citipoint Chambers; Adeyinka Olumide-Fusika, Citipoint Chambers; Ajibola Kaka, and Raheem Alesinloye, Ikeja branch at the 62nd NBA annual general conference in Lagos...yesterday

Osun Warns against Political Assassinations

Yinka Kolawole in Osogbo

The Government of Osun State rose from its weekly Executive Council Meeting with a stern warning to those beating the drum of violence and bloodshed in the state to desist or they would be made to dance to their evil rhythm.

This followed recent assassinations of chieftains of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in the state, and several violent attacks on party members and government officials, including the wife of the governor, Mrs Kafayat Oyetola.

While calling for calm among peace loving people of the state, including functionaries of government and members of the APC, the state government also revealed that it was aware of plans by the opposition to further unleash terror on government officials and members of the APC in the days ahead.

In a statement released to THISDAY yesterday by the Commissioner for Information and Civic Orientation, Funke Egbemode, the government called for calm among its officials and members of the APC, adding that they should not allow themselves to be drawn out by those on an adventure of terror.

"The government is very worried about the spate of politically-motivated assassinations in Osun, a state that hasenjoyed peace and tranquility in the last four years and has earned its rating as the nation's safest place.

Police Arrest Pastor, Nine Others for Death of Traditional Worshiper in Lagos

Rebecca Ejifoma

The Lagos State Police Command, yesterday arrested a female pastor and nine members of her church for allegedly killing an Oro traditional worshiper, Akeem Agboola in the Oko-Oba area of the state.

The 25-year-old Agboola was said to have lost his life after he and his fellow Oro worshippers stormed the church, commanding them to halt their programme.

It was gathered that Truth and Spirit Prophetic Church at Sanni Taiwo Lawal Street in the Pooposhola area of Oko-Oba was having its monthly vigil when the Oro traditional worshipers were having a sacrament.

A witness and member of the church, Benedicta narrated: "While we were having our vigil, the Oro traditional worshiper came into our church and ordered us to stop worship. But our pastor was trying to explain to them that we were inside the church and not outside the premises. It was when they started beating us that some of us ran away."

Benedicta, however, admitted that the brave ones and those who were not able to run among them resisted the Oro worshipers.

"It was later that we heard that one of them died. But what is the offence we committed for doing our thing inside the church?" she bemoaned.

A senior police officer from Oko-Oba police station, who would not disclose his identity, recounted that at 6.30 am, they got a report at the station that a church was about to be set ablaze by Oro worshipers.

Ekiti Federal Roads Now Death Traps, Speaker Laments

Victor Ogunje in Ado Ekiti

The Speaker, Ekiti State House of Assembly, Hon Funminiyi Afuye, yesterday said the federal government roads in the state are no longer safe for motorists and commuters.

According to him, the dangerous and parlous states of these federal roads are increasing carnages and subjecting the populace to untimely death.

Afuye said this in Ado Ekiti while addressing the members of the assembly during plenary session.

To correct the dangerous trend, the speaker appealed to the federal government to, as a matter of urgency, fix the bad portions of federal roads in the state.

Afuye stated that increasing number of vehicles traveling from the others states into Ekiti have destroyed some of the roads constructed by the state Government due to high traffic. "Most disturbing is the Ado – Ikere -Akure road. It is in a very bad shape.Motorists from Ado now go through Ilawe-Igbaraoke-Akure axis, which takes more time.

"Most disturbing is the fact that many of the roads constructed by the state government are now being damaged by influx of vehicles through them when the federal roads are no longer motorable.

"We appeal to the federal government to direct its relevant agencies for adequate intervention in these roads.

Speaking further on the regrettable situation, the House's Majority Leader, Hon Gboyega Aribisogan, said Ado-Ijan- Ijesa Isu-Ikole road has become a death trap and beehive of criminal activities that must be curtailed to avoid catastrophe.

Abia LP Guber Candidate, Otti, Names Running Mate

Emmanuel Ugwu-Nwogo in Umuahia

The governorship candidate of Labour Party (LP) in Abia, Mr. Alex Otti, has formally presented his running mate to the public and also set up a campaign council to drive his quest for Abia's top job.

At a ceremony in his campaign office in Umuahia, Otti named Ikechukwu Emetu, a 38-year-old youth from Ohafia as the deputy governorship candidate. He chose a former House of Representatives member, Chief Nnanna

Ngwu to head the campaign council. In his past outings in the governorship race the renowned economist and former bank chief executive had run with a woman, Mrs. Uche Eme Uche also from Ohafia but this time around he opted for a youth and engineer as running mate.

He explained that his choice of a youthful deputy governorship candidate was a deliberate decision as his desire was to provide inclusiveness for Abia youths in the political arena.

Otti also stated that he settled for Emetu because of his "outstanding community development service and humanitarian gestures in his Ohafia local government.

Group Condemns Attacks on Presidential Convoy in Lagos, Rivers

Ayo Oke and **Ijeoma Okonji**

A Non-government organisation, (NGO)and support group of the All Progressive Congress (APC), Think Tinubu Movement (TTM), has condemned the recent attacks on presidential convoy in Lagos and Rivers States, claiming the attacks were orchestrated by opposition parties.

Speaking to journalists at the first world conference in Lagos yesterday, the Director General, TTM, Chief Segun Afolorunikan, said the attacks were obviously inter-party, while the presidential convoy attacks in Katsina and Bauchi were intra-party.

He explained that while attacks on presidential convoy in Katsina and Bauchi States being an intra-party affair, it should be noted that the Lagos (Agege) and Rivers States attacks were obviously inter-party in which one life was lost in both states.

He hinted that TTM has zero tolerance towards electioneering violence, be it inter-party.

He said: "Premium value must be placed on human lives and properties which is the basis for security. Our movement is propagating job and career development, empowerment programs, rather than employment creation within governmental establishments."

Afolorunikan disclosed the inability of electorate to elect credible leaders resulted to slow development.

He said: "Fortunately, the country had enjoyed 23 years uninterrupted stretch democracy, and today, political watchers have said, the country is one step forward and five steps backward."

US Honours Sokoto Student Killed by Islamic Fanatics

The United States Department of State has honoured slain Sokoto student, Deborah Samuel Yakubu.

Deborah, a 200 Level student of Home Economics at Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto, was murdered by Islamic extremists and set ablaze after she advised her classmates against posting religious materials on their WhatsApp page.

In marking the US International Day Commemorating the Victims of Violence Based on Religion or Belief, on August 22, Deborah's picture was uploaded on the website of the US Office of Religious Freedom.

The office promotes universal respect for freedom of religion or belief for all as a core objective of US foreign policy.

It also monitors religiously motivated abuses, harassment, and discrimination worldwide, and recommends, develops, and implements policies and programs to address such concerns.

Honouring Deborah, the office wrote: "In May, a mob brutally stoned, flogged, and burned to death college student Deborah Samuel in Nigeria, in an attack fueled by hatred and blasphemy allegations, even as authorities attempted to stop it."

Traditional Rulers Warned against Breach of Security in Bauchi

The Chairman, Bogoro Local Government, Bauchi State, Mr. Iliya Habila, has warned traditional rulers and the people of the area against acts that could breach peace and security.

The chairman made the statement in Bogoro yesterday at a stakeholders' meeting of traditional, religious leaders, security agents and other stakeholders in the LGA.

Habila urged the traditional and religious leaders not to accept any stranger except after due and thorough scrutiny had been carried out by the authorities.

He also cautioned Fulani groups against indiscriminate acceptance of strangers whose mission and purposes were obscured.

According to him, Bogoro LGA is relatively peaceful but surrounded with neighbouring towns, villages and some parts of Plateau which had security challenges

"Hence the need to be extremely cautious in entertaining strangers.

"Following pressures from the neighboring local governments and Plateau, there are bad elements that can make attempts to come to this local government which is detrimental to relative peace and security enjoyed by us."

On the relationship between farmers and herders, especially during the rainy season, the chairman advised both parties not to take the laws into their hands in cases of breach of any law.

Enugu Civil Servants Decry Poor Condition of Service

The Amalgamated Union of Public Corporations, Civil Service Technical and Recreational Services Employees (AUPCTRE) has frowned at the poor condition of service for workers in parastatal organisations in Enugu State.

The Enugu State Chairman of the union, Mr Timothy Ojielo, made the remark yesterday in Enugu during the state council's Delegates' Conference.

According to Ojielo, most of the parastatal organisations have no scheme and condition of service.

He said that the development was the reason workers were not scheduled for pension.

"It is regrettable that the situation in the state is now both systemic and endemic.

"Hence, no amount of demonstrations or strikes move the political class to change for the better.

"The entitlements of workers in the organisations, like gratuities and pensions, are not even mentioned year after year to justify one's diligent services for 35 years.

"This has exposed pensioners to agonising deaths as a result of starvation," he said.

NEWSXTRA

NDLEA Seizes, Destroys N2bn Hard Drugs in A'Ibom

Okon Bassey in Uyo

Akwa Ibom State Command of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) recently arrest and seized 90 kilograms of hard drugs substance suspected to be Amphetamine, and others worth N2 billion during routine operations in the state.

This was disclosed at the second public destruction of illicit drug exhibits in the state by the NDLEA in Uyo, yesterday.

Speaking on the development, the Deputy Governor of Akwa Ibom, Mr. Moses Ekpo, said the state government will do everything within its power to contribute to the attainment of zero case profile in drug related offences in the state and Nigeria at large.

The deputy governor, who described the event as epochal, said it was a positive report card on the work of the agency as well as the product of the healthy collaboration existing between the agency and state government.

He commended the leadership of the agency under Brig-General Buba Marwa(rtd), noting that his appointment has positively altered the performance narrative of the agency nationwide.

According to him, the efforts of the NDLEA have resulted in the upsurge of drug seizures, arrest and convictions at critical drug corridors across the country.

He noted that the state command of the agency made a recent arrest and seizure of 90 kilograms of substance suspected to be Amphetamine and other seizures recorded during routine operations, with street value estimated at more than N2 billion.

"This has obviously rubbed off on the Akwa Ibom State office, with the result that we have been able to more effectively contain the challenges of drug abuse and illicit trafficking," he stated.

While appreciating the role and contributions of the United States government and the United Nations to the success story of the agency, he also thanked other security agencies for their support to the work of NDLEA.

The deputy governor urged the federal government to further empower NDLEA with more funding to enable them to not only give support to state offices, but procure needed work tools for a revolution in the fight against unhealthy drug use.

"I call on Nigerians to team up with government in the war against drug-use and illicit trafficking. The negative implications of drug-abuse are far- reaching, including adverse effects on the health of our people, avoidable road accidents and drug-related criminality," Ekpo appealed.



WELL DESERVED AWARD …

L-R: Chief Operating Officer, Academy Halogen, Dr. Wale Adeagbo; Assistant Manager, Corporate Communications, Halogen Group, Mrs. Linda Igbelina and, Managing Director/CEO. Conrad Clark, Mr. Joachim Adenusi, during the presentation of 'Best Sustainable Initiative Development of The Year Award' to Halogen Group in Lagos... recently ABAYOMI AKIYELE

Bachelor Wins N5m in Dangote Cement Promo

Ibrahim Oyewale in Lokoja

A bachelor, who is preparing for his wedding, has won a star prize of N5 million at the ongoing Dangote Cement Promotion.

This was contained in a statement that was signed Media Officer, Mr. Jibrin Abubarka, in Lokoja, yesterday, which said that it was jubilation galore for the young man who won the state prize during the Dangote Cement promo in Abuja.

The Group Managing Director, Dangote Industries Limited, Mr. Olakunle Alake, presented the star prize award to the winner, Mr. Mamza Joshua Ayuba, amidst pomp and pageantry.

Ayuba, 35, described the award as a dream comes true.

He said: "I was told that I was a lucky winner of Five Million Naira. But, I thought it was a joke. I did not believe that the Dangote Spell and Win Promo was real in the first place. So, it came as a surprise that I could not speak for a moment."

He disclosed that he bought close to 200 bags of Dangote cement when it happened.

"When I got the alphabet 'O,' which eluded me after collecting the other alphabets to complete the spelling of 'D A N G O T E,' I was elated. Honestly, I am happy right now and wish to become a distributor of Dangote cement as soon as possible," Mamza said.

NEMA Unveils 160 High-tech Digital Radios

Kasim Sumaina in Abuja

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) yesterday in Abuja unveiled the first phase of 160 high-tech digital radios to facilitate more effective communications among its team of players.

The agency noted that the four categories of radios acquired-PNC370, PNC380, PNC550 and PDC550-are to create better interface between its operational and tactical actors.

The Director-General of NEMA, Mustapha Habib Ahmed, in his remarks at the launch, said: "This is the first phase; as we continue with other phases, you will get to know them. The idea is to cover all our offices and from these 160, we will deploy to all our offices and as more as the items come, more of those radios will get to them and overtime, stakeholders are likely to also be plugged into this arrangement."

Ahmed explained that the radios are multi-mode handheld devices capable of working as two way radio on UHF frequencies (400-470MHz) or on cellular LTE. "They are rugged, compact in design and IP68 rated," he added.

MFM Disowns Okija 'Deliverance' Facility

Adeline Okoronkwo

Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries (MFM) yesterday distanced itself from the activities of one of its pastors in Okija, Ihiala Local Government Area, Anambra State.

The MFM pastor was alleged to be using a place to detain, chain and hold people hostage against their will in the guise of conducting deliverance.

Reacting to the development, Director of Administration, MFM, Akin Olawale, in statement, said the members of the church got the information with a rude shock because the practice was alien to them.

He said: "Although the alleged pastor is one of our pastors, the said facility is a private property of the pastor and his activities of conducting such kind of deliverance is not with the knowledge nor approval of the church leadership. In his response to our preliminary investigation, the pastor claims the respective candidates who were being brought to him for prayer against mental ailment and drug addiction usually have their guardians to sign an undertaking for them.

The above notwithstanding, we have immediately directed the said pastor to shut down the illegal facility being used in the name of the ministry and to report to the HQ for further actions."

Sanusi to Political Aspirants: Prioritise Healthcare, Education Spending

Ugo Aliogo and **Ijeoma Okonji**

A former Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, yesterday, advised political aspirants running for different public offices to prioritise healthcare and education spending in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

Sanusi, who spoke yesterday in Lagos at the 10th Moses Adekoyejo Majekodunmi Foundation (MAMF) August event with the theme: 'Nigeria Healthcare System: The Past, Present and the Future,' expressed displeasure over the low investments in education and healthcare sectors, which he noted has led to increased brain drain and low productivity of the sectors.

He urged on the political class to make the issues of healthcare delivery and education top priorities, when making strategic infrastructure and development policies in the country, in order to reduce the brain drain in the country.

Sanusi lamented that the federal government put more interest in having fuel subsidies than paying salaries of teachers and doctors, who educate and provide the essential medical treatment to children and wives.

He said due to the negligence of the medical profession and academics, the country has lost a lot of experts to other countries, where they are making more impacts, which Nigeria could have benefited from, adding that, "education and health sectors are the foundation of development and if you lose it, you will be finished.

Anambra Assembly Majority Leader Dies in S'Africa

Soludo expresses shock

David-Chyddy Eleke in Awka

A member of Anambra State House of Assembly, Hon Nnamdi Okafor has been announced dead. Okafor, who represents Awka South state constituency 1 is also the majority leader of the state assembly.

A two-time lawmaker, Okafor reportedly slumped in a hotel in South Africa, where he was holidaying.

A source who announced the death in a political WhatsApp group said: "The Majority Leader of Anambra State House Of Assembly and member representing Awka South Constituency 1, Hon. Nnamdi Okafor (Akajiugo Awka) collapsed in the early hours of today (yesterday) in a Hotel at Sandton City Johannesburg, South Africa and was confirmed dead hours later.

"Cause of his death is yet to be ascertained as at the time of filing this report. May His Gentle Soul Rest In Peace, Amen," the source wrote.

Most members of the Anambra State House of Assembly have been in South Africa on holiday for close to a month, since the assembly went on recess.

Speaker of the state assembly, Rt Hon Uchenna Okafor, who reacted to the death in a telephone conversation with journalists said a formal release will be made on his death.

No Elephant of a Man Can Stand against 2023 Elections, Says Pastor Kumuyi

Fidelis David in Akure

The General Superintendent of the Deeper Christian Life Ministry (DCLM), Pastor Williams Kumuyi, yesterday said that "no elephant of a man can stand against the 2023 general elections."

Kumuyi, who stated this in Ondo town, headquarters of Ondo West Local Government Area of the state while arriving for a 6-day global crusade, revealed that only God will determine the winners of the 2023 elections.

The pastor, who is also the convener of the global crusade with the theme, "Triumphant Power," said: "As to next year, 2023 about the election, everything is in the hands of God. I want to tell you, no pin drops anywhere in the world without God's knowledge and nobody goes ahead without God's control. He controls everything that happens in the world.

"Would there be election next year? Would there not be election? Who will emerge as the president of our country? Who will come out as governor of each the states? Known unto God before the beginning of time and what we want in answer to the problem of contentious people in our land.

"What He wants will come true. When a lion is coming, no rat stands in his way and says you can't pass. When the Almighty says this is what it is, for Nigeria in particular, for 2023 in particular, no elephant of a man can stand in its way."

UBA, MFS Africa Partner Digital Payments, Remittances

Africa's Global Bank, the United Bank for Africa (UBA) Plc, and MFS Africa, Africa's largest digital payments hub, have announced a partnership to offer innovative and timely solutions to a wide range of customers, especially in the area of remittances, electronic money services, SME payments, as well as integration to businesses for cross border payments.

These services are expected to cover the 20 African countries UBA operates in, which include Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, Zambia, Tanzania, Uganda, Republic of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Liberia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Mali and Senegal.

Both organisations signed an MoU at the UBA Head Office in Lagos last Tuesday, heralding the start of a partnership that will be pivotal in leveraging MFS Africa's digital payment hub that connects over 400 million mobile money users to a wide range of partners, including Mobile Money Operators, Money Transfer Organisations, Fintechs, Enterprise Merchants and others to drive distribution of financial services at scale.

UBA Group Deputy Managing Director, Muyiwa Akinyemi, who spoke during the signing ceremony, expressed his excitement at the plethora of offerings that UBA customers will enjoy from the partnership.

Elders Petition IG over Alleged Compromise in Murder Investigation in Edo

Adibe Emenyonu in Benin City

Two elders of Ikhuen Oboh community, Mr. Efosa Aigbobahi and Mr. Peter Omorowa, have called on the Inspector General of Police, IGP. Alakli Baba, to ensure a thorough investigation into the alleged killing of one Mr. Frank Eferi, by a person they identified as Mr. Clement Guobadia.

The elders alleged that there is a plot by some senior police personnel to compromise the investigation process.

The duo, in a petition by their Solicitor, Idahagbon & Co., dated August 24, 2022, said that they want justice meted to all involved in the killing while alleging that two members of a gang had been arrested by the police.

"The confession of the suspects to the police implicated some other persons who are providing the dangerous weapons, including AK 47 with which they carry out their criminal operations."

The elders said they had petitioned the homicide section of the Force CID, Alagbon, Lagos State, when they got information that there were attempts to compromise the investigation in the Edo State Police Command but "surprisingly, the said cronies who are determined to thwart the investigation process are now attempting to use the office of the deputy inspector general (DIG) to forestall the progressive investigation of the suspects at Alagbon.

THURSDAYSPORTS

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Edwards Blames Ekong and Partner for Watford's Ouster

Duro Ikhazuagbe

CARABAO CUP

Super Eagles Vice Captain, William Troost-Ekong has received harsh words from Watford Coach, Joe Edwards, after his team crashed out of the Carabao Cup following a 2-0 loss to League One side MK Dons on Tuesday night.

Ekong who was handed his first start of the season at the heart Watford defence was blamed along with his partner, Edo Kayembe, for the goal which broke the deadlock in the 45th minute.

An error between the duo allowed Will Grigg near the touch line to latch onto the ball and pass to Louise Barry who slide it into the net for the opening goal.

Speaking at the post match, Watford Coach, Edwards, singled out Ekong and Kayembe as responsible for that goal. Another sloppy defending between the duo also resulted in the second goal that sealed Watford's exit from the Carabao Cup.

"There were some individual errors, and errors that we then couldn't recover from. Sometimes when you make a mistake then you want your mate to be able to help you out. We couldn't do that so we got punished.

"You don't expect that kind of basic error. When they happen you hope you can recover from them, but we didn't," owngoal.com quoted the Coach whose team got knocked out of the Carabao Cup by Dons currently sitting 22nd spot in League One.

Sadly, Ekong's errors ruined Maduka Okoye's first official game for Watford.

The Super Eagles shot stopper joined Watford from Dutch club Sparta Rotterdam this summer but he has yet to play his first match in the English Championship.

Elsewhere, both Emmanuel Dennis and Maduka Okoye made their debut for their respective English clubs in the Carabao Cup.

Dennis, who cost Nottingham Forest £20 Million from Watford, played 75 minutes for his new club in a Carabao Cup 3-0 win over Grimsby. He provided an assist for one of the goals.

Alex Iwobi was Man-of-the-Match after he delivered an assist for Everton to pip Fleetwood to advance to the third round of the cup competition.

Kelechi Iheanacho got his first start of the season for Leicester City when they eliminated Stockport County on penalties to qualify to the next round of the League Cup. Wilfred Ndidi was an unused sub.



William Troost-Ekong...partly blamed for Watford's ouster from Carabao Cup on Tuesday night

Woods, McIlroy to Launch Virtual Golf League

Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy have unveiled a technology-focused golf league in partnership with the PGA Tour that will feature players competing on six three-man teams.

Woods and former Golf Channel President, Mike McCarley, who has partnered Woods to form TMRW Sports, outlined the startup that will combine virtual technology and a green complex at a custom-built venue.

The new league, TGL, will begin in January 2024 and have teams compete in 18-hole matches during 15 regular-season events, with the top four teams advancing to the playoffs. The contests will take place in prime time on Monday nights.

"We've been working on this for two years," McIlroy said. "I think it's a great opportunity for PGA Tour players to show a different side of themselves, prime time on Monday night. I think it's great for brand exposure to try to engage a different audience."

McIlroy also said Woods plans to compete in the matches. That, in itself, is a victory in the eyes of McIlroy, considering Woods has only competed in three tournaments this season while recovering from injuries sustained in a car accident outside Los Angeles in February 2021.



Tiger Woods (left) and Rory McIlroy have teamed up for the virtual gold league

NFF: Why Falconets Overstayed at Istanbul Airport

The Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) on Wednesday explained that a number of factors, including the inability to secure transit visas for players and officials of the U20 Girls National Team, Falconets, at the Istanbul Airport, led to the team having to stay 24 hours at the airport in Turkey on their way from the FIFA U20 Women's World Cup.

"The NFF did not book the team's tickets from Costa Rica; FIFA did. FIFA also did not envisage the hitches that saw the team delayed for more than three hours in Bogota, and another one hour in Panama. By the time the team got to Istanbul, the flight to Abuja had left.

In apparent reaction to pictures of the Falconets sleeping on airport floor that had gone viral on social media yesterday morning, NFF's General Secretary, Dr Mohammed Sanusi, explained that the blame was not entirely that of the federation.

"Our officials pleaded for compassionate transit visas so as to take the players and officials to a hotel inside the town, but this was not possible as they were informed that Nigeria had been removed from the list of countries whose citizens were issued visa-on-arrival in Turkey.

"The airline then took the team to a sleeping area at the airport and gave them tickets to have meals every five hours. This situation has nothing to do with NFF, who had made arrangements to receive the team in Abuja before the complications in travel arrangements," explained the NFF scribe.

The NFF had implored world-governing body, FIFA to intervene with the Embassy of Germany to issue the team transit visas before their departure from Nigeria, in order for the team to be able to travel through Germany. This did not happen.

On the issue of body-wear, Sanusi said: "The players were handed three sets of green jerseys and two sets of white jerseys, several house-wear types and training jerseys. The players opted to wash only their jersey top (no other stuff) because when the first set of body-wear was sent to the laundry people at the hotel, it returned with some FIFA and NFF badges at the front and names at the back peeled by the machine."

NOC Commends Nigeria Surfing Federation over Training for Coaches, Athletes

The leadership of the Nigeria Olympic Committee(NOC) has commended the Nigeria Surfing Federation for bringing foreign experts to lecture Nigerian athletes, coaches and other technical officials on the modern technicalities of surfing sport as practiced all over the world

The General Manager(GM) of NOC, Mr. Emmanuel Nweri, gave the commendation when he received the surfing delegation led by its President, Prince Adewale Fawe and the Technical Director, Mr. John Adetokunbo Micheletti at the NOC Secretariat, National Stadium Surulere, Lagos.

Speaking, Mr. Nweri who represented the Secretary General of NOC, Mr. Olabanji Oladapo, said what the Ngeria Surfing Federation did by paying courtesy visit to the NOC, was the best approach for any sport that wants to develop

Besides sponsoring the technical/ life saving workshop which was anchored by two foreign experts, Mr. Hans van Den Broek from The Netherlands and Norway-based South African, Mr. Shannon Ainslie.

The France-based Paddle Paddle Organisation also donated 30 expensive surfing boards to Nigeria to help develop the sport in the country .

A total number of 35 participants drawn from across the country took part in the weeklong exercise that lasted from August 15 to 21, 2022, at the Takwa Bay Beach, Victoria Island Lagos.



THISDAY

Thursday, August 25, 2022 Price: N250

MISSILE

Ibrahim Shekarau to Rabiu Kwankwaso

"All the agreements we had with him were betrayed by Kwankwaso and his boys and they did not accommodate one single person. I wouldn't have opened up if not for Kwankwaso's guilty conscience that made him talk to the media. We want to set the record straight on the saying that we were late. It is better to abandon politics than to live in injustice and deception"—*Former Kano State Governor, accusing the NNPP presidential candidate of betrayal*

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OLUSEGUN ADENIYI

THE VERDICT

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The Case Against ASUU…1

A thought-provoking piece is going round on WhatsApp. Credited to Professor Hamman Tukur Sa'ad, it concerns the current Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) strike and the tertiary education crisis in Nigeria. The author not only accuses ASUU leadership and those who manage education in Nigeria of lacking critical thinking, but also indicts them for sundry acts of financial impropriety and gross incompetence. In these days of fake news, I had to scout around for the professor's contact to be sure he wrote the piece.

Vice Chancellor of the Federal University of Technology, Minna between 2002 and 2007 and Chairman of the Federal Government Visitation Panel on the 2020 crisis at the University of Lagos, Sa'ad is a prominent national figure. Apparently, the professor belongs to an online chat group where prominent academics daily agonise over the problem of tertiary education in Nigeria. Not only did he confirm his authorship, Sa'ad forwarded to me other more critical interventions he has made on the issue. And they are not the usual lamentations. They go to the root of the crisis, offering suggestions on the way forward. Today, I want to publish a few excerpts from Prof Sa'ad before I proffer my own comments on the issue.

REMUNERATIONS

The salaries paid to lecturers are ridiculously low by all standards, but ASUU can be blamed for that too. Universities have their autonomy and statutes as well as governing councils that can introduce charges to augment whatever pittance government pays. But ASUU is vehemently opposed to charges, even when the federal government promised to reintroduce Education Bank from where students could borrow funds and pay later. This is what happens in some countries, including the richest country in the World, USA. With charges, it will be possible to pay a professor in a high-profile discipline up to N3 million per month and get him to render good services. What happens now is that some lecturers are servicing three to four universities to make up. Even when ASUU is on strike, they service private universities so they can afford to stay six months while pretending that they are without salaries. Who is fooling who?

I am opposed to IPPIS on principle. We are not civil servants and cannot be lumped together with government employees. However, most ASUU members are afraid that such a scheme will show their names in a number of federal universities, doing part time teaching, being visiting teachers, or adjunct lecturers. It is unfortunate that students and parents are the ones suffering as a result of these strikes. Government officials and ASUU leadership are shedding crocodile tears over the fate of the students as if they care. It is not enough to call off this strike just in readiness for the next one. This open-close regime must be stopped once and for all. Let universities take their autonomy seriously and councils do the needful, including paying good salaries to lecturers.

STATE UNIVERSITIES

ASUU in its greed for check-off money has incorporated state universities into the union. Now they want federal government to fund state universities. Is it that ASUU leaders don't understand that university education is on the concurrent list? What a crazy country we are running! There are states which have three universities where majority of the structures were built by TETFUND. I was opportune to sit on the council of a state university where more than N1 billion was squandered, and the governor insisted that no more funding to the university until the council was able to recover the looted resources. In the process of investigation, the council realised that the funds were actually monies from federal sources: TETFUND, NEEDS, SEEDS etc. and that state government officials were deeply involved in the looting. Along the line, the governor decided to ignore the council and set up a visitation panel consisting of commissioners, including some that were deep in the rot. The result was that the council was dissolved with ignominy. One of the commissioners was appointed as sole administrator or acting vice chancellor!

FUNDING ISSUES

The federal government has consistently goofed in negotiating with ASUU members, especially over allowances. The federal government is not the employer of university staff by law. However, since ministers of education have insisted on acting Big by pretending that they have absolute and direct authority over universities, they will continue to suffer the consequences of their folly. ASUU has sucked them in.

I have spent all my life in the education sector, either as a pupil, student, teacher or a lecturer. The sector functioned better when regions, native authorities, missionaries and private sector handled it. The collapse came when the federal government felt it could handle everything below the sky. Every day, the government opens new universities while they can't fund the present ones they own. Every sector that the federal government took over, it has managed to destroy. Hospitals, roads, universities, secondary schools, name it.

As rich, powerful and big as the United States is, other than specialist universities like those for the army, navy and airforce, the federal government has only two universities. Howard University that was created when the states and private universities were denying admission to black people. The second one is the District of Columbia University in Washington DC which is in the federal territory. However, US federal government intervenes in education through bursaries, loans and grants to students. Barack Obama just managed to finish the repayment of his university student's loan when he became American president.

Seeing how the regions and native authorities competed in educating their children during the First Republic, I have no doubt that creating a similar atmosphere would enable us to once again move forward. Take the case of Borno Native Authority that used to send its brilliant pupils to secondary schools and universities in UK on scholarship. People like Babagana Kingibe and many others of that generation were products of such a scheme. Education was a serious business in those days at every level. But with the illusion of oil money, we dumped everything on a dysfunctional government at the centre.

Our parents used to sell goats, cows, groundnuts and whatever they had to send us to Government Secondary Schools in the 1960s. At the university level, state governments gave scholarships, but fees were charged. Uncle Naija moved in with oil money, took over everything and destroyed it. Our universities competed with the best in the world under the old system. But where are we today?

In the 1970s when we were at Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, we were either on scholarship from our state government in my case N/E or parents paid in the absence of sponsorship. Those who genuinely could not afford the fees were termed indigent students. List of such students was forwarded to federal government for sponsorship. But it was a stigma. Few students would like to be on that list. So, university education was not free as such.

Continued on page 21

Leadership and Young People

Leadership was the focus last Saturday at the 2022 edition of the annual Teens Career Conference of The Everlasting Arms Parish (TEAP) of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Abuja. Hundreds of teenagers from Abuja and environ as well as those who attended online were challenged by the speakers to inculcate the right values today because nobody is guaranteed tomorrow. And to that extent, there is no time to waste.

BudgIT co-founder and CEO, Seun Onigbinde reminded the teenagers that leadership at every level and in all areas of human endeavor requires a personal commitment to discipline, character and distinction. "True leadership is a product of your everyday decision, and it starts now as you ask yourself, 'in this place that I am right now, how do I get to be fruitful, productive and useful?'" said Onigbinde who further urged the youths to build unique qualities that would stand them out from the crowd.

After challenging the teenagers on whether leaders are made or born, Executive Director, YIAGA-Africa, Samson Itodo told his audience that "Leadership is about sacrifice, service and communication: Service to yourself; community and the people around you. Leadership is about solving problems – so tell yourself – I am a leader, and this is my time." Itodo also advised the teenagers to use the Internet to impact themselves positively. "The social media is the most powerful tool that you may have. The things that you know, some of us do not even know it" said Itodo who, however, warned that the internet has two sides. "I just want to plead with you that as you use the Internet, use it to build yourself because these same tools can destroy you, if you don't use them effectively."

Leadership, according to model and Nollywood actress, Linda Ejiofor-Suleiman who shared the story of her career trajectory, is about taking personal responsibility. "Leaders are not immune to failure, just that their attitude to failure is different. They take time to reflect on what they did wrong and work on it. Leaders are focused people with vision, who are willing to ask questions," she said while admonishing the teenagers never to forget the God factor in whatever they do. "He alone perfects all our plans."



Mr Seun Onigbinde, Dr (Mrs) Ngozi Azodoh, Mr Ibrahim Suleiman, Mrs Linda Ejiofor-Suleiman, Ms Elizabeth Ekpenyong and Mr Samson Itodo

Coordinated by Ms Elizabeth Ekpenyong, Deputy Director at Debt Management Office (DMO) who heads the TEAP Junior Church, events at the conference included Spoken Word, Music, Talk Show and dance drama. While thanking the guest speakers after their sessions, Dr Ngozi Azodoh, Director of Planning, Research and Statistics at the Federal Ministry of Health, reminded the teenagers of the importance of imbibing the lessons learnt. Her husband and host, Pastor Eva Azodoh, a retired army colonel, consultant urologist and founder of Chivar Specialist Hospital, Abuja, concluded the conference by pronouncing the Father's Blessings on the teenagers.

Meanwhile, the teenagers were able to ask Linda, who came with her husband Ibrahim, questions about the intersection between career and family, especially for young couples. And before they left for Lagos on Sunday afternoon, I hosted Linda and Ibrahim to lunch in our house. With some teenagers, and friends including Ifioma Malo joining us, it was a fitting climax to an amazing weekend.

Dame Ihedioha @ 90

It is difficult to imagine that a decade has passed since we gathered at Mbutu, Aboh Mbaise local government area of Imo State to celebrate the 80th birthday of Dame Dorothy Nsonma Ihedioha. As she clocks 90 on Sunday, we are going to celebrate her in Abuja. For more than three decades, Emeka has been my friend. And Mama has treated me as her son too. As Ndigbo would say "Nne bu nne. Ezi-nne bu Ezi-nne" (A mother is a mother. A good mother is a good mother). Now that she joins a small group of Nonagenarians, I wish her many more years of happiness and good health.

Printed and Published in Lagos by **THISDAY Newspapers Limited. Lagos:** 35 Creek Road, Apapa, Lagos. **Abuja:** Plot 1, Sector Centre B, Jabi Business District, Solomon Lar Way, Jabi North East, Abuja .
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