ICPC: Civil Servants Padded 2021, 2022 Budgets with N400bn Duplicated Projects

Says N49.9bn collected as salaries by ghost workers from Jan to June this year

Sunday Aborisade in Abuja

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) yesterday disclosed that the 2021 budget totaling N13.59 trillion was padded by civil servants in the various Federal Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), with duplicated projects worth N300 billion.

Additionally, the anti-graft agency also disclosed that projects' duplication worth N100 billion were also inserted into the N17.12 trillion 2022 budget by some MDAs.

The ICPC further disclosed that whopping N49.9 billion was tracked as salaries paid to ghost workers between January and

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Buhari Rewards Athletes with National Honours, N200m Cash... Page 54

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Shettima: Inability to Build Elite Consensus Nigeria's Greatest Challenge... Page 12

PDP Releases Presidential Campaign Council Composition

Emmanuel is chairman, Mohammed, vice chair for north

Makinde, vice chair, south, Tambuwal, director general

Chuks Okoch in Abuja

The leadership of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has announced the composition of its Presidential Campaign Council, with the Akwa Ibom State governor, Udom Emmanuel, as the council's chairman.

In a document released yesterday, signed by National Organising Secretary of PDP, Bature Umar, the Bauchi State governor, Senator Bala Mohammed, was appointed vice chairman of the campaign council for the north, while the governor of Oyo State, Seyi Makinde, was made the southern vice president.

Rivers State Governor Nyesom Wike, who had been at the centre of the party's crisis, was listed as a member of the council. Similarly, Wike's ally, Governor Samuel Ortom of Benue State, made the list as a member of the council.

Sokoto State Governor Aminu Tambuwal was made Director General of the presidential campaign, while former governor of Cross River State, Liyel Imoke, was made Deputy Director General, Operations.

Continued on page 5

Inflation Hits 17-Year High at 20.52%, Higher in Ebonyi, Rivers, Bayelsa

Analysts harp on need to formulate, implement policies to boost food supply

CBN: Nigerians' attitude to foreign goods impacting economy negatively

James Emejo in Abuja, **Nume Ekeghe** in Lagos and **Blessing Ibunge** in Port Harcourt

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) which measures the rate of change in prices of goods and commodities rose to 20.52 per cent year-on-year in August, compared to 17.01 per cent in the corresponding period in 2021, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) disclosed yesterday.

The CPI had risen to 19.64 per cent in July 2022.

The latest inflation figure was the highest inflation rate the country has recorded in 17 years.

The inflation figures came just as the Director, Corporate Communication Department, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Mr. Osita Nwanisobi, yesterday expressed concern that the attitude of Nigerians towards foreign goods and services was one of the major challenges affecting the nation's economy.

The statistical agency said the 3.52 per cent rise indicated that the headline inflation rate increased in August 2022 when compared to the same month in the preceding year.

According to the CPI report for August 2022, which was posted on the NBS website, food inflation stood at 23.12 per cent on a year-on-year basis in the period under review, which

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INEC: No New Addition or Subtraction from Voters' Register... Page 47



100-METRE HURDLES WORLD RECORD BREAKER MEETS THE PRESIDENT...

L-R: World Record Sportswoman, Tobi Amusan; President Muhammadu Buhari, and Minister of Youth and Sports, Mr. Sunday Dare, during the Reception for Nigeria's contingent to the 2022 Commonwealth Games at the Presidential Villa Abuja ...yesterday GODWIN OMOIGUI



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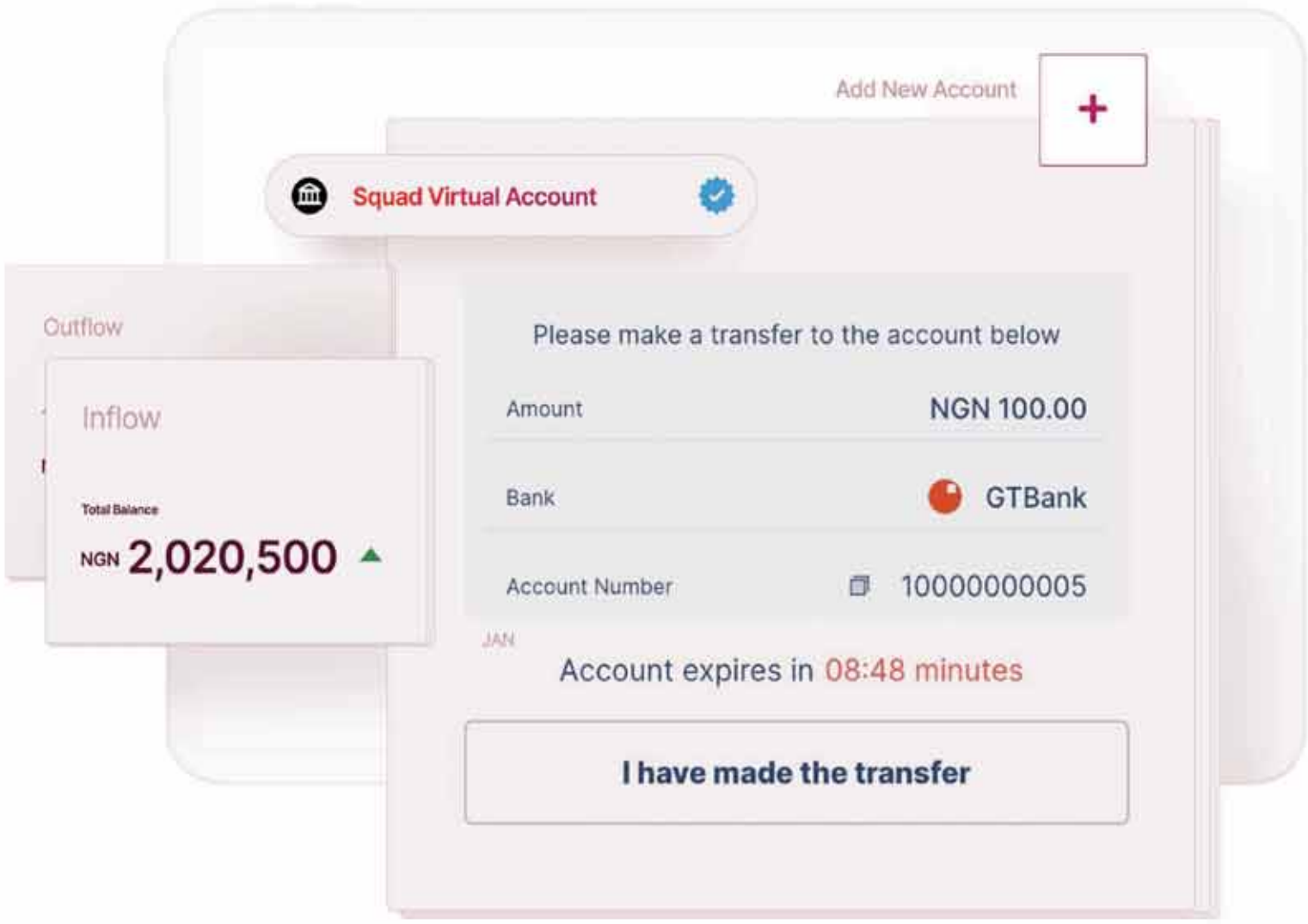

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Kenya's New President Removes Petrol Subsidy Day After Assuming Office

Emmanuel Addeh in Abuja

Kenyan President, William Ruto, yesterday followed up on a pledge to remove a fuel subsidy that has further depleted the state's already strained coffers, a move that's likely to be unpopular with some motorists in the East African nation.

Just a day after Ruto's September 13 swearing in, Kenya's Energy & Petroleum Regulatory Authority said it had scrapped a subsidy on gasoline, raising the price by 13 per cent.

Critics of the price-relief measure have said the buffer protects those who can afford private cars, a Reuters report said.

But the regulator retained diesel and kerosene subsidies, helping cushion low-income earners who use the latter fuel for lighting and cooking, and rely on public transport.

Ruto faces the dual tasks of stabilising government finances and bringing surging living costs under control. Kenya's public debt ballooned to 8.6 trillion shillings ($71 billion) in June, from 1.9 trillion shillings in 2013 when the previous administration came to office.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) classifies the country as being at high risk of debt distress.

Inflation may meanwhile be on track to hit double digits in the fourth quarter due to global price pressures, according to analysts including Razia Khan, Standard Chartered Bank's London-based head of research for Africa and the Middle East.

The government had expected to spend 280 billion shillings on fuel subsidies through the end of the fiscal year in June, equivalent to what it budgeted for development, Ruto said in his inauguration speech.

"We expect the president to make a few unpopular policy decisions, as much as we also expect the opposite as he attempts to keep up the promise to reduce the cost of living," said Renaldo D'Souza, head of research at Nairobi-based Sterling Capital Ltd.

"It was clear from the onset that the fuel subsidy was unsustainable in the long run," he added.

A separate subsidy on corn, used to make a staple known as ugali, cost as much as 7 billion shillings in just one month, according to Ruto.

Rather than targeting assistance at consumers, the new administration will seek to try and reduce food production costs and increase output by subsidising inputs such as fertilisers and quality seeds, he said.

As a first step, 1.4 million bags of fertiliser will be offered to farmers for 3,500 shillings each from next week, 3,000 shillings less than the current cost.

"The action on fertiliser prices and helping to boost production is sound, but cannot on its own alter very near-term developments," Khan said.

Nigeria is expected to spend over N4 trillion on fuel subsidy this year after President Muhammadu Buhari deferred its implementation under the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) for 18 months.

IMF Ranks Nigeria 11th Country with Highest Private Savings in Africa

Ndubuisi Francis in Abuja

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has ranked Nigeria as the 11th country with the highest private savings in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region, placing Angola on the number one spot.

The rating was contained in a new IMF working paper captioned "Private Savings and COVID-19 in Sub-Saharan Africa."

According to the report, private savings in Nigeria increased from about 19 per cent in 2019 to about 24 per cent in 2022.

Savings, it noted, were the most important source of financing for Nigerian households' survival during COVID-19, followed by loans, goodwill, and working.

The paper re-examined the main private savings determinants in Africa, followed by an analysis of the COVID-19 pandemic impact on private savings in the region and other country groupings. Using an unbalanced panel data from 1983–2021 for 31 SSA economies, the paper found that real per capita economic growth remains a key historical determinant of private savings in the region.

In contrast with other regions, private saving rates have not increased during COVID-19 in SSA.

The report stated: "Instead, COVID-19 deaths in our estimations are significantly associated with a decline in private savings in SSA. Robustness checks and a descriptive analysis of household surveys during the pandemic corroborate those results."

Overall, the IMF stated that private saving rate in SSA increased during the last two decades to an average rate of 17.3 per cent in 2019 from 11.5 per cent in 1983.

Angola occupies the first slot, accounting for the largest private savings in SSA with about 55 per cent while Gabon and Congo came second and third with 42 per cent and 41 per cent respectively.

"Private saving rates, as expected, are particularly low in fragile states and low-income countries (LICs).

"The private saving rate in SSA has increased during the last two decades to an average rate of 17.3 per cent in 2019 from 11.5 per cent in 1983.

"However, there is significant heterogeneity across the SSA countries. Oil exporters and middle-income countries

"MICs (Middle Income Countries) are the highest savers in the region (Figure 2, Panel II). Private saving rates, as expected, are particularly low in fragile states and low-income countries (LICs)," the report stated.

PDP RELEASES PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN COUNCIL COMPOSITION

Members of the council also include former National Secretary of PDP, Professor Adewale Oladipo, who was appointed Director-General, Operations, Chief Raymond Dokpesi, was nominated Deputy Director General, Technical and Systems, and former National Chairman of PDP, Okweaileze Nwodo, was appointed Deputy Director-General, Research

The presidential campaign council was divided into four categories of directorates, with Adewale in charge of Directorate of Administration, Directorate of Finance, and Directorate of Legal Affairs.

Dokpesi was put in charge of Directorate of Technology, Directorate of Situation Room, Directorate of Election Management, and Directorate of Training.

Imoke was assigned to take care of Operations, which was further divided into Directorate of Field Operations and Logistics, Directorate of Strategic Communications, Directorate of Security, and Directorate of Support Groups.

Nwodo was mandated to oversee the Directorate of Research, Directorate of Intelligence and Strategy, Directorate of Monitoring and Evaluation, and Directorate of International Affairs.

ICPC: CIVIL SERVANTS PADDED 2021, 2022 BUDGETS WITH N400BN DUPLICATED PROJECTS

June this year.--

The Chairman of the anti-corruption agency,

Prof. Bolaji Owasanoye, made the revelations during an interface with the Senate Committee on Finance.

The ICPC boss said the N300 billion duplicated projects in the 2021 budget and the N100 billion in the 2022 budgets were tracked through a thorough scrutinisation carried out on the approved projects for the various MDAs.

Owasanoye said, "N300 billion would have been wasted by the federal government on duplicated projects inserted into the 2021 budget and another N100 billion for same purpose in the current fiscal year if not tracked and intercepted by the ICPC.

"The same preemptive move saved the country from spending N49.9 billion for salaries of ghost workers put on fictitious pay roll by some fraudulent officers in the various MDAs between January and June this year.

"The names of the MDAs involved in projects duplications running into intercepted billions of naira and fictitious pay rolls are available and will be forwarded to the (Senate Finance) Committee.

"The good thing about the preemptive moves made by us is that monies for the fraudulent acts were prevented from being released to the affected MDAs and it is gratifying that the Finance Ministry and Accountant General Office cooperated with us," he said.

He advised relevant committees of the National Assembly to be on the lookout for such projects duplication in the proposed N19.76 trillion 2023 budget.

"From our own end, the detection of such projects are done by verifying their locations and names, upon which we tell the appropriate authorities not to release wrongly budgeted monies for them," he added.

Obviously impressed by the submission of the ICPC boss, the Senate Committee through its Chairman, Senator Solomon Adeola (APC Lagos West), said the operational cost of the agency would be increased from its current N1.8 billion.

Adeola said, "This Committee is impressed by proactive ways your commission is adopting in the fight against corruption.

"Your submissions clearly show that all hope is not lost for our dear country as far as fighting corruption is concerned.

"Your operational cost which is N1.8billion will be increased as required impetus for more proactive measures against corrupt practices across the various MDAs."

INFLATION HITS 17-YEAR HIGH AT 20.52%, HIGHER IN EBONYI, RIVERS, BAYELSA

was 2.82 per cent higher than the 20.30 per cent recorded in August 2021.

However, core inflation, which excludes the prices of volatile agricultural produce stood at 17.20 per cent year on year in August, up by 3.79 per cent when compared to 13.41 per cent recorded in August 2021.

The NBS pointed out that the rise in food inflation was caused by increases in prices of bread and cereals, food product, potatoes, yam, and other tubers, fish, meat, oil, and fat.

Month-on-month, food inflation stood at 1.98 per cent in August, representing 0.07 per cent decline compared to the 2.04 per cent recorded in July.

On the other hand, the core index recorded the highest increases in prices of gas, liquid fuel, solid fuel, passenger transport by road, passenger transport by air, fuel and lubricants for personal transport equipment, cleaning, repair, and hire of clothing.

On a month-on-month basis, core inflation stood at 1.59 per cent in August, down by 0.17 per cent when compared to 1.75 per cent recorded in the preceding month.

Also, year-on-year, the urban inflation rate stood at 20.95 per cent, which was 3.36 per cent higher compared to 17.59 per cent recorded in August 2021.

On a month-on-month basis, urban inflation stood at 1.79 per cent in August, representing a 0.03 per cent decline compared to 1.82 per cent in July.

On the other hand, the rural index year on year stood at 20.12 per cent, representing 3.69 per cent increase over the 16.43 per cent recorded in the preceding year.

Also, month-on-month the rural inflation was 1.75 per cent, down by 0.06 per cent compared to 1.81 per cent in July.

However, at state level, the inflation rate on a year-on-year basis was highest in Ebonyi 25.33 per cent, Rivers 23.70 per cent, Bayelsa 23.01 per cent.

On the other hand, Jigawa 17.30 per cent, Borno 17.56 per cent and Zamfara 18.04 per cent recorded the slowest rise in headline inflation.

Month-on-month, however, the highest increases were recorded in Anambra 2.78 per cent, Ondo 2.53 per cent, Nasarawa 2.40 per cent, while Yobe 0.68 per cent, Borno 0.84 per cent and Zamfara 0.98 per cent recorded the slowest rise in inflation.

Also, year-on-year, food inflation was highest in Kwara 30.80 per cent, Ebonyi 28.06 per cent and Rivers 27.64 per cent, while Jigawa 17.77 per cent, Zamfara 18.79 per cent and Oyo 19.80 per cent recorded the slowest rise.

Month-on-month, however, food inflation was highest in Anambra 3.05 per cent, Ondo 2.92 per cent and Bauchi 2.78 per cent, while Yobe 0.46 per cent, Oyo 0.89 per cent and Delta 0.94 per cent recorded the slowest rise.

However, reacting to the inflation outcome, Chairman, Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), Abuja Branch, Prof. Uche Uwaleke, said the increase in headline inflation above the psychological threshold of 20 per cent did not come as a surprise in view of the rising inflation trend in many economies partly caused by the Russian Ukrainian conflict.

It's interesting to note that the NBS, in its latest CPI report, he said the NBS also provided a clue as to the major factors driving the inflationary pressure in Nigeria namely supply disruptions and the rising cost of production.

Uwaleke said "In the light of this revelation, what becomes clear is that the recent monetary policy tightening stance of the CBN alone may not address the challenge.

"The government needs to formulate and implement complementary fiscal policies aimed at boosting food supply as well as reducing firm's cost of production."

Also commenting on the development, the Chief Executive Officer, Eczellon Capital, Diekola Onaolapo cited domestic constraints.

He said: "The figures should surprise anyone; it is tragic that things are going this way. However, our inflation is often imported, and given the trajectory of the foreign exchange rate over the past few months has been. It is not a good development but not surprising."

He added: "Considering inflation measures and changes in pricing from period to period, you'll expect that after a while, it begins to taper off but the year-on-year comparison is going to continue but month-on-month would begin to taper off at some point."

On his part, the Head, Financial Institutions Ratings at Agusto & Co, Mr. Ayokunle Olubunmi said: "I don't think the figures are actually surprising given what we're seeing globally and also with the country, I'm sure nobody is surprised by what we are seeing. Also, the exchange rates played a part because we largely import."

"For the rest of the year, we think there would actually be an increase. The momentum will actually continue however, there will be a slowdown and the rate of increase is going to reduce. For us, we are projecting that the average inflation for the year would not exceed 19 per cent. The rate increase is going to reduce. It is going to increase at a decelerating rate."

CBN: Nigerians' Attitude to Foreign Goods, Impacting Economy Negatively

Meanwhile, Nwanisobi yesterday said the attitude of Nigerians towards foreign goods and services was one of the major challenges affecting the nation's economy.

The CBN Director, who noted that in the past 15 years, the country had survived several challenges, said Nigerians need to contribute to the development and stability of the nation's economy by cutting down on their appetite of foreign goods.

He listed some of the activities in the past that hindered the growth of the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to include economic recession, COVID-19 pandemic, oil theft, insecurity, among others.

He berated Nigerians' appetite for foreign goods which he said leads to pressure in the forex market and naira depreciation.

The CBN director spoke yesterday, during an enlightenment fair organised by the CBN for business operators, banks, farmers, cooperative societies, NYSC members and workers of various establishments, held in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

Speaking at the programme with the theme: "Promoting Financial Stability and Economic Development,"

Nwanisobi, who was represented by the Deputy Director, Corporate Communication Department, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Mr. Samuel Okogbue, said the Enlightenment Fair would educate the participants on their various business activities that affects the economy.

"CBN is about the economy and the economy is about the people. We are here to interact with you about economy as to be conscious of what you are doing that impacts on the economy.

"The essence of our coming here is not only to tell you what CBN is doing. We also want to appreciate you, to think with you about our economy so that we will be conscious of what we are doing and how your businesses and other activities impact on our economy.

"In the last 15 years we have passed through many problems such as economic recession, COVID-19 which have impacted on the economy. We are battling with insecurity, oil theft and the urge for foreign goods which affects the nation's Gross Domestic Product, GDP.

"We consume foreign goods, everything we consume are foreign based and all this affects the foreign exchange rates. Our attitude to foreign goods is affecting our economy. This enlightenment fair will educate you on consumer protection, currency operations, payment management system, development finance and eNaira," he said.

In his remarks, the CBN Port Harcourt branch Controller, Maxwell Okafor, said the fair was aimed at disclosing the activities of CBN to the participants and what is required of them to secure their businesses and operate a free market economy.

Also, the CBN Assistant Director, Consumer Protection Department, Damola Atanda; Chika Ugwueze, CBN Assistant Director, Payment System, and Stanley Oruyeigha, Head Development Finance Department, enlightened participants on issues concerning consumer protection, payment system and development finance.

One of the participants and programme manager, Rivers State Agricultural Development Programme (ADP), Mr. Vitalis Chindah, commended the CBN for their interventions in area of agriculture product in the state and across the nation.

He urged the CBN to do more in encouraging the so many yearnings farmers who need finance to upgrade their business.

NEWS

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INAUGURATION OF MEDICAL IMAGING AT MAUTH...

L-R: Medical Director, Modibo Adamawa University Teaching Hospital (MAUTH), Prof. Awal Abubakar; Minister of State Petroleum Resources, Chief Timipre Sylva, and Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum Resources, Engr. Kamoru Busari, during the inauguration of medical imaging at MAUTH, Yola, Adamawa State…yesterday

Nigeria-Morocco, Others Sign Deal to Commence World's Longest Offshore Gas Pipeline

Project will create wealth, says Kyari

Emmanuel Addeh in Abuja

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) and the National Office of Hydrocarbons and Mines of Morocco (ONHYM), yesterday, penned a deal that kicked off the world's longest offshore gas pipeline.

The contract, which also involved the commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), SMH of Tanzania, as well as Petrosen of Senegal, was expected to drive the execution of the 7,000-kilometre Nigeria-Morocco gas pipeline project to ramp up supply to Europe.

Group Chief Executive Officer, NNPCL, Mallam Mele Kyari, speaking on the occasion in Morocco, said the pipeline project would create wealth and improve the standard of living of countries within the African continent.

Kyari said the gas pipeline project would also help in the mitigation of desertification, describing the event as a very important milestone in the project as it reaffirms the commitment of stakeholders to deliver.

The NNPCL boss explained that the company was well positioned to move forward with the project by leveraging on its experience and technical capabilities, ranging from gas production, processing, transmission and marketing as well as in executing major gas infrastructure projects in Nigeria.

From inception of the project to the current stage, Kyari said concerted efforts had been made by the government of Nigeria and the Kingdom of Morocco, which led to the achievements recorded. He expressed appreciation to King Mohammed VI of Morocco and President Muhammadu Buhari for entrusting NNPCL with what he described as the strategic project.

Kyari stated, "As you are aware, our countries stand to benefit immeasurably from the execution of the project, which extends beyond the supply of gas to energise the countries along the route.

"Some of the benefits include creation of wealth and improvement in standard of living, integration of the economies within the region, mitigation against desertification and other benefits that will accrue as a result of reduction in carbon emission.

"I am glad to say that NNPC is well positioned to progress the project by leveraging our experience and technical capabilities, ranging from gas production, processing, transmission and marketing as well as our vast experience in executing major gas infrastructure projects in Nigeria.

"On our part, NNPC Limited will facilitate the continuous supply of gas and provide other enablers, such as the required land for the first compressor station for the pipeline to be deployed in Nigeria, which is among the 13 stations earmarked along the pipeline route.

"On behalf of the federal government, I would like to thank you all as we continue to strengthen our partnership for the benefit of our countries."

The project was conceived during the visit of King Mohammed VI of Morocco to Nigeria in December 2016.

The NMGP is aimed at the monetisation of Nigeria's abundant natural gas resources, thereby generating additional revenue for the country, diversification of Nigeria's gas export routes, and elimination of gas flaring.

It will also assist in supplying gas to Morocco, 13 ECOWAS countries, and Europe as well as help the integration of the economies of the sub-region and improve the standard of living of people within the sub-region.

It is also expected to make available reliable gas supply as well as provide avenue for other countries along the pipeline route to develop and export their gas.

The pipeline is a 48-inch X 5,300 km (offshore from Brass Island-Nigeria to Dakhla-Morocco) and 56 X 1,700 km (onshore from Dakhla-Morocco to Maghreb European (MEP) pipeline, with a total length of over 7,000 Km and about 13 compressor stations.

The pipeline will originate from Brass Island (Nigeria) and terminate north of Morocco, where it will be connected to the existing MEP that originates from Algeria, via Morocco to Spain.

Buhari Committed to Rebuilding North-east Region Ravaged By Terrorists, Says Sylva

Emmanuel Addeh in Abuja

The Minister of State, Petroleum Resources, Chief Timipre Sylva, yesterday reassured that the current administration will rebuild the North-east region of the country devastated by Boko Haram attacks in the last decade.

Sylva spoke during the handing over of a Radiography Centre at the Modibbo Adama University Teaching Hospital (MAUTH), Yola, Adamawa State, funded under the oil and gas sector intervention programme.

He added that the completion of the projects was a demonstration of the federal government's readiness to restore normalcy through the oil and gas sector interventions in providing the necessary infrastructure and services in the country.

A statement by the Senior Advised , Media and Communications to the minister, Horatius Egua, quoted the minister as listing the critical areas as security, healthcare, education, agriculture, energy, climate action, human capital development and poverty alleviation.

The minister , who harped on the urgent need for collaborations between the government and the private sector said that it was only through such efforts as demonstrated by the ministry of petroleum resources that the nation can fast-track the needed development across the broad spectrum of the country

"This is the kind of collaboration we need in our nation to get things moving. What I have seen here is commendable and I dare say that collaborations like this is the only way through which we can grow as a nation. There should be a handshake between the government and the private sector," he advised.

The project according to Sylva forms part of the commitment of the President Muhammadu Buhari-led administration to redeem its pledge to the people of the North-east in accelerating the desperately needed rehabilitation, reconstruction, and rebuilding the region.

The minister noted that the upgrade of the MAUTH facility was intended to enhance the training of medical students, boost health care delivery as well as reducing the doctor-patient ratio in the state and neighbouring states in the region.

The commissioning of the hospital with state-of-the-art CT-Scan, x-ray and MRI, he said, will go a long way towards improving response time to all health-related matters and strengthen learning ability.

Sylva stressed that with the laboratory testing and case management in one location, there is a much shorter time between sample collection and infection confirmation, which ensures early initiation of treatment and thus mitigate the mortality rate in the state.

NCAA Explains Why It Suspended Azman Air

Chinedu Eze

The Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) has confirmed that it suspended the operations of Azman Air on Wednesday, saying it took the action because the airline failed to provide the required documents for the renewal of its Air Transport Licence (ATL).

One of the critical documents is the tax certificate, which the airline could not provide because it failed to remit ticket and cargo sales charge amounting to N1.2 billion to the NCAA. In addition to that, the airline also failed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on how it would remit the fund, which was five per cent charge that airlines collect on behalf of the regulatory authority.

The NCAA also said the airline failed to submit security clearance for the renewal of its ATL, which expired in April 2021.

Speaking on phone with aviation journalists yesterday, the Director General of NCAA, Captain Musa Nuhu, said the N1.2 billion debts was the revenue accrued from the five per cent Ticket Sales Charge (TSC) and Cargo sales Charge (CSC) collected from the air travellers by the airline.

The TSC/CSC is shared among five aviation agencies: NCAA, Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA), Accident Investigation Bureau (AIB) Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMET) and the Nigerian College of Aviation Technology (NCAT), Zaria.

The NCAA gets 58 per cent out of the total five per cent of TSC/CSC and it is the major revenue source for the agency, while the other four agencies share the remaining 42 per cent.

According to Nuhu, the regulatory agency had made efforts to recover the debt from the airline over the years, but the domestic operator was recalcitrant in paying despite collecting it from the passengers.

However, the withdrawal of the airline's ATL has rendered its Air Operator Certificate (AOC) invalid.

Nuhu told journalists that its management had held series of meetings with Azman Air's leadership on how to pay back the debt, but both parties failed to reach an agreement.

For instance, he explained that the management of the airline had promised to pay back the sum of N10 million monthly as part of the N1.2 billion debts, but the regulatory body insisted on N50 million monthly from the airline.

Besides, he stressed that the airline could not provide its security clearance, which was one of the prerequisites requirements for renewal of ATL.

"We didn't suspend Azman Air's AOC, but suspended their ATL, which had earlier expired. The ATL earlier expired in April 2021, but we gave the airline extension because of the disruption to aviation activities by the Covid-19 pandemic, just as we did for other airlines, too. However, we wrote a reminder letter to the airline six months to the new expiring date, which is statutory.

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NEWS



MULTICHOICE MEDIA SHOWCASE 2022...

L-R: Executive Head, Marketing, MultiChoice Nigeria, Tope Oshunkeye; Academy Director, West Africa, MultiChoice Talent Factory, Atinuke Babatunde; Chief Executive Officer, MultiChoice Nigeria, John Ugbe; Executive Head, Content, MultiChoice Nigeria, Dr. Busola Tejumola, and Chief Operating Officer, MultiChoice Nigeria, Ayo Ajala at the MultiChoice Media Showcase 2022 held in Lagos ...yesterday

Be Good Citizens of Nigeria, Buhari Tells 286 Foreign Nationals Granted Citizenship

Britons, Americans, Lebanese, Syrians, among beneficiaries

Deji Elumoye in Abuja

President Muhammadu Buhari has awarded Nigerian citizenship to 286 foreign nationals, urging them to be good citizens of the country in order to enjoy all the rights and privileges bestowed on them.

Addressing the new Nigerian citizens at a ceremony yesterday at the State House, Abuja, the president said, "you have pledged your allegiance to Nigeria. When you give your love and loyalty to Nigeria, she returns her love and loyalty to you,"

He explained that out of the 286 foreign nationals presented with certificates of Nigerian citizenship, 208 received certificates for naturalisation, while 78 got certificates by registration.

Buhari urged them to make positive and useful contributions to the advancement, progress and well-being of the different communities they reside, adding that as citizens they must be in accord with the national ethics and code of conduct.

"You are expected to abide by the ideals and institution of the Nigerian national flag, anthem, pledge and respect for all constituted authorities.

"All those concerned with Immigration matters are to offer our new citizens quick legal identification. Also, their local governments should assist with their integration in the local community to enable them enjoy all the entitlements of a Nigerian citizen."

In exercising the constitutional powers conferred on him, by Chapter III Sections 25-31 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended), the president told the new citizens that Nigeria remains a nation united by the principles of opportunity, equality, and liberty as enshrined in the Constitution.

"No matter where you come from, or what faith you practice, this country is now your country. Our history is now your history, and our traditions are now your traditions. Nigeria is your home and pride and joy.

"In line with our transformational ideals of strict adherence to due process and transparent procedures, the Ministry of Interior ensured that only deserving persons were recommended to the Federal Executive Council to be conferred with Nigerian citizenship."

Buhari recalled that the federal government in 2020 adopted the National Action Plan to eradicate statelessness and accordingly, the Minister of Interior, Rauf Aregbesola, inaugurated the High-level Steering Committee to Eradicate Statelessness in Nigeria by 2024.

"This ceremony therefore is a further demonstration of the federal government's commitment and determination to remove as many people as possible from statelessness.

"In this regard, I will like to reiterate our commitment to the strategic role Nigeria plays in the comity of nations, in its unwavering quest for greater human integration, towards ensuring peace and prosperity."

Earlier while welcoming the new Nigerians, the Minister of Interior, Aregbesola, in his speech entitled "The more the merrier," said the beneficiaries were from the United States, Europe, the Americas, Asia, Middle East, Oceania and Africa, who have seen the good in Nigeria.

"Without any doubt, Nigeria is a great nation, richly endowed and blessed with great people. Smart people continue to flock to our country to do business with us," Aregbesola said, adding that Nigeria would continue to welcome every qualified citizenship applicant.

He described the conferment ceremony as a celebration of the oneness of the human race, consistent with the mandate of the Ministry and the Buhari administration to lay a solid socio-economic and political foundation that will thrust Nigeria into one of the top 20 economies in the world.

"To achieve this lofty vision, the government is determined to encourage and attract foreign investors, high-net worth individuals, highly-skilled individuals and people with rare talents and strategic competencies into our country, " he said.

Electricity Workers Lambast Discos, Gencos over Poor Power Supply Despite N2trn Intervention Fund

Peter Uzoho

Electricity workers in Nigeria have criticised the distribution companies (Discos) and the generation companies (Gencos) over the continuous poor power supply in the country after privatisation and handing over the distribution and generation arm of the power sector to new owners.

The Zonal Organising Secretary (Liaison), National Union of Electricity Employees (NUEE), Kolade Ayodele, specifically told journalists that the new owners of the power assets, whom he described as "hustlers" deceived the federal government into giving them N2 trillion intervention to them.

He said rather than being an intervention fund as claimed by the government and the power firms, the N2 trillion intervention fund was the companies' way of collecting back the money the paid to acquire the assets in 2013.

Alleging that the private operators have continued to impoverish Nigerians and have contributed poorly to the power sector, leaving the country pillaged, Ayodele called for the government to immediately reverse the privatisation of the nation's power sector,

Noting that despite recognisable improvements in the wheeling capacity of the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) of 7,000 megawatts, he said the generation output had now dwindled below 5,000MW.

The union fingered the activities of the new owners as part of the reasons the power sector has gone almost comatose and the impoverishment of the average worker in the sector.

Ayodele said Nigerians should also be worried as electricity tariffs continued to rise without commensurate service delivery.

"Despite improvement in the wheeling capacity of the Transmission Company of Nigeria, TCN, which is still Federal Government-owned to over 7,000MW, the generation output has been dwindling below 5,000MW.

"Alas! the 'hustlers' who deceived the federal government into paying almost N2 trillion subvention to the owners of the new companies since privatisation, are being used to call the union names in order to exploit Nigerians and sustain the current comatose situation. Their mission is simply to call a dog a bad name in order to hang it, while they keep smiling to the banks," he stated.

Ayodele explained that since the privatisation of Nigeria's power sector in October 2013, the NUEE had been in the fore-front of speaking out on behalf of the Nigerian people.

Stating that it was an undeniable truth that the power sector privatisation had not added any value to the lives of the ordinary Nigerians, Ayodele noted that the entire exercise, which he described as a charade, had not brought any meaningful impact or improvement to the sector.

According to him, the exercise has rather led the nation to a huge setback, pointing out that the infrastructural development by the new business owners in the power sector has almost gone comatose while the socio-economic status of the average worker in the sector has continued to decline amid prevailing harsh economic conditions.

"The same equipment inherited from pre-privatisation have remained what drives the sector as there are no visible attempts by the Gencos and Discos to upgrade and expand their capacities/networks.

"Nigerians were deceived into believing that the 'harvestors' had the financial/technical muscles to improve power generation and distribution to Nigerians. Can Nigerians be told today that this purpose has been achieved?

"The answer was echoed in the print/electronic media by members of the National Assembly who even called for the total reversal of the entire process," the NUEE official alleged.

Pensioners to Receive Payment, a Week after Retirement, PenCom Assures

Contributory pension fund hits N14.5trn Lawmakers tackle commission over rising operating cost

Sunday Aborisade and **Juliet Akoje** in Abuja

The National Pension Commission of Nigeria (PenCom) said yesterday that federal pensioners would henceforth receive their entitlements, a week after retirement.

The agency also declared that pension fund, currently at N14.5 trillion was not idle but had been invested appropriately.

The Executive Chairman of PenCom, Mrs. Aisha Dahiru Umar stated these in her submission to the Senate Committee on Finance currently engaging government agencies on proposals for the 2023 - 2025 Medium Term Expenditure Frame Work (MTEF) and Fiscal Strategy Paper (FSP).

The PenCom boss said backlog of accrued pension payments to pensioners had been almost cleared by the federal government.

She said within the last 17 years, the federal government had been paying N49 billion per month to offset the backlog of pension.

She said, "Late payment of pension to pensioners will be a thing of the past very soon as required steps in that direction, have been taken by the federal government whose retirees are affected."

She said: "By the provisions of the Establishment Act, all income earned from investment earned from the Retirement Savings Account (RSA) are credited back to the RSA of the contributors. Nobody takes a single kobo from it. However, the Commission and the pension operators are allowed to charge fees on the fund under management and that is what we survive on.

"For example, the total asset under management is now N14.5 trillion made up of three funds. One is the Retirement Savings Account Fund, the other is the Closed Pension Fund Asset and the Assets in Existing Scheme.

"Out of the N14.5 trillion, the RSA fund is about N11 trillion, the CPFA has N1.5 trillion and the AES has about N1.4 trillion. These monies are in the account of contributors. It is not kept by PenCom, it is not kept by the PFAs. It is not anywhere but in the account of the contributors, just like the commercial banks.

"We charge fees as follows. PenCom charges on the RSA fund 0.2 percent, while the PFAs charge 1.2 percent and the PSCs charge 0.25 percent. Those percentages are charged on a daily basis and then divided by 365 days because if you wait to do that the end of the year, it is going to be higher and the RSA account holders will be cheated."

She added: "The Commission is mandated by the pension reforms act to charge these fees to enable it generate enough revenue to meet its personnel and operational cost. It is also to rid the government of the burden of funding the Commission.

"We also charge fine which we collect from the operators when they break certain rules. We use what we call a sanction regime to guide us on what they should pay when they break the rules. There are also one-off charges like licensing fees which N500,000. All these monies are paid into CBN account."

However, the lawmakers who spoke during the scrutiny of the Commission's accounts, demanded for details of total sum of N14.594 billion spent on personnel cost for 500 staff as well as N2.3 billion end of the year benefits, out of which the sum of N12.02 billion was for staff salary and N2.5 billion for other staff costs.

Documents had shown that the Commission's personnel cost rose from N12 billion in 2021, to N17 billion in 2022 and was projected to hit N21.5 billion in the 2023 budget proposal submitted to the Budget Office.


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NEWS



SITUATION ROOM...

L-R: President Muhammadu Buhari with the Service Chiefs, during the security meeting with President Muhammadu Buhari at the Presidential Villa Abuja ...yesterday GODWIN OMOIGUI

Azura Defends $30m Monthly Power Invoice Claims, Says 40% Returns to Govt

Says loans payment, gas supply funding form chunk of remittances

Emmanuel Addeh in Abuja

Azura Power company, an Independent Power Producer (IPP) which generates over 10 per cent of Nigeria's total electricity, yesterday pushed back on claims it was singlehandedly collecting $30 million as power bills, revealing that at least 40 per cent of the fund goes back to the government.

The Managing Director, Azura Power West Africa Limited, Edu Okeke, who spoke in an interview with select energy journalists, noted that to reduce the sum, the government could simply stop the servicing of its loan on the project, being the biggest lender, or halt the payment of about $10 million monthly in the gas supply arrangement.

There have been a lot of hue and cry as to how much the company receives from the supply through its 461MW-capacity power plant to the country, with the House of Representatives Committee on Finance, being the latest to express dissatisfaction over the $30 million monthly payment.

The committee said the amount was outrageous, noting that the deal wasn't acceptable, given that electricity supply hadn't improved markedly in recent times.

But revealing that the invoices usually have two parts namely: Capacity and actual power put on the grid - Okeke explained that excluding taxes paid to the government, it has to fund the take-or-pay gas arrangement and loans to its creditors, including the federal government.

"But what they haven't told you is that the day they pay us that $30 million, 40 per cent goes back to government the next day.

"About $10 million of that money is gas and it goes to the Nigerian Petroleum Development Company (NPDC)/Seplat and NPDC owns about 60 per cent of that. So NPDC takes $6 million into its pocket.

'About $4 million goes to the Nigerian Gas Company (NGC) which is again owned by the government, which is the biggest lender to Azura.

"We have about 16 lenders. The biggest lender is the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) through the Bank of Industry (BoI), but they won't tell you that. And they get their money immediately," the Azura boss stated.

He added that he had approached the authorities to advise that if the amount the government is being paid is too huge, all they need to do is to slash it or halt payment of loans and payment of gas altogether, but that there had been no cooperation.

"Nobody will tell you we are paying that much. We are not talking about taxes now. We are talking about the loan repayment to the CBN and others.

"The World Bank is standing, wanting everybody to do the right thing...and they know that if you do anything untoward, you go to jail and I am not ready for that," he added.

Okeke argued that Azura was developed by a lot of people because every agency of government signed off on it, insisting that it went through the normal process, except the final one which was the 'legal opinion', eventually released by the Muhammadu Buhari administration after it was delayed under the Goodluck Jonathan government.

"For those that don't understand how it works, in project financing, when you finish signing all the contracts, more than 100 contracts that we signed on Azura, the lawyer will now give a legal opinion to say, I have the right and authority to sign on behalf of Nigeria. In the other party, the lawyer will do the same thing.

"So they actually came out with a legal opinion saying that because for Nigeria, the Minister of Finance and Minister of power had approved, it didn't need one from the Attorney General, but we insisted," he explained.

The power company is partly sponsored by the UK Government, US government, Germany, France Sweden, Netherlands and then the World Bank. "These people, do you think all of them will sit down and say how do we go and screw Nigeria? he queried.

On the controversial take-or-pay arrangement, he maintained that some countries where there's still some level of the sanctity of contracts do not need any Sovereign involvement in business deals.

"For us to generate electricity, we have to have constant gas. Now for you to make sure you have gas, there is take-or-pay. That's how it's structured in every project of this nature. And if you're generating power, that take-or-pay is immaterial, because you're using it," he explained.

He stated that Azura was not the only company with take-or-pay, stressing that Afam, Okpai, Omotoso, Olorunsogo which have firm and effective Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) also do.

"The oil companies have also, but they don't call it take-or-pay because they own the gas and the power," he pointed out.

According to him, "the money is actually from government purse to government purse."

He explained that the notion that other plants had been shut down to allow Azura evacuate power wasn't entirely true, insisting that only the NPDHC was impacted, even though it wasn't the fault of Azura.

According to him, the evacuation study done by the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) before Azura began evacuation, showed that the full evacuation by both NDPHC was achievable initially, saying that as it was, NPDHC could not even generate much because gas is not available to it.

He noted that if Distribution Companies (Discos) paid their invoices, there would be no need for a sovereign guarantee or even the involvement of the ministry of finance.

"If the government wants the about $30 million reduced , what they should do is to call NGC and tell them , meet all your obligations to Azura, but don't send your invoice at the end of every month or let the CBN call us and say we know you are owing us but suspend it. Because it's all these funds that compound up to the money we collect," he added.

He explained that most of the misinformation going on was because of paucity of information as to how the industry works.

Discard Appointment Policy on Supreme Court Justices Now, BoSAN Tells NJC

Says appointment ought to be on merit not promotion Rtd Justice Aboki seeks limitation in appeal to presidential election

Alex Enumah in Abuja

The Body of Senior Advocates of Nigeria (BoSAN) yesterday told the National Judicial Council (NJC), the body responsible for the appointment of judicial officers, to do away with the current replacement policy for the appointment of Justices of the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court.

The body in its speech delivered at a Valedictory Court Service for Retired Justice Abdu Aboki, who attained the mandatory retirement age of 70 years, last month, also urged the NJC to also jettison the system whereby Justices of the Supreme Court must be promoted from the Court of Appeal.

BoSAN, in the speech delivered by Chief Onomigbo Okpoko, argued that the system was responsible for the level of mediocrity and incompetence in the judiciary.

"The Body of Senior Advocates takes the firm view that the selection and appointment of Justices for appointment to the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal on the basis of replacement is one that cannot result in the appointment of the best Lawyers into the appellate Courts in the country," the Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) said.

While stressing that the agitation of the BoSAN in this respect, would not go away any time soon, Okpoko said, "Our submission to the appointing authorities is that the policy of replacement of the retiring Justices from their place of origin is not sound and should be discarded.

"The National Judicial Council as the appointing authority should address this issue and appoint the best candidates of our country to man our courts.

"After all, Justice is blind and so does not look at or see the faces of litigants. Justice knows no tribe and has no colour or religion. it has no specified location because it is everywhere. Let no one put on the Nigerian Judiciary the iron clad case of restricting the appointment of our Justices in the manner complained of."

BoSAN, also urged the NJC to expand the appointment to include the bar and academia, as there are well qualified persons in that area.

Okpoko, while stressing that constitutional way of becoming a Justice of the Court of Appeal or the Supreme Court was by way of appointment and not promotion, listed former Justices of the apex court who did exceptionally well but where not initially judges.

"I met Justice Ephraime Akpata as a Chief Magistrate in Warri and have the fortune of appearing for the accused person in the last case Justice Akpata conducted as a Magistrate. You and I know that Justice Akpata made it to this Appeal Court from which he honourably retired. The issue of correct appointment of Judges is crucial", BoSAN emphasised.

56% of Nigeria's Agricultural Land Not in Use, Says Minister

Seriki Adinoyi in Jos

The federal government has disclosed that 56 per cent of Nigeria's arable land is underutilised.

Disclosing this in Jos, Plateau State yesterday at the ongoing 45th regular meeting of the National Council on Agriculture & Rural Development, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Dr. Mohammad Abubakar said, "Nigeria is endowed with a total of 79 million hectares of agricultural land with only 44 per cent being cultivated. The nation also has 267 billion cubic meters fresh surface water and 58 billion cubic meters underground water, with 37 billion cubic meters only stored in dams.

"Annual rainfall in the country is within the 300mm to 4,000mm. Conversely, potential irrigable area is about 3.14million Hectares with less than seven per cent utilised presently."

He, however, said the government was doing all it could to encourage agriculture having trained 153,124 women and youths on various agricultural crop, fishery and livestock value chain and empowered 142,703, trained 214,787 farmers on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and 220,018 farmers on Farmer Business School (FBS).

The minister said, "recent reports from the National Bureau of Statistics indicates that the agricultural sector topped the chart in a survey of seven sectors identified to have contributed to the Nigeria economy in the second quarter of 2022.

"It out-performed six other sectors comprising Trade, Telecommunications, Manufacturing, Oil & Gas, Real Estate as well as Finance & Insurance. The chart revealed that Agriculture alone contributed 23.3 per cent to GDP (Half Year 2022)."

To improve its performance, the minister said the federal government was strengthening the linkage between research, agriculture and industry by intensifying commodity value chain development process.

"This is being guided by the new framework of the National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy (NATIP), 2022-2027, launched in August 2022, which seeks to modernise the agricultural sector in line with changing global food systems and supply chains.

"Actually, NATIP is the Ministry's response to the present Administration Agenda of diversifying the nation's economy from petroleum oil-based to Agriculture and solid minerals.

"The document serves as successor policy of the Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP), 2016-2020, with a view to developing priority value chains on the basis of comparative ecological advantage across crops, livestock and fisheries sub-sectors in collaboration with the States Government.

"In pursuant of our mandate of ensuring food security, employment generation and wealth creation in the country, the Ministry is committed to supporting the establishment of over 100 processing centres in the rural communities across the nation under the Green Imperative Project of a private-driven mechanization programme."

Abubakar said the Ministry hopes to vigorously develop clusters, rural nodal centres and rural cottage industries, as well as establish six Special Agro-industrial Processing Zones (SAPZ) nationwide.



YORUBA TENNIS CLUB'S 96TH ANNIVERSARY LECTURE...

L-R: Vice Chairman, Yoruba Tennis Club, Mr. Olakunle Agbebi; Lagos Deputy Governor, Dr. Obafemi Hamzat; Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu; the Club's Chairman, Chief Babajide Damazio and APC Vice-Presidential Candidate, Senator Kashim Shettima, during the Club's 96th Anniversary Lecture held at Greetings Hall, Yoruba Tennis Club, Lagos Island...yesterday

Falana Petitions EFCC, Seeks Probe of Fraudulent Fuel Importation, Smuggling of Products to Neighbouring Countries

Accuses NNPCL of refusing to use tracking mechanisms provided by PEF, Lloyds Intelligence Report, others

Kingsley Nwezeh in Abuja

Human rights lawyer, Mr. Femi Falana has called for the investigation of fuel importation by the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) as well as smuggling of petroleum products to neighbouring countries.

In a petition titled: "Request for Investigation into the Fraudulent Fuel Importation and Smuggling of Products to Neighbouring Countries," dated September 15, 2022 and addressed to the Chairman of EFCC, Mr Abdulrasheed Bawa, Falana called for a probe of the corporation following the discrepancies in the daily consumption figures of PMS dished out by the agency at different fora and the alleged indictment of the agency by the Ministry of Petroleum Resources and Nigeria Customs Service.

He also accused the oil corporation of deliberately refusing to use a software used by Petroleum Equalisation Fund (PEF) for tracking all trucks loading fuel in Nigeria and the Lloyds Intelligence Report and Thompson Reuters Ekon.

Citing media reports, the petition stated that, "On March 24, 2020, the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) disclosed that Nigerians were consuming about 38.2 million litres of petrol daily.

"Specifically, the agency said, 'while the Lagos zone with 25 depots has 483,894,000, the Calabar/Eket Zone with seven depots contains 78,731,000, Warri with 11 depots has 177,599,593, Port Harcourt comprising seven depots has 96,011,000, Umuahia, 6,938,000 and Kaduna 9,679,000.'

"Barely 15 months later, the Group Managing Director of the NNPC claimed that 38.2 million litres had grown to over 102 million litres per day, from an average of about 60 million litres per day. He blamed the astronomical rise in the consumption rate of premium motor spirit on the growing activities of smugglers of the product."

The petition further noted that, "at a public forum on June 24, 2021, Mr. Kyari announced that the NNPC had concluded arrangements to collaborate with the EFCC, Department of State Services (DSS), Nigeria Police Force (NPF), NCS, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and other relevant security agencies to tackle the smuggling of petrol from Nigeria neighbouring countries.

"He also stated that the federal government had directed the NNPC to immediately cut down the consumption rate of PMS from the rate 102 million litres to 60 million litres."

Citing more media reports on the matter, Falana said the federal government had distanced itself from the fraudulent importation of fuel by the NNPC.

"Thus, on March 27, 2022, the Minister of State, Ministry of Petroleum Resources, Mr. Timpre Sylva said that,

"When I assumed office, initially I was told that our daily consumption was 66 million litres. Then, when fuel prices increased from N145 to N162, the consumption figure temporarily fell to about 40 something million litres per day, because the arbitrage opportunity reduced.

"When the value of the naira dropped again, and the number went up again to over 60 million litres. I am told the figure sometimes rise to as high as 90 or over 100 million litres. I don't know how that happens. At this rate, I have said if anyone is looking at a criminal enterprise, look no further than the fuel subsidy."

Continuing, Falana stated that about two years ago, Kyari had announced plan by the national oil company to extend some of its services, including the building of filling stations across neighbouring countries.

"He stated that the move would curb illegal cross-border movement of petroleum products in countries that Nigeria shares borders with.

"But during his appearance at the public hearing on 2022 to 2024 Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and Fiscal Strategy Paper (FSP), in Abuja organised by the House of Representatives Committee on Finance last week, Mr. Kyari turned round to say that setting up filling stations in neighbouring countries would not stop petrol smuggling from Nigeria.

"During his own appearance at the same public hearing last week, the Comptroller-General of Customs, Colonel Hamid Ali (rtd) refuted the bogus figure of fuel allegedly smuggled out of Nigeria.

"In a rather scientific manner, Colonel Ali exposed the fraudulent claim of the NNPC when he stated inter alia:

'If we are consuming 60 million litres of petrol per day by their own computation, why in the world would you allow the lifting of 98 million litres per day?..'

"So how do we get to 60 million everyday? If you say this petrol is smuggled, if you release 98 million litres, and then we use 60 million litres, the balance will be 38 million litres. How many trucks will carry 38 million litres? Everyday. That's almost 500. Which road are they following? Where are they carrying this thing to?", he queried.

"In its reaction to the serious allegation of fraudulent importation of fuel into Nigeria and the criminal act of smuggling of the product to neighbouring countries by alleged criminals the NNPC insisted that the average daily evacuation (Depot truck out) from January to August 2022 stood at 67 million litres per day as reported by the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA)", the petition said, citing further media reports.

Falana, therefore, urged the anti-graft agency to commence investigation into alleged fraudulent fuel importation by the NNPCL in view of position of the Ministry of Petroleum Resources and the NCS boss debunking the claims of the oil corporation.

"In view of the foregoing, it is crystal clear that the Directorate of Petroleum Resources, the Ministry of Petroleum Resources and the Nigeria Customs Service have shown, beyond any shadow of doubt, that the figures of fuel importation by the NNPC are bogus and fraudulent.

"The monumental fraud was confirmed when the NNPC cut down the supply of fuel from 102 million litres to 62 million litres per day on the basis of the orders of the federal government.

"Having regards to the indictment of the NNPC by the authorities of the Ministry of Petroleum Resources and the Nigeria Customs Service we are compelled to request the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission to investigate and expose the monumental fraud that has characterised fuel importation and the mismanagement of fuel subsidy by the NNPC as well the criminality of smuggling fuel from Nigeria to neighbouring countries," he said.

"In conducting the investigation the EFCC should find out the quantity of barrels of crude refined locally and in foreign countries including West African States.

It may interest the EFCC to know the Petroleum Equalisation Fund spends billions of naira annually on Project Aquila Software which has a mechanism for tracking all trucks loading fuel in Nigeria.

Insecurity: Inter-faith Group Demands Gumi's Investigation, Arrest

Adedayo Akinwale in Abuja

The National Inter-Faith Movement has called for the investigation and arrest of a popular Muslim cleric, Sheikh Ahmad Gumi, over an alleged attempt to incite religious crisis in the north.

The group made the call in a statement by its National President, Rev. Amos Adah, following the arrest of Gumi's media consultant, Tukur Mamu.

Mamu, a newspaper publisher, negotiated the release of some of the hostages in the March 2022 train abduction in Kaduna. He was recently arrested by InterPol at Cairo International Airport on his way to Saudi Arabia, ostensibly for Lesser Hajj, and was deported to Nigeria, where he was picked up by the Department of States Services (DSS) at the Kano International Airport.

The statement said, "We have followed with keen interest, the investigation and arrest of Mamu by the DSS. We must say that this proves that our security agencies are working without many words. The DSS also acted timely to take Mamu to court.

"This is a smart move in the right direction. Any individual or group, who has decided to unleash anguish on fellow humans, must be made to pay. On behalf of other Christian leaders in Kaduna and the entire North-west, who have suffered from bandits, we say, thank you, to the intelligence community.

"However, they must not rest on their oars. If there is evidence to tie down Mamu, certainly, there will be more linked to his master, Gumi. Thus, we charge our gallant officers to take the next brave step to arrest and prosecute Gumi."

NSIA Signs Healthcare Expansion Deals with Eight Nigerian Institutions

Emmanuel Addeh in Abuja

The Nigerian Sovereign Investment Authority (NSIA) yesterday signed agreements for the expansion of its diagnostics and oncology programme through the Healthcare Development and Investment Company (NHDIC).

The eight collocation agreements in total will include lease and collaboration agreements with three Federal Medical Centres (FMCs) and three state governments under phase one of the expansion.

The state governments are Enugu, Kaduna and Kwara states while the selected, medical centres include Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Teaching Hospital, Bauchi and Usman Dan Fodio University Teaching Hospital, Sokoto.

Other FMCs include the Federal Medical Centre Asaba, Delta, University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom and University College Hospital Board of Management, Oyo state.

According to the organisation, the event was attended by the Managing Director, NSIA, Uche Orji, the Deputy Governor of Enugu State, Cecilia Ezeilo as well as representatives of governors of Kwara, Kaduna states and Medical Directors of the Teaching Hospitals.

The broader goal of the programme, it said, is to establish, in two phases, a portfolio of 23 diagnostic centres, seven catheterisation labs and two oncology centres across Nigeria.

Pursuant to the agreements, NSIA said that funds will be deployed to build, equip, maintain, and operate catheterisation labs in Kwara, Oyo, Sokoto, Bauchi and Delta states.

In addition, it stated that it will build, equip, maintain, and operate private modern medical diagnostic centres in Enugu, Kaduna, Kwara, Akwa Ibom, Oyo, Sokoto, Bauchi and Delta states; and build, equip, maintain, and operate an oncology centre for advanced radiotherapy treatment

Each centre, it said, will run as a joint venture between NSIA and the respective tertiary hospital to ensure timely and efficient delivery of services.

The investments are expected to build new and upgrade these institutions to modern medical centres and significantly enhance Nigeria's ability to treat Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), it said.

Speaking at the event, the NSIA boss said the investments will provide access to advanced healthcare services for the benefit of lower-income families with limited access to care

He said the programme was created having identified critical infrastructure gaps through a comprehensive assessment of the sector.

Furthermore, he noted that the move aligns with the NSIA's NHDIC strategy to invest in the sector through the establishment of diagnostic centres and tertiary healthcare centres.

According to Orji, the enhanced diagnostic capabilities will improve medical intervention in the country and in the respective catchment areas of the partner federal teaching hospitals.

When these centres become operational, he said they will deliver additional development impact for Nigerians through the provision of high-quality, affordable, and accessible healthcare

The proposed projects present a disruptive healthcare strategy, as it will bring about the provision of high quality, affordable and accessible healthcare to the local market, as well as development/ training on the required clinical resources in Nigeria and bring quality healthcare to many



ABIODUN ON PROJECT INAUGURATION GALOUR ...

L-R: Ogun State Commissioner for Works and Infrastructure, Ade Akinsanya; The Onimeko of Imeko, Oba Benjamen Oyeditan Olanite; Governor Dapo Abiodun; his deputy, Noimot Salako-Oyedele and the All Progressives Congress candidate for House of Representaives, Yewa North/Imeko Federal Constituency, Gboyega Nasir Isiaka at the inauguration of Oke Ola Road, Imeko Afon Local Government in Ogun West Senatorial District on Wednesday

Shettima: Inability to Build Elite Consensus Nigeria's Greatest Challenge

● Says emilokan an idea whose time has come, insists Tinubu is excellent example of nationalist

● Sanwo-Olu calls predecessor most credible to succeed Buhari

Segun James

The vice presidential candidate of All Progressives Congress (APC), Senator Kashim Shettima, yesterday, said the failure of the elite to build consensus was at the heart of Nigeria's challenge.

Shettima said the Emi lo kan slogan, coined by the presidential candidate of the party, Bola Tinubu, was an idea, whose time had come.

Speaking at the 95+1 anniversary lecture of the Yoruba Tennis Club, at the club's Greeting Hall in Lagos, Shettima described Tinubu as an excellent example of a nationalist.

The former Borno State governor added that with Tinubu's commitment to the Nigerian project, it would only be fair to elect him as the next president of the country.

In his own remarks, Lagos State Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu said Tinubu was the most qualified to lead Nigeria among the presidential candidates contesting to succeed President Muhammadu Buhari next year.

Speaking on the theme, "Social Club and the Search for National Cohesion," Shettima lamented that the greatest challenge facing Nigeria's nationhood was the inability to build elite consensus on the best way to organise and jointly chart a path to progressive development appropriate to the country's varied populace.

He stated, "Our diversity, which should be a strength, has been exploited and the constant bickering over access to power, has stoked the basest instincts, amongst our elite, in the pursuit of political power. So divisive has this been that politics has been more like warfare, where every weapon of mass destruction has been deployed, rather than a civic engagement.

"It is imperative that all of us must begin the process of a rethink of the content, values and modus operandi of politicking. We must imbue politics with unquestionable patriotic content, which speaks to the development of our nation and the advancement of the welfare of the Nigerian people, underscored by national cohesion."

Shettima boasted that with the "emergence of Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu as the presidential candidate of the APC, we are convinced that the general political situation in Nigeria needs the competencies of a detribalised and committed Nigerian, like ABAT, to re-ignite the requisite values that can help us rededicate ourselves and all Nigerians to collectively tackle the challenges of national cohesion."

According to him, even though the 2023 general election is a few months away, "Nigerians have a choice to make in the determination of our destiny. Our ticket is dedicated to the building of that progressive and united country that will allow us to harness the very best that our country has to offer.

"We will rekindle the spirit of patriotism and draw on all the positive lessons from the commendable history of the Yoruba Tennis Club. We trust that we can count on your support in the days and months ahead and God willing, when we assume power, we will ensure that stakeholder groups such as yours are constantly engaged in the continuous development of our nation building plans.

"In 2023, we need a Nigerian leader that has the humility and generosity of spirit of General Yakubu Gowon. We need a leader that has the commitment of a Muhammadu Buhari. We need a leader that has the work ethic and broad-mindedness of an Olusegun Obasanjo. We need a leader that has the situational pragmatism and understanding of Nigeria's security, the maradonic skill of an Ibrahim Babangida.

"We need a leader with a vision and sense of responsibility and commitment and somebody who understand the nation like an Abdulsalami Abubakar and in our systemic circumstances, we need a leader with a dose of the hospitality of a Sani Abacha.

"We need a leader with the intellectual acumen, with the action to catapult this nation to a higher pedestrian. We need a leader, who is not bound by regional or religious sentiment.

"We need a leader that has established such records of excellence and commitment to good governance. There is no one, with all due respect, that fits this than Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu."

Shettima maintained that Tinubu had shown commitment to the peace and cohesion of the country. He added,"Asiwaju is an idea whose time has come, and Emilokan is for real. We must get our politics right, in the same patriotic manner that the Founding Fathers of the Yoruba Tennis Club, and their successors, got it right, and have kept it going for 96 years.

"Social clubs play a vital role in the process of national cohesion. Social groups, exist in every nook and cranny of this country and even abroad, where Nigerians in the diaspora have found themselves, bringing together groups with a common purpose, identity, and culture."

Shettima said social clubs were credible examples of appreciable governance systems, "where periodic elections are often held in a generally open and transparent manner. Clubs, such as this, have been more committed to national cohesion, in practice, than our political structure. In recent times, we have witnessed increasingly alarming tendencies towards a loss of belief in the idea of our national cohesion.

"The truth, however, is that nation-building is a continuous work-in-progress, and we must always maintain optimism. When the Founding Fathers launched this prestigious Club, they could not have envisaged all the problems of the past 96 years. But filled with the optimism that their Club would not only come to be but that it would also survive every form of turbulence. It is a lesson we must imbibe in politics and in our endeavour to strengthen national cohesion in Nigeria gathering and also for your attention."

Rtd Supreme Court Justice, Clara Ogunbiyi, Replaces Smith, Assumes Duties as Acting Chair of PSC

● Pledges to run an inclusive administration based on rule of law ● Union suspends strike

Kingsley Nwezeh in Abuja

A retired Supreme Court Justice, Clara Ogunbiyi, yesterday, assumed duties as Acting Chairman of the Police Service Commission (PSC) following the resignation of former Inspector-General of Police, Musiliu Smith.

A statement by the commission said Ogunbiyi pledged to run a broad, rules-based administration, as the workers union of the commission suspended its strike in order to study the new management.

She said the commission deserved the best and promised to ensure that the management strove to give the staff a commission to be proud of.

"We will do our best, by the grace of God, and I believe our best will be good enough," she pledged.

Ogunbiyi was until her nomination Commissioner 1 in the commission and next in hierarchy to the former chairman. She expressed her appreciation to her colleagues for their confidence in her ability to lead the commission.

The statement said Ogunbiyi was nominated by Smith to replace him pending the appointment of a new chairman by the president.

It explained, "The Chairman of the Police Service Commission, Alhaji Musiliu Adeola Kunbi Smith, a retired Inspector General of Police, has formally resigned his appointment. His resignation, which has been accepted by Mr. President, takes immediate effect. Alhaji Smith retired on health grounds.

"Following his resignation and pursuant to Schedule 2(4) sub-section 2(2) of the Police Service Commission Establishment Act 2001, Members of the Management of the Commission met yesterday (Wednesday), September 14th, 2022, and nominated a colleague, Justice Clara Bata Ogunbiyi, a retired Justice of the Supreme Court, as the acting Chairman, pending the appointment of a new Chairman by Mr. President."

Meanwhile, the Joint Union Congress of the commission suspended its strike action to allow the new management to look into its demands.

In a chat with THISDAY, Chairman of the union, Mr Adoyi Adoyi, said the union suspended the strike to allow the new leadership attend to the cause of the industrial action. He said the new management had already taken some steps to reverse the contentious decisions that precipitated the strike.

Lagos Impounds 4,694 Motorcycles, Convicts 1,490 Offenders

The Police in Lagos State have convicted about 1,490 persons consisting of miscreants, street traders, traffic offenders, among others, for various offences in the state.

It was gathered that the convicts were among the 1,709 suspects arrested by policemen for various offences in the state between June 1 and September 9, 2022.

This was the period the Lagos State Government reviewed the state traffic law guiding the activities of commercial motorcyclists in the state.

The review, among other reasons, came on the heels of the lynching of a sound engineer, David Imoh, by suspected commercial motorcyclists in the Lekki area of the state.

As a result of the tragic incident, a ban was placed on the operations of commercial motorcyclists in six local government areas, consisting of Eti Osa, Ikeja, Surulere, Lagos Island, Lagos Mainland and Apapa.

The enforcement of the ban began on June 1 with security agents patrolling the listed LGAs for errant motorcyclists who had been protesting against the ban.

Despite the protest, the government extended the ban to four more LGAs including Kosofe, Oshodi-Isolo, Shomolu, and Mushin, on August 18.

According to statistics obtained from the state Police Public Relations Officer, SP Benjamin Hundeyin, enforcement of the ban on motorcycle operations between June 1 and September 9, 2022, led to the seizure of 4,694 motorcycles from recalcitrant commercial motorcyclists.

In June 2022, 1,885 motorcycles were impounded for contravening the ban. However, a decline was recorded in July with 1,501 motorcycles impounded while August and September accounted for 1,029 and 279 motorcycles respectively.

However, out of the 1,709 persons arrested for contravening traffic laws, and committing other offences in the state, 131 suspects were screened out while a total of 1,578 were charged to court, leading to the conviction of 1,490.

Out of the 1,578 suspects prosecuted, eight had their cases struck out, 11 were discharged while 69 were still awaiting trial.

The statistics also confirmed the seizure of 26 tricycles from tricycle operators who, among other offences, contravened the traffic laws in the state.

The period also saw the seizure of 106 vehicles for driving against the traffic in the state.

Meanwhile, the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Mr Abiodun Alabi, said the enforcement of the ban on commercial motorcycles in some local governments in the state would be continuous in order to restore sanity to the affected areas.

In a statement by Hundeyin, yesterday, Alabi explained that Lagos, being the commercial capital of the nation, needed to be safe and orderly to attract more investments.

"The enforcement has to be continuous to maintain the tempo that we have attained within so short a time. Many of the seized motorcycles have been crushed, but the most important message that we want to pass across is compliance so that the government does not have to crush any motorcycles," the police commissioner stressed.

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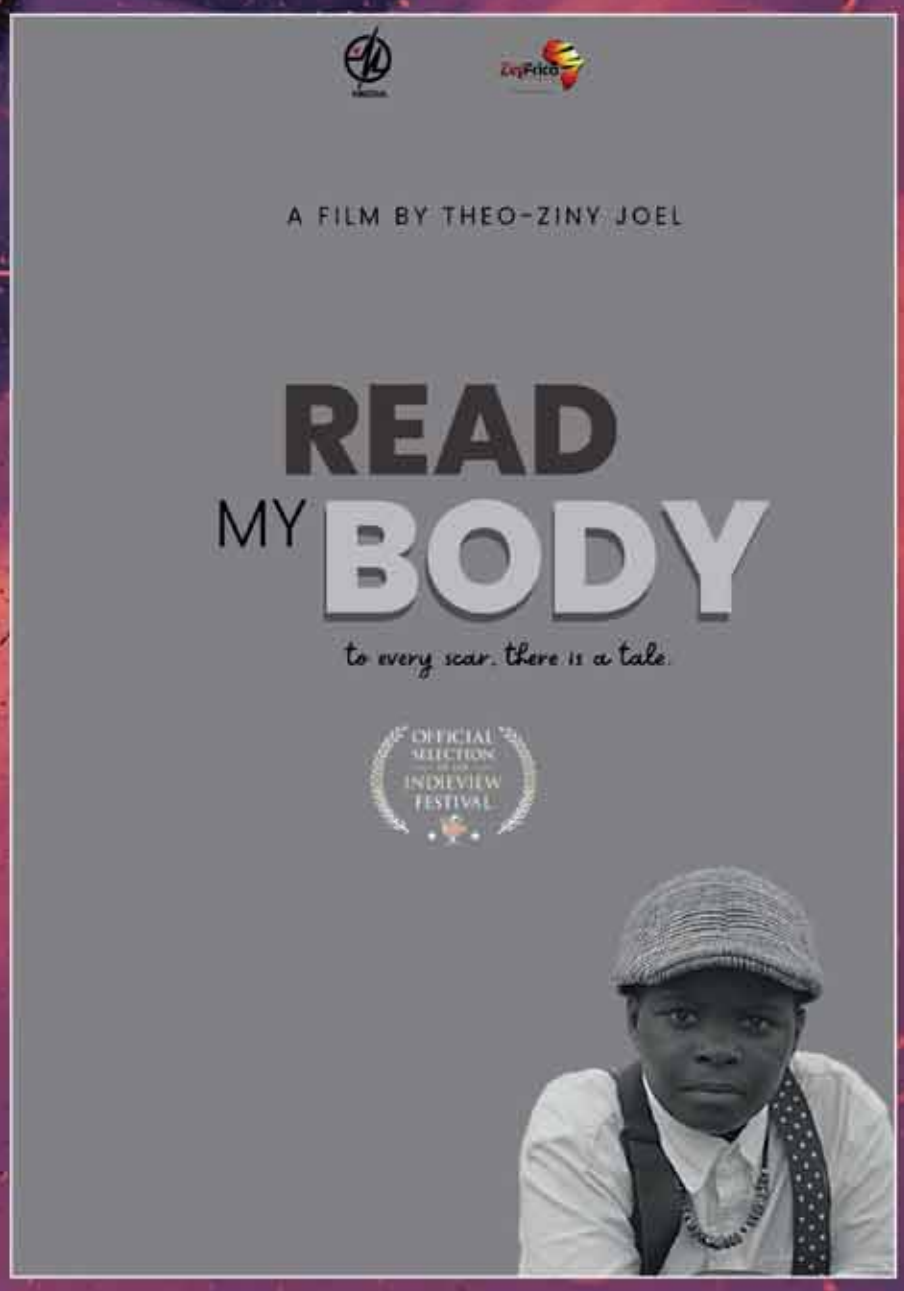

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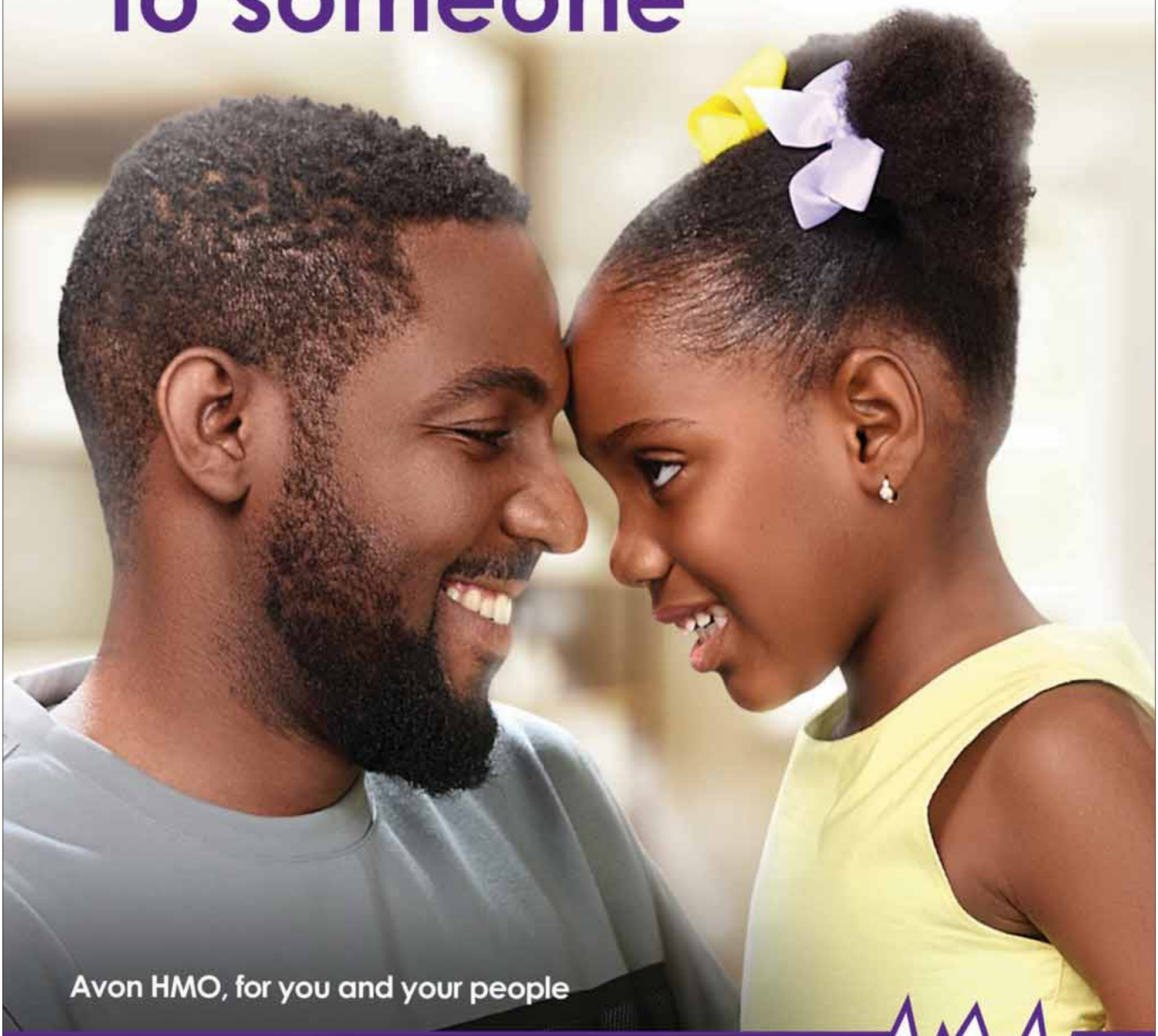

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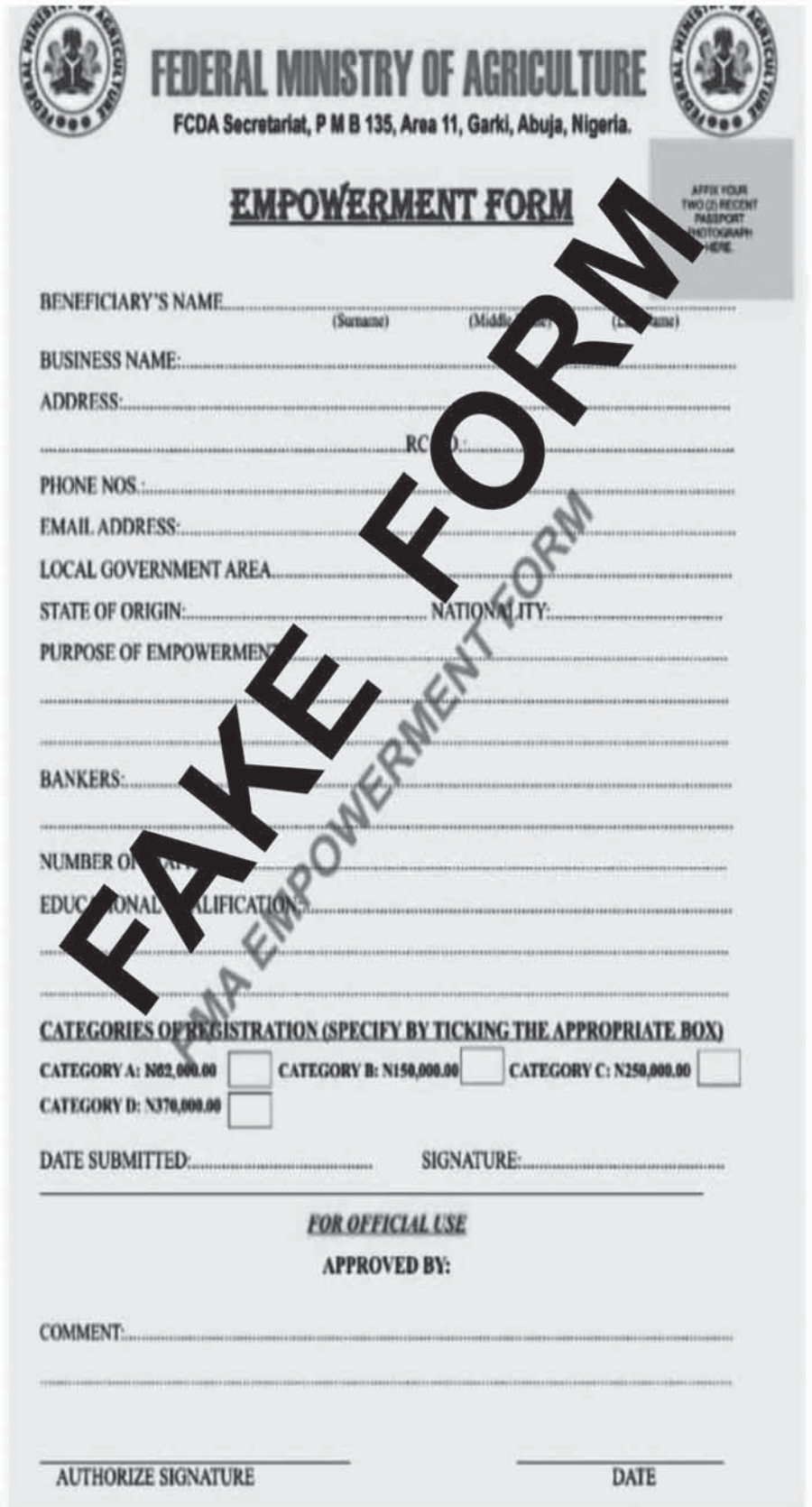
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Ubah's Attack and Renewed Fear of Insecurity in Anambra

David-Chyddy Eleke writes that there is a renewed fear over the state of security in Anambra State following recent attack on the convoy of a member of the National Assembly, Senator Ifeanyi Ubah

Until last Sunday, the governor of Anambra State, Prof Chukwuma Soludo may have already been thumbing his chest over his achievement in the area of flushing out criminal elements in the state. The attack came to all as a surprise because it came at a time when the state had been declared safe again.

Same last week, Anambra State Police Command had taken stock of its achievements in the state, and declared that the state was now safe. The state police commissioner, CP Echeng Echeng, who addressed officers of the command at the state police headquarters in Awka, during a visit of the Assistant Inspector General in charge of Zone 13 police command, AIG Umar Muri, had said: "We have registered a lot of successes in the fight against criminals. Most of the successes wouldn't have been possible without your (Muri's) advice.

"Our security situation continues to improve everyday, and it will continue to improve day after day. Many of those criminals who were referred to as unknown gunmen have been arrested, many guns have been recovered and vehicles recovered and given to their owners. The unknown gunmen are now known. May I also seize this opportunity to tell you that the mastermind of the Okija attack on police has been picked up by police with three of his friends and are today giving us clues about their operations. We lost two men during that attack. The morale of our men have been restored. When we came on board, morale was low, but today morale is high and we are still building on it. We will continue to ensure that our men will go about their job without being harassed by miscreants," Echeng had said.

To underscore the return of peace in the state, the command opened up access roads around the state police command to motorists and passersby. Roads around the state police command's headquarters in Awka had been shut to motorists, following attacks on various police facilities during the very peak of insecurity in the state.

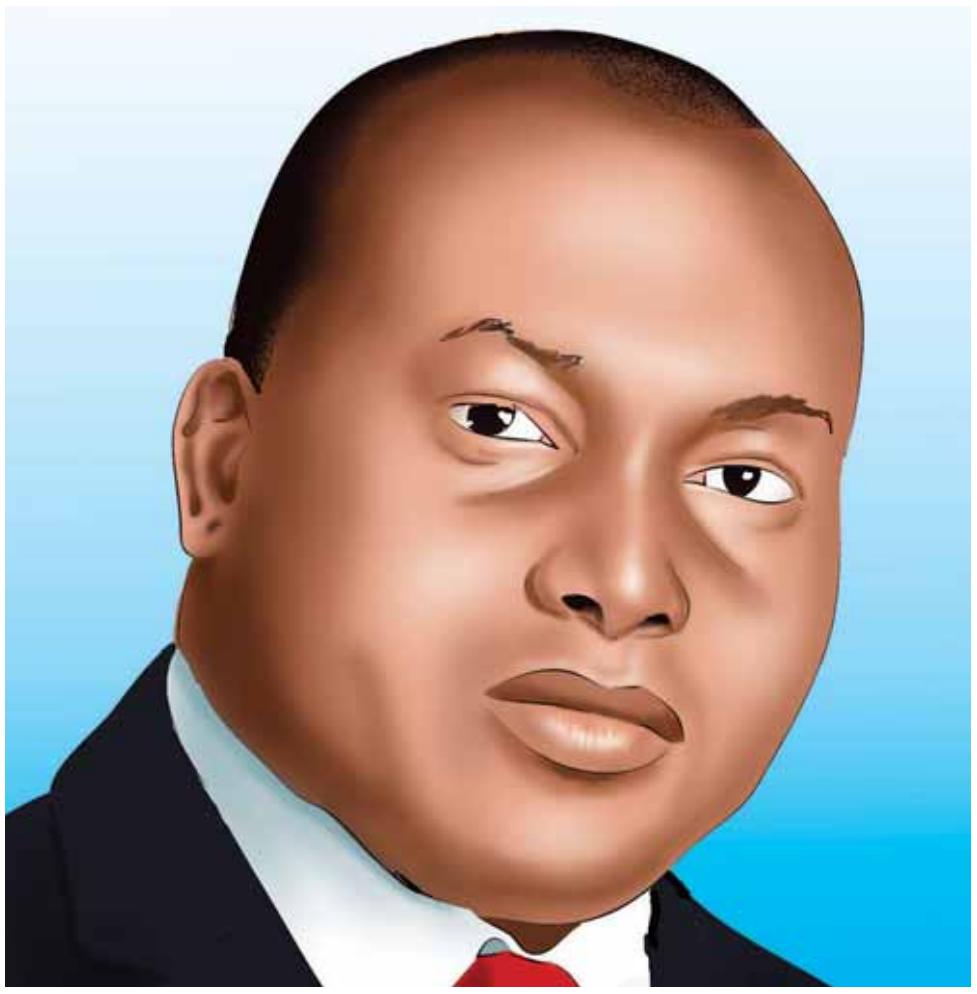
Since February 2021, security in Anambra State had deteriorated, with daily cases of killings of private individuals, politicians, government functionaries and security operatives alike. Facilities of government, including police stations, offices of the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, Enugu Electricity Distribution Company (EEDC), local government secretariats, and many others were not spared.

Though there were fears that the attackers were members of the secessionist group, Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) the group distanced itself from the attacks.

On the other hand, the attackers grew brazen by the day. Sometimes they formally write to communities of their decision to attack them. They also mopped up arms bought by various communities for their vigilance groups, and even collected settlement fees before allowing anyone hold any function in communities. At some point, they also circulated messages warning that carrying materials in one's car which depicted politics in anyway was a sure way to invite death if they accosted such persons.

Not a few politicians were also attacked, and the activities of the criminals almost truncated the November 2021 governorship election, just as it successfully stopped campaigns in most parts of the state.

But upon the swearing in of Professor Chukwuma Soludo in March this year, he extended olive branch to the criminals with a deadline.



On the expiration of the deadline, the governor has been steadily smoking them out through the help of the security agencies, until recently, when the state was again deemed safe enough.

But last Sunday night's attack on Senator Ifeanyi Ubah who represents Anambra South Senatorial zone has again heightened fear of insecurity in the state.

Ubah, a former governorship candidate and the Senator representing Anambra South Senatorial zone is also recontesting for the position on the platform of Young Progressives Party (YPP).

He was returning to Nnewi from a function at about 7pm on Sunday, when some daredevil gunmen ambushed his convoy at Enugwu-Ukwu community in Njikoka Local Government Area.

Ubah in the attack was said to have lost about six police operatives attached to him, his personal assistant, his personal photographer and a driver. Another man who was identified as Onowu Nri, who though was not in the convoy was also shot dead. Several persons allegedly sustained injuries during the attack, but the Senator who rode in a bullet proof car escaped unhurt.

This has put a question mark on the safety of politicians and others in the state. Some prominent sons of the state who reacted to the news of the attack have called for a renewed resolve by the state government to sack all criminal elements in the state.

Some politicians including the Senator representing Anambra Central, Senator Uche Ekwunife; the member representing Nnewi South, Nnewi South Ekwusigo federal constituency, Hon Chris Azubogu and former governorship candidate of All Progressives Congress, (APC), Senator Andy Uba, who condemned the attack called on Soludo to swiftly ensure the arrest of the culprit.

As a consequence of the attack, the state which was already recovering from the every Monday sit-at-home exercise totally relapsed.

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

Kashim Shettima @56: Tribute to A Detribalized Leader

Stanley Nkwocha writes that the Vice Presidential candidate of the All Progressives Congress, Senator Kashim Shettima, who clocks 56 recently, is a man whose political pedigree has prepared for greater responsibility in the country

The milestone 56th birthday anniversary of the former governor of Borno State and Vice Presidential candidate of All Progressive Congress(APC), Senator Kashim Shettima, affords me the opportunity to celebrate the life of a truly detribalized Nigerian, an unrepentant democrat, quintessential public servant and a patriot who is passionate about our country's place in the 21st century and how we can harness the transformative capacity of our abundant human and natural resources to build a prosperous and inclusive society.

Our paths crossed about 12 years ago in the course of a media tour organized by the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) under the leadership of Ndagene Aku of blessed memory.

The tour was in collaboration with Red Carpet Protocol during the tenure of Ali Modu Sherrif as Governor of Borno State. The young Kashim Shettima had left his lucrative job as the North East Regional Manager of Zenith Bank to serve his state as a commissioner in the cabinet of Ali Modu Sherrif. During our courtesy visit to the governor, I was saddled with the responsibility of giving a vote of thanks on behalf of our team, a task I performed to the best of my ability.

As our visit came to an end, a gentle hand tapped me from behind; I turned and was greeted by a friendly and warm smile.

As we shook hands, he said: "My name is Kashim Shettima, the commissioner for Health. Nice speech you gave at the



chambers. Let's exchange numbers and stay in touch."

To state that I was humbled and dumbfounded by this kind gesture from a top senior functionary of government which I considered rare in this part of the world is an understatement.

As we exchanged numbers, I never knew what the future held, there was nothing at that moment to suggest that he would later become a two-term governor of the state, a Senator and now the Vice-Presidential candidate of the APC.

In the course of my professional work and interactions with public servants and politicians from various parts of the country, I have had the privilege of meeting many politicians who have made their mark in their own right.

But my association with Kashim Shettima has left indelible imprint on my mind and has further enriched my understanding of the intrinsic qualities of national integration in diversity.

In him, I have seen and experienced the true colour of what it really means to be a detribalized citizen of this great country. His belief in the promise of this country of many ethnicities and his preference for competence over tribe or primordial sentiments marks him out as one of the most detribalized Nigerians I have ever come into contact with. Based on my experience, I strongly believe that those who impute Islamization agenda as a result of his choice as the running mate to Bola Ahmed Tinubu are speaking from the standpoint of ignorance and hardly know the man.

Apart from my revulsion at the ongoing attempts to inject religion into politics, empirical evidence based on the actions of Shettima as governor does not support the notion that Tinubu and he will execute an islamization agenda when they win the presidential election.

Shettima is a leader consumed by his love for humanity. His global or national worldview as a necessity rejects clannishness in all ramifications.

-Nkwocha writes from Abuja.

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

THE VIEW FROM AMERICA
CHIDO NWANGWU



Battle for 2023: Partisan War Without End?

Chido Nwangwu writes about the face-off between the presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party, Atiku Abubakar and Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike, over the soul of the main opposition party





On September 28, 2022, Nigerians and the international community await the formal start of the 2023 presidential election campaign.

It's going to test the worthiness, usefulness and articulation of competing viewpoints and strategies for improving an increasingly embattled Nigeria.

For millions of Nigerians, the state of the country requires taking it forward through stringent financial accountability, a revolutionary economic discipline and restructuring!

The competition in battle for a new direction will test the physical stamina and honesty and public morality and private purposes of the candidates.

It was the famous, incisive American journalist, the late Ambrose Bierce, who defined politics as "A strife of interests masquerading as a contest of principles. The conduct of public affairs for private advantage."

The same purposes and fight for personal leverage is the driving force of most politicians especially in Nigeria, most parts of the African continent and of course in the U.S.

The latter is notoriously evident in the continuing revelations about former President Donald Trump's shenanigans to keep power, no matter the cost!

With only a few days to the start of the campaigns, and months ahead of the scheduled February, 2023 elections), the presidential candidates have many issues and challenges to deal with.

For example, the candidate of the Peoples' Democratic Party of Nigeria, Atiku Abubakar, has among those issues, the alleged undermining actions and lingering attacks on him by some of his party leadership for not picking the blunt and hard-charging Governor of Rivers State, Nyesom Wike, as his running mate.

Abubakar, former Vice President of Nigeria, has been competing for and/or contesting to become President since 2003. A number of political insiders say it's even earlier than that.

Since May 28, 2022, Abubakar, a former top director at the Nigerian Customs (border) agency bagged the ticket in Abuja when Nigeria's former House of Representatives Speaker Aminu Tambuwal (from Sokoto) at the point for voting to commence threw his support to benefit Abubakar in a tight vote tally.

We have since learned, according to a claim by one of Wike's strategists that the embattled Governor "could have" beaten Atiku at the 2022 PDP convention but for the "surprising, shocking, last-minute moves" by Tambuwal. Tambuwal has not made any comments on the anger and disappointment of his (former) friend and ally, Wike.

Wike has left Atiku, again, wondering what Wike has in mind.

The bone of contention remains the decision of Atiku on who will be his VP, after the showdown and political horse-trading at the PDP convention for the 2023 presidential election flag bearer fight. When the votes were counted on May 28, 2022, Atiku Abubakar got 371 and Nyesom Wike had 237. There were other contestants.

For VP, Atiku and his close advisers settled for a non-dramatic personality, a medical doctor and current Governor of Delta State, Ifeanyichukwu Okowa.

Atiku, himself, underlined it -- with the following comments: "In these consultations, I made clear that my running mate would have the potential to succeed me at a moment's notice, that is, a president-in-waiting.

In other words, the person must have the qualities to be President. The person must have an appreciation of the deep rot which our country has been put into by the rudderless APC (All Progressives Congress) government; understands the great suffering that most of our people are going through and the urgency of relieving them of that suffering; understands the critical importance of economic growth and development to provide our young people with jobs, hope, and a pathway to wealth."

The friends of Wike, especially some Governors, are not happy. Especially as the countdown to the 2023 presidential elections continue, amid all the fake Bishop shenanigans of the presidential candidate of President Buhari's All Progressives Congress (APC), Alhaji Bola Ahmed Tinubu and his VP, Alhaji Kashim Shettima.

Evidently, regardless of their meetings in London, when the loquacious but results-oriented Wike is unhappy, he speaks his mind, no matter whose ox is gored.

Atiku and his supporters apparently will continue to "hear" from Wike on this final effort for Atiku to contest to become President of Nigeria.

I have one vital question regarding this battle for the 2023 presidency of Nigeria: will Wike 'tambuwal' Atiku?

-Nwangwu is Founder of USAfrica multimedia networks and public policy organization based in Houston.

Follow him @Chido247

EPISTLES *of* ANTHONY KILA



The Quest for Good Leadership

Anthony Kila writes on the need to redefine and rediscover the attributes of a good leader in a political setting like Nigeria



Dear Readers

The title of our epistle today is taken from the theme of the public lecture organised by the Nigeria Union of Journalists, Lagos State Council, as part of the Press Week celebrated from 12th to 16th September 2022.

In reality the theme of our Union of Journalists is longer than the title here; theirs was "Media & 2023 Transition: In search of Good Leadership". The organisers led by the Council Chairman, Adeleye Ajayi, and the Event planning Chairman Adewale Akodu, were kind enough to deem me fit as the key note speaker for the event.

Reading from right to left, I think it is important that we redefine and rediscover the related concepts of leader and leadership in our society. There is a general tendency to misunderstand and limit these concepts to the public and political sphere.

But allow me to digress to something that happened to me in Lagos this week, I have a feeling some of you might be familiar with such occurrences: Some ushers were deployed by their agency to cater for guests at the just concluded CIAPS Business Roundtable, two of these ushers came very late, right at the end of the event to be precise.

Just as I was leaving the Centre, I observed the two ushers making frantic calls and gesticulating from afar, I moved closer to see what was going on.

It turned out that the ushers, by their own account, came late because they got the address wrong but wanted to be paid because they did their best to get to the place.

They did their best and they want to be paid not for result or output but for effort. This episode, to me, epitomises a lot about what is wrong with our society: we are operating a system where we think effort not just result should be remunerated, mind you, not appreciated for encouragement as we do in our classrooms but renumerated as we do in our job and market place; we are operating a system where many think the "why" is more important than the "what": I stole because I was needy so, please don't punish me, I lied because I was scared so, please do not penalise me.

This to me is clearly a Valorian issue and I argue that this kind of value and world view have permeated our society because we are under a leadership that allows such value or misvalue to grow. And therein lies the first essence and function of leadership: to set the trend, guide values and world views through using the instruments of inspiration, motivation, teaching, reward and punishment for the purpose of taking a group from one state to a better one.

It goes without saying that all these instruments work where there is leadership by example.

It also goes without saying that leadership by example requires sacrifice.

There are two immediate consequences of framing leadership the way we have done so far. One is that leadership is more of a burden than an accomplishment or elevation, it means the leader must focus more on delivery than title and that the leader must keep remembering that it is what he or she depicts as right or wrong, useful or not, acceptable and unacceptable, that will be practised or not practised in the society.

The ushers that want to be paid for the effort of getting to an event where they did not usher is able to think that way and make such a demand in a society wherein the prevailing values allow such mode of conduct to be thinkable and it occurs under a leadership that condones or might condone such mode of acting.

The second consequence of framing leadership the way we have done so far is that leadership cannot therefore be limited to the political or public sphere. Our lives as members of the same society are in reality shaped more by our families, schools, places of worship, by advertisers, TV, radio and newspaper than politics and government.

The idea that politics trumps all these other spheres of influence is due to a misconception of leadership dangerous and expensive abdication of dignity, pride, roles and responsibilities.

The fact is that it is politics that consciously goes out of its way to influence and dominate all these other spheres of power.

It might help here to remember that of all the available leadership positions in the society, ascension to political office has the least of requirements.

Think of it: To be a barber, dentist, teacher or soldier, you need some form of training, qualification and experience if not provable adeptness and to rise within that profession to be a leader, as master you need to show mastery. Not so in politics where the trend is to lower the bar as much as possible as if there is a quest to make way for and to let in intellectual and moral dwarfs in a bid to make the intellectually and morally sane people look like freaks.

If we therefore want to embark on a meaningful quest for good leadership then we must start from recognising the various spheres of leadership and from there move on to prioritise those form of leadership based on commitment, sacrifice and delivery.

A good quest for leadership will show us that the leader we want or even need will have to be someone that sees leadership as a burden not an achievement let alone an entitlement.

The quest for good leadership is a continuous and holistic process that requires renewal and vigilance, it is a process built on agreement and clarity not trust or hope because the good leader of today is human and might go rouge or turn mad tomorrow.

For the benefit of all, this continuous and holistic process will require that other spheres of leadership discover their true position, influence, role and responsibility in the society.

The two most important and immediate roles and responsibilities of leadership in a plural society is to provide values and to hold account various other form of leadership all in a milieu of healthy, constructive but conflictual relationship.

Leaders from the academia and business, religion and science need to boldly establish their values as well as interest and stoutly defend them knowing very well that the quest for good leadership will produce the leader that can accommodate all these values and interests. More than anyone else the media has a major role to play for it is the media that arranges, represents, presents and highlights what matters to the rest of us.

Join me if you can @anthonykila to continue these conversations.

-Kila is Centre Director at CIAPS Lagos. www.ciaps.org.

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WORKS AND HOUSING

HEADQUARTERS MABUSHI, ABUJA

PUBLIC NOTICE

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DECLARES COLLECTION OF TOLLS ON FEDERAL HIGHWAYS ILLEGAL

The attention of the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing has been drawn to the Illegal Collection of Tolls from members of the public by unauthorized persons along Federal Highways at **Atoyo, Ogere, Ijebu-Ode junction, Shagamu, Randa and other locations in Ogun State.**

Members of the public should note that the Federal Government through the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing has not authorized any person(s), company or organization to collect tolls on Federal Highways on its behalf in Ogun State or in any of the 36 States of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory.

The Ministry by this notice wishes to advise perpetrators of this act who are defrauding members of the public by collecting tolls from Highway users in Ogun State or any part of Nigeria to desist from this illegal act in their own interest, and not to cause any burden to motorists.

By this notice, perpetrators apprehended in this illegal act will be prosecuted in line with the laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

THIS NOTICE IS TO SERVE AS WARNING TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

SIGNED:

Bashir Nura Alkali, ***FCA, FCTI***
Permanent Secretary
FMW&H

BUSINESSWORLD

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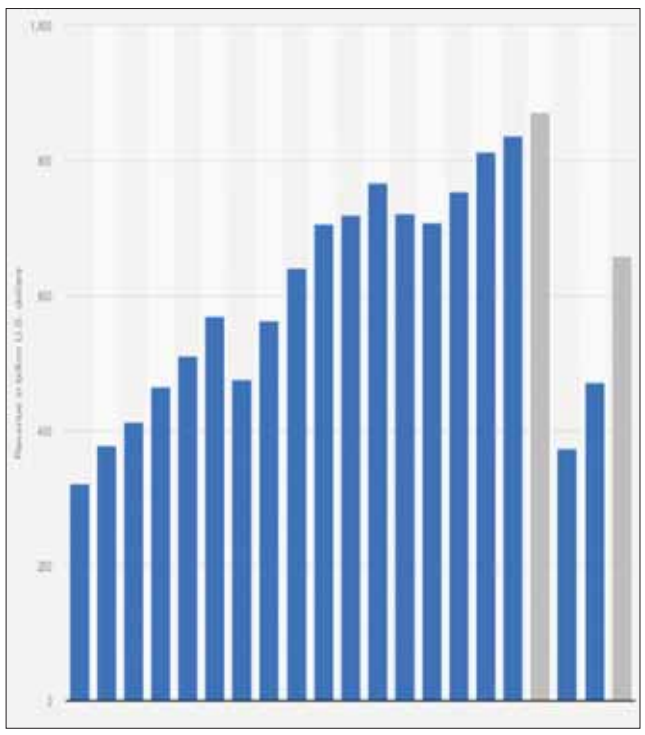
08056356325

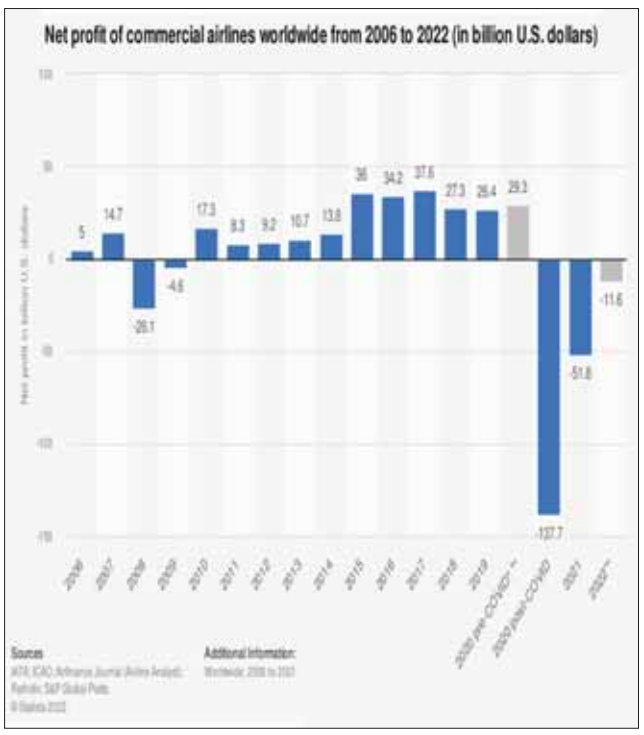
RATES AS AT SEPTEMBERT 15, 2022

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%			

FG Confirms Ethiopian Airlines as Technical Partner, Core Investor in Nigeria Air







Chinedu Eze

The federal government has confirmed the selection of Ethiopian Airlines as technical partner and core investor for the establishment of its planned national carrier, the Nigeria Air, a development the government will announce soon.

The selection of Ethiopian Airlines will put to an end, several months of speculations about who become the technical partner and core investor in Nigeria Air.

THISDAY learnt that a team from the Ministry of Aviation had travelled to Addis Ababa in Ethiopia to start discussion with the East African carrier with indication that the agreement would be signed after the meeting.

"Yes, we have selected Ethiopian Airlines. We have agreed to work with the airline and we are hoping to make the announcement soon," a dependable source from the Ministry of Aviation told THISDAY.

With the selection, the horizon may have become clearer now on the timeline of the planned national carrier, as everything is being put in place for the actualisation of the project.

Before the final decision to select Ethiopian Airlines, there has been robust relationship between the airline and the Ministry of Aviation.

THISDAY gathered that the ministry had already started training programme for the personnel of the planned national carrier at Ethiopian Airlines facility in Addis Ababa.

Although the technical partner/core investor is expected to provide equipment and funds and will have 49 per cent control stake in the new carrier, but THISDAY gathered from an insider source in the Ministry of Aviation, that Ethiopian Airlines would provide equipment, technical personnel and management for the airline, but would not invest money in the bargain.

Ethiopian Airlines, which is unarguably the best-managed airline in Africa and the most profitable, has invaluable experience in similar partnerships, including its partnership with Asky, Zambia, Malawi, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique Ethiopian and others, which are its subsidiary.

The federal government, which midwifed the project, said it would have five per cent stake because the airline would be private sector driven.

THISDAY learnt that in addition to its shareholding by core investor, the rest of the shares would be owned by other Nigerians.

However, since the national carrier project started, government has not made public the other stakeholders who have indicated interest to invest in the new carrier.

"The Ministry of Aviation has picked Ethiopian Airlines since they are the only one that bided. Initially, the Ministry wanted to have more airlines to bid but since others didn't, they have to pick Ethiopian Airlines. If the Ministry will realise its plan to establish the national carrier, it has to start working immediately with Ethiopian, because there is no enough time.

"I heard the Minister sent some pilots there some time ago for training. But it was ab-initio training. They are also preparing for the training of pilots on Boeing 737 NG aircraft. Ethiopian will provide the technical management personnel, "the source told THISDAY.

A source close to Ethiopian Airlines also told THISDAY that the East African carrier has all the aircraft types needed to start initial flight operation, which is connecting some domestic destinations; so the airline would deploy the needed equipment to flag off the service for Nigeria's new national carrier.

"Ethiopian Airlines has the equipment needed for the start-up of the new national carrier, Nigeria Air. It has many Bombardier Dash 8 aircraft, which would be the equipment that would be deployed with additional deployment of few Boeing B737 NG aircraft. The airline is most prepared to support the Nigerian government actualise its national carrier ambition," the source told THISDAY.

Nigeria Air has already obtained Air Transport Licence (ATL), which is a prelude to obtaining its Air Operator Certificate (AOC) that would qualify it to start operation, but so far no administration infrastructure on ground, but places have been earmarked for the airline

Continued on page 23

McKinsey Projects $40bn Revenue, 152% Growth for Africa's Electronic Payments Market by 2025

Eromosele Abiodun

Analysts at McKinsey research have projected 152 per cent growth in Africa's electronic payments market by 2025.

The firm in a report estimated that while cash is still king in Africa, the e-payments market is likely to grow by more than $40 billion in revenues from domestic payments alone between 2020 and 2025, with about 188 billion in transaction volumes.

The report also highlighted the challenges and possibilities for traditional and non-traditional players looking to find their niche, "in this rapidly evolving and increasingly competitive landscape.

"In 2020, e-payments generated approximately $24 billion in revenues, of which about $15 billion was domestic electronic payments from 47 billion individual transactions totaling just over $800 billion of transaction values. However, on average, only five to seven per cent of all payment transactions in Africa were made via electronic or digital channels."

An Associate Partner in McKinsey's Lagos office, Edem Seshie, said e-payments constitute a significant growth opportunity on the continent, especially as the convenience and scalability of payment methods improve and support infrastructure develops.

He added that, "Enduring pain points coupled with shifts in consumer and business behavior, as well as supportive government and regulatory environments, are opening up unprecedented opportunities for the acceleration of e-payments in Africa.

It added, "Local, global, traditional, and new players are all innovating to capture the $40 billion of revenue potentially at stake by 2025. This is an exciting, complex, and evolving market with tremendous growth prospects, and we can expect to continue seeing a new generation of winners emerge and scale."

Key highlights of the research include: the compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of revenues for online payments which will likely exceed 30 per cent, possibly reaching about $13 billion in 2025, meaning revenues will more than

Continued on page 23

MARKET DATA AS AT THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2022

BONDS

DESCRIPTION	Price	Yield	Change (%)	Updated Time
^14.20 14-MAR-2024	103.65	11.50	-0.01	September 8, 2022
13.53 23-MAR-2025	101.08	13.01	0.00	September 8, 2022
^12.50 22-JAN-2026	98.69	12.98	0.00	September 8, 2022
^16.2884 17-MAR-2027	110.80	13.05	0.00	September 8, 2022
^13.98 23-FEB-2028	103.73	13.00	0.00	September 8, 2022

BILLS

MATURITY	Dis-count	Yield	Change (%)	Updated Time
NTB 13-Oct-22	9.00	9.08	0.00	September 8, 2022
NTB 10-Nov-22	3.90	3.93	0.00	September 8, 2022
NTB 26-Jan-23	9.80	10.18	-0.01	September 8, 2022
NTB 9-Feb-23	10.00	10.44	0.00	September 8, 2022
NTB 9-Mar-23	10.05	10.58	0.00	September 8, 2022

CPS

MATURITY	Discount	Yield	Change (%)	Updated Time
NENL CP I 24-OCT-22	20.67	21.22	-0.01	September 8, 2022
FSDH CP VII 27-OCT-22	14.78	15.08	-0.01	September 8, 2022
SIBP CP III 27-OCT-22	13.95	14.22	-0.01	September 8, 2022
DLMG CP IV 11-NOV-22	17.62	18.19	-0.02	September 8, 2022
FDHP CP III 17-MAR-23	15.42	16.76	0.01	September 8, 2022

OTC FX FUTURES

CONTRACT TENOR (MONTH)	Contract	Current Rate ($/₦)	Updated Time
1	NGUS SEP 28 2022	439.60	September 8, 2022
2	NGUS OCT 26 2022	441.81	September 8, 2022
3	NGUS NOV 30 2022	444.01	September 8, 2022
4	NGUS DEC 28 2022	446.22	September 8, 2022
5	NGUS JAN 25 2023	448.43	September 8, 2022

AFRAA, Flight Safety Foundation Sign MoU to Improve Cooperation

Chinedu Eze

The African Airlines Association (AFRAA) and Flight Safety Foundation (FSF) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to establish a framework of cooperation and facilitate between the two organisations on actions to enhance air transport safety in Africa.

Under the MoU, AFRAA and FSF will cooperate closely and consult each other on matters and/or activities of mutual interest aimed at the improvement of safety of the air transport industry in Africa such as joint regional technical workshops, development of information and resource material for the membership of each organisation and the industry at large, promotion of effective safety information sharing among other initiatives.

AFRAA Secretary General, Mr. Abderahmane Berthé and President and CEO of FSF, Dr. Shahidi, signed the MoU at the sidelines of the Aviation Africa conference in Kigali, Rwanda.

Berthé stated: Safety is among AFRAA's top priorities and the driving force behind our championing regional safety coordination for Better Skies in Africa. For African aviation to yield better safety performance, the continued coordinated efforts by aviation stakeholders are essential in line with the five pillars: cooperative approach to safety improvement in Africa under the framework of the Abuja Safety Targets, operational compliance of African carriers with International standards, data-driven safety management, infrastructure safety, and fleet modernization."

"We are excited to establish a framework of collaboration with Flight Safety Foundation that will enhance actions under the five pillars and positively impact air transport contribution to Africa' s economic development," Berthé added.

SAHCO, Afolabi Win ATQ Awards

Skyway Aviation Handling Company Plc (SAHCO) has won Aviation Cargo Investment Award.

The award was presented to SAHCO by African Travel Quarterly (ATQ) Magazine in recognition of SAHCO's contribution to the growth of the Aviacargo industry in Nigeria through the construction of the biggest ultra-modern Custom bonded cargo warehouse thereby facilitating Cargo Business in the country.

In addition, the Chairman of SAHCO and SIFAX Group, Dr. Taiwo Afolabi, was also awarded Aviacargo Personality of the year during the event.

The award is in recognition of Afolabi's investment in Ports, Hospitality, Aviation and Maritime in Nigeria and his exemplary leadership qualities. Taiwo who was represented by the Managing Director/ CEO of SAHCO, said he was quite humbled by the award and he emphasized that he will continue to contribute his quota through the SIFAX Group to ensure that SIFAX Group continues to raise the bar where excellence is expected.

Speaking during the award presentation at the CHINET22 Aviation and Cargo Conference in Lagos Marriott Hotel, Ikeja GRA, Publisher/Organizer of the event, Ikechi Uko praised SAHCO for building and maintaining the biggest and the best cargo warehouse in Nigeria thereby promoting both import and export through the facility while rendering topnotch Ground Handling services in accordance to international standards.

While accepting the awards, the Managing Director/CEO, Basil Agboarumi said SAHCO is consistently committed to delivering quality services even in the face of challenges, he thanked the event Organiser and Management of ATQ Quarterly for recognizing SAHCO and the Chairman's significant investments and contributions to the Nigerian economy.

He promised that SAHCO would continue to invest in modern facilities to ensure speedy, safe and efficient services to provide quality Ground Handling Services consistently to clients across all the commercial airports in Nigeria.

He went on to emphasize that SAHCO is the only Ground Handling Company in Nigeria that owns Cool Dollies which are used to convey temperature sensitive shipment from the aircraft to the Cold Rooms or Freezers in the Warehouse, where the Cold Rooms and Freezers are equipped with Data Loggers that are used to ensure that there is no drop in temperature to avoid denaturing of the contents.

Qatar Airways Reintroduces A380 to Perth, Australia

Starting December 6, 2022, Qatar Airways would be increasing passenger capacity on its flights to and from Perth.

Previously operated by the Boeing B777-300ER, the airline said passengers would now have a chance to journey on board the A380, featuring a three-class configuration of seating over two decks with a dedicated onboard premium lounge. The aircraft will accommodate an additional 163 passengers daily adding up to 517 seats spread across the three cabins: eight First Class seats, 48 Business Class seats and 461 Economy Class seats.

The update is part of the recent strategic partnership between Qatar Airways and Virgin Australia. This expanded code-share significantly expands the networks, lounges and loyalty programs of both airlines, bringing substantial benefits and new destinations to travellers. Launched in September 2022, the partnership opens seamless travel to over 150 destinations across the extensive Qatar Airways and Virgin Australia networks, creating a new gateway of seamless travel between Australia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa, including popular destinations such as London, Paris, Rome and Athens.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker, said: "We want to demonstrate our commitment to Australia by continuing the work we did during the pandemic to keep Australians connected. It is imperative for Australian travellers to feel welcome in our city whether they are transiting or visiting Doha. During the much anticipated FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™, all flights to and from Perth will be scheduled taking into consideration football match timings so that all fans can enjoy the biggest event of the year."

Throughout the pandemic, Qatar Airways has maintained its Australian services and carried over 330,000 passengers in and out of Australia between March 2020 to December 2021 via both commercial flights and special chartered services.

CWG Celebrates 30 Years of Positioning Africa, Rolls Our Future Agenda

Emma Okonji

CWG Plc, the Pan-African systems solutions company, is celebrating 30 years of providing Information Technology (IT) services in Nigeria, Africa and the rest of the world, with strong promise to offer emerging technology solutions and services in the next phase of its operations.

Part of the assurances for the next phase of CWG operations, according to the company, is unveiling of its new subsidiary, known as Fifthlab that will offer unique IT services, while expanding its operations.

Addressing the media in Lagos on Wednesday about its 30 years journey in the technology space, the Group Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of CWG, Mr. Adewale Adeyipo, said: "As we reflect on our history, our victories, our losses and our learning as a knowledge-driven organisation, the experiences have produced the opportunity to refine our corporate strategies and values, eventually birthing our CWG 2.0 roadmap a well as the establishment of our training academy, and cementing learning as an integral part of our ethos and culture."

In commemorating the milestone, CWG has launched a number of year-long activities, including Transform-a-School Initiative, Pitch for Transformation Challenge, Youth Bootcamp, Award and Gala Night and Thanksgiving Service, in addition to the unveiling of its new subsidiary, the Fifthlab, Adeyipo further said.

Giving details of CWG's humble beginning, Adeyipo said it started with five staff in 1992, selling IT infrastructure and later upgraded into using technology to grow business and to solve individual and corporate challenges in the IT space. According to him, CWG currently supports millions of digital accounts in the financial sector, with presence in four African countries (Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda and Cameroon), while offering technology services in 26 African countries.

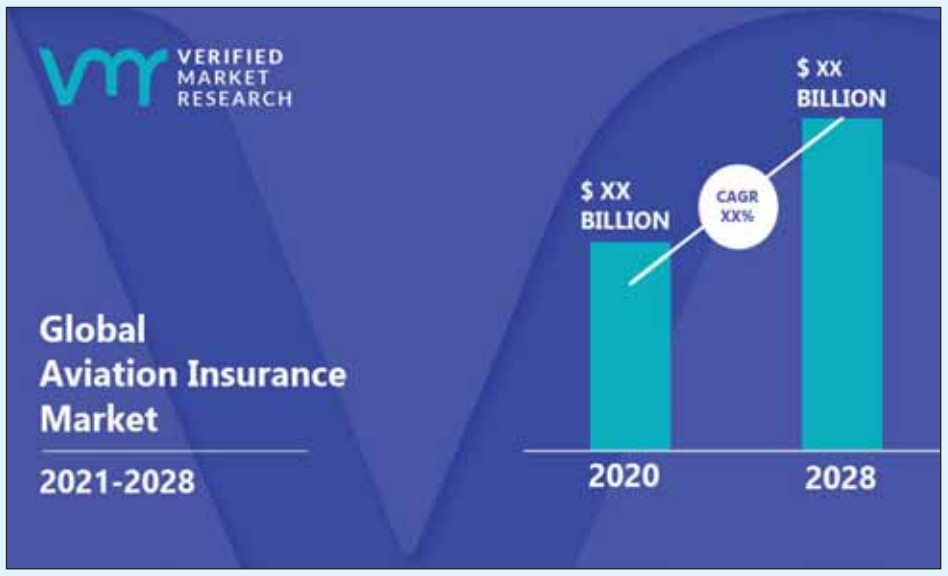
The Chief Operating Officer at CWG, Mr. Afolabi Sobande, who spoke about the next phase of CWG's operations, said CWG would continue to provide exceptional services to its customers and ensure that their technology needs are met and challenges addressed promptly, going forward, despite the economic challenges faced by businesses. "We are excited about the future and we are ready to address the challenges of the future, given the kind of activities we have rolled out for the next one year," Sobande said.

Founder and Executive Vice Chairman of CWG, Mr. Austin Okere, noted that retail payment systems and financial services being digitised, are now top goals for economic growth.

AIR WATCH

Air Watch – in partnership with – AIR PEACE ...your peace, our goal www.flyairpeace.com

Of Local Content and Airlines' Insurance Obligations



Chinedu Eze

Meeting insurance obligation is a critical challenge to Nigerian commercial airlines due to the cost of premium, which is defined by country risk and other factors, including operational environment, airport facilities, government policies and country's safety record.

In Nigeria, insurance policy stipulates that airlines must insure through local insurance companies to meet the requirement of local content; but because aviation demand high financial capacity, risks are shared with international insurers.

This was recently explained by the National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) at Chinet Aviation Cargo conference last week in Lagos, as the Commission stated that the law guiding insurance operations in the aviation sector stipulates the withdrawal of a minimum of five percent of shareholders' funds to protect operators from third parties' liability.

NAICOM said that Nigerian insurance companies could handle aviation related insurance, including aircraft insurance.

Commissioner for Insurance, Mr. Sunday Thomas explained that while every airline operator is required to insure its businesses 100 percent as stipulated by the law, many of them are not finding it easy to pay their premiums as at when due; so they break payment of premium into monthly and quarterly, depending on the airline's financial ability.

Thomas who was represented by the Director of Policy and Regulations,

Mr. Leonard Akah, said: "So they are breaking it into bits, some monthly and all that but our law says no premium, no cover. So if you don't pay, you are on your own and you can't fly if you don't have insurance. This is an issue, even to access the foreign exchange because the parts, everything is foreign, even to access this currency is not easy."

Thomas listed other challenges to aviation insurance to include sabotaging local content Act requirements, insufficient technical expertise, installmental premium payment, limited local capacity and nature of reinsurance cover.

He advocated for more capital injection to enable more local retention, enhanced cooperation among NAICOM, the NCAA and Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCMB) and more engagements with airline operators.

According to the regulation, any carrier operating air transport services to, from or within Nigeria, or aerodrome operator, aviation fuel supplier, or any provider of ground handling services, meteorological services, air traffic control services, aircraft maintenance services, or provider of such other class of allied service as the Authority may from time to time determine in writing shall maintain adequate insurance covering its liability under this Act and also its liability towards compensation for damages that may be sustained by third parties for an amount to be specified in regulations made by the Authority" S.74 (1) Civil Aviation Act, 2006.

Over the years Nigerian airlines have yearned to insure directly with foreign insurance companies because it costs them less to do so, but NAICOM said no person shall transact an insurance or reinsurance business with a foreign insurer or reinsurer in respect of any life, assets, interest or other properties in Nigeria business classified as domestic insurance unless with a company registered under this Act.

The insurance experts who spoke at the conference while citing the

regulations insisted that there are a lot of benefits for airlines when they insure through Nigerian insurance companies in keeping with the local content policy, but airlines may yet be convinced about the benefits.

The Commission said, "A person who intends to insure any property located in Nigeria, whether movable or immovable, or any insurable interest or liability in relation thereto, shall place such an insurance with an insurer registered in accordance with this Act who may, subject to the provisions of this Act, reinsure such property or liability overseas where the Nigeria insurance industry lacks the capacity to retain the risk."

It added that all aviation insurance business shall be conducted in accordance with insurance laws and other relevant regulations, which include the establishment of underwriting terms and conditions for any aviation and its associated risks in Nigeria, shall be the responsibility of an insurer duly licensed to transact insurance business in Nigeria. This is without prejudice to an insurer's need to seek expert advice from its facultative reinsurers for appropriate risk rating/pricing.

The Commission also stated that an insurer shall ensure that all aviation insurance transactions are conducted in compliance with Contract Certainty principles and requirements.

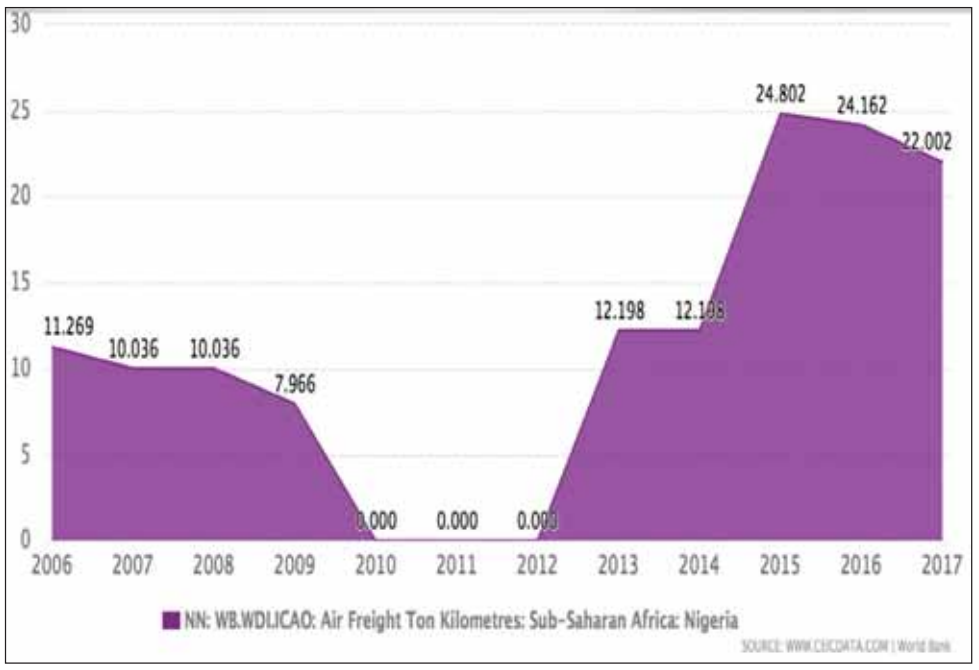
"Aviation insurance liability policy for any Nigeria domiciled risk shall conform to the minimum passenger liability limit as required by the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), which would include that every insurer and/or co-insurer shall, prior to accepting, signing and/or stamping any aviation insurance policy/schedule of co- insurers, carry out Risk Measurement and Exposure Assessment vis-a vis its available capacity.

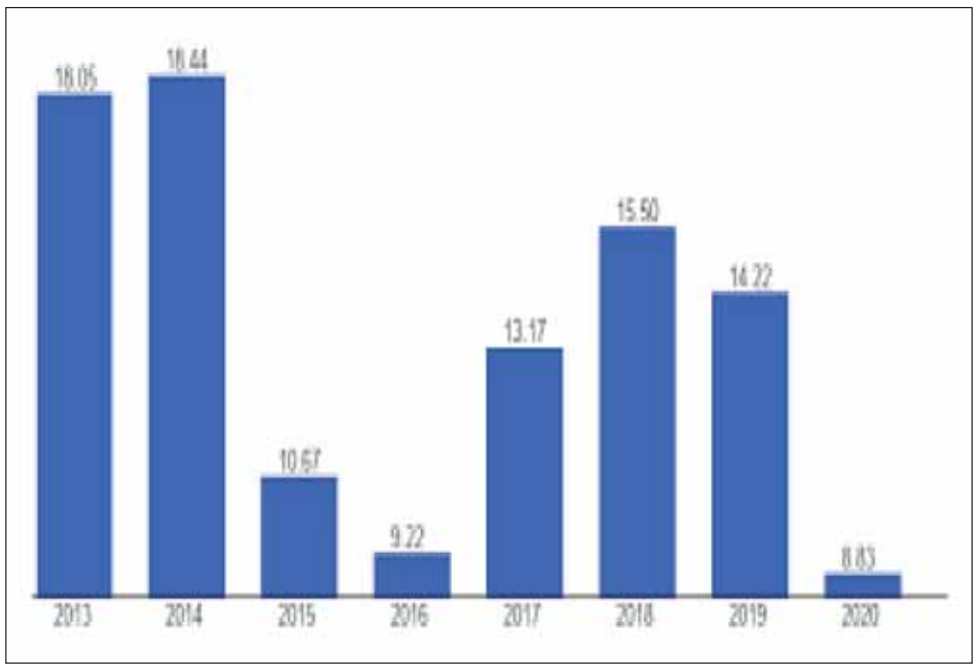
"The risk measurement/exposure assessment shall be documented and ratified by an appropriate authority (CEO, DGM, AGM, Controller or Head of Department/Unit) not later than 24 hours from the time the risk was accepted, signed and/or stamped by the authorized persons," he said.

On reinsurance/ exposure limits, the Commission explained that an insurer's treaty and/or facultative reinsurance arrangements with a foreign reinsurer shall not be placed with a company having a Financial Strength Rating (FSR) lower than "A-" (S&P) or "A" (A.M. Best); that the aviation insurance treaty shall allow automatic acceptance by the Reinsurers. Thus, a facultative reinsurance arrangement, facility or line slip subject to declaration or to be agreed shall neither be categorised/recognised nor accepted as treaty; that the Net Retention/Deductible of an insurer under any treaty, on per risk basis, shall not constitute more than 5 per cent of its Shareholders' Fund and where an insurer decides to write an aviation insurance risk for its net account only without reinsurance treaty, the insurer shall not accept nor commit more than 5 per cent of Shareholders fund determined under prior year audited accounts approved by the Commission.

Eradicating Barriers to Export Business in Nigeria

Among many factors identified as impediments to successful export of Nigerian goods at a recent conference, two challenges stood out, which include making product acceptable in the international market and eliminating bureaucracies and protocols at the ports. **Chinedu Eze** writes that government and its agencies must review and enforce smoother process to export of potentially multi-billion dollars Nigerian goods





Last week, stakeholders from aviation, trade and transport sectors of the nation's economy, brainstormed at the 2022 edition of the Chinet Aviation and Cargo conference held in Lagos and brought to the fore many challenges impeding export trade in Nigeria.

From not meeting international standardisation, inefficient regulation, corruption to hiccups in cargo freighting from the nation's airports, the expose at the conference made it obvious that for many reasons, it is Nigeria that is holding itself down from taking advantage of the huge market, whereas Nigerian farm produce and other products from Nigeria are in high demand from different parts of the world.

MAXIMISING OPPORTUNITIES

In her presentation at the conference, the Chairman, Export Group of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industries (LCCI), Mrs. Bosun Solarin, said for Nigeria to benefit maximally from the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), projected to elevate 30 million people out of abject poverty, generate a market hub that will connect 1.3 billion people in 55 countries and also generate $3.4 trillion aggregate GDP, the country has to be adequately prepared to effectively compete in the export trade.

For this to be achieved, Solarin said there must be effective distribution channels in which logistics, which is movement of people and goods, play indispensable role of bridging the gap between the dream and its reality. She made reference to report carried out after the conference last year, which highlighted inadequacies within the export space, which include problems of limited export production, limited/ or no capacity for certification/packaging of exportable products, infrastructural deficiency in the logistics and evacuation of exports, low penetration and access to key markets.

"Let me affirm that these problems still exist and will continue to exist until every agency of government will consciously aim at helping to mitigate and resolve some of these issues, and not seeing themselves as being up there, while every other person is down beneath," she said.

She identified these problems to include the problems of limited export production, noting that Nigerians are more interested in importation of goods rather than promoting export.

"We must as a people develop the willingness to help this country out of its predicaments. We must deliberately embrace exportation through deliberate support to/for players in the sector, the CBN (Central Bank of Nigeria) has come up with various policies, but businesses/exporters are saying, they cannot be sourcing FX, even for payment of export charges, at very high rates and the CBN will be asking for the same FX at a very lower rate, that the N65 incentive which when added together is less than N500, this needs to be critically looked into, otherwise the RT200FX (CBN Pays Exporters programme) may just be a cliché," she further said.

CERTIFICATION

Solarin also pointed out that one of the inhibitions to export of Nigerian goods is certification. She noted that even to obtain certification from National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control in Nigeria (NAFDAC), which is a Nigerian agency is difficult to get.

"There are many MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) now in production, NAFDAC charges about N40, 000 for one product with a maximum of five products that is allowable for registration for micro businesses, whether that micro business has capacity to do more does not matter to them, and where allowed, the cost for one additional product (the 6th) is N90, 000, they still collect 8 products each for lab analysis, when the costs are put together, it's a great burden on entrepreneurs," she explained.

Solarin said if Nigeria must move forward as a country, especially with "AfCFTA staring us in the face, NAFDAC should certify production facilities, why should Nigeria have many registration numbers for the same product eg. plantain flour, why not just a registration of facility, with facility numbers for each company as done by FDA (US Food and Drug Administration), HACCP (of FDA) e.t.c. Government should place less attention/emphasis on revenue generation for some agencies, because the disadvantages of such outweighs its advantages."

She said the Standard Organsiation of Nigeria (SON) needed to do more on certification, remarking that businesses are tasked daily to get Mandatory Conformity Assessment Programme (MANCAP), yet there are no standards to process the applications.

"It costs almost N1.5 million to get the minimum third party certification HACCP that some countries still accept, who is helping to bridge this gap.

The Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) in 2021 paid to help about 120 exporters get certified with HACCP and ISO. More funding is required in this space if we must overcome the challenges, Access to markets will also continue to be an illusion without proper and acceptable certifications," she also said.

EXTORTION AND BUREAUCRACY

One of the major challenges facing air freighting of goods is extortion.

Officials of government agencies like Quarantine, NAFDAC, Nigerian Immigration Service, Customs and others constitute obstacles to easy movement of goods to the underbelly of the aircraft that airlift them to various destinations. Using government bureaucracy and laws, these officials rigidly insist on certain conditions that must be met before they would allow these goods to be exported; but when bribed, they relax all the rules.

The Nigeria Export Processing Zone Authority (NEPZA) said that some of these laws do not exist in the books but are created by these agency officials to extort money from exporters.

Assistant Director, Investor Promotion, NEPZA, Augustine Onyekwere, who spoke at the conference on behalf of the agency's Managing Director/CEO, Prof. Adesoji Adesugba, said there were many charges leveled on the exporters that were not approved by government.

"If you look at what is going on in some of our aviation industries precisely in this environment, there are a lot of unapproved people in that place. Maybe because it is our usual Nigerian way of doing things, some of these levies cannot be accounted for or taxes that people collect. Sometimes I ask myself, how many agencies are even in Lagos (Murtala Muhammed Airport). So if you go to the airport, somebody will tell you that they have to survive but this is not the same thing we see when we travel to other countries outside Nigeria. You hardly see all these type of things. I came in from Kigali, I was privileged to go there, I tell you; it is a crime to even think of gratification. So if we can do that, I feel it is possible to do it so that we don't continue to lose investment to Ghana and other countries," Onyekwere said.

He said there are many charges that exporters pay that are not receipted.

"By government law from N100 payment we need to collect a receipt. But you know some of us coming from government; whatever thing you do you must have a receipt to claim your movement. So people that are practitioners understand what I meant by these charges, and some of them are illegal," he said.

Onyekwere said that he was amazed that exporters still sustain their business after paying both legal and illegal charges, explaining that Ghana is doing better in exports than Nigeria because their export process is transparent and seamless.

"To be honest with you, I was privileged to be in Ghana in March and I went for a particular conference and I understand why European markets are enticed by Ghana exports. Of a truth, Nigeria has all it takes to lead but one of the challenges is bureaucracy, too many agencies. I was asking myself if I leave government what else could I do. Is it not either as a consultant or into business? I wonder how Nigerians survive in this business, I really don't know. Because I can't imagine how you pay all the levies, all the taxes from environment to this and that and they still stay in business. So the major thing is that there should be concerted effort by all regulatory agencies to know that every action each and every one of us is taking has its own way of disinvesting in Nigeria," he said.

ILLEGAL EXPORT

The Managing Director of Flight and Logistics Solutions, Amos Akpan said that many goods are freighted from Nigeria's airports that are not documents; that Nigeria exports more goods than the records show.

He said that if Nigeria is determined to boost non-oil exports to earn foreign exchange and meet international obligatory payments, it has to change its attitude towards exports; because currently its approach to export is wrong.

"We engage more on seminars and policy statements, but what happens in the farms, logistics chains, airport and seaports, is far from what we say we want to achieve. Statistically, more non-recorded export trade is ongoing in the airports than those captured by the bureau of statistics," he said.

In the area of solid minerals, he said that there is no mention of the volume or quantity of solid minerals exported per month or per year by

Nigerian Bureau of statistics, which also implies nil entry in the forex earning column of the statistical report.

"However, observers see the ongoing activities at the mining sites and the illegal movements of solid minerals through the Nigerian borders. It remains unrecorded and not captured as statistics and yields no revenue as export proceeds for the country," Akpan said.

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

MCKINSEY PROJECTS $40BN REVENUE, 152% GROWTH FOR AFRICA'S ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS MARKET BY 2025

quadruple between 2020 and 2025.

It added that cards and wallets could account for nearly 40 per cent of revenues, respectively, with account-based payments accounting for less than 25 per cent, "around half of future electronic-payments revenue will likely come from Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa, with the fastest growth in Nigeria, at 35 percent per year."

The report further added that, other countries that could see electronic-payments growth above 20 per cent per year include Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Senegal, and Uganda.

"South Africa is likely to represent a smaller share overall while remaining the biggest e-payments market in Africa in 2025, with $5 billion in annual revenues," the reported highlighted.

FG CONFIRMS ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES AS TECHNICAL PARTNER, CORE INVESTOR IN NIGERIA AIR

at the Abuja and Lagos international terminals, where it would base its operation when it begins to fly.

With this partnership, it is expected that the East African carrier would provide the takeoff aircraft for the airline's operation and subsequently it would begin to acquire its own equipment.

The federal government also planned to establish a leasing company, which would provide aircraft for the national carrier.

Last year, the federal government hinted that it was expecting to raise about $250 million from the private sector for the national carrier, which was then at the stage of procurement.

In a publication by the Ministry of Aviation titled, "Status of the Road Map/PPP Projects," the Ministry explained that the establishment of a national carrier would enable Nigeria gain optimal benefits from Bilateral Air Service Agreement (BASA), take full advantage of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) and introduce competition, leading to competitive fares and services as well as to generate employment.

"The national carrier project will be private sector driven, with government holding not more that 5 per cent of the shares. The private sector consortium may comprise reputable international airlines, such as Qatar Airways, leasing companies, aircraft manufacturers (OEMS), financial and institutional investors," the publication stated.

It noted that government would provide the required support by creating enabling environment in terms of sustainable policies, allocation of BASA, routes provision, financial guarantees and ensuring fiscal incentives to sustain the success of the airline.

THISDAY also learnt that the national carrier team at the Ministry of

Aviation had since last year started the training of senior cadre personnel both administrative and technical and facilities had been earmarked for the airline at many of the airports owned by the federal government and managed by the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN).

Nigerian Ports: How Customs Enervates Trade Facilitation, Enthrones Corruption

Failure to provide scanners at ports across the country as promised by the Comptroller General of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Col Hameed Ali (RTD.), insistence on physical examination of cargo, endemic corruption and deliberate frustration of trade facilitation, has made Nigerian ports the least efficient in Africa and riddled with overtime cargo worth billions of naira, writes **Eromosele Abiodun**









Abandoned containers at the port

Like other sectors of the Nigerian economy, the nation's seaports have become a cesspool of corruption, a place held captive of an agency established to ensure trade facilitation-the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS). Nigeria, an import dependent economy, has a port system that has defied all efforts to reform it. President Muhammadu Buhari in a bid to rid the system of corruption and enhance revenue generation, which has over the years been frustrated by the leadership of the NCS, appointed a retired colonel, Hameed Ali to reform the service. Ali seems to have joined the cue, as promises to provide equipment, scanners to solve the problems were never kept. Nigeria is the only port in the world where 100 per cent examination of cargo is done. As against what the NCS wants Nigerians to believe, 100 per cent examination has never been in the interest of Nigeria. If that is the case, why do the NCS set us road blocks along port access roads, further heightening the perennial gridlock on the ports access roads to reexamine containers that its officers have cleared at the port? Why are overtime cargos littering the port? Why are foreign shipping companies leaving the country empty rather than take export cargo out of Nigeria? These and many other questions are begging for answers.

In February 2017, during an inspection tour of the ports in Lagos,

Hameed Alli promised to end the long wait for cargo scanners to be provided at the ports and guaranteed that scanners would be provided in the first quarter of 2018.

Specifically, he had said: "New cargo scanners to arrive in Nigeria next year. The new scanners would arrive the ports by the first quarter of 2018, to make cargo examination easier, faster & Surer."

Responding to stakeholders' demand for the audit of N9.2 billion scanners at the ports, the CGC had noted that: "After examining the scanners, only two can be immediately repaired and put to use, but the others will be repaired over time."

At another forum on October 4, 2017, the CGC again promised, saying: "Hopefully, before a couple of months from now, we will have scanners at the ports."

However, SIX years after his first promise, only two scanners have been acquired by the NCS, and as at the time of filing this report, the NCS has refused to use them, insisting on manual inspection of cargo.

This has lead to the ports been riddled with overtime cargoes, which is presently threatening efficiency of seaports across the country. The alarming numbers of the cargoes are, however, fueling congestion, high cargo dwell time and high turn around time of vessels that call at the nation's seaports.

The Customs Excise and Management Act (CEMA), classified cargoes as overtime when they have stayed in the port for 28 days without the importer or clearing agent coming up to clear them and take delivery. Under that condition, the law allows the Customs to auction such cargoes after 90 days.

THISDAY checks revealed that there are over 100,000 overtime cargoes worth billions of naira abandoned by importers with some of these cargoes been in the ports for between seven to 10 years having taken 30 per cent of port space, which invariably congests the various terminals at the ports due to lack of space.

However, the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), that is responsible for the evacuation and auctioning of overtime cargoes from the nation's seaports have abdicated their responsibility, allowing the cargoes takeover over 40 percent of space meant for import laden containers, thereby, affecting efficiency of the seaports.

But, since evacuation have become a tall order for the Customs, stakeholders have called on the federal government to direct Customs to conduct on the spot auctioning of the cargoes.

A HISTORY OF MALADY

Since 2015 when the last batch of scanners installed at the nation's seaports was handed over to the government under conditions contravening its contractual provisions, the eventual breakdown of the equipment has left the maritime business in dire straits. For several years running, the ports have remained without scanners, causing a clog to the efficiency of the port system.

Mobile and fixed scanners are essential equipment for international businesses as it helps in facilitating ease of doing business.

This is because it aids in addressing modern procedures for cargo examination for importation, exportation, security and other purposes.

Unfortunately, this all-important equipment has been absent from the Nigerian ports due to the total breakdown of the previously provided ones.

Experts believe the greater consequence is that lack of functional scanners has taken Nigeria away from countries in West and Central Africa seeking to position as operators of modern port system and a hub for maritime activities in the two regions.

Maritime expert and a member, Task Force to Reform Customs in 2010, Lucky Amiwero, blames the collapse of scanners at the nation's ports on the doorsteps of the NCS and the Ministry of Finance (MoF).

According to him, the scanners that have eventually packed up at the seaport now was mismanaged by MoF and Customs because both organisations did not ensure that the equipment were properly transferred to the government after the expiration of the contract tenor of the concessionaires.

Based on the provisions of the contract between the federal government and contractors in 2006, Amiwero explained, the intervention committee, which was appointed by Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala in 2014 was supposed to have ensured that functional scanners were transferred to the federal government upon the completion of the contract tenor.

He regrets that what the committee eventually recommended did not conform with some of the provisions of the contract when the concessionaires were leaving.

CLOG TO PORT EFFICIENCY

For now, the lack of scanners at the nation's seaports has continued to constitute a clog to the efficiency of the port system.

While the NCS has resorted to crude, manual cargo inspection otherwise called 100 per cent physical examination, there have been times that dangerous goods like arms, ammunition and prohibited drugs exited the ports undetected, This would not have been were the scanners available.

Recently the Chairman, Seaport Terminal Operators Association of Nigeria (STOAN), Vicky Haastrup, decried the high rate of manual examination of cargoes at the nation's seaports and asked the NCS to deploy technology to drive the process.

"The NCS should do everything possible to install functional scanners at the port to reduce the high rate of physical examination of cargoes and to reduce human contacts. Customs should also make it possible for consignees to process their release documents and make necessary duty payments online without having to visit the port or Customs commands.

"There is also need to reduce the number of government agencies that participate in cargo examination at the port in addition to reducing the number of checks carried out on cleared cargos both inside and outside the port premises. Customs' clearing process must become smart at this time."

Amiwero also share the view of the STOAN boss, saying that physical examination is not done anywhere in the world.

"The process is nebulous, it is time-consuming and expensive overall.Invariably this is why we are running the most expensive port. Globally, 80 per cent of cargoes are not subjected to 100 per cent physical examination," he said.

WILD GOOSE CHASE

Meanwhile, the NCS rather than capitalise on its existing Information Communication Technology (ICT) platform that has robustly supported it's revenue collection drive to also provide scanning services in a more cost-effective and seamlessly synchronising manner, the service has embarked on a nebulous chase for a more costly and probably unreliable option.

Also, the NCS failed to utilise a "No Objection Certificate" earlier given to it by the Bureau for Public Procurement (BPP) in 2018 for the purchase of three units of scanners.

THISDAY findings revealed that the NCS wrote to the BPP in May 2020, requesting for "due process no objection" for cost variation due to non-inclusion of withholding tax, value-added tax and exchange variation for purchase of three units of Rapiscan mobile cargo scanners. The exchange rate variation and cost implication alone is leading to more losses for the government given the differential in the exchange rate at that time and now.

INFLUX OF ARMS, DRUGS

The unavailability of scanners at the nation's ports has continued to have dire consequences. For instance, in January 2017, operatives of the NCS's Federal Operations Unit (FOU), Zone A, Ikeja, intercepted a Mack truck carrying container load of rifles that had exited the port of Lagos.

That is not all, several trucks of illicit drugs like tramadol have been seized by enforcement officers of the NCS. Officers stationed at the port could not detect them during the examination due to reasons of possible corruption and lack of scanner to electronically detect container contents quickly and accurately.

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



L-R: Senior Manager, Disruption and Innovation, PwC Nigeria,Mr. Chiweze Ihebuzor;Associate Directorand Head Human Capital, PwC Nigeria, Mrs. Felicia Uwaechie; Participants,Oluwayemisi Blessing Oloruntoba; Farihan Sodiq; and Product Manager, Xerde, Doris Theophilus,at the closing ceremony of PwC and Xerde's first-ever tech Bootcamp held in Lagos recently

PHOTO: ETOP UKUTT

Report: 83% of New Phone Subscribers in July Chose Glo

Emma Okonji

The latest report by telecommunications industry regulator, Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), indicates that more new phone subscribers settled wih Globacom in the month of July.

According to the report published on NCC's website, Globacom added 2,103,721 million new customers in July to take its subscriber base to 58,330,200 from 56,226,479 the previous month. This represents 83 per cent of the total number of 2,523,276 new phone users recorded in the country in July.

MTN came second with 392,440 new subscriptions in July, while Airtel was third with 90,955 new customers, followed by 9mobile.

The report by the commission also revealed that the total number of subscriptions to telecommunication services across the mobile networks of MTN, Glo, Airtel and 9mobile rose to 208.6 million during the period under review. The corresponding figure for June was 206 million. The country's teledensity, which measures the number of active telephone connections per 100 inhabitants living within an area, also rose from 108.15 per cent in June to 109.47 per cent in July, 2022.

So far this year, the mobile network operators have gained a total of 13.5 million new subscribers, with the number of phone users in the country rising from 195,128,265 at the end of December, 2021, to 208,604,996 at the end of July, 2022. This is a departure from last year when the operators lost close to 20 million subscribers as a result of the ban on new SIM registration, the report said.

The NCC report shows that Globacom has played a major role in leading this growth. Its remarkable performance in the industry is believed to be a result of the continuous network upgrade and extension of 4G data coverage to more cities across the country.

Binance Charity Partners Women in Tech on Blockchain Courses

Emma Okonji

Binance Charity, the philanthropic arm of Binance, in collaboration with Women in Tech, has announced a global partnership to provide blockchain educational courses to 2,800 women from vulnerable communities across Africa and Brazil.

Binance Charity is donating $250,000 for a six-month pilot project to empower women with the knowledge and skills to thrive in a Web3 future, with the first courses taking place in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, and Cape Town, South Africa, in October, this year.

Further programmes will be rolled out across Nigeria, Zambia, Senegal, Morocco, Burundi, Kenya, Ghana, and Ivory Coast.

VP of Binance and Head of Binance Charity, Helen Hai, who disclosed this in a statement, said: "The size of the global blockchain market is expected to grow from $4.93 billion in 2021 to more than $200 billion by 2028. Yet, for the past four decades the gender gap in tech has widened, with only one woman in every five people working in the industry today. Providing professional training to the massive career opportunities set to open within the blockchain industry for women, is a shared goal of Binance and Women in Tech."

According to Hai, "Binance believes the future of crypto should be built by all, not the few so we're creating certified courses and removing financial barriers for women, especially those from vulnerable communities, to study and train. It is important to us at Binance and Women-in-Tech that quality blockchain education, innovation, and research opportunities are within everyone's reach."

Courses will be offered in classes of 25 to young women aged 15-25 by qualified trainers in person, online, or as a hybrid. The Web3 courses will be designed by Binance Academy and adapted to meet local context. Courses will include:

Blockchain fundamentals, Crypto fundamentals, Decentralization, Web3 and the Metaverse

Founder and CEO Women in Tech, Ayumi Moore Aoki, said: "We believe that education can truly transform lives.

Unilever Repositions Sunlight with New Packaging

Raheem Akingbolu

Sunlight, a leading household brand from Unilever Nigeria Plc, has unveiled a new, refreshed and exciting packaging for its range of products as a master brand.

The brand has also launched a new television commercial deeply rooted in its purpose – to support entrepreneurial Nigerian women in their desire to contribute more to their households and society.

At the unveiling of the master brand, which took place at Marriot Hotel, Lagos, the Category Manager, Homecare Oladapo Oshuntoye, explained that "the Sunlight Masterbrand is an initiative to unify all the brand's product offerings under one umbrella in terms of packaging, marketing communication and brand purpose. This re-launch also signifies the brand's commitment to continue to deliver best-in-class quality products that provide a better washing experience, offer burst after bursts of uplifting fragrance, and come in a range of sizes to cater to everyone's washing needs."

He noted that the brand has subsequently evolved with innovations, particularly with the launch of dishwashing liquid in 2014, the re-launch of Sunlight powder in 2016, the launch of Sunlight laundry bars in 2017, and most recently, the launch of multipurpose washing liquid in 2020. He further explained that one of the critical reasons for the re-launch is to give so much more to our consumers that have stayed with us through the years.

Also speaking at the event, the Marketing Director, Home Care Unilever West Africa, Patrick Tognisso, said that the re-launch marks an essential milestone in the journey of the Sunlight brand, primarily as it consistently seeks ways to better its different offerings to consumers and society.

Also speaking, Corporate Affairs and Sustainable Business Director, Unilever West Africa, Mrs. Soromidayo George, noted that the re-launch would further Sunlight's commitment to fulfilling its brand purpose by supporting entrepreneurial women in their desire to contribute more.

Galaxy Backbone, 9mobile, Others Back NITRA ICT Growth Conference 2.0

Nosa Alekhuogie

More key technology companies have indicated their interests to participate in the second edition of the ICT Growth Conference 2.0, being organised by the Nigeria Information Technology Reporters' Association (NITRA).

The event, which is slated to hold at the Lagos Oriental Hotels on September 29, 2022, with the theme: 'Creating A Digital Ecosystem In Nigeria: The Hurdles, The Gains', will have the Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Dr. Isa Ibrahim Pantami as the lead speaker.

The technology companies include: Galaxy Backbone, 9mobile, SecureID, Rack Centre, Arravo Global Services and Phase 3 Telecoms.

Announcing the partnership in Lagos, Chairman of NITRA, Mr. Chike Onwuegbuchi, explained that the conference would present realities in Nigeria as both the industry regulators and the supervisory ministry are working assiduously to set Nigeria on the apex list of digitally empowered countries, and make it a forerunner in global technology index.

Onwuegbuchi noted that the partnership with these organisations would add to the event as they will bring their wealth of knowledge in Cloud Computing, Financial Security, Social Engineering, Data Center, Telecommunication, and other relevant fields to the conference, and join the dialogue on the growth ingredients needed to drive the country towards a digitized society.

"Specifically, the Forum will offer stakeholders the opportunity of reassessing and reinvigorating some policies to make maximum impact in the growth of ICT in Nigeria. This is a growth conference, and stakeholders will be allowed to speak out on what the growth indices should be," Onwuegbuchi further said.

SecureID is one of Africa's industry leaders in card manufacturing, personalization/fulfillment, and digital solutionsm, while Arravo is a leading global systems integrator and managed services provider. Phase3 Telecom is an indigenous aerial fiber optic network infrastructure provider, providing connectivity, network management and data storage services to wholesale, enterprise and retail customers across West Africa, while Galaxy Backbone is a public enterprise of the Federal Government of Nigeria incorporated with the primary mandate of setting up and operating a unified ICT infrastructure platform that addresses the connectivity, transversal and other technology imperatives.

9mobile Offers Customers More Value with Upgraded Data Plans

Emma Okonji

Telecommunication Company, 9mobile, is again demonstrating care for its customers by offering them more value for money with its new and upgraded data plans.

With the exciting data plans, customers will do more online without incurring extra costs.

The Director of Product Innovation and Business Development, 9 mobile, Kenechukwu Okonkwo, who disclosed the new data plan, said: "Given the prevailing economic realities, we deemed it fit to empower our customers to do more without depleting their resources by retaining the prices of some existing data plans but increasing their data volumes while introducing new ones."

He added that with the data upgrade, customers would receive 50MB for N50 instead of 25MB and 100MB + another 100MB for social networks access at N100, instead of the former 100MB, adding that both plans are valid for one day. "We have also introduced a fantastic daily plan, which offers 300MB (200MB any time browsing and 100MB night browsing) + 300 bonus secomds to call any network in Nigeria, all for N150," Okonkwo said.

He further disclosed that other newly introduced data plans were 12GB for N3,000 and 125GB for N20,000, both with 30 days validity.

LESG Vows to Drive Lagos Transformation as Ehingbeti Summit Draws Nearer

Nume Ekeghe

The Lagos Economic Summit Group (LESG) has pledged its commitment to supporting Lagos in its bid to becoming Africa's model megacity and financial hub that is safe, secure, functional and productive.

With the forthcoming Ehingbeti Summit scheduled to hold next month, over four areas in Lagos have been sensitised on the summit aimed at brainstorming innovative ideas and economic blueprints to make Lagos a 21st century economy.

"So far, Obalende, Yaba, Abule Egba and Badagry axis of Lagos have been sensitised with the LESG's five day activation exercise to announce the summit.

The summit, expected to unveil a 30-year development plan (2022-2052).

With over 222 resolutions out of which 210 resolutions have been implemented, the State has achieved a 77 per cent budget performance, thus far as plans to hit 100 per cent is on the cards. Next stop for the five day activation exercise is the LASTMA office in Oshodi, Eko Idumota and Oyingbo markets.

"With the activation, Lagosians would be in the know of the State's plan to achieve a greater Lagos as the summit is expected to host economic and finance experts from public and private sectors of the nation's economy to deliberate on the paths to sustainable socioeconomic growth of Lagos State, "it stated in a statement.

The Co-Chairman, Ehingbeti Lagos Economic Summit and Commissioner of Economic Planning and Budget, Lagos State, Sam Egube, at a pre-summit stakeholders engagement in Lagos, said: "This meeting again to announce that Ehingbeti is here again and coming again and to celebrate that plan and give account of what Ehingbeti and Lagos has achieved with all the resolutions that we have."

He stated that Lagos controls about 50 per cent of trading businesses in West Africa, adding that Ehingbeti represents the economic heritage of the Marina and Broad street areas of Lagos State, which served as the springboard for Nigeria and West Africa Socio-economic development right from the time of European incursion.



Expert: Building Trust is Critical for e-Commerce Success

Gilbert Ekwugbe

A frontline digital expert, Mr. Victor Ojiakhena has said that for e-commerce businesses to succeed in Nigeria and all around the world, they must not leave any stone unturned in building trust among their audience.

Speaking at a digital forum in Lagos recently, Ojieakhena said even though online shopping is the trend among the younger generation, the place of trust in business relationships must not be taken for granted.

According to him, trust is the cornerstone of customer relations in the e-commerce market because consumers experience more uncertainty when shopping online. He said customers' areas of trust border around card security and privacy issues, the quality of products or services they receive after they have placed their orders online, and the wait for the products and services they order.

Ojiakhena said it is important for online businesses to ensure these areas of trust are properly addressed so their customers can trust them more and do more business online. The digital expert said platforms such as Clickafix have been able to establish trust in these areas with the quality of professionals enrolled on the platform. Clickafix, a one-stop shop for skilled artisans, is a marketplace where artisans such as carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and technicians for refrigerators, air conditioning, generators, and home appliances are available in large numbers to customers.

Ojiahkene said Clickafix has undergone a rigorous process to conduct background checks on every artisan on the platform to ascertain their competence and character in the delivery of excellent service.

Korea Proposes Idea Contest Programme for Nigerian Tech Companies

Olawale Ajimotokan in Abuja

South Korea has initiated a start up idea contest programme to enable collaboration between Nigerian technological start-ups and Korean young business people. The President of Korea Africa Foundation (KAF) Lyeo Woon-Ki disclosed this during a recent tour of Nigeria.

Lyeo, a former Korean Ambassador to Ghana, said that many Nigerian start ups have applied for the technology based programmes.

He added that the Korean government has also selected a Nigerian company, CC Hub to enable it navigate the difficulty of selecting the suitable Nigerian and African start ups as well as assist in their incubation process.

Lyeo also disclosed that Korea will also provide some form of funding and consultation for CC Hub until they groom some companies.

"Besides this start up idea contest, we also have a new process in creating new unicorn promising companies in Nigeria. The first collaborating event is on the way now. We are also trying to encourage Korean Unicorns to come to Africa, "Lyeo said.

The envoy, who, while in Africa, visited Nigeria, South Africa and Ghana to promote KAF, stressed the need for cooperation with Nigeria, which he described as a very important country.

He also regretted that most Korean people do not have good impression of Nigeria, which they erroneously believe is a very difficult and hard place to live.

"But they have not visited Nigeria and have not met Nigerian people. But once they meet real Nigerians and visit the country they will begin to have a change of impression.

Fidelity Bank Splashes Millions on 80 Loyal Customers

Kayode Tokede

A total of 80 customers of Fidelity Bank Plc won N1 million each at the cash presentation of the bank's Get Alert in Million (GAM) season 5 promo (GAIM 5) and rewarded others with various sums of money.

Speaking that the Grand Prize Presentation Ceremony of the GAIM Season 5 Promo in Lagos yesterday, Promo Chairperson & Executive Director, Lagos & South-West, Fidelity Bank, Dr Ken Opara, disclosed that the bank rewarded 1,880 customers with various sums of money comprising 1,800 customers that have won N10,000 each in 36 weekly consolation draws and 80 customers who have won N1million each in eight monthly draws.

He noted that the event marks the fulfillment of the promise the bank made last November when it commenced the journey of rewarding customers for maintaining a healthy savings habit with N125million in cash prizes. The bank at the event presented cash prizes to 13 winners that emerged in the grand and final monthly draws held last week.

According to him, "While we have improved the lifestyle of our customers through the GAIM 5 promo, we are also happy that we are contributing to the Central Bank's objective of deepening financial inclusion in the country.

"For instance, we have heard stories of people who have opened Fidelity Bank accounts just for an opportunity to win in the promo.

"As we present the winners of the grand and final monthly draws with their cash prizes today, I would like to advise that they make good use of the money. As a partner in their progress, we have set up SME desks in our branches to provide advisory on how to utilize their money judiciously.

The Divisional head, product development, Fidelity bank, Mr. Osita Ede explained that the bank customer has to save a minimum of N2,000 only and activate a virtual or physical debit card to get a ticket in the promo.

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

NGX Group Promise Improved Returns, Release Dividend Policy

Kayode Tokede

Nigerian Exchange Group (NGX Group) Plc has stated that it will continue to ensure that its shareholders received mouthwatering returns on their investments even as it released its dividend policy.

The policy document which was approved by the board of directors of NGX Group Plc and published on the company's website was formulated in accordance with the Laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, investment and tax legislations, Codes of Corporate Governance, as well as internationally recognized best practices and principles.

"NGX Group, through its Dividend Policy, seeks to guarantee shareholder rights especially as it relates to return on investment. The policy is developed to address issues relating to the determination and payment of dividend. The Group shall apply the policy, accordingly to determine any claim by any shareholder, individual or institution, regarding the dividends payouts by NGX Group subject to provisions in the Articles of Association of the Company, "it stated.

In terms of the administration of dividends by The Group, the Policy document added NGX Group will apply the policy on an annual basis to develop a transparent and methodological dividend consideration and payouts.

"This approach will ensure that NGX Group has sufficient distributable profits and/or general reserves, as determined by a review of the Company's audited financial statements as well as consideration of other financial factors, prior to any declaration and/or payment of dividend. To this end, the policy will guide the NGX Group in its approach to distributing surplus funds from its distributable profits and/or general reserves to shareholders, as may be determined by the profit and availability of cash for distribution; operating, and investment needs of the Company; anticipated future growth and earnings of the Company; and provisions of the Company's Articles of Association among others, "the company added.

The NGX Group Policy document provided guidance on the dividend payable in cash in a year. According to the document, "the range of dividend payable in cash will range between a pay-out ratio 25 per cent and 75 per cent of the distributable profit of same year to which the dividend is applicable.

PRICES FOR SECURITIES TRADED AS OF 15 /09/2022

MAIN BOARD	DEALS	MARKET PRICE	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE TRADED (N)

S/N	BANKING	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
1	UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC	253,075.72	7.40	-1.33	127	2,046,925
2	ZENITH BANK PLC	612,231.63	19.50	-2.50	614	18,250,335
BANKING					741	20,297,260
S/N	OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
3	ACCESS HOLDINGS PLC	318,129.77	8.95	0.56	126	5,239,588
4	FBN HOLDINGS PLC	366,131.99	10.20	-	116	2,717,918
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					242	7,957,506
FINANCIAL SERVICES					983	28,254,766
ICT						
S/N	TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
5	MTN NIGERIA COMMUNICATIONS PLC	4,070,902.61	200.00	-	185	341,549
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES					185	341,549
ICT					185	341,549
INDUSTRIAL GOODS						
S/N	BUILDING MATERIALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
6	DANGOTE CEMENT PLC	4,174,924.31	245.00	-	62	270,348
7	LAFARGE AFRICA PLC.	396,251.77	24.60	-	85	967,948
BUILDING MATERIALS					147	1,238,296
INDUSTRIAL GOODS					147	1,238,296
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	-	12	191
EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION					12	191
OIL AND GAS					12	191
AGRICULTURE						
S/N	CROP PRODUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
9	ELLAH LAKES PLC.	7,200.00	3.60	-	7	966
10	FTN COCOA PROCESSORS PLC	638.00	0.29	-9.37	3	201,703
11	OKOMU OIL PALM PLC.	179,621.25	188.30	-	24	7,574
12	PRESCO PLC	142,600.00	142.60	-	61	313,962
CROP PRODUCTION					95	524,205
S/N	LIVESTOCK/ANIMAL SPECIALTIES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
13	LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC.	3,450.00	1.15	3.60	10	668,232
LIVESTOCK/ANIMAL SPECIALTIES					10	668,232
AGRICULTURE					105	1,192,437
CONGLOMERATES						
S/N	DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
14	JOHN HOLT PLC.	315.21	0.81	-	3	1,590
15	S C O A NIG. PLC.	1,137.19	1.75	-	0	0
16	TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATION PLC	43,899.83	1.08	0.93	38	1,551,447
17	U A C N PLC.	32,187.45	11.00	-	13	187,866
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIES					54	1,740,903
CONGLOMERATES					54	1,740,903
CONSTRUCTION/REAL ESTATE						
S/N	BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
18	ARBICO PLC.	152.96	1.03	-	1	380
CONSTRUCTION/REAL ESTATE						
S/N	BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION					1	380
S/N	INFRASTRUCTURE/HEAVY CONSTRUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
19	JULIUS BERGER NIG. PLC.	41,440.00	25.90	-	13	12,149
INFRASTRUCTURE/HEAVY CONSTRUCTION					13	12,149
S/N	REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
20	UPDC PLC	18,559.97	1.00	-2.91	29	1,996,662
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT					29	1,996,662
CONSTRUCTION/REAL ESTATE					43	2,009,191
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.	28,890.84	3.69	-	2	6,500
23	GOLDEN GUINEA BREW. PLC.	829.98	0.81	-	0	0
24	GUINNESS NIG PLC	192,534.65	87.90	-	69	280,680
25	INTERNATIONAL BREWERIES PLC.	131,624.14	4.90	-1.01	28	907,532
CONSUMER GOODS						
S/N	BEVERAGES--BREWERS/DISTILLERS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
26	NIGERIAN BREW. PLC.	397,891.85	48.40	-	50	446,160
BEVERAGES--BREWERS/DISTILLERS					149	1,640,872
S/N	FOOD PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
27	BUA FOODS PLC	1,049,400.00	58.30	-	16	59,473
28	DANGOTE SUGAR REFINERY PLC	200,423.49	16.50	-	77	2,608,294
29	FLOUR MILLS NIG. PLC.	124,241.50	30.30	-	52	406,290
30	HONEYWELL FLOUR MILL PLC	19,032.47	2.40	3.00	34	937,649
31	MULTI-TREX INTEGRATED FOODS PLC	1,340.10	0.36	-	0	0
32	N NIG. FLOUR MILLS PLC.	1,336.50	7.50	-	1	1,060
33	NASCON ALLIED INDUSTRIES PLC	29,143.82	11.00	-	8	22,506
34	UNION DICON SALT PLC.	2,446.38	8.95	-	0	0
FOOD PRODUCTS					188	4,035,272
S/N	FOOD PRODUCTS--DIVERSIFIED	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
35	CADBURY NIGERIA PLC.	24,416.63	13.00	-	5	35,100
36	NESTLE NIGERIA PLC.	1,070,085.94	1,350.00	-	47	1,206,238
FOOD PRODUCTS--DIVERSIFIED					52	1,241,338
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.	26,580.44	21.25	-	52	1,293,652
HOUSEHOLD DURABLES					52	1,293,652
S/N	PERSONAL/HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
39	P Z CUSSONS NIGERIA PLC.	36,726.91	9.25	-	29	279,564
40	UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC.	76,695.82	13.35	-	21	70,248
PERSONAL/HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS					50	349,812
CONSUMER GOODS						
CONSUMER GOODS					491	8,560,946
FINANCIAL SERVICES						
S/N	BANKING	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
41	ECOBANK TRANSNATIONAL INCORPORATED	202,762.54	11.05	-0.45	31	1,120,153
42	FIDELITY BANK PLC	98,514.31	3.40	-0.29	80	3,787,073
43	GUARANTY TRUST HOLDING COMPANY PLC	581,265.79	19.75	-0.25	341	9,482,091
44	JAIZ BANK PLC	29,360.00	0.85	1.19	13	804,127
45	STERLING BANK PLC.	43,185.63	1.50	0.67	49	7,791,079
46	UNION BANK NIG.PLC.	167,444.33	5.75	-3.36	21	627,299
47	UNITY BANK PLC	5,026.42	0.43	2.38	5	225,382
48	WEMA BANK PLC.	44,874.96	3.49	-0.29	41	3,403,272
BANKING					581	27,240,476
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	-3.51	26	825,447
FINANCIAL SERVICES						
S/N	INSURANCE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
51	AXAMANSARD INSURANCE PLC	16,020.00	1.78	-	28	354,760
52	CONSOLIDATED HALLMARK INSURANCE PLC	6,636.79	0.62	-1.59	15	1,700,740
53	CORNERSTONE INSURANCE PLC	11,444.83	0.63	-1.56	19	9,354,500
54	CORONATION INSURANCE PLC	8,637.00	0.36	-5.26	24	479,478
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	2.15	9	370,000
59	LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC	6,720.00	0.48	-	5	1,087,798
60	MUTUAL BENEFITS ASSURANCE PLC.	5,817.87	0.29	-	18	2,119,993
61	NEM INSURANCE PLC	25,734.53	5.13	-	3	39,070
62	NIGER INSURANCE PLC	1,547.90	0.20	-	0	0
63	PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC	6,758.81	0.51	-	0	0
64	REGENCY ASSURANCE PLC	1,800.56	0.27	8.00	7	1,698,975
65	SOVEREIGN TRUST INSURANCE PLC	2,954.76	0.26	-	2	718,285
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	-	0	0
69	UNIVERSAL INSURANCE PLC	3,200.00	0.20	-	1	60,000
70	VERITAS KAPITAL ASSURANCE PLC	2,773.33	0.20	-	7	1,656,634
INSURANCE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES					164	20,465,680
S/N	MICRO-FINANCE BANKS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
71	NPF MICROFINANCE BANK PLC	9,888.34	1.65	-	3	11,907
MICRO-FINANCE BANKS					3	11,907

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	11,100.00	5.55	-	35	327,467
78	CUSTODIAN INVESTMENT PLC	38,232.12	6.50	-	10	706,924
79	DEAP CAPITAL MANAGEMENT & TRUST PLC	300.00	0.20	-	0	0
80	FCMB GROUP PLC.	63,962.76	3.23	0.94	25	1,430,374
81	NIGERIAN EXCHANGE GROUP	38,693.06	19.70	-1.75	36	1,411,100
82	ROYAL EXCHANGE PLC.	5,248.28	1.02	-	0	0
83	STANBIC IBTC HOLDINGS PLC	388,709.91	30.00	-	33	40,094
84	UNITED CAPITAL PLC	71,400.00	11.90	-	58	679,224
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					197	4,595,183
FINANCIAL SERVICES					945	52,313,246
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	-	0	0
MEDICAL SUPPLIES					0	0
S/N	PHARMACEUTICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
87	FIDSON HEALTHCARE PLC	22,835.21	9.95	-	28	228,849
88	GLAXO SMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIG. PLC.	7,055.67	5.90	-	8	39,117
89	MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC.	6,693.91	3.88	-	8	29,613
HEALTHCARE						
S/N	PHARMACEUTICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
90	NEIMETH INTERNATIONAL PHARMACEUTICALS PLC	2,962.69	1.56	-	12	102,754
91	PHARMA-DEKO PLC.	444.48	2.05	-	5	53,600
PHARMACEUTICALS					61	453,933
HEALTHCARE					61	453,933
ICT						
S/N	COMPUTER BASED SYSTEMS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
92	COURTEVILLE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS PLC	1,704.96	0.48	2.13	13	87,144,422
COMPUTER BASED SYSTEMS					13	87,144,422
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	-	0	0
95	NCR (NIGERIA) PLC.	388.80	3.60	-	0	0
IT SERVICES					0	0
S/N	PROCESSING SYSTEMS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
96	CHAMS HOLDING COMPANY PLC	1,408.82	0.30	-9.09	25	6,225,491
97	E-TRANZACT INTERNATIONAL PLC	19,306.59	2.91	-	4	1,507
PROCESSING SYSTEMS					29	6,226,998
S/N	TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
98	AIRTEL AFRICA PLC	7,516,303.01	2,000.00	-	54	80,531
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES					54	80,531
ICT					96	93,451,951
INDUSTRIAL GOODS						
S/N	BUILDING MATERIALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
99	BERGER PAINTS PLC	1,912.83	6.60	-	9	30,82
100	BUA CEMENT PLC	1,808,356.51	53.40	-	28	18,09
INDUSTRIAL GOODS						
S/N	BUILDING MATERIALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
101	CAP PLC	13,991.61	17.75	-	8	13,204
102	MEYER PLC.	1,205.91	2.27	-	0	0
103	PREMIER PAINTS PLC.	1,230.00	10.00	-	0	0
BUILDING MATERIALS					45	62,126
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.	7,573.68	2.15	-4.87	11	394,794
ELECTRONIC AND ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS					11	394,794
S/N	PACKAGING/CONTAINERS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
106	BETA GLASS PLC.	27,658.45	46.10	-	15	50,490
107	GREIF NIGERIA PLC	232.39	5.45	-	0	0
108	TRIPPLE GEE AND COMPANY PLC.	400.91	0.81	-	4	6,670
PACKAGING/CONTAINERS					19	57,160
S/N	AGRO-ALLIED & CHEMICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
109	NOTORE CHEMICAL IND PLC	100,754.14	62.50	-	0	0
AGRO-ALLIED & CHEMICALS					0	0
INDUSTRIAL GOODS					75	514,080
NATURAL RESOURCES						
S/N	CHEMICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
110	INDUSTRIAL & MEDICAL GASES NIGERIA PLC	3,721.23	7.45	-	9	22,811
CHEMICALS					9	22,811
S/N	METALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
111	ALUMINIUM EXTRUSION IND. PLC.	1,583.68	7.20	-	1	10
METALS					1	10
NATURAL RESOURCES						
S/N	MINING SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
112	MULTIVERSE MINING AND EXPLORATION PLC	1,193.34	2.80	-1.06	34	1,140,856
MINING SERVICES					34	1,140,856
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					44	1,163,677
OIL AND GAS						
S/N	ENERGY EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
114	JAPAUL GOLD & VENTURES PLC	1,753.56	0.28	3.70	19	2,251,198
ENERGY EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES					19	2,251,198
S/N	INTEGRATED OIL AND GAS SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
115	OANDO PLC	62,654.32	5.04	-	19	125,889
INTEGRATED OIL AND GAS SERVICES					19	125,889
S/N	PETROLEUM AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTORS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
116	ARDOVA PLC	17,453.25	13.40	-	10	26,106
117	CONOIL PLC	18,389.73	26.50	-	5	2,449
118	ETERNA PLC.	8,216.11	6.30	-	7	76,752
119	MRS OIL NIGERIA PLC.	4,920.40	14.35	-	7	9,076
120	TOTALENERGIES MARKETING NIGERIA PLC	79,617.87	234.50	-	9	1,433
PETROLEUM AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTORS					38	115,816
OIL AND GAS					76	2,492,903

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NIGERIA'S 2023 GENERAL ELECTION

Kenya's Presidential Election holds lessons for Nigeria, write ***SAMUEL OROVWUJE*** *and* ***ARMSTRONG ONGERA***



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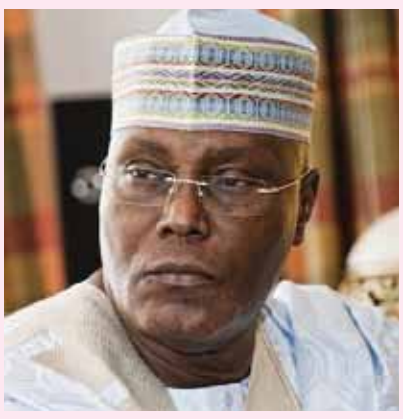
ATIKU ABUBAKAR AND BALA MOHAMMED: THE LIMITS OF HYPOCRISY

EMMA AGU *contends that the PDP North East Solidarity Network is mischievous*



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EDITORIAL

THE TUBERCULOSIS SCOURGE



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The revitalisation of the Editors' Forum offers media leaders an opportunity to query aspiring politicians, writes ***BOLAJI ADEBIYI***

EDITORS' CHANCE TO INTERROGATE UNFOLDING POLITICAL PROCESS

Like the proverbial lizard that jumped down from the rooftop, President Muhammadu Buhari was full of praises for his seven years plus administration on Tuesday, awarding it full marks. "So, in relative terms of time and resources, this administration has done extremely well. I have to say it because those who are supposed to say are not saying it. I don't know why," he said in Owerri during his one-day working visit to Imo State.

Buhari's claim rested on his usual platitude about doing more with less. He told his audience that his administration had done a lot in the area of infrastructure development and security despite dwindling resources. These are essentially dubious claims that do not stand in the face of the facts of the nation's realities.

For instance, he spoke as if in the 16 years preceding his ascension to power, oil sold for $100 per barrel. This is a lie. The President Olusegun Obasanjo administration did much of what it did with an oil price that hovered around $20 to $50 at an average daily production of 1,800 barrels per day. Even President Goodluck Jonathan's administration which was massively vilified for perceived waste only enjoyed the windfall of $80 to $100 for a relative period of time.

Meanwhile, Buhari conveniently refused to tell his audience that his administration had operated within a period of the steady rise in oil prices in the last three years but had been unable to reap the booty because of bad political management of the Niger Delta and incompetence in the handling of the massive theft of the commodity that is the life wire of the nation.

Interestingly, Buhari spoke glowingly about his strides in securing the nation even when the organisers of the state visit carefully chose Tuesday for the trip, a clear acknowledgement of the Monday sit-at-home protest imposed on the entire South-east of the country for years by amorphous gun-wielding non-state actors. It happened, therefore, that Hope Uzodinma, the state governor, understood that Monday which ordinarily should be for serious work like project inauguration is a no-no for even the president of the Republic.

But that is not the substantive issue for discussion here. It is the president's complaint that those who should be parroting his perceived achievements are mute. In his usual clumsy way of speaking, it was difficult to understand the object of his grievance. Given the awkwardness of his statement, a section



of the media had taken the journalistic licence to interpret it to mean that he was saying his officials who had the mandate to project his administration had failed in their duties. Maybe.

It is, however, gratifying that the president this time around did not apprehend the media as the whipping boy of his acute communication failure. Faced with the widespread belief that the Buhari administration's failure is a naked truth that has become a liability for the All Progressives Congress' efforts in the upcoming electioneering for the 2023 presidential election, a spokesman of the party's presidential campaign held the media responsible for what he called the dearth of information in the public space on Buhari's achievements.

Reminded by the anchor of the television programme that there were multiple media platforms for the administration to have ventilated its works, the spokesman, who struggled to identify the Buhari legacies that he had mouthed severally, insisted that there was a media conspiracy to downplay the achievements of the outgoing government.

Actually, media scapegoating has been the past time of politicians and their spokesmen. It has been worse in the last seven years or so. If the politicians are not complaining about being underreported, they would bellyache about being misquoted or that critical reports on them have been sponsored. Yet what has been obvious is that there is either very little on the ground to be projected or the persons engaged to market them are incompetent. Both work together most of the time at the three tiers of government.

As the electioneering begins at the end of September, media scapegoating would increase but that would be futile for any serious politician that is intent on reaching the public with their programmes of action. A more sensible thing to do would be to engage communication experts that know the workings of the media and could leverage that to secure positive coverage.

Incidentally, the Nigerian Guild of Editors, the umbrella body of over 600 editors spread across the nation, has created a platform tagged Editors' Forum for politicians aspiring to leadership positions at various levels to showcase their policies and plans. According to its officials, the forum is a part of the guild's efforts to contribute to the deepening of democracy in the country by assisting the public to interrogate the processes leading to the general election through regular engagements with its important stakeholders.

No doubt a good idea which helps to properly reposition the organisation as a focused group that has the capacity to interrogate important developments in the country, its format is quite refreshing as it takes the form of an interactive session between media leaders (managing directors and editors of major news outlets, including newspapers, broadcast and online) and the major electoral stakeholders, including leaders of the electoral management body, security agencies, and political parties and their candidates.

"The guild believes that the forum offers competing candidates an opportunity to provide media leaders with more knowledge and clarifications on their programmes and manifesto for the people," the NGE said in a recent statement announcing the forum that is expected to feature the presidential and governorship candidates of leading political parties jostling for power.

While the presidential gladiators are billed for Abuja and Lagos, the governorship aspirants will present their plans at the regional headquarters in Ibadan, Enugu, Port Harcourt, Kaduna, Jos and Kano.

It is noteworthy that the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu, will be setting the pace for the forum today in Lagos as he presents the electoral agency's programmes and plans to engender a credible general election in 2023. It is hoped that other stakeholders will take advantage of the engagement opportunity to ventilate their plans for the badly troubled nation.

Adebiyi,
the managing editor of THISDAY Newspapers, writes from bolaji.adebiyi@thisdaylive.com

Kenya's Presidential Election holds lessons for Nigeria, write SAMUEL OROVWUJE and ARMSTRONG ONGERA

NIGERIA'S 2023 GENERAL ELECTION

Kenya, the East Africa's most populous country, gained its flag independence from her imperial majesty of Great Britain in 1963, and Nigeria in 1960. The colonial legacy of the divide and rule politics that has characterised Nigeria elections also took root in Kenya, often giving rise to conservative leadership, which appears populist in outlook, but far from realities of the majority of Kenyans. This year's presidential election was indeed remarkable and unique in many ways and indeed a deep source of inspiration to nations in search of democratic practices and ideals.

The final verdict from the Supreme Court may have come and gone, the lessons from the elections are instructive and relevant particularly for Nigeria and INEC in the



conduct of 2023 general election. In our view, one of the greatest imports from the Kenya elections is total commitment to a powerful fusion of women and youth engagement which has mobilised huge numbers of people to vote for change.

Crucially, Kenya has indeed demonstrated that she is a nation where, more than anything else, democracy rules. It is instructive to note also that Kenya with a population of over 50 million people has shown the way for us in Nigeria that Western democratic principles and values can be respected and sustained by the people irrespective of their ethnic, religious, cultural affinity and bias.

Instructive was the validation of the election results by the Supreme Court and it was far and widely accepted, in part, because they were substantiated by the Nairobi-based Elections Observation Group (ELOG), Kenya's largest election monitoring coalition. ELOG deployed 5,000 observers in all 47 counties (states), covering 46,229 polling stations. The lesson is that it allowed Kenyan media to run their own tallies and release provisional results 72 hours before the IEBC- the electoral body. The proactive media initiative is worth replicating for 2023 General Election in Nigeria. The real – time online streaming of results allowed the political parties, civil society organisations, and ordinary citizens to trail the unfolding results.

This year's election in Kenya is also a deep reflection of a nation that believes in the principle of the rule of law and the institutions of the state that are charged with the conduct of elections and, above all, in the sanctity of the ballot box and the inviolability of the human persons in electing a credible leader who may not be popular with existing political structure of Godfathers that has characterised the recruitment to public office and service in Nigeria.

Expectedly, the electoral process was led decidedly in a transparent manner and the democratic climate was better than previous elections in Kenya. Therefore, INEC must be seen to be transparent in line with the Electoral Law as amended.

For several weeks, issue-based politics was canvassed, rallied, and the social media was also awash with critical debates particularly for a new coalition party – Kenya Kwanza Alliance led William Ruto, whose campaign was hinged on the promise of tackling unemployment and poverty. Furthermore, Kenya Kwanza Alliance throughout the campaign offered the people of Kenya from all sides of the political divide governance that will play by the highest global standards while respecting ethnic identity.

The other three presidential candidates were Raila Odinga of Azimio La Umoja Coalition, George Wachakoyah of Roots Party and David Wahiga of Agano Party respectively. Interestingly, Deputy President William Ruto gathered 50.5 percent of the vote and Raila Odinga's 48.9 percent - a meagre difference of 233,000 votes out of more than 14 million votes cast in the elections.

Particularly heartwarming in the 2022 Kenyan Elections is the election of seven Women as Governors in the counties (states) of Homa Bay; Nakuru; Embu; Machakos; Kirinyaga; Meru and Kwale respectively. Indeed, the elections of women have broadened our understanding of gender parity in political participation. This reinforces exceptional nature of women's heroism in contemporary gender and development issues in Africa and it would forever inspire the younger generation of women particularly in Nigeria for public leadership.

The transparent manner in which the over 22 million registered voters cast their ballots in 46,229 polling stations across the 47 counties is worthy of note. It is a clear demonstration of democracy at work in Africa. Therefore, INEC must learn from the logistics and management acumen of Kenya to deliver exceptional elections in 2023.

Political elite and existential power mongers in Africa should also draw inspiration from the peaceful conduct of the Kenyan Presidential election, particularly on the maturity and the spirit of sportsmanship that were displayed by the two major contestants. We must learn as a people to play by the rules with a view to deepening democratic values and culture. The courts in Kenya are not overwhelmed by election cases and that in itself is the real hallmark of political engineering.

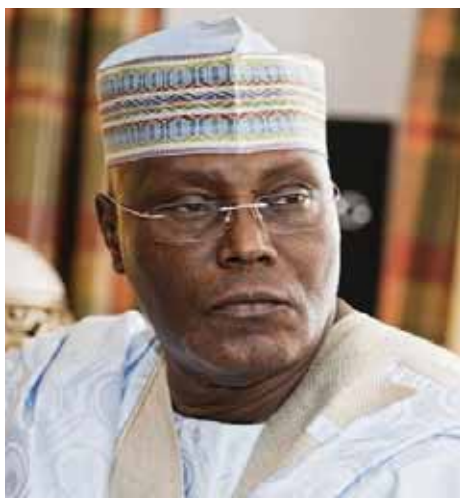
The Labour Party, and other leading opposition parties, must learn critical lessons from the coalitions on how to create and highlight alternatives campaign strategy and broad-based issues and other people - oriented benchmarks and successes to explore commonalities, build consensus with a view to seeking transformation for a new Nigeria. ■

Orovwuje
is founder, Humanitarian Care for Displaced Persons & ***Ongera****, Kehosa Foundation*

EMMA AGU contends that the PDP North East Solidarity Network is mischievous

ATIKU ABUBAKAR AND BALA MOHAMMED: THE LIMITS OF HYPOCRISY

So much has happened within the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) since the emergence, some will say predictably, of former Vice President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, as the flagbearer of the party, for the 2023 presidential elections. Not the least of these developments is the moral challenge posed by Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike, who has insisted that the Chairman of the party, Dr. Iyorchia Ayu should step down for a southerner, in line with pre-primary agreements. The contention is that it is not right for the two most powerful positions in the party, to be occupied by people from the same latitudinal divide of north and south.



Both Atiku and Ayu are from the north.

Despite concerted efforts by well-meaning party chieftains such as the immediate past chairman of the BOT, Senator Walid Jibrin, to douse the tension and reunite the warring factions, and with only a few days left before the commencement of campaigns, peace and stability are yet to return to the fold of the party. If Wike's unbending minimum is a problem, the nefarious role of some agent provocateur and hypocrites who relentlessly stoke the embers of conflict and disunity, has not helped matters.

From experience, those who stoke the fire of conflict do so for many reasons. These include those who seek access to the candidate but think their only chance is to massage the person's ears about imaginary enemies; those who need to run down prospective or potential opponents in the power game; hungry scavengers desperately seeking immediate pecuniary gratification and, do not be surprised, fifth columnists who have been deployed by opponents to destabilise the party from within.

It is difficult to place the group that goes by the name, Peoples Democratic Party North East Solidarity Network, that recently called a press conference to, as they claimed, alert Atiku Abubakar to be wary of Bala Mohammed, executive governor of Bauchi State who it irreverently described as a "traitor". Bala Mohammed, a traitor?

Well, if you are in doubt, not so with this clairvoyant group that had this to say about Bala Mohammed: "…From our findings, the former lawmaker is still sobbing over his loss at the presidential primary and has allied with other disgruntled aspirants and party members. But on the surface, he pretends to be with Atiku. He is pro-Atiku in the day while he dines with Wike at night". Here comes the Nostradamus(es) of the PDP.

Sadly, these are the kind of people who go about recruiting enemies for Atiku and the PDP or, put differently, whose stock-in-trade is to alienate hitherto loyal party men and women, to the point of turning them against the party. People or groups who want Atiku to believe that being Wike's friend makes Bala Mohammed an enemy are, to put it mildly, Atiku's biggest enemies and, could ultimately become his major undoing, that is, if the experienced political player believes many of these people who could be described as political jobbers or opportunists. I do not want to go into the morality or otherwise of Wike's demands. His Excellency, Atiku Abubakar is experienced enough in the affairs of life, including politics, to be schooled on matters of trust.

But I must say, and I do so because I know, that in going into the presidential race, Bala Mohammed was genuinely inspired to present himself for service, not in the desperate manner that some political turncoats have exaggerated, but in the best democratic traditions which the PDP proclaims as its mantra. He meant every word of his when he pledged, at every point during his nationwide consultation, before the primaries, that he would abide by the choice of his party.

When that choice became Atiku Abubakar, Bala Mohammed promptly congratulated him and followed up with a visit to the flagbearer's house in the Asokoro District of Abuja where he further pledged his loyalty and allegiance and promised to mobilize the Bauchi State electorate in his support. I am also aware that when Atiku Abubakar's running mate, Governor Ifeanyi Okowa of Delta State requested to visit Bala Mohammed, the later offered to visit him instead, insisting that the presidential running mate of his party deserved the courtesy.

If the so-called PDP North East Solidarity Network had been patriotic and genuinely pro-Atiku as it claims, it would have known that to seek to antagonize an incumbent Governor like Bala Mohammed, with a huge electoral value, was the ultimate betrayal. If the characters that constitute the PDP North East Solidarity Network were privy to what transpired at Atiku's 75th birthday in Bauchi last year, they would have been less outlandish in their hypocrisy. Not only did Bala Mohammed roll out the red carpet for a deserving elder brother, but he also named the newly constructed 4.2 km Gombe Road Maiduguri By-pass after the former vice president, now presidential candidate of his party. That suffices for how Bala Mohammed feels about Atiku Abubakar. For his part, as reported by the People's Gazette last November 26, Atiku Abubakar had this to say about Bala Mohammed:

"Today, I read with emotions your birthday greetings to me. I don't normally like celebrating birthdays, but here you are today, making me celebrate birthday with a birthday cake and birthday bull.

"I never had it in my life like this. Your excellency, words alone are not enough for me to describe how I feel today. ■

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EDITORIAL

THE TUBERCULOSIS SCOURGE

Government could do more to contain the disease

Tuberculosis, better known by its acronym TB, still constitutes a major health problem in Nigeria. This much was brought to the fore last week by the Kaduna State Tuberculosis, Leprosy and Buruli Ulcer Programme which recorded fresh 4,474 cases of the disease. It is unfortunate that despite being a vaccine-preventable disease, statistics from the World Health Organisation reveal that every year, about 245,000 Nigerians die from TB, while about 590,000 new cases occur. Indeed, the WHO has ranked Nigeria first in Africa and sixth globally on TB prevalence.

It is on record that the WHO 10-year strategy (2006-2015) to cut down the burden of TB in the world worked in many countries as it reportedly saved some 37 million lives while some countries succeeded in halving the prevalence of the disease. But in Nigeria, the reverse is the case. The greatest problem in combating the disease is the prevalence of Multidrug Resistance Tuberculosis (MDR-TB). The other challenge is rooted in poor diagnosis. Available reports indicate that many cases of tuberculosis are not diagnosed, and even when diagnosed, they are not registered for tracking.

However, there are other challenges. To say the least, government efforts on research has been peripheral ever since the disease became a heavy burden for the country. Yet research ought to be a focal point in the fight to combat tuberculosis since with such efforts, a whole lot can be achieved in finding measures to prevent the disease. The Nigerian Institute of Medical Research (NIMR) should do more in that regard. Also, Nigeria's government funding mechanism has not been effective enough to contain the high cases of the disease. Much of the funding of tuberculosis has been predominantly from foreign donors.



Nigeria's government funding mechanism has not been effective enough to contain the high cases of the disease. Much of the funding of tuberculosis has been predominantly from foreign donors

What that says very clearly is that the federal government has not shown enough commitment to fighting the disease. That perhaps explains why the Direct Observed Treatment Short Course (DOTS), a global method for treatment of the disease, has not been funded by the government. Also, availability of TB microscopy laboratory services is still in short supply, thereby weakening the preventive strategies set aside to tackle the disease. These are the existing gaps that have held back the elimination of tuberculosis for years in the country.

Tuberculosis is caused by a bacterium which most commonly affects the lungs and transmitted from person to person through air droplets. But it is a curable disease, but that is dependent on early detection and correct diagnosis aided with proper treatment. Sadly, many patients afflicted with TB do not complete the therapy while others do not even make themselves available for treatment. Yet failure to complete the treatment and the mismanagement of drugs has led to the death of many patients and the increase in variants of the disease that are drug-resistant.

On the whole, we enjoin government, at all levels, to fight TB with more seriousness. There should be a more workable plan to address many of the gaps that have encumbered the fight against the disease. Focusing on prevention, diagnosis, tracking and treatment are important while there is an urgent need for government to invest more on research on TB as a strategic way to a put a stop to its spread. The NIMR could be empowered to go into advanced research on the subject that unravels the mystery surrounding Nigeria's high incident cases. An actionable plan that focuses on research, tracking and treatment is also very critical to taming the rise of TB in Nigeria. Health authorities must take the challenge seriously.

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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

OPEN LETTER TO BOLA AHMED TINUBU

With a total sense of the consciousness of the importance of the impending 2023 general election for your excellency and our great party, the All Progressives Congress (APC), and having been at the forefront of the media and campaigning activities on behalf of our party, in 2015 and 2019, and comprehending the nuances and intricacies of things, I deem it necessary to render to you my perspective and perception of the media cum political landscape in the hope of improving the general disposition and strategy of your presidential campaign.

As a key stakeholder in the management of the Buhari's administration media image and perception, and understanding the nexus between the achievements of the outgoing administration and marketability of your image and political brand, I believe the APC should and must put in place a coherent and well co-ordinated media mechanism that permits seamless flow of information and smooth interaction among its various media components at all levels, if we must dictate the perception.

The unified media approach must take three main factors into consideration. One, the reviewed manifesto of the party, which includes the reforms pursued or advocated by the party, the management of the party and the deliverables. Two, the quality of the candidate, which includes virtue, character, competence and political trajectory. Three, the policy environment i.e. the challenges met on ground by the APC when it ascended the domain of power in 2015. The APC has made some efforts to correct the inherent systemic anomalies while consolidating on the emanating gains from previous administrations, with such initiatives as the TSA, the School Feeding Programme, among others. The APC between 2015 and today has recorded unprecedented achievements as a result of huge investments in infrastructure and human empowerment.

A coordinated and unified media strategy means all official and unofficial spokespersons and media agents or operatives of the party and the campaign at all levels, from the national to the state down to the ward must sing a common tune.

Proposal: That campaign organizations at all levels must marshal a vibrant and effective media team that synchronizes with the central co-ordinating national campaign media hub; that there should be occasional and frequent seminars and brainstorming sessions to sensitize and energize our media and publicity officers at every rung of the campaign ladder; campaign messages must be strategically organized to deliver on their mandate and enliven the image and credibility of the party and candidate(s) for maximum effects at the poll. Objective: To create an efficient and effective media machine at every level of the national campaign effort of the APC singing a common tune, i.e. not the prevailing disjointed approach; to nurture cadres of responsive media officials and operatives with understanding of the manifesto, vision of the party, and candidates as well as their political trajectory and the policy environment as expatiated above.

I sincerely believe that if the above listed points are duly considered and incorporated it will make positive impact on our eventual disposition and strategy going into the election proper.

Dr Tom Ohikere,
Publisher/MD

This Weekend

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2022

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VICTOR OZOMOGE: A Different Kind of Tailor

COVER

This Weekend

Victor Ozomoge: A Different Kind of Tailor

Victor Ozomoge, founder and chief executive officer of Zomoge Inspired, a high-class tailoring outfit, is a tailor with a difference. Ozomoge whose firm offers unusual and refined outfits most creatively would rather be called simply a tailor than being referred to as a fashion designer as other colleagues of his in the same field would prefer. In this interview with **MARY NNAH**, the seamster who has spent well over 18 years in the fashion industry, reveals how he has distinguished himself as a tailor

Generally, people think that fashion designing goes beyond tailoring now you are saying tailoring goes beyond fashion designing. How?

I am a tailor. I don't like to be referred to as a fashion designer. I prefer a tailor because I do tailor stuff. Yes, fashion designing can be restricted but tailoring goes way beyond just sewing. So, I like to be referred to as a tailor.

When you say the word fashion designing, it could be home interior designing, it could be cloth making, it could be anything but just imagine God tailoring human beings; tailoring lives, tailoring minds and hearts, it is total. When I make clothes for you, it goes beyond me just making pieces of clothes for you.

The kind of clothes you make is not the conventional kind of clothing. So, tell us what inspires your collection.

The essence of creativity, originality, class, excellence and all the attributes of greatness are what inspire my collection.

At a time when Nigeria is facing an economic downturn and people trying to survive with hardly enough income to get quality clothing, you on the other hand are making quality clothing. Now, how do you balance that at the expense of not comprising your quality?

We know it is a very tough time and a lot of people have asked me the same question, wondering how I intend to get my money back. What I'm doing is from my mind; it is passion. Everyone in business is profit-orientated so am I. But as much as I am profit-oriented, I want to do something that makes me go to sleep at night knowing that I am fulfilled. It might take a while for me to make all the money back like I tell my friends but there is something about knowing that you have this inner peace in you and that is what inspires what I am doing.

Do I compromise? I don't have to compromise but that does not mean that I have to place my product in a place that my target audience can't reach. Every business does have a target market and so I have my target market.

So what is your target market?

Well, I cannot leave behind the low economy class, of course, they are the owners of any economy. They buy in bits and might buy cheaply but they buy more. I cannot leave them out of my target market. But then, they are not my main target market. My target market is those who can afford my products, I do not care who you are but as long as you love quality, you are my target market.

What is the cheapest rate for your cloth?

In an economy like ours, where we don't produce our fabrics and production materials, it might be difficult to answer that question. Sincerely it is what I buy that I will sell. So, if you come to my outlet, what you pick determines the price. However, the cheapest I have here is a little above the minimum wage.

How do you source your raw materials?

I have friends all over the world and I try as much as possible to reach out to them to help out. First, you need to understand something, in developing countries, even in the western world, and in well-developed economies, most of these high brands don't even have their products made in their countries. They take them to countries like Asia where they have low labour rates and this, in turn, makes their products a little bit cheaper compared to if they had done them in their own countries. So, based on your question, I guess you can take my answer from there.

Considering the fact you spend a whole lot on transportation and incur a high cost of the exchange rate, do you think sourcing your materials outside the country is more cost-effective for you?

Government is the driver of any economy that survives. And our government is not doing so well for entrepreneurs like me. We don't have good raw materials especially when you want to deal in bulk. Our textile mills are closed; companies, where fabrics are produced, are not functioning anymore.



Ozomoge

Even if they do function, the local materials they produce in good quality are so expensive. So, you will even get them cheaper if you source them abroad than buying them in Nigeria. So, it is not my fault that I am not buying from the local vendors, government should try and fix the economy. I don't like the fact that I invest so much in bringing in quality materials from abroad and people are just coming to price and go because they feel my products are too expensive but because I must retain quality, I will rather source my raw materials out there.

How exactly does sourcing raw materials outside the country affect your business in totality?

It affects my business negatively and positively. Negatively is the cost. At the end of the day, you calculate the cost of the flight, foreign exchange, and other expenses you incur and you find out that when all these are added to the cost of production, the cost of our products becomes so high. Positively, when we source these materials abroad and bring them into the country, we can make clothing that is of international standard because we can work easily with imported materials.

Do you export your finished products outside the country?

Yes, I do. I have guys who trust my products in Canada, America, UK and even India. I may not have traveled round the world but my clothes have traveled round the world and it's not today. It has been a while.

So, how long have you been around?

I have been around since 2004, with a different name but in 2007, we re-branded to Zomoge Inspired. I was in collaboration with someone before but somewhere along the line, the energy was not quite refining, so I had to pull out. And since then I have been operating low-key.

At what point did you notice tailoring as something you wanted to do?

I didn't study tailoring. I am an accountant by profession, I graduated as an accountant from the Universality of Nsukka. So it was while in the university that I picked an interest in tailoring. I found out that I love to dress properly and it was during one of those very long ASUU strikes just like we have now. The strike lasted for like nine months. I worked with one of my mentors then, he is late now. Then I used to follow him around. He was a tailor that used to make clothes for Femi Kuti and Lagbaja.

That was how I fell in love with tailoring and at a point, I started sewing for people. After I graduated from the university I just felt this was the only thing I could do. It was not easy. I have heard my staff ask if I have ever felt like quitting. And I told him plenty of times.

Today, it's a different story. Plenty of my friends have been here and they feel like I have done so much here and they wonder if it just tailoring I do to achieve so much. And I have told them repeatedly that I do not do any other thing than tailoring.

Every single thing I achieve today, I have made it from nothing else but tailoring. I just learned how to do business differently. Everything in my outlet is the best of quality not because I want to show it off but simply because I want you to see the good chairs that you sit on as a reflection of what I am going to do for you. Some people get intimidated when they come in here while some get inspired. I like to work with those who get inspired.

Do you mentor and train people?

I have a lot of people who look up to me. I mentor people but people rarely will come and say that they want to be mentored and even those that come, when life happens, they run to what is easy.

How I mentor is that first and foremost, you need to understand that I am a tailor and not an inspirational speaker, so whoever wants to be mentored has to learn by looking at what I do. Empirical knowledge is the greatest form of knowledge; which has to do with what you have experienced by yourself. But I cannot say that mentoring people is my core. But if you are humbled enough to want to be mentored by me, the best form of mentorship I can give you is you watching how I work and we work together.

What exactly are the challenges you face?

Well, every business has its challenges. So, there are several challenges that I cannot begin to mention. And our economy and government are not helping at all. If you must be in business, just draw a target market chart.

Who are the big names you have worked with?

I have likes RMD, Mudi, Osagie Ize-Iyamu. I have quite a lot of big names.

What exactly differentiates you from other tailors or fashion designers?

My originality, sense of thinking - our mind is our greatest form of a gift - so, I think differently, I see differently and usually when I am designing, I am not only looking at how beautiful it will turn out, I am looking at the result. I am looking at what purpose it will serve; how far it will go and who it is going to reach. When I have you as a customer, I no longer look at you. I am looking at who you know. It is the people that are at your back line that I will now target.

Some people think that designers are gradually returning to the old era. What is your take on that?

Fashion is revolving. What used to be in the '70s comes back in the '80s and 90s. So, there is no permanent intelligence; everybody takes from this and adds to that. That is the way fashion is, it keeps evolving.

In everything that you have done so far, how would you say you have added value to the Nigerian economy?

I have reduced unemployment. I have a lot of people who cater to their families just because they work for Zomoge Inspired. People who would have gone into crime and people who would have become nonentities have worked here and they receive inspiration from the fact that I wake up daily and come here and I show them that this matters to me and it can also matter to them if they take their lives seriously.

What is your aspiration for Zomoge in the next couple of years?

I see Zomoge being a top brand, that will be well respected and well spoken about; a brand that people of quality will reckon with. I see Zomoge as a brand that will be competitive in the international market. I used to say as a joke like 15 years ago, that I won't rest until I see the name of my brand printed on the street where I am located - maybe I'm on my way there but now I am beginning to aim higher than that. Now, I don't even want the name of my brand printed on the street where I am located, I want the name of my brand to be printed even on the street where I don't live.

NEWS

THISDAY Features Editor Wins NMCA Award of Excellence

Rebecca Ejifoma

The Group Features Editor of THISDAY Newspaper, Mrs. Chiemelie Ezeobi, has emerged winner of the National Media Community Award as Outstanding Journalist of the Year.

She clinched the award at the 2022 edition of the National Media Community Award (NMCA) held in Ogba, Lagos State for her knack in reporting the security beat.

This, according to the organisers, is sequel to her vast and immense media contribution to the protection of lives and properties of Nigerians and expatriates alike, coupled with her close affinity with the country's security apparatus.

The National Media Community annual awards is a platform which promotes media excellence and ensures that media professionals not only go around celebrating others but also celebrate themselves.

The Founder of the award, Joshua Uloko told newsmen that the award aims to celebrate excellence in the media industry.

He emphasised that is a way of appreciating the restless and unrelenting efforts of Nigeria pen pushers. According to Uloko, through dint of hard-work and dedication to duty, Ezeobi has over the decade been consistent in crime reporting in the country.

As stated in the letter of notification, they observed and critically followed her uncommon writing prowess and ability to disseminate genuine and thoroughly investigated stories through her media platform.

"We, hereby, use this opportunity to appreciate your magnificent effort. This is because we know that your write-ups and story ideas are geared towards intellectually assisting security agencies in Nigeria in combating crimes and criminats out of the shores of the country," the letter of notification read in part.

The NMCA is organised by Media Community Network in conjunction with Daily Pride Communications, publisher of City Pride Achievers' Magazine and Crime Bursters International Magazine.

Also celebrated at the awards ceremony were Politics Today host, Seun Okinbaloye; veteran media professionals like Publisher of City People magazine, Dr. Seye Kehinde; and Publisher/Chairman of THISDAY Newspaper/Arise TV, Prince Nduka Obaigbena, among others.



THISDAY Features Editor, Chiemelie Ezeobi

Titilayo Ogunbambi's 'Emerge' Tackles Gender-based Violence

Mary Nnah

It was a huge celebration as members of the Lions Club converged in Ikeja Lagos for the formal presentation of Lion Aare Lekan Owolabi as the District Governor of Lions Club District 404b2 Nigeria.

Speaking during his official presentation in Lagos, Owolabi described the occasion as wonderful, noting, "It is a day that we all have been looking forward to."

"At Lions Club, we do what we know to do best, that is on a day like this when the District Governor is being presented to the public and to raise funds for the core project for the lions year, it is an opportunity for members of the public to know who we are as lions and at the same to see what we have done in the past and what we are still currently doing. It is also a time for the lions to raise funds for the district to be able to deliver on its core mandate for the lions' service years", Owolabi said.

Owolabi who revealed that his tenure started on July 1st this year when he started carrying out his project, added that his main focus was the redevelopment and expansion of the eye clinic of the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH).

Owolabi who succeeded Lion Kayode Oshinuga, noted that the LASUTH eye centre has become too small for the huge number of patients that visit the place for eye services daily.

He said therefore that the eye center would be renovated with modern equipment worth five hundred million naira."Our core project is rebranding, reconstructing, and equipping the eye center at Lagos State Teaching Hospital. While deliberating on the projects to carry out for the year, we feel to make a significant impact on the LASUTH eye center', he added.

The event was also used to raise funds for the project and many members, club chapters and friends donated to the cause. Owolabi revealed his plans to engage in a membership drive, stating the more members in the organisation, the more funds it will be able to raise and do more for the needy and society.



Titilayo Ogunbambi, middle, flanked by parents, Chief and Mrs. Anthony Meraiyebu at the event

Celebration as Lions Club Presents Aare Lekan Owolabi as District Governor

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He praised his successor for taking the club to a higher level, adding that he will consolidate on the structures that are placed to realise the objectives of the club, which is providing service to the people who need them.

BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION RELEASES GOALKEEPERS REPORT

.Underscores opportunities to accelerate progress toward ending poverty, fighting inequality, and reducing the impacts of climate change



Chiemelie Ezeobi

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation on Thursday released its sixth annual Goalkeepers Report, noting that nearly every indicator of the UN Sustainable Development Goals is off track at the halfway point for achieving them by 2030.

Despite significant setbacks caused by overlapping global crises, the report is optimistic, underscoring opportunities to accelerate progress toward ending poverty, fighting inequality, and reducing the impacts of climate change.

Co-authored by foundation Co-chairs Melinda French Gates and Bill Gates, this year's report, "The Future of Progress," notes the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, wars in Ukraine and Yemen, ongoing climate and food crises, and macro-economic headwinds on global ambitions to improve and save millions of lives by 2030.

"It's no surprise that progress has stalled amid numerous crises," said Bill Gates. "But this is not a reason to give up. Every action matters to save lives and reduce suffering. Turning away would be a mistake."

In their respective essays, French Gates and Gates call for new approaches to achieving gender equality and food security.

They also cite dramatic progress in dealing with the HIV/AIDS epidemic—a nearly 60% decline in annual deaths between 2000 and 2020—as an example of what can happen when the world invests in long-term solutions and innovative approaches to entrenched issues.

"The world faces many challenges—some of which may seem insurmountable. Yet, despite the setbacks, I'm filled with hope that we can solve these problems together and save millions of lives through human ingenuity and innovation," French Gates said. "We know progress is possible because the global community has faced difficult odds before and won. And we can do it again."

This year's report includes best- and worst-case scenarios for ending preventable infectious diseases and malnutrition, improving access to quality education, increasing access to financial services, and achieving gender equality.

"At this historical inflection point, how the world responds to setbacks is a choice that will impact what happens now and for generations to come. Millions of lives hang in the balance," said Gates Foundation CEO Mark Suzman.

JUMIA KICKS OFF BRAND FESTIVAL TO PROMOTE AUTHENTIC BRANDS

Jumia, the leading pan-African e-commerce platform, has commenced its annual 'brand festival' campaign, targeted at promoting authentic products at the best prices directly from the manufacturers on the Jumia platform.

The campaign, which started on Monday, September 12th, and will run through October 2nd, 2022, offers millions of consumers nationwide the opportunity to buy original products from the official stores of several top brands such as Adidas, Samsung, Infinix, Umidigi, Nivea, DeFacto, Nestle, Bacardi, Intel/HP, Unilever, Pernod Ricard, Oraimo, Diageo, Coca Cola, Apple, and Xiaomi.

Chief Commercial Officer, Jumia Nigeria, Ijeoma Arum, said, "The Jumia Brand Festival is not only for the promotion of authentic products, but it also serves as a means for consumers to get the best prices directly from the manufacturers on our platform. We are aware of the needs of today's consumers, which is to gain quality goods at the most competitive market prices and that is the essence of this campaign. We have partnered with the best international brands to make their products accessible to consumers across the country, so consumers can spend less while buying more."

Manager e-commerce Group, Samsung Electronics West & Central Africa, Oyebade Moses, said that partnering with Jumia is always an opportunity to co-create on providing customers with amazing offers on innovative Mobile and Electronics products which Samsung is best known for both locally and globally, adding, " With the current economic situation, it is imperative to ensure that customers are still able to access basic commodities that have a significant impact on their daily activities. The Jumia Brand Festival is set to provide this and we are happy to be a part of it."

Consumers can take advantage of the amazing offers during the Anniversary Sale by simply downloading the Jumia App. The campaign will feature Treasure Hunt, Brand Days, Daily Check-In, and Flash Sales, where consumers can win exciting prizes and get further discounts on several products. The campaign is also providing free shipping on a wide range of products to consumers within Lagos, Abuja, and Ibadan.

E-TRENDS

...Your weekly entertainment delight

MUSIC
SHOWBIZ
NOLLYWOOD

JOEL 'KACHI BENSON TO CO-DIRECT DISNEY'S ORIGINAL



Joel 'Kachi Benson and Matt Ogens to direct 'Madu'

Award-winning Nigerian filmmaker Joel 'Kachi Benson is directing Disney's Original Documentary on a Nigerian boy whose ballet video went viral in 2020. The boy, Anthony Madu, became a viral sensation when his teacher uploaded a video of him dancing barefoot in the rain on YouTube. His pirouettes and leaps mesmerized many viewers across the world and eventually fetched him a scholarship at the 100-year-old Elmhurst Ballet School in the U.K.

The documentary titled 'Madu' captures Anthony Madu's journey since he became a viral sensation. He was 11 at the time the video was uploaded.

"Anthony's journey is a beautiful one, full of courage, growth and acceptance. We aim to share unique, diverse and global perspectives with audiences, full of magic and heart," said Marjon Javadi, vice president of Disney Original Documentary,

Benson, who won the Venice Award in 2019 for his virtual reality documentary 'Daughters of Chibok' is co-directing with Oscar nominee Matt Ogens. In a statement, they disclosed that 'Madu' is "a journey of discovery, growth, belonging and acceptance, a theme we both personally relate to. Making his voice heard is our ultimate drive, and we believe Anthony's extraordinary story will make the most captivating, emotional, and riveting film either of us has told."

'Madu' is part of a growing slate of films from Disney Original Documentary. It is produced by Jamie Patricof, Katie McNeill and Rachel Halilej of Hunting Lane Films while Marjon Javadi oversees the project for Disney Original Documentary.

Footage of the feature documentary was shown to audiences at the D23 Expo held in California, USA. 'Madu' will get a festival run before a limited theatrical release.

WHEN EMEPAN HOSTED ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA, EVENT PROMOTERS

Committed to celebrating entertainment journalists, brands and event managers in Nigeria, the Entertainment Media and Event Promoters Association of Nigeria (EMEPAN) recently held its first Industry Out.

The soiree which was held at CCX Premium Bar and Restaurant had in attendance individuals who work in the sector as well as Dr Onyeka Ogbatu (Don Perry), whose company Don P Wine and Beverages, a subsidiary of Spanish Kingdom Group, a real estate, hospitality and winery conglomerate based in Madrid, Spain sponsored the event.

Ogbatu, whose love for the entertainment media and event promoters is not hidden, held an interactive session with the attendees where conversations on how to move their craft forward were held.

Put together by EMEPAN's Director of Communications, Amaobi Madu, Industry Out is one of the ways the association intends to celebrate those who work tirelessly behind the scenes to bring glamour to the entertainment industry.

AFRIMA Moves Date as It Unveils Nominees

Stories by Vanessa Obioha

For the first time after its inaugural edition, the All Africa Music Awards (AFRIMA) will be hosting the awards in December. Previous editions had been held in November.

The International Executive Committee of the AFRIMA made this known in a press statement announcing the nominees for this year's edition. The awards will now be held from December 8 to 11.

This year's nomination sees South Africa topping the list with Costa Titch, fetching six nominations for his 2021 smash hit, Big Flexa, in "Song of the Year"; "Breakout Artiste of the Year"; "Best African Collaboration"; "Best Artiste, Duo or Group in African Electro"; and "Best Artiste, Duo or Group in Use of African Dance/Choreography".

Hot on his heels is Congolese maestro, Dadju, who ties with six nominations, as well, in "Best Male in Central Africa"; "Song of the Year"; "Album of the Year"; "Artiste of the Year"; "Best African Act in the Diaspora"; and "Best Soundtrack in a Movie, Series, or Documentary".

Ranking closely with the third highest nominations is the Ivorian rapper Didi B who bags five nominations in "Best Male Artiste in Western Africa"; "Song of the Year"; "Album of the Year"; "Best African Rapper/Lyricist"; "Best Artiste, Duo or Group in African Hip Hop".

Also, ranking equally with the third highest nominations is Algerian singer, Soolking, with five nominations in "Best Male Artiste in Northern Africa"; "Song of the Year"; "Album of the Year"; "Best Video"; and "Best African Act in the Diaspora".

Egyptian rapper and record producer, Wegz, with five nominations in "Best Male Artiste in Northern Africa"; "Song of the Year"; "Producer of the Year"; "Artiste of the Year"; and "Best Artiste, Duo or Group in African Contemporary" rounded up the nominees with third highest nominations.



AFRIMA nominees Kizz Daniel, Fireboy DML, Burna Boy

Other artistes with four nominations are the Nigerian music stars, Burna Boy in "Best Male Artiste in Western Africa"; "Song of the Year"; "Album of the Year"; and "Artiste of the Year"); Fireboy in "Best Male Artiste in Western Africa"; "Song of the Year"; "Producer of the Year"; "Artiste of the Year"; and "Best African Collaboration"; Kizz Daniel in "Best Male Artiste in Western Africa"; "Song of the Year"; "Artiste of the Year"; "Best African Collaboration"; and "Best Artiste, Duo or Group in African Pop"; and Tiwa Savage in "Best Female Artiste in Western Africa"; "Artiste of the Year"; "Best African Collaboration"; and "Best Artiste, Duo or Group in African RnB/Soul".

African superstars with four nominations also include Zakes Bantwini (South Africa) in "Best Male Artiste in Southern Africa"; "Best African DJ"; "Artiste of the Year"; and "Best Artiste, Duo or Group in African Electro"; Marwan Moussa (Egypt) in "Best Male Artiste in Northern Africa"; "Best African Rapper/Lyricist"; "Breakout Artiste of the Year"; and "Best Artiste, Duo or Group in African Hip Hop"; and Nomfundo Moh (South Africa) in "Best Female Artiste in Southern Africa"; "Album of the Year"; "Breakout Artiste of the Year"; and "Best Artiste, Duo or Group in African RnB/Soul".

Commenting on the nominations list, AFRIMA jury member representing the Southern African Region, Adam Tiran, said: "The sheer breadth of music from all over the continent that we considered at the AFRIMA adjudication, for this year's awards, is mind-blowing. It's really encouraging to see so many African superstars on the list, as well as other rising stars who have had an amazing year, and, finally, a lot of brand new music discoveries. The future is bright for the continent!"

This year, the awards received a total of 9,067 entries - the highest number ever recorded by the awards, since its inception. The AFRIMA jury selected a total of 382 nominations across 39 categories, to represent all five regions in Africa, as well as in the diaspora.

"Best Soundtrack in a Movie, Series or Documentary" category is also making a comeback this year.

The public voting portal for the 2022 AFRIMA edition will be live on Sunday, September 25, 2022, and voting closes on December 10, 2022, before the AFRIMA main awards ceremony.

King Davinci Emerges Red Bull's Dance Your Style Champion



King Davinci

Iyke Bede

With sheer stamina, skills, and a fascinating stage presence, David Udoh, better known as King Davinci, emerged national winner of the Red Bull Dance Your Style competition. He will represent Nigeria in South Africa at the world stage finals in December.

Throughout the competition, King Davinci destabilised his opponent with well-calculated moves and a countenance that evinced confidence. He garnered unanimous votes in most stages and secured all the votes in the final duel with Danceotomi.

Celebrating under red and blue neon lights, pyrotechnics, and loud music that sent ripples across the Atlantic, King Davinci gave a peek into his journey to the finals.

"Last year I was part of the spectators who watched the competition and I wanted to be a part of it so badly," he revealed.

"From the day I met all the finalists at the Red Bull camp, it was good vibes. I learnt a thing or two from the finalists and can say it has made me a better person. I am very satisfied with winning. It was an experience."

Anticipating his journey to the world stages, he hinted that his game plan to dominate in South Africa was to remain authentic in all aspects. He vows to claim victory for Nigeria.

The Dance Your Style global campaign which is geared at discovering, promoting, and projecting local dance talents culminated in a finale staged on a barge on the open waters under the Falomo Bridge, Ikoyi, started with 459 hopefuls from Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt.

It had 16 finalists go head to head in four rounds of elimination. Each pair of contestants, at every stage, were allotted a minute each to prove their mettle on two tracks of different genres, with each session lasting a total of four minutes.

Although stalled by the downpour that evening, the show kicked off on a high note, with the face-offs entirely judged by the crowd of close to 200 people. And as expected for the second season, each finalist banked their personality, dance techniques, and fashion sense to sway the crowd in their favour.

To add more colour, the event was graced by Nigeria's dance queen Kaffy, dance and social media influencers, with a special performance from up-and-coming afro-pop sensation Nonzo.

LANCELOT IMASUEN RETURNS WITH 'GBEGE'



Sam Dede in 'Gbege'

Prominent Nigerian filmmaker Lancelot Imasuen is set to release his latest film 'Gbege' in October.

Leaning on his love for cultural preservation, 'Gbege' tells the story of a troubled man, whose father died while he was serving life imprisonment. However, burying his father poses a challenge as the law proves to be no respecter of tradition.

Gbege parades some top Nigerian thespians like Jide Kosoko, Ebele Okaro, Sam Dede, Mercy Aigbe and Ini Edo. Others include Zubby, Sanni Muaizu, Charles Inojie, Harry B, Broda Shaggi, Nosa Rex, Junior Pope, Angela Equeavoen and so on.

Imaseun, who also doubles as a director, has worked in the film industry since 1995 and his films feature unexplored aspects of the African experience including tribalism, witchcraft, crime, poverty, religion, and folk beliefs.

In 2008 a Canadian documentary 'Nollywood Babylon' co-directed by Ben Addelman and Samir Mallal, and produced by AM Pictures and the National Film Board of Canada in association with the Documentary Channel, followed Imasuen while he was shooting his 157th film Bent Arrows.

'Gbege' will be in cinemas from October 7.

BBNAIJA S7: THE BUZZ BREAKS LAST SEASON'S STREAMING RECORD



The Buzz host, Toke Makinwa

Africa streaming platform Showmax has disclosed that its BBNaija exclusive talk show: The Buzz' broke last season's record for the most first-day views on Showmax in Nigeria.

According to the platform, 'BBNaija S7: The Buzz' is the most popular Showmax Original content after The Real Housewives of Lagos. The show is hosted by Toke Makinwa and features well-known personalities and BBNaija enthusiasts as they discuss and share their thoughts on the juiciest moments in the Big Brother house.

Executive Head of Content and West Africa Channels at MultiChoice, Busola Tejumola said: "The reception for this season of 'The Buzz: has been massive. This new record is a testament to that. I believe BBNaija season 7 is going to get more exciting and the fans are in for a good show."

With nine episodes so far, Makinwa has sat down with different media personalities and content creators like Gbemi Olateru-Olagbegi, ChiGul, Tosin Ajibade, Nedu, Leo Dasilva, and Moet Abebe, to name a few.

THISDAY

ART WEEKEND ...For pure art enthusiasts

Documenting a Life of Courage

A commemorative memoir filled with emotional stories, albeit short of tear-jerking moments, formed the biographical story of Fatimo Olusola Braimo. **Yinka Olatunbosun** writes

A situation that causes a close shave with death once or repeatedly requires courage. For some, you may add to the list- faith in God, love and support, perseverance and resilience. That's the summation of the new memoir by Fatimo Olusola Braimo titled 'Fatimo's Ranch and Other Stories.' The author recounts her life experience at 60 in a near-chronological order with some elements of suspense. Like a diary, the memoir captures her colourful childhood and the bleak moment at 30 when she was diagnosed with a disease that her father refused to call by its name.

The young Fatimo had to live with the reality of a chronic illness and the fear that she might never achieve her dreams. Indirectly, she raised one question in the course of the narrative while confronted with her diagnosis: Why do bad things happen to good people? Towards the end of the story, she provides the answer or better still, her life's trajectory provides the answer.

Interestingly, the author did not make the story all about her ailment. Although the diagnosis was a defining moment in her life, she didn't let it define her as she enjoyed a rewarding career within and outside Nigeria and subsequently, built her own dream family. The story is inspiring as well as instructive as Fatimo gives hope to others living with similar challenging circumstances.

There's something about this story that would make a reader turn back the pages to glare at the cover picture all over again. It's almost impossible to relate the happy face on the book cover to the harrowing tale inside of it. The silver lining in her life shone through the narration: access to medical care, financial and emotional support.

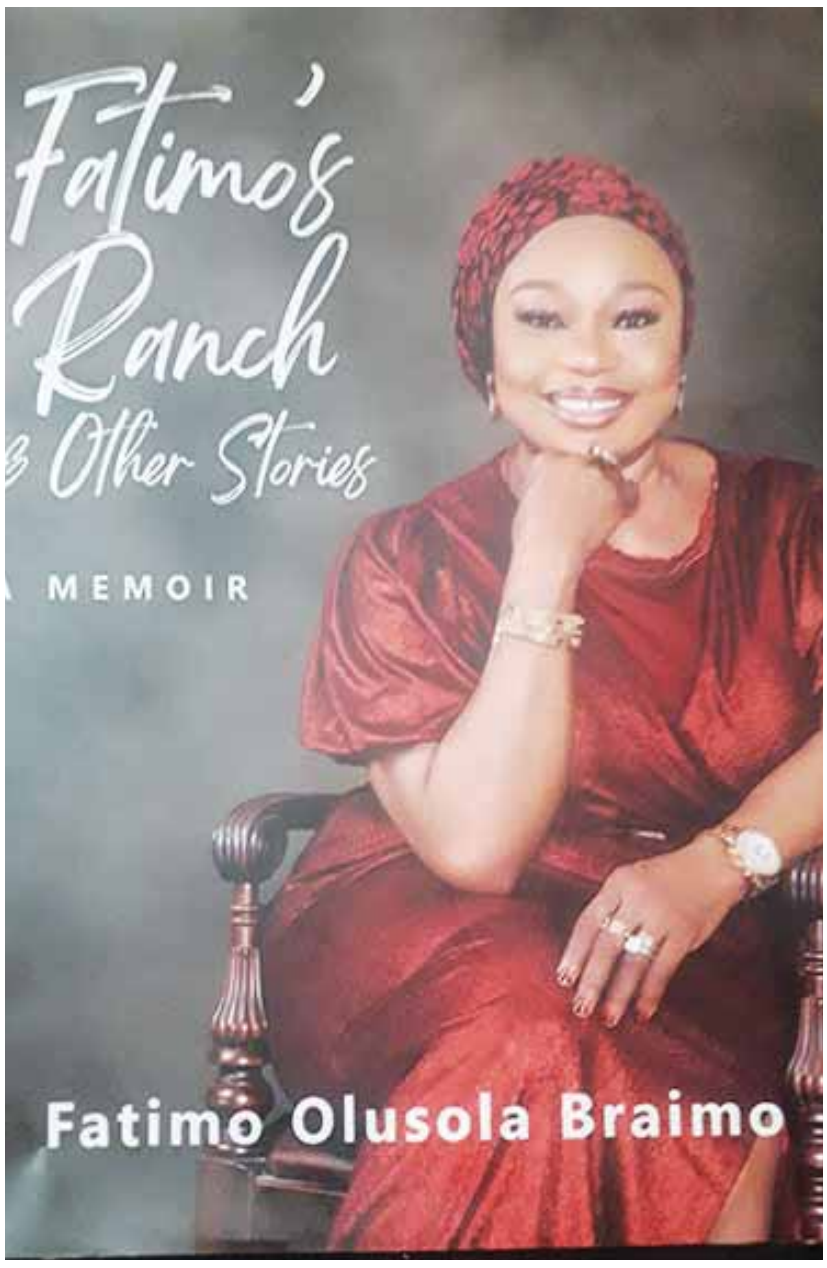
Big font, beautiful pictures and graphics are part of what contributed to making this beautiful memoir an interesting, easy bed-time read or a literary accessory for the coffee table. The story is calming yet gripping.

Vital lessons about lifestyle changes and a positive mentality are taught through the non-fictional narrative. Friends attest to Fatimo's exemplary personality in the torrents of tributes that poured over the later part of the memoir.

One essential substance of her story is her faith. As a devout Muslim, she didn't underestimate the power of her Islamic brotherhood and the support system they represent in her travails. Fatimo's faith was an action word.

She studied, schooled and worked. Her growth as a professional was not undermined by her personal challenges. Indeed, she 'found love in a hopeless place.'

A globe-trotting survivor, she seems unperturbed by material wealth. Her story doesn't glamourise her life, instead it celebrates everyday heroes and a life of service to humanity. The book is published by The Erudio Alphabet Company with designs by PicaPoint Design.



The book cover

Soto Gallery Opens with "Crack"



Tola Akerele

Yinka Olatunbosun

A group exhibition reflecting recent histories and an intersection of individual paths titled "Crack" is set to open on September 24 at the new SOTO Gallery along Omo-Osagie, Ikoyi, Lagos. The inaugural show is perhaps a climax of sorts for iDesign Art as well as a platform to showcase works of emerging and established African artists. The interior design company iDESIGN is reputed as specializing in detailed interior design for commercial and exclusive residential projects to hospitality design and more.

At a recent tour of the breezy art space, the founder, SOTO Gallery and an award-winning interior designer, Tola Akerele explained that the artist and community-centred space was instituted to examine new and improved ways of converging design, art and installation.

"We have created a relaxed and inclusive space that will allow us to establish and grow our iDESIGN Art platform. I am excited by the opportunity to nurture young artists and encourage art appreciation of the remarkable talent we have here in Nigeria," Akerele said.

The grand opening is expected to usher in an assortment of sensual experiences as the Lagos art enthusiasts and visitors feast on the well-curated varied art forms. The opening show features eight exhibiting artists curated by Arin Olowoporoku, a cultural producer and creative director.

While explaining the concept behind the overarching theme for the show, Olowoporoku alluded to nature.

"CRACK refers to the first light of day, the crack of dawn. This exhibition expands on the idea of coming full circle, the end of a time that leads to the start of a new period," she explained.

The show which features works of Chief Muraina Oyelami, Victor Ekwu, Mary Funmilola Onidare, Bertha Onyinyechi Onyekachi, Sor Sen, Laju Sholola, Johnson Uwadimma and Uche Uzorka burrows into their immediate state of being.

The curator further remarked, "We were looking out for artists who seek to inspire not only with technique, but by the themes they explore. We want to share original stories that bring profound impact to the viewer."

The show ends on the 11th of October, 11.

Heralding Iconic Lagos at Didi Museum

Yinka Olatunbosun

The art project christened 'Iconic Lagos' is set to dazzle the city at Didi Museum, from September 17 to 25.

Organised by Eyes of The Lagos Boy, the multi-media exhibition is dedicated to Africa's most populous city in celebration of everyday life in Lagos, and the vibe of the city.

Eyes of a Lagos Boy documents history from the African perspective towards a balanced representation. Its Founder, Bolaji Alonge explains, "Defining our own image is one way of taking charge of our future. ICONIC LAGOS presents an alternative narrative that will remain tattooed on the viewers' retina. Celebrating the beauty around us in spite of everyday challenges and the current global instability is not a luxury, it is a necessity."

ICONIC LAGOS consists of three elements: photography by Bolaji Alonge, mixed media images by Jason Ogbazi/Alonge and artworks by other artists – expressing their own vision of Iconic Lagos.

The show kicks off with a VIP opening on September 17, with performance by wannixhandi and jeanshiki couture. The next day, there will be a masterclass on visual Storytelling with the participation of experienced photographers while on September 24, a workshop for young artists and art lovers will be staged for children between age 5 and 15.

11 Artists Interrogate Humanity at 'The Crossroads'

Yinka Olatunbosun

Adeniyi Adewole Wasiu, a contemporary figurative sculptor and studio artist, enjoys modeling with clay and fiberglass casting, and also accentuates his subjects with a lavish use of colour. Sometimes, he'd start his day with introspection, and later, generally reflect on life's complexities and contradictions.

"I refer to my works as hybrid sculptures, where I have animal heads juxtaposed on human bodies," he began during a preview of his works alongside ten other artists at the Wheatbaker Hotel, Ikoyi, Lagos.

He explores themes of human and animal characterisation as the window to the subject matters of humanity.

The on-group show tagged "The Crossroads" exhibition which runs until October 7, at The Wheatbaker Hotel has unleashed the creative energy of 11 young talents. Curated by Majid Biggar of SMO Contemporary Art, The Crossroads is made up of thirty-three paintings, sculptures, photographs and mixed-media works by Adeniyi Adewole, Ashiata Shaibu, The Creatus, Boluwatife Lawal, Christopher Samuel Idowu, Kevwe Eru, David Ibukun Oniyide, Francis Nwajiaku Uche, Odia Odibo, Ikenna Obinka and Victor Sonoiki.

The works delve into the mindscapes of young talent as they grapple with critical decisions in the midst of tense socio-economic global and local realities which have a pivotal impact on their futures.

Ashiata Shaibu and Adeniyi Adewole interrogate the subject of freedom highlighting coming-of-age struggles with self-expression and self-actualization. The works by Kevwe Eru, David Ibukun Oniyide, and Victor Sonoiki delve into the global mental health crisis facing youth on an individual and communal level.

Boluwatife Lawal, Samuel Idowu, Francis Nwajiaku Uche and Ikenna Obinka explore culture, identity and human connections by analyzing how history and politics shape our daily experience, and the conflicts and contradictions resulting from these realities.

The pensive gazes on Christopher Samuel Idowu and Odia Odibo's subjects point at uncertainty and introspection that are associated with life changing decisions. Idowu's aged palette highlights the importance of each moment, while Odia's lush white beards give his subjects a sense of quiet maturity.

Boluwatife Lawal, Francis Nwajiaku Uche and Ikenna Obinka use their art to explore culture, identity and human connections by analyzing how history and politics shape our daily experience, and the conflicts and contradictions resulting from these realities. Lawal uses swirls of vibrant colour to represent the synergy and cooperation between two beings, while Obinka's portraits stare back defiantly in the face of societal oppression.

Nwajiaku Uche fuses traditional Igbo and Catholic iconography to examine the parallels between historical and modern realities.

Odibo Odiabhehor Joseph, a protégée of George Edozie visualises some human challenges and recreates them on canvas while the Edo State-born, Kevwe Eru chose to explore her interest in the creative arts with photography as her first medium of expression, but over the years, she has fused it with digital art and other media inspired by the sciences, spirituality, nature and the human form.

POLSCOPE

with Eddy Odivwri
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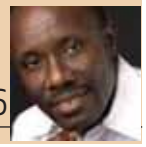


Crude Oil Theft: The Shame of a Country

If there was one more needed example of the incompetence and lack of capacity of the Buhari-led administration, it will be the unbridled pillaging of crude oil in Nigeria.

We all do not need to be economists to understand how our economy has been terribly mismanaged, as if the persons in charge of handling the economy are roadside carpenters.

Otherwise, how can it be explained that in the face of the oil boom for all oil-producing nations, occasioned by the Russian-Ukraine war, Nigeria, our beloved country, is wallowing in doom. While the rest of the oil-producing world is celebrating their boom, we are gnashing our teeth in doom, frantically searching for where to borrow money from to service our faithfully increasing debt profile.

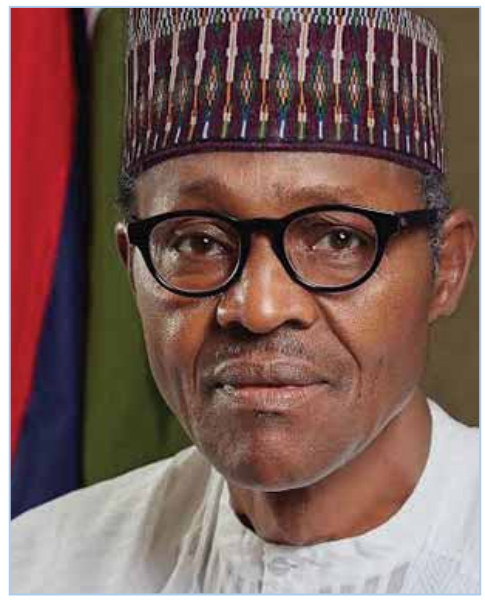
It is bad enough that we have refused to take advantage of the boom to swell our treasury, yet it is doubly worse that we are now cadging for funds from anywhere and everywhere to fund our inexplicable rising debt. Now I understand why some persons were fanatically opposed to President Mohammdu Buhari's aspiration to rule this country in 2015. Their opposition was strictly on the ground that the entirety of the economics and business sense of Buhari did not go beyond his 400 or so cows which he quoted as his asset, year-in, year-out. Thus, dealing with the meganomics of the huge wealth in the black gold clearly appear too complex and humongous for Mr President. The result is that those who work with and around him, capitalize in this deep gap to ruin-run the oil industry. It is doubly ironic that it is the same Mr President who is clearly deficient in the oil economy is the substantive Petroleum minister, assisted by no-better Minister of State for Petroleum, Mr Timipre Sylva, a graduate of Linguistics. The result is that today, while other oil-producing nations are throwing "petrol-party" and expanding their vault, Nigeria is using fat lens to look for institutions that can lend us money to settle our so-called petroleum subsidy. A crying shame!

The Economist, earlier in the week, lamented how Nigeria is missing out from the oil boom in the world. On all sides, our story is that of regret and lamentation. Not only are we not able to meet up with the OPEC production quota of 1.8 million bpd because of massive theft of our crude, the 700 million barrels we manage to export is not enough to pay for the ever-increasing litres of petrol we import to service local consumption.

The Buhari-led government refused to remove the so-called subsidy in the name of protecting the poor, whereas, the real beneficiaries of the subsidy gesture are members of the nefarious



Sylva



Buhari

cabal running the country. What is worse, over 30 percent of the imported petroleum products get smuggled out of the country to neighbouring countries like Niger, Chad, Benin Republic etc. Who are those behind the smuggling? Certainly not the poor President Buhari claims to be protecting.

It is bad enough that almost eight years after, none of the four refineries in the country is up and running, as to save us from the senseless importation of refined petroleum products. Yet, it is doubly annoying to know that huge sums in foreign currency are allocated every year for the notorious Turn-Around-Maintenance (TAM) of the sterile refineries, and the staff of those refineries are not only paid regularly, they indeed receive the best pay package in the country. So, what are they being paid for when the refineries, either by design or fortuitous occurrence, are never functional? If the NNPC was a one-man owned company, would it ever be this recklessly operated?

Even little Angola has gained so much from the oil boom that her own currency has not only been strengthened, it is now more valued than even the American dollar. But in Nigeria, the Naira keeps losing value on a daily basis.

Saudi Arabia , one of the leading producers of oil, who has maximally gained from the oil boom is already considering building a fresh new city from their gains during the oil boom.

What kind of economics is Buhari and his managers practicing?

How can we be so blessed, yet so cursed?

Perhaps the weirdest move made, is the helpless surrender of the oil pipelines to a single individual, Government Ekpemupolo, alias Tompolo, to secure the pipelines in the creeks and protect same from being vandalized by the oil thieves, at the cost of… wait for it…. N4 billion every month! That means that in a year, Tompolo will gross-in N48 billion into his treasury for protecting the nation's pipelines, whereas, we have tons and tons of Naval, military and NSCDC officers and personnel in the creeks who are supposed to be performing the same functions now contracted to Tompolo.

What that simply says is that the said single individual (who was previously indicted by the same government for oil bunkering and related violence) has more efficient and reliable capacity than all the security apparatchik of the nation put together.

Didn't the Holy Book say, For where your treasure is, there will your thoughts be also? How can Buhari's thoughts not be on the nation's oil kingdom, since therein is our wealth? If the security cannot protect those in the North East and North west, against terrorists (although the military are doing much better now) can it also not protect the nation's wealth base in the Niger Delta?

But even that (Tompolo) folly is not the end of the story. Already, the kicks against this move is coming from all directions. Former Niger Delta warlord, Asari Dokubo has vowed to resist Tompolo and his surveillance contract as he (Dokubo) has put together his own Security Team, as Tompolo cannot "be eating alone". Mrs Rita Lori, a vocal Niger Delta matriarch has condemned the move as Tompolo cannot exercise such a boundless franchise to protect oil pipelines everywhere in the Niger Delta.

But the NNPC and the Petroleum ministry have argued, albeit in a defeatist mode, that it is better to lose N4 billion and block the theft so that Nigeria can meet up her OPEC quota, than not pay the surveillance fee and still not be able to export more than 700 million bpd.

What they seem to gloss over is tackling those behind the crude oil theft. Three weeks ago, the presidency announced that it knows and will release the names of persons behind the oil theft. I am surprised that such a list can be hoarded from the public whilst the leadership says it wants to fight the thieves. What stops them from naming and shaming those involved? The delay could be interpreted to mean that those stealing the crude are the same persons that are in government or at best they work hand-in-hand.

Already, the NNPC which claimed that about 40,000 barrels of crude are stolen every day, has commissioned an investigation that is bound to reveal even more bizarre findings. No doubt, there is a network of collaboration between security agencies (navy, police, army etc.) and the local and international cartel stealing this crude from Nigeria. It is no news that security personnel lobby to be posted to the creeks, even if it is for just three months, for the obvious rougish gains they are bound to make supervising the pillaging of our commonwealth.

Through the use of technology, the NNPC which set up a Command centre six months ago, can now, at a glance, have a clear view of all the activities that go on in the oil and gas infrastructure, where not less than 35 incidents are recorded daily, from the shallow waters, swamps to the deep sea goes on in the creeks. They have been able to identify the weak points of compromise, theft etc. but have given the impression that when such intelligence is shared with the Navy, nothing gets done. Many people however believe that the NNPC top brass know a thing or two about the network of thieves that have been stealing our crude. But the best our petroleum ministers can do is to surrender the creek to a single fellow. What a shame!

We cannot be so endowed, yet so impoverished. The conflict between our endowment and our abject lack is too sharp to be explained away or dismissed by those who claim they are Buharists!

Mamu: When an Intercessor Becomes a Suspect

I had always wondered the wisdom behind the free operations of Sheikh Abubakar Gumi and his so-called media adviser, Tukur Mamu. I just did not understand why such persons with deep knowledge and information on the modus operandi of the terrorists were neither interrogated nor courted as a means of breaking into the insecurity enigma in the country.

In my column, last July 29, titled The Nigerian Issues that Bother Me (1), I had written about the fog behind the operations and services of Sheikh Gumi and his Man Friday, Tukur Mamu, thus:

A certain Sheikh Abubakar Gumi, has been the go-between for the bandits. He knows where they are. He negotiates with them. He brings feedback from them. Yet, the Nigerian government is not able to use the Gumi to crack into the hideout of these criminals. I barely can understand this. How come Gumi is able to reach the bandits all the time, but no security operative is able to use Gumi to get to the bandits? What else is called accessory to crime? Few days ago, Gumi's media aide, Tukur Mamu was on television, giving finite details of the operational modus of the bandits, while ruling out the use of military force to free the train passengers held captive.

Beside the fog around why Gumi is spared, I also worry about how the bandits are able to communicate with the families of the captives regularly, yet the Nigerian government is not able to deploy technology offered by the NIN facility to track and trace the location of the bandits. It is all so befuddling.

With the September 6 eventual arrest of Tukur Mamu, in far away Cairo, Egypt, and the nuggets of information so far released by the Department of State Security (DSS), it is clear that there is more to the "volunteering service" being offered



Manu



Gumi

by the duo of Gumi and Mamu.

As I wondered last July 29, it is worrisome that a certain band of terrorists causing the nation sleepless nights and huge resources in foreign currencies is known to Gumi and Mamu.

They know where they are, even in the thick forest of deciduous trees. The bandits listen to them. They have their telephone numbers. They understand their modus operandi. The duo practically act as the mouth piece of the bandits, conveying their messages to the rest of Nigerians, especially the federal government and the families of kidnap victims. They negotiate the ransom to be paid to secure the release of the victims. Sometimes, they even receive the ransom themselves and take same to the bandits ensconced in the bush and in turn secure the release of those who have paid. Such a transactional glee!

Does one need to be a security expert to know that there is a fishy connect between the bandits and the duo of Gumi and Mamu? That the latter have been left unquestioned all the while beats my imagination.

Now I can better understand why at the turn of every negotiation, he always forbade the use of military operations to free the hostages. Now I understand why he was always persuading the federal government and the families of kidnapped victims to meet the demands of the bandits. Now I understand why he appeared so messianic. More revelations are awaited.

It is very interesting that at the search of Mamu's home in Kaduna, many incriminating items like army/Navy uniforms, huge sums of money, even in foreign currencies… about N2 billion, financial instruments (like P.O.S machines etc.) were found in his house.

Hmmmm, he surely has plenty explanations to do. Already, he has made informed statements including naming some persons behind the terrorism menace in the country.

It is curious that a man who claims to be the publisher of little-known Desert Herald could be warehousing such a huge sum in his house. Keeping such sum from the bank is even more curious, as it could trigger a system inquisition if it is lodged in the bank.

That there are military uniforms and other accoutrements are quite telling.

Also interesting is that the DSS has been granted the permission to keep him for sixty more days (in the first instance) to further its investigation.

But hey, Mamu has a boss. He is Sheikh Gumi. Why is he not in the DSS net too? Gumi, who had always sold the impression of being specially gifted in the issue of Islamic terrorism had actually called on the DSS to either charge Mamu to court or release him with apology.

Yet again, I dare say that if Mamu's hands are being found to be soiled, Gumi's fingers cannot be so clean. He should be nabbed!

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF ON-GRID ELECTRICITY GENERATION LICENCE PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 70 (2) & 72 OF THE ELECTRIC POWER SECTOR REFORM ACT

Gbarain Generation Company Limited whose office is situated at Plot 1490, Samuel Ademulegun Street, Central Business District, Abuja hereby gives notice that it has made an application to the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission whose principal office is situated at No. 1387 Cadastral Zone A00 CBD, Abuja, for the renewal of 225MW on-grid electricity licence (NERC/LC/093) located at Gbarain, Bayelsa.

Notice is hereby given that persons who have objections to the renewal of the licence should send their written comments clearly articulating the basis for any objection, in accordance with the provisions of NERC Application for Licences Regulations 2010 and Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (Business Rules of the Commission) Regulations 2006 no later than 21 days of this publication to:

Chairman
Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission
Plot No 1387 Cadastral Zone A00
Central Business District
Abuja

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF ON-GRID ELECTRICITY GENERATION LICENCE PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 70 (2) & 72 OF THE ELECTRIC POWER SECTOR REFORM ACT

Calabar Generation Company Limited whose office is situated at Plot 1490, Samuel Ademulegun Street, Central Business District, Abuja hereby gives notice that it has made an application to the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission whose principal office is situated at No. 1387 Cadastral Zone A00 CBD, Abuja, for the renewal of 561MW on-grid electricity licence (NERC/LC/090) located at Odukpani, Calabar, Cross Rivers State.

Notice is hereby given that persons who have objections to the renewal of the licence should send their written comments clearly articulating the basis for any objection, in accordance with the provisions of NERC Application for Licences Regulations 2010 and Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (Business Rules of the Commission) Regulations 2006 no later than 21 days of this publication to:

Chairman
Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission
Plot No 1387 Cadastral Zone A00
Central Business District
Abuja

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF ON-GRID ELECTRICITY GENERATION LICENCE PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 70 (2) & 72 OF THE ELECTRIC POWER SECTOR REFORM ACT

Geregu Generation Company Limited whose office is situated at Plot 1490, Samuel Ademulegun Street, Central Business District, Abuja hereby gives notice that it has made an application to the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission whose principal office is situated at No. 1387 Cadastral Zone A00 CBD, Abuja, for the renewal of 434MW on-grid electricity licence (NERC/LC/094) located at Geregu, Kogi State.

Notice is hereby given that persons who have objections to the renewal of the licence should send their written comments clearly articulating the basis for any objection, in accordance with the provisions of NERC Application for Licences Regulations 2010 and Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (Business Rules of the Commission) Regulations 2006 no later than 21 days of this publication to:

Chairman
Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission
Plot No 1387 Cadastral Zone A00
Central Business District
Abuja

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF ON-GRID ELECTRICITY GENERATION LICENCE PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 70 (2) & 72 OF THE ELECTRIC POWER SECTOR REFORM ACT

Egbema Generation Company Limited whose office is situated at Plot 1490, Samuel Ademulegun Street, Central Business District, Abuja hereby gives notice that it has made an application to the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission whose principal office is situated at No. 1387 Cadastral Zone A00 CBD, Abuja, for the renewal of 338MW on-grid electricity licence (NERC/LC/092) located at Egbema, Imo State.

Notice is hereby given that persons who have objections to the renewal of the licence should send their written comments clearly articulating the basis for any objection, in accordance with the provisions of NERC Application for Licences Regulations 2010 and Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (Business Rules of the Commission) Regulations 2006 no later than 21 days of this publication to:

Chairman
Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission
Plot No 1387 Cadastral Zone A00
Central Business District
Abuja

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF ON-GRID ELECTRICITY GENERATION LICENCE PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 70 (2) & 72 OF THE ELECTRIC POWER SECTOR REFORM ACT

Omoku Generation Company Limited whose office is situated at Plot 1490, Samuel Ademulegun Street, Central Business District, Abuja hereby gives notice that it has made an application to the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission whose principal office is situated at No. 1387 Cadastral Zone A00 CBD, Abuja, for the renewal of 250MW on-grid electricity licence (NERC/LC/091) located at Omoku, Rivers State.

Notice is hereby given that persons who have objections to the renewal of the licence should send their written comments clearly articulating the basis for any objection, in accordance with the provisions of NERC Application for Licences Regulations 2010 and Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (Business Rules of the Commission) Regulations 2006 no later than 21 days of this publication to:

Chairman
Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission
Plot No 1387 Cadastral Zone A00
Central Business District
Abuja

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF ON-GRID ELECTRICITY GENERATION LICENCE PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 70 (2) & 72 OF THE ELECTRIC POWER SECTOR REFORM ACT

Omotosho Generation Company Limited whose office is situated at Plot 1490, Samuel Ademulegun Street, Central Business District, Abuja hereby gives notice that it has made an application to the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission whose principal office is situated at No. 1387 Cadastral Zone A00 CBD, Abuja, for the renewal of 500MW on-grid electricity licence (NERC/LC/095) located at Omotosho, Ondo State.

Notice is hereby given that persons who have objections to the renewal of the licence should send their written comments clearly articulating the basis for any objection, in accordance with the provisions of NERC Application for Licences Regulations 2010 and Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (Business Rules of the Commission) Regulations 2006 no later than 21 days of this publication to:

Chairman
Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission
Plot No 1387 Cadastral Zone A00
Central Business District
Abuja

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF ON-GRID ELECTRICITY GENERATION LICENCE PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 70 (2) & 72 OF THE ELECTRIC POWER SECTOR REFORM ACT

Benin Generation Company Limited whose office is situated at Plot 1490, Samuel Ademulegun Street, Central Business District, Abuja hereby gives notice that it has made an application to the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission whose principal office is situated at No. 1387 Cadastral Zone A00 CBD, Abuja, for the renewal of 450MW on-grid electricity licence (NERC/LC/096) located at Ihovbor, Benin, Edo State.

Notice is hereby given that persons who have objections to the renewal of the licence should send their written comments clearly articulating the basis for any objection, in accordance with the provisions of NERC Application for Licences Regulations 2010 and Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (Business Rules of the Commission) Regulations 2006 no later than 21 days of this publication to:

Chairman
Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission
Plot No 1387 Cadastral Zone A00
Central Business District
Abuja

IMAGES

Photo Editor Abiodun Ajala
Email abiodun.ajala@thisdaylive.com



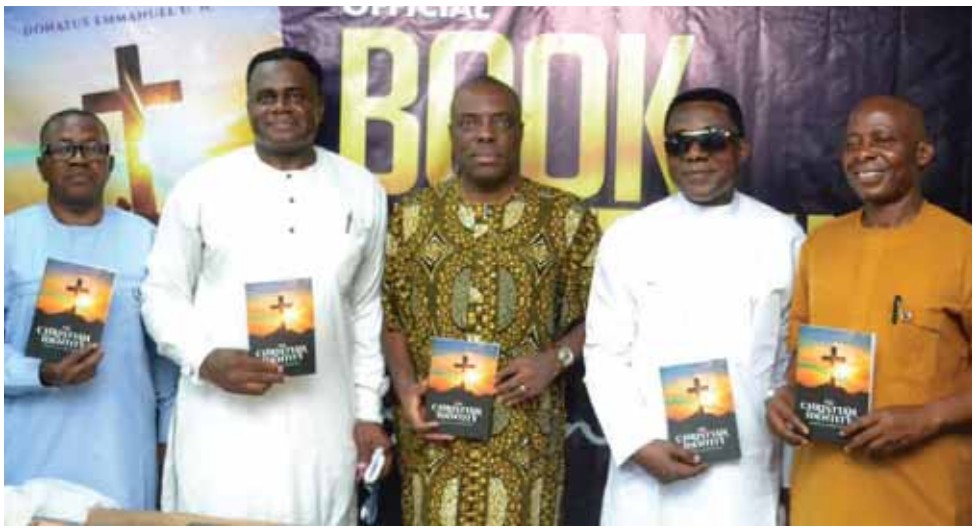
L-R: Journalist, Kennedy Mbele; Medical Director, S.E Medical Clinics, Lagos, Dr. Stanley Dikedi; Nigeria Country Head, Max Group of Hospitals, Saravanan Arimuthu, Dr. Adeleye Olufunke; and Max Group of Hospital Assistant Marketing/Sales Manager in Nigeria, Oluseyi Emmanuel, at the unveiling of Liver Transplant by Max Group of Hospitals held at Hotel Continental, Lagos…recently



L-R: President, Chartered Institute of Stockbrokers (CIS), Mr. Oluwole Adeosun; representative of Edo State Governor, Mr. Anthony Okungbowa; Director-General Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Mr. Lamido Yuguda; and second Vice President of CIS, Mrs. Fiona Ahimie, during the 26th Stockbrokers Conference in Benin-city, Edo State…recently



L-R: Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, North East Development Commission (NEDC), Mohammed Goni Alkali; Executive Director, Humanitarian Affairs, NEDC, Musa Umar Yashi; Executive Director, Administration and Finance, NEDC, Mohammad Jawa Gashua; and Executive Director, Operation, NEDC, Maiwada Omar Mohammed, during the Presidential Communication Team weekly briefing on the achievement of the commission held at the Presidential Villa in Abuja…recently PHOTO: GODWIN OMOIGUI



L-R; Book Reviewer, Dr. Pat Mbatojuo; Chairman, Book Unveiling Committee, Dr. Uchenna Ezeagwu; Chief Launcher, Elder David Edoche; author of the book, Prof. Donatus Nzei; and legal practitioner, Mr. Ike Ugwoke, at the unveiling of a book titled: 'The Christian Identity', and the author's professorship thanksgiving ceremony in Lagos...recently



L-R: Vice Chairman, Mamuda Group, Mr. Nemr Hammoud; Honorary Consul of France in Kano, Mr. Stephan Malaussene; Honorary Consul of Lebanon in Kano, Mr. Khalil Muselmani; and Managing Director, Mamuda Group, Mr. Nasser Hammoud, during Pop Cola's first year anniversary in Kano...recently



L-R: Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, presenting Oath of Office to newly appointed Chairman, The Standing Tribunal of Inquiry into Chieftaincy Matters in Lagos State, Justice Owolabi Dabiri (rtd), during the swearing-in of members of the tribunal, at the Lagos House, Alausa, Ikeja…recently



Vice President Yemi Osinbajo; Sokoto State Governor, Aminu Tambuwal; Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Boss Mustapha; Chief of Staff to the president (COS), Prof. Ibrahim Gambari; Minister of Finance, Dr. Zainab Ahmed; and CEA, Doyin Salami, at the Presidential Committee to Review Nigeria's National Economic Situation, in Abuja, presided by President Muhammadu Buhari…recently PHOTO: TOLANI ALLI

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 14-Sept-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	190.02	191.17	13.84%
Afrinvest Plutus Fund	100.00	100.00	7.34%
Nigeria International Debt Fund	313.16	313.16	9.47%
Afrinvest Dollar Fund	105.62	106.77	7.05%
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	7.40%
Anchoria Equity Fund	138.53	140.08	-0.52%
Anchoria Fixed Income Fund	1.17	1.17	2.70%
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	21.18	21.82	4.43%
ARM Discovery Balanced Fund	510.78	526.18	13.21%
ARM Ethical Fund	42.58	43.86	9.30%
ARM Eurobond Fund ($)	1.09	1.09	0.29%
ARM Fixed Income Fund	1.06	1.06	4.30%
ARM Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	10.11%
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	92.02	92.02	-4.89%
AVA GAM Fixed Income Dollar Naira	1,082.34	1,082.34	8.23%
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	2.10	2.10	3.03%
Capital Express Balanced Fund(Formerly: Union Trustees Mixed Fund)	2.32	2.37	9.71%
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	N/A	N/A	N/A
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	N/A	N/A	N/A
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	12.22%
Paramount Equity Fund	18.8	18.47	9.86%
Women's Investment Fund	148.05	146.28	3.24%
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	9.66%
Cordros Milestone Fund	130.97	131.89	5.27%
Cordros Dollar Fund ($)	111.17	111.17	5.02%
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	9.49%
EDC Nigeria Money Market Fund Class B	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	10.38%
EDC Nigeria Fixed Income Fund	1,119.05	1,139.07	0.69%
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	9.76%
Emerging Africa Bond Fund	1.04	1.04	8.69%
Emerging Africa Balanced Diversity Fund	1.04	1.04	4.01%
Emerging Africa Eurobond Fund	103.36	103.36	2.15%
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	1502.68	1502.68	11.47%
FBN Balanced Fund	193.94	195.26	10.66%
FBN Halal Fund	123.44	123.44	10.72%
FBN Money Market Fund	100.00	100.00	9.14%
FBN Dollar Fund (Retail)	125.87	125.87	6.02%
FBN Nigeria Smart Beta Equity Fund	158.90	161.03	5.85%
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	N/A	N/A	N/A
Coral Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Coral Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
FSDH Dollar Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
GUARANTY TRUST FUND MANAGERS LIMITED			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	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vantage Balanced Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vantage Guaranteed Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kedari Investment Fund (KIF)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vantage Equity Income Fund (VEIF) - June Year End	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vantage Dollar Fund (VDF) - June Year End	N/A	N/A	N/A
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	1.61	1.64	13.57%
Lotus Halal Fixed Income Fund	1,169.50	1,169.50	6.50%
MERISTEM WEALTH MANAGEMENT LTD			info@meristemwealth.com
Web: www.meristemwealth.com/funds/; Tel: +2348028496012			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Meristem Equity Market Fund	12.07	12.15	10.81%
Meristem Money Market Fund	10.00	10.00	10.79%
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)	102.55	102.55	9.68%
Norrenberger Money Market Fund (NMMF)	100.00	100.00	11.37%
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	N/A	N/A	N/A
PACAM Fixed Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
PACAM Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
PACAM Equity Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
PACAM EuroBond Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
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	125.10	127.65	0.05%
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	1.07	1.07	10.05%
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	3,538.53	3,572.36	4.46%
Stanbic IBTC Bond Fund	241.73	241.73	2.61%
Stanbic IBTC Ethical Fund	1.39	1.41	11.11%
Stanbic IBTC Guaranteed Investment Fund	326.04	326.05	4.12%
Stanbic IBTC Iman Fund	258.15	261.90	10.66%
Stanbic IBTC Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	10.31%
Stanbic IBTC Nigerian Equity Fund	11,726.16	11,884.89	7.47%
Stanbic IBTC Dollar Fund (USD)	1.34	1.34	3.65%
Stanbic IBTC Shariah Fixed Income Fund	119.70	119.70	2.39%
Stanbic IBTC Enhanced Short-Term Fixed Income Fund	112.23	112.23	5.50%
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	0.95	0.97	7.45%
United Capital Balanced Fund	1.34	1.36	2.76%
United Capital Wealth for Women Fund	1.12	1.14	8.90%
United Capital Sukuk Fund	1.08	1.08	5.03%
United Capital Fixed Income Fund	1.91	1.91	4.41%
United Capital Eurobond Fund	123.29	123.29	4.05%
United Capital Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	11.23%
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	13.59	13.71	3.04%
Zenith ESG Impact Fund	15.58	15.73	6.55%
Zenith Income Fund	23.12	23.12	5.30%
Zenith Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	9.73%
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	3.75	3.85	-6.49%
Vetiva Consumer Goods Exchange Traded Fund	6.03	6.13	3.10%
Vetiva Griffin 30 Exchange Traded Fund	17.92	18.12	1.35%
Vetiva Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	9.24%
Vetiva Industrial Goods Exchange Traded Fund	17.82	18.02	-10.79%
Vetiva S&P Nigeria Sovereign Bond Exchange Traded Fund	139.33	141.33	-11.61%

REITS

Fund Name	NAV Per Share	Yield / T-Rtn
SFS REIT	119.15	5.15%
Union Homes REIT	52.07	2.37%

EXCHANGE TRADED FUNDS

Fund Name	Bid Price	Offer Price	Yield / T-Rtn
Lotus Halal Equity Exchange Traded Fund	14.17	14.27	1.32%
SIAML Pension ETF 40	126.54	129.74	-0.45%
Stanbic IBTC ETF 30 Fund	98.88	101.05	-0.88%
MERGROWTH ETF	16.40	16.50	-3.65%
MERVALUE ETF	17.10	17.20	14.54%

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.

FOREIGN DESK

COMPILED BY BAYO AKINLOYE

Ukraine Requests More Australian Weapons as Forces Retake Territory

Ukraine has called for more artillery and ammunition from Australia after a counter-offensive in the nation's east saw Kyiv retake a key town from Russian control.

Military experts have said Ukraine needs better artillery supplies and ammunition to hold on to key positions.

Ukrainian authorities have said their forces have made important gains recently in pushing back Russian troops, retaking more than 3,000 square kilometres of territory.

Weapons supplied by other countries have been instrumental, observers say. Officials in Kyiv have thanked Australia for its so-called Bushmaster armoured personnel vehicles. They have an innovative 'V-shaped floor designed to spread the impact of explosive devices more effectively than a traditional flat floor.

Ukraine wants Australia to supply up to 12 howitzers after Canberra provided six lightweight, towed howitzers in April.

Australia's deputy prime minister Richard Marles, also the defence minister, has described Ukraine's fight against Russia's invasion as "nothing less than inspiring."

He told the Australian Broadcasting Corp. that his government would continue to support Ukraine.



Queen Elizabeth's Coffin Flown to London for Final Commemorations

A C-17 military aircraft carrying the coffin of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II left Edinburgh, Scotland, and travelled to London as mourners bid a final farewell to the monarch who reigned for 70 years.

Elizabeth's only daughter, Princess Anne, was on hand Tuesday in Edinburgh as pallbearers from the Queen's Color Squadron of the Royal Air Force carried the coffin onto the aircraft. Princess Anne was accompanying the coffin on the flight back to London.

Earlier in the day, members of the public paid their respects to Elizabeth at St. Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh, with many waiting overnight for a final opportunity to file past her coffin before it was flown to London.

The queen's body will first be taken to Buckingham Palace, where crowds have lined the streets, waiting for an opportunity to witness history in the making. The coffin will then be transferred in a public procession led by her son, King Charles III, to the 11th-century Westminster Hall, where she will lie in state for four days. The hall will be open 23 hours a day for visitors and be guarded by soldiers from the royal household.

Tens of thousands of people are expected to travel to Westminster for the occasion.

Ukraine War Overshadows SCO Summit in Uzbekistan

Excitement is building in Uzbekistan ahead of this week's Shanghai Cooperation Organization meeting, where Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping will be the most prominent among more than a dozen world leaders visiting the Central Asian nation.

"The world is coming to Samarkand" has been the theme of the preparations for the annual meeting, to be hosted by the group's current chairman, Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

"All SCO member states are our closest neighbours, friends and strategic partners," he said in a prepared statement ahead of the summit.

Mirziyoyev believes that Samarkand, the medieval capital of the empire of Uzbekistan's national hero Amir Temur will be a dramatic backdrop for the gathering of leaders from eight SCO members and three observer states alongside several dialogue partner countries.

Putin and Xi, who are expected to meet one-on-one on the sidelines of the two-day event, will be joined by leaders from India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan and Tajikistan.

Armenia, Azerbaijan Clash Along Border

Fresh clashes broke out Tuesday between Armenia and Azerbaijan, with each side reporting casualties and blaming the other for the violence.

Armenia said Azerbaijani forces attacked several points near the border, killing 49 Armenian soldiers.

Azerbaijan said Armenian forces fired on its positions, leaving an unspecified number of casualties.

The two countries have had a decades-long conflict involving the Nagorno-Karabakh region inside Azerbaijan but mainly populated by ethnic Armenians.

A six-week war in 2020 killed more than 6,600 people and saw Azerbaijan reclaim territory in and around the region.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called on the two sides to "end any military hostilities immediately," saying in a statement that there is no military solution to the conflict.

Russia's Foreign Ministry also urged Armenia and Azerbaijan to resolve the conflict through political and diplomatic means.

Kenya Swears in President Ruto After Heated Elections

Kenya swore in its new president, William Ruto, on Tuesday, following a tightly contested election. Numerous African leaders attended the ceremony for Ruto, but his chief election rival, Raila Odinga, stayed away. As Kenya's fifth president, Ruto faces a struggling economy, massive debt, and a record drought that has devastated northern parts of the country.

In an elaborate ceremony, William Ruto took the oath to be Kenya's fifth president at Moi International Sports Center in Nairobi.

Tens of thousands of Kenyans, a host of African leaders, representatives from foreign governments and ambassadors witnessed the inauguration.

Ruto takes the reins of power from former boss Uhuru Kenyatta, for whom he served as deputy president for the past 10 years.

The incoming president likened his win to that of the country gaining independence from colonizers.

"Our special gratitude also goes to millions of Kenyans in the hustler movement for tirelessly mobilizing for the campaign and executing a historic revolutionary feat perhaps as great as the daring exploits of our legendary freedom fighters," he said.

After years of neglect, the incoming government campaigned on what it called a "hustler" platform to empower the poor.

Lithuania Strengthens Ties with Taiwan Amid China Threats

Lithuania's new representative office in Taiwan has begun operations, although it has yet to physically open its doors due to delays, according to media reports.

Lithuania's representative to Taiwan had only recently finished quarantine procedures and was still preparing the new trade office, local media reported on Tuesday. A similar report by Reuters cited a Taiwanese diplomat saying the new office was still being "fitted out."

Taiwanese media earlier reported that the new office would open on September 12, but the date came and went without an official announcement. Both Lithuania's and Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs declined to specify a date when the office would formally open its doors following inquiries from VOA.

The Baltic state said last year it would open the office to cement its growing ties with Taiwan even as both sides risk attracting the ire of China.

Lithuania, a nation of around 2.7 million, has emerged as one of Taiwan's most unlikely yet outspoken allies in Europe as it pursues a "values-first" foreign policy.

DRC Welcomes Uganda War Reparations Payment

Uganda has made its first war reparations payment to the Democratic Republic of Congo for losses its troops caused during wars and occupations in the 1990s. Uganda paid Kinshasa $65 million, the first of five annual payments ordered in February by the International Court of Justice. Uganda's payment came as a surprise after years of proceedings and talks with the DRC.

Uganda's payment to the Democratic Republic of Congo follows a ruling by the International Court of Justice early this year. The court ordered Uganda to pay $325 million to the DRC as reparations for an invasion that lasted from 1998 to 2003.

Under the order, Uganda is to pay $65 million in September of each year from 2022 through 2026.

Uganda Ministry of Finance spokesperson Apollo Mughinda tells VOA that the first payment is a gesture by Uganda that it is willing to pay the amount set by the court.

"Uganda has paid the first instalment as per the requirement. We paid 65 million dollars. And you can see the goodwill," Mughinda said. "If something happens along the way because we are brothers, we are all members of the East African community, well, it can be negotiated further."

US Inflation Rate Eased in August, but Remains High

US consumer price increases eased in August compared to a year ago, the government said Tuesday, but the drop was modest and may not be noticed much by financially squeezed American households.

The inflation rate was up at an annualized 8.3 per cent rate in August, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. The figure was down from the 8.5 per cent mark recorded in July and the 9.1 per cent inflation rate in June, which was the biggest increase in four decades.

Even as US motorists have gladly watched gasoline prices fall sharply in recent weeks — down 10.6 per cent from their peak — costs for food and apartment rentals have continued to increase.

Overall, as a result, the government said that consumer prices were up one-tenth of a per cent in August compared to July.

Food prices were up 0.8 per cent in the past month, while costs for housing, medical care, new cars and household furnishings all increased in August compared to July.

Lack of Democratic Reforms Risks Further Instability in Sri Lanka

A report on the human rights situation in Sri Lanka urges the newly elected government to implement democratic reforms and combat impunity to prevent the recurrence of human rights violations.

The report was submitted Monday to the UN Human Rights Council.

Widespread protests over high levels of inflation and shortages of fuel, food, medicines, and other essential items led to the resignation of the previous Sri Lankan president on July 14. A week later, a new president was elected by parliament.

The handover of power was largely peaceful. However, the UN acting high commissioner for human rights, Nada Al-Nashif, expressed concern over certain actions the new government took in recent weeks.

She said the government has a fresh opportunity to steer the country toward justice and reconciliation and address the legacy of conflict. Sri Lanka's 26-year-long civil war ended 13 years ago. However, Al-Nashif noted tens of thousands of survivors still do not know the fate of their missing loved ones, nor have they received justice and reparations.

In response, Sri Lanka's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ali Sabry, said the government was aware of the socio-economic hardships faced by its people and was taking measures to improve their situation. He said steps also had been taken to strengthen democratic governance and combat corruption.

Police find weapons on mosque's roof in Pakistan

Michael Olugbode with agency report

Pakistani police have claimed it has found a cache of arms and ammunition on a mosque's rooftop in Karachi's Shah Faisal Colony.

Shah Faisal colony police and Al-Falah conducted an intelligence-based raid in the mosque, where they found the weapons in a fridge that was kept on the rooftop.

The seized weapons included three sub-machine guns, one light machine gun, two shotguns, three pistols, one rifle, and over 500 ammunitions.

The weapons had been sent to the forensic division of the police for examination.

Also, the Sahil police arrested three suspects for stealing the car tapes, panels and mirrors from expensive cars.

According to an agency report, the suspects were identified as Bilal, Yasir, and Umair, who recently stole a panel of a car parked under an apartment building in Defence Housing Authority.

The report said a case was registered at the Sahil police station and the police traced and arrested the suspects involved in the theft. Police said the gang comprised seven members, three of whom had been arrested.

While in Nazimabad, the body of a missing woman was found in the underground water tank at her maternal uncle's house.



ROYAL ENDORSEMENT FOR MBAH...

Enugu PDP Governorship candidate, Peter Mbah (right), exchanging pleasantries with the Chairman, Enugu West Council of Traditional Rulers, Godwin Madu at a ceremony at Oji River, Enugu…recently

INEC: No New Addition or Subtraction from Voters' Register

●*Atiku charges electoral commission on credible polls*

Chuks Okoch in Abuja

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), yesterday, maintained that, since the end of the continuous voter registration exercise, no fresh registrant was added or subtracted from the voters' register.

In a related development, the presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Atiku Abubakar, has tasked INEC and other agencies of government playing roles in the electoral process to ensure that the outcome of the 2023 general election was a true reflection of the desires of the people.

However, INEC, reacting to the press conference addressed by the Coalition of United Political Parties (CUPP) on the Register of Voters for the 2023 general election, said it recognized and respected the right of citizens, either as individuals or groups, to demand explanation from public agencies, including itself, and to hold them accountable.

But the commission said it was always important that caution was exercised so that such interventions did not unwittingly sow doubts in the public mind, thereby diminishing public confidence and trust in the electoral process.

In a statement by the INEC National Commissioner in charge of information and chairman of Voter education, Festus Okocha, INEC said, "It is important to reiterate that no new registrant, has yet been added to the Register of Voters for the 2023 General Election or will be included until these supplemental activities have been completed in line with the law.

"For the avoidance of doubt, we restate the main components of these activities. First, the Commission is conducting a comprehensive Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS) cleanup of the registration data by scrutinising every record.

"Based on the Electoral Act 2022, any record that does not meet all the criteria for inclusion as stipulated in Section 10, including the appearance in person by the registrant at the registration venue with proof of identity, age and nationality and our business rules requirements of adequate number of fingerprints and clear pictures will be invalidated."

Further, Okoye said, in line with Section 19(1) of the Electoral Act 2022, after the ABIS and clean-up, the Commission shall appoint a period of seven days during which the register would be published for scrutiny by the public for objections and complaints.

He said, "It is only after the cleanup and claims and objections have been completed that the final register will be published," and that INEC would continue to provide the public with updates on the progress of these processes, as it did through its press release of September12, 2022.

Accordingly, he said that the ABIS for the period of registration between 15th January and 31st July was being concluded presently, and the outcome in terms of multiple and ineligible records would be made public.

But, Atiku, in a press statement, by his media adviser, Paul Ibe, on the occasion marking the International Day for Democracy, said the celebration of democracy was a celebration of the people's power.

He noted that although there had been significant improvements in the electoral processes, "the 2023 episode is an opportunity for INEC to show that the commission has grown beyond partisanship.

"In 2023, Nigerians will be voting for the leadership that they truly believe will lead this country out of the current dire situation and it is important to use the opportunity of the celebration, this day, to tell not just the INEC but other agencies and non-governmental organisations involved in the conduct of election that the next election should be the freest and fairest ever in the history of Nigeria.

"Good governance is the ultimate end game. And the democracy that we practice is the only veritable vehicle that can drive us safely to the establishment of a government that will give us good governance and ensure that the rule of law is entrenched in our body politic."

NATFORCE Operations Illegal, Says Security Council

●*Passes confidence vote on security agencies* ●*Posits Mamu's arrest won't halt negotiation for Kaduna train victims' release*

Deji Elumoye in Abuja

The National Security Council (NSC), has described the National Taskforce on the Prohibition of Illegal Importation/Smuggling of Arms, Ammunition, Light Weapons, Chemical Weapons and Pipeline Vandalism (NATFORCE), as an illegal body, which was not supposed to operate anywhere in the country.

The Council, yesterday, at its meeting at the State House, Abuja and presided over by President Muhammadu Buhari, also passed a vote of confidence on security agencies in their current efforts to tackle myriad of security challenges facing the country.

Briefing newsmen after the meeting, Minister of Interior, Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola, advised the NATFORCE leadership to disband itself with immediate effect or risk being disbanded forcefully by security agencies.

The Senate had in July, 2022, passed the Bill establishing the Commission, while the House of Representatives was expected to pass its version upon resumption from annual vacation in September, 2022.

But security experts had recently kicked against the Senate's inclusion of NATFORCE in the new Act establishing the National Commission for the Coordination and Control of the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Aregbesola, therefore, stated that government was not singling out only NATFORCE but all other illegal security outfits operating across the country.

He said, "Equally of concern to the Security Council is the presence of some illegal outfits that impersonate the legitimate security agencies. Of particular concern is a body called National Task Force on Illegal Importation of Goods, Small Arms and what have you, but the short name for it is NATFORCE.

"The Council declares that body an illegal organisation, it should just simply disband itself, because the Council has ordered all security agencies to enforce the disbandment of that body and other such bodies that operate illegally without any force of law."

Asked about those behind the taskforce and the reason for declaring it illegal, the Minister said, "The National Task Force to combat Illegal Importation/ Smuggling of Arms, Ammunition, Light Weapons is an illegal body. There was never a time the Nigerian government set it up with any legislative instrument or power.

"So, what I've come here to tell Nigerians through you is that the body should simply disband itself or risk being forcefully disbanded by all security agencies. It is unknown to Nigerian laws and therefore illegal.

"It does not have any power at all to operate and it has been illegal all the while, but we are now reinforcing the fact that it's an illegal organisation that doesn't have to operate anywhere in Nigeria. It should just phase out itself or risk possible disbandment by all security agencies."

On why the security council took the decision, he said, "From my statement, it is very clear that this body is illegal; it's not known to Nigerian law and once it's not known to law. It is an illegal body. Actually, we are not singling out NATFORCE alone, all such bodies that impersonate security agencies and commit illegality all over the place.

"We are just saying with this announcement, disband themselves or risk being disbanded forcibly by the Nigerian law enforcement agencies. I'm reporting to you the decision of the Nigeria Security Council, if you understand what it means, this is the highest executive organ on security in Nigeria."

Osinbajo: Private Sector Intervention Vital for Sustainable Higher Education Funding

●*Says Nigerian youth are world-class innovators*

Deji Elumoye in Abuja

Vice President Yemi Osinbajo has called for robust private sector intervention to drive world-class, groundbreaking research and cutting-edge innovation in the country's higher institutions of learning.

Osinbajo spoke Thursday evening in his keynote remarks at the Yaba College of Technology (YabaTech) N50 billion Endowment Fund Launch in Lagos. He said with the right platforms, young Nigerians would always rise to the stature of national and global challenges, while finding solutions to them through innovation and technology.

The vice president said not only were institutions of higher learning proving ground for best ideas, the birthplaces of innovation, and ground-breaking research, they were also, to all intents and purposes, designed to guide and nurture a society's pathway into the future.

He noted that research and inquiry might lead to revolutionary discovery or lead nowhere.

Osinbajo stated, "How do you fund world-class, relevant, cutting-edge higher education sustainably? The question has even greater resonance in Africa, where public resources are low and the poverty levels put access to quality education beyond the reach of many."

He said Yaba College of Technology was one of the best institutions to use as proof of the concept that could, indeed, develop world-class higher institutions for innovation and research using both private and public-sector finance.

Osinbajo added that the N50 billion ambition of this endowment fund mirrored the vision for the institution and demonstrated its keen awareness of what was truly at stake.

He stated, "We must augment government's finest intentions with our individual and collective desire to see us do better, to see Africa do better; to see our children step into global arenas of enormous and unprecedented opportunities.

"One thing is clear, young Nigerians will always rise to the stature of the challenges the world presents them, and even beyond, if we continue to provide a platform for them to stand on.



ACCESS MEGA REWARDS...

L-R: Senior Banking Advisor, Access Bank Plc, Robert Giles; Head Marketing and Communications Manager, Chioma Afe; Winner, N1 million in the Accessmore Mega Rewards campaign, Precious Nwuba; Head, Digital Channel, Access Bank, Oluremi Tinuolu- Gabriel, and Group Head, Customer Experience, Virginia Nowak, during the Access More Mega Rewards prize presentation ceremony in Lagos… yesterday SUNDAY ADIGUN

Fayemi, Amosun, Sanwo-Olu, Abiodun, Makinde, Obaseki Condole Akeredolu over Mother's Passing

Victor Ogunje in Ado Ekiti and **James Sowole** in Abeokuta

Present and former governors in the country have identified with one of them, the Governor of Ondo State, Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, SAN, over the passing of his mother, Lady Evangelist Grace Akeredolu, and generally described her demise as painful.

Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) and Ekiti State Governor, Dr Kayode Fayemi, in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Yinka Oyebode, described the late Lady Evang Akeredolu as a devoted Christian leader, supportive mother, confidant and encourager.

He said the deceased, during her lifetime, was an epitome of kindness, forthrightness and courage, same qualities which her son, Governor Akeredolu, exhibited as a lawyer and public servant.

Fayemi, however, noted that the late Madam Akeredolu was a rallying point for the Akeredolus, following the departure of their patriarch many years ago and did not waiver in standing in the gap for them till she breathed her last.

Two-term former governor of Ogun State, Ibikunle Amosun, said, as a doting mother that she was, Mama will be remembered for the quality parenting she gave to her children and other members of the Akeredolu family, and also for her devotion to the service of God and the development of her community.

"Though painful that Mama Bosede Akeredolu had to answer the call of her creator at this time, I enjoin the entire Akeredolu family to take solace in the knowledge that Mama lived a fulfilled life and left behind many enduring legacies, particularly children and families who are responsible members of our society.

"May the good Lord grant Mama Grace Bosede Akeredolu eternal rest, and give her children, particularly, Arakunrin Rotimi Akeredolu, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and the entire family the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss," she said.

Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Gboyega Akosile, urged Governor Akeredolu, the deceased family, friends and entire people of Owo and Ondo State in general to preserve the legacy of love and prayers left behind the deceased.

"Mama was a strong supporter and pillar of Governor Akeredolu and without any iota of doubt, she contributed to the success of all her children as a principled, disciplined and committed mother. She also trained her children and those around her in the way of God.

"As an evangelist, she served God and humanity passionately using her gift and talent to win souls for God and minister to people around her. She was an apostle of God and remained committed to God till her passing on Thursday," he said.

Governor Dapo Abiodun of Ogun State, in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Kunle Somorin, described the death of Lady Akeredolu as painful, even at the advanced age of 90.

"Though Mama has gone to be with her Lord and Creator, her life was enough a lesson for all of us to learn from. As a devout Christian, she served God with all her heart and ensured that her family members, friends and acquaintances, all benefited from her caring and warm disposition.

"We all shall continue to remember her for good. Her life was indeed worthy of emulation as she epitomised virtuousity and piety. At this time, we should not grief, but celebrate the joining of the Saints Triumphant by our dear Mama.

"I pray that our Lord will grant Madam Akeredolu eternal rest in His bosom. On behalf of my family, the government and people of Ogun State, I express my heart-felt commiseration with Governor Rotimi Akeredolu, the government and the people of Ondo State, on the passing of Lady Evangelist Grace Akeredolu. May her soul continue to find repose in the Lord," the statement concluded.

Governor 'Seyi Makinde of Oyo State, in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Mr. Taiwo Adisa, commiserated with the government and good people of Ondo State over the death of the governor's mother, whom he said lived a good life.

"I commiserate with my Egbon, who is also the chairman of the South-West Governors' Forum, His Excellency, Arakunrin Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, SAN, on the death of his mother, Mama Grace Akeredolu. I equally express my condolences to the government and good people of Ondo State and I pray to God to grant repose to Mama's soul and to grant the entire Akeredolu family the fortitude to bear Mama's loss.

"No matter how old our loved ones are, we never would love to see them leave us. But in the programme of God, there is a time to be born and a time to die. So, we can only submit to God's will and cherish the memories our loved ones leave us with.

"I am sure that Mama left a bundle of good memories, because she was a woman of virtue and a great mother. So, I encourage Governor Akeredolu and everyone Mama left behind to take solace in the great life Mama lived. Mama lived a happy and fulfilled life. May her beautiful soul rest in perfect peace. Amen," he said.

The Edo State Governor, Godwin Obaseki, said he was deeply saddened by the news of the passing of Lady Akeredolu, who he said was a devout Christian and community leader, passionate about Christ and dedicated her life to the service of God.

"She was meek, kindhearted and loving and gave herself freely for the upliftment of humanity and her community. As a disciplinarian, she espoused the virtues of love, honesty and integrity and bestowed these values to her children, including the Ondo State Governor, Arakunrin Rotimi Akeredolu.

George: PDP May Lose 2023 Presidential Poll Except Ayu Goes

Segun James

Former Deputy National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Chief Olabode George, has warned that the party might lose the 2023 presidential election if equity, fairness, and internal democracy was not allowed to prevail, particularly, emphasizing that the National Chairman of the party, Dr. Iyorchia Ayu, must go as the starting point.

He said if Ayu did not resign, the party would be seen as telling the people of southern part that they were not wanted.

"With two weeks to the commencement of campaign season, that we believe will usher in a PDP government into Aso Rock in 2023, unfortunately, I am compelled to address a 'clear and present danger' that might thwart this window of opportunity afforded the PDP.

"Our party is at the precipice of a dangerous looming crisis if pending critical issues are not urgently addressed. Party unity and inclusiveness of all members are ingredients to a viable strategy for our election victory.

"Pitiably, some of our leaders are, directly or indirectly, responsible for the present crisis in the party because of their flawed personal interests, which are targeted at disrupting the unity of our great party," he said.

He lamented that leaders of the party must not pander to ethnic affiliation, because PDP is the only truly national party, while the opposition All Progressives Congress (APC) was just a mere congregation of strange bedfellows.

He, however, said members of the party must not "allow any sentiment – ethnic or religious – to divide us. Unfortunately, with what we are presently witnessing, our party may lose the next presidential election if we continue to disregard or fail to address the feeling and grievances of 'alienation' being presently experienced by the entire Southern population of this great country. If this issue is dismissed, we cannot expect votes from them.

"In May this year, we elected our presidential candidate in the person of Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, setting aside the principle of rotation as enshrined in the constitution of our party in the interest of peace and unity of our party. Today, we are in a situation in which our National Chairman is from the same zone as our presidential candidate.

"Some people are insisting that there is nothing wrong with this present arrangement. Some have argued that this happened during Chief Olusegun Obasanjo's administration, where the candidate and the national chairman were from the same zone.

"Let the truth be told, there are remarkable differences in the scenario then and now. Then we had the leader of the party, who was then a sitting president from the South and the candidate was from the North."

MultiChoice Announces Special World Cup Coverage, Unveils Big Brother Naija+South Africa

MultiChoice Nigeria has announced a bumper coverage of the 2022 FIFA World Cup and a special Big Brother Naija +South Africa edition for its customers on DStv and GOtv

This was disclosed at the MultiChoice Media Showcase held yesterday in Lagos.

Speaking on the special coverage of the 2022 FIFA World Cup and the next Big Brother reality TV show, the CEO, MultiChoice Nigeria, John Ugbe said all 64 matches of the World Cup in Qatar will be live on DStv and GOtv.

He added that the special Big Brother edition would be even more intense with housemates from Nigeria and South Africa.

"MultiChoice is excited to bring every single fan, all the action in their language, along with local commentary. To add value to all our customers, we are making all 64 World Cup matches, available in 14 different local languages including Pidgin, Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa.

"The next Big Brother edition will have housemates from the two giants of Africa, Nigeria, and South Africa, together in one house. This is designed to be a unifying experience of culture, personalities, and entertainment, highlighting what we both have in common. The prizes promise to be as massive as the entire show itself – both in cash and other sponsored prizes," he was quoted to have said in a statement.

Touching on the investment by MultiChoice in growing content offering for customers' pleasure, the Executive Head of Content, MultiChoice Nigeria, Dr. Busola Tejumola, said customers would be spoiled for choice in the coming months, as the company would be unveiling a chain of new programmes on its Africa Magic channels.

Highlighting some of the new content customers could look out for, Tejumola said popular comedy series, The Johnsons, would return for the new season which would be to honour the show's late cast, Ada Ameh.

Speaking further, she said customers should look out for a new 260-episode local series 'The Covenant', and another 260-episode local series titled 'Itura', starting from October 3. She added that the popular Africa Magic series, 'Tinsel', and 'The Rishantes', will also make a return in a few weeks.

"For the holidays, our holiday channel will go live in November and will be showing some global events and carnivals. The Calabar Carnival in Cross River State will be live on this channel. Also, Crime and Justice Lagos will premiere on Showmax later this year. Customers can also look out for our first local animation series coming soon," she added.

All showcased content will be available to both DStv and GOtv customers.



NEW HEAD OFFICE FOR PERSONAL TRUST MFB…

L-R: Group Managing Director, First Ally Capital, Mr. Ebenezer Olufowose; Director, Personal Trust Microfinance Bank, Dr. Ayoola Oduntan, and Chairman, Personal Trust at the recent opening of the head office of the bank in Lagos...recently

Court Orders INEC to Accept Akpabio as APC Senatorial Candidate in A'Ibom

Alex Enumah in Abuja

Justice Emeka Nwite of the Federal High Court, Abuja, yesterday ordered the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to accept and publish the name of Senator Godswill Akpabio as the candidate of the All Progressive Congress (APC) in the 2023 senatorial election for Akwa Ibom North/West Senatorial District.

Justice Nwite made the order while delivering judgment in a suit challenging the refusal of INEC to recognise Akpabio as APC's candidate in the said poll.

While the APC and Akpabio are the 1st and 2nd plaintiffs respectively in the suit marked: FHC/ABJ/CS/1011/2022, INEC is the sole defendant.

The court in its judgment held that the electoral umpire acted illegally by refusing to accept and publish Akpabio's name when it was submitted to it by the APC as its candidate.

According to the judge, Akpabio was validly nominated as candidate of the APC in the forthcoming Akwa – Ibom North/West Senatorial District election at a primary conducted by the APC's National Working Committee (NWC) on June 9, 2022.

The judge declared that INEC, "is bound by the provisions of Section 29 (3) of the Electoral Act to publish only the personal particulars of the candidate of the first plaintiff for the Akwa-Ibom North/West Senatorial District elections in the person of the second plaintiff (Akpabio) as received from the first plaintiff."

The judge also declared that INEC cannot publish any other name or particulars of any other candidate as candidate of the APC for the Akwa - Ibom North/West Senatorial District elections, "except as nominated, submitted and received from the first plaintiff (APC)."

He then ordered INEC to publish the name and particulars of Akpabio as the candidate of the APC for the Akwa-Iborn North/West Senatorial District in the 2023 general elections as nominated and submitted to it by the party.

FERMA Commends Security Operatives over Safety of Workers in Kebbi

Ismail Adebayo in Birnin Kebbi

The Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA), Kebbi State office, has commended security operatives for always standing guard whenever its workers and machineries are carrying out maintenance works on federal roads in any part of the state.

The Head of the FERMA in Kebbi State, Mr. Rilwan Usman, said: "I have to commend security agencies in the state for providing us with the needed security even before we invite them. The security agencies are always available for us anywhere we are doing maintenance work on federal roads."

Usman said that the agency has always considered the safety of its workers and machineries wherever it wants to deploy them to.

He said: "Wherever we are working we make security a priority. The safety of our workers and machineries is paramount."

Usman observed that maintenance works are ongoing in different parts of Kebbi State where there is no security challenge.

"The only area where we may have challenges in carrying out our work in Kebbi now is Kebbi-south. For now, we are not working there but when the security of the area improves we will give them the required attention. FERMA would continue to maintain roads for easy movement of people and goods across the state," he said.

The head of FERMA in Kebbi State, also called for synergy between the agency and security agencies to prevent federal roads across the country the damages it has witnessed in recent time.

He observed that overloading and deliberate act of sabotage by some road users are responsible for the damages witnessed on federal roads.

Usman said: "Our mandate is to make sure that the country's road networks are made motorable all year round. Vehicles carrying loads above what is stipulated is not part of our mandate.

"But sometimes you wonder how these drivers get away with the excess of loads they carry from south to north and from the north to the south. We should understand that prevention is cheaper than repairs. Government is committing huge amount of resources to maintain roads across the country. Those damaging the roads are causing economic sabotage to the country.

"I think there should be synergy between the agency and the security agencies for the road users to be better educated on the maximum load a vehicle can carry on the roads for them to last longer."

He urged relevant security agencies to checkmate truck drivers that exceeded the capacity of goods stipulated for them so that the country's roads could be safeguarded from unnecessary damages.

Police Arrest 1,460 Suspects, Rescue 55 Kidnapped Victims in Bauchi

Segun Awofadeji in Bauchi

Police operatives in Bauchi State have arrested 1460 suspects in connection with various crimes committed within and outside the State from November 2021 to date.

The Commissioner of Police, Bauchi, Umar Mamman Sanda, who resumed duty on November 29 2021, disclosed this yesterday during the launching of Police Public Complaints Committee (PPCC) sensitisation campaigns for the North-east subregion held in Bauchi.

Sanda said since his assumption of duty as the 43rd Commissioner of Police, the Command has recorded 722 cases and rescued 55 kidnapped victims from their captors.

According to the CP, exhibits recovered from the kidnappers within the period under review include Five AK-47 rifles, 145 live ammunitions, 20 local revolver-made guns, 10 Dane guns, 20 cartridges and 45 machetes.

Other exhibits recovered include one AK-47 rifle, two assault rifles, eight live ammunitions, one pistol revolver with five rounds of ammunition and one locally made pistol revolver.

The police in the command also recovered 13 dene guns, nine fabricated revolver, one single barrel, one double barrel, three cartridges,14 motorcycles, five Laptops,10 Keke NAPEP, 81blocks of Cannabis and 101 different handsets.

Mamma Sanda disclosed that the command under his watch has recovered N7.2 million from suspects in the period under review.

Poverty is Ravaging Us, We Need Health Insurance, Pensioners Tell Govs

Victor Ogunje in Ado Ekiti

The Nigeria Union of Pensioners (NUP), South-west Zone, has cried out that its members are dying in droves across the states due to unpaid pension, gratuities and poor access to health insurance policy.

The NUP, therefore, begged President Muhammadu Buhari and the state governors to initiate policies that would give pensioners unfettered access to robust medicare for longevity after meritorious services to the nation.

The body spoke yesterday in Ado Ekiti during the annual South-west Zonal council meeting held in Ekiti State.

The South-west Publicity Secretary of NUP, Mr. Segun Abatan, lamented that "throughout the nation, pensioners are dying in droves, because there is no policy to enhance their medicare after retirement.

"The governors should emulate the Oyo State Governor, Mr. Seyi Makinde, who placed all retirees on health insurance and this had reduced the level of deaths. The governors must put in place robust health insurance for pensioners."

He specifically lambasted the Southwest governors for allegedly failing to initiate timely implementation of the increment in pension that could match the economic realities of the nation.

#EndSARS Anniversary: Lawyers Want #Obidatti23 Rally Stopped in Lagos

Wale Igbintade

Ahead of the second year anniversary of EndSARS protest, nine lawyers, have approached the Federal High Court in Lagos praying the court to stop the Labour Party (LP), its candidates and supporters from conducting #Obidatti23 Forward Ever Rally" on October 1, 2022 or any other date, in Lagos State.

The plaintiffs asked the court to restrain the LP, its presidential candidate Peter Obi, his vice Yusuf Datti Baba-Ahmed, one Julius Abure and their loyalists from holding the rally, until the hearing and determination of their Motion-On-Notice dated September 12, 2022.

The plaintiffs in the suit marked FHC/L/CS/1729/2022 are Adedotun Ajulo Esq., Salamatu Suleiman Lewi Esq., Hakeem Ijaduola, Esq., Ogunbona Akinpelu Esq., Owolabi K. Oluwasegun, Esq., Mogbojuri Kayode Esq., Wuyep Mantim Nadom Esq., Dimimu Mabel, Esq., Kolawole Salami, Esq. and Wale Abe Lawrence.

The Defendants are: LP Presidential candidate, Peter Obi, his vice, Baba-Ahmed, Abure, the Inspector General of Police (IG), Commissioner of Police (Lagos State Command), Director-General (Department of State Services), Lekki Concession Company (LCC) Limited, Attorney-General of Lagos State and The Governor of Lagos State.

PDP Crisis: Founding DG of Governors' Forum Calls for Urgent Meeting

Chuks Okocha in Abuja

The founding Director General of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) Governors Forum (PDPGF) and prominent political consultant, Earl Osaro Onaiwu, has called for an urgent and crucial meeting of all PDP governors, to resolve all the contentious issues in the party and move forward with one united potent voice, in order to rescue and rebuild Nigeria.

The former DG said the convocation of such a meeting has become imperative and an unsalable sine qua non, if the party must win the 2023 national elections in Nigeria.

Osaro Onaiwu said that it is only when the current challenges of perceived inequities in the party's nomenclature are urgently resolved, that the party can truly present a united front capable of dislodging the shipwrecked ship of the ruling party All Progressive Congress (APC)'s monumental failure which has sunk Nigeria to the lowest ebb of development index in every area.

According to Earl Onaiwu, "the PDP governors have the capacity, capability and intelligence to resolve the crisis in the party and reposition the party structures to achieve a much needed cooperation and synergy that are a precursor to victory at the polls."

Mind Builders School Boss Advises Pupils to Focus on Studies

It was all showers of blessings as Mind Builders School resumed for the new academic session last Monday. The rain notwithstanding, pupils turned out in large numbers for academic studies after the long eight weeks holiday.

The Head of School of Omole Phase 2 Annexe, Mrs. Oluwatoyin Felicia Esan, while welcoming the pupils thanked God for His wonderful mercies on the parents and pupils of the school. She used the Holy book to admonish the pupils to face their studies squarely as whatever they become in the future lies on the approach to their studies at this stage of their lives. She further gave a brief talk on the school theme for the term - "Helping Others To Succeed" (HATS) while emphasizing on the benefits of teamwork.

We Will Resist Those Who Want to Use Northern CAN to Settle Political Scores, Says Oibe

John Shiklam in Kaduna

The Secretary General of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in the 19 northern states and the Federal Capital Territory (Northern CAN), Mr. Sunday Oibe has said any politician who wants to use the association to settle political scores would be resisted.

Oibe also warned those using the name of northern CAN to extort money from politicians to desist from such acts.

Speaking in an interview yesterday in Kaduna, he dissociated the northern CAN from a meeting of its state chairmen, allegedly convened on Tuesday in Abuja, by former speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon. Yakubu Dogara and former Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Lawal Babachir who are chieftains of the All Progressives Congress (APC), opposed to the party's same faith presidential ticket.

"It is not true that chairmen of CAN in the 19 northern states met in Abuja, to take a position on the issue of Muslim-Muslim ticket.



OYO INAUGURATES PROJECTS …

L-R: Ekiti State Governor, Dr Kayode Fayemi; Oyo State Governor, Seyi Makinde; wife of former Governor of Oyo State, Mrs Mutiat Ladoja, and Deputy Governor of Oyo State,Bayo Lawal, during inauguration of 7.2km Idi-Ape-bashorun-Akobo road and Flyover projects in Ibadan…yesterday

2023: Don't Vote Greedy Politicians, Jonathan Tasks Nigerians

Laleye Dipo in Minna

Former President Goodluck Jonathan, has tasked Nigerians not to vote greedy politicians, who will not think about the interest of the country but what they can amass for themselves.

Jonathan gave the charge in Minna, Niger State, yesterday, in a chat with newsmen after paying a courtesy visit to a former Head of State, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, at his uphill residence.

"We all wish our country well especially, for the young people, elections are coming; they have to select the person you believe that will lead us well, serve us well, the leader is also a servant. As a president, you lead, you serve," Jonathan said.

He maintained that Nigeria needed "Somebody that will take the interest of all of us, the interest of the country, somebody that will not compromise our own interest for his own aggrandizement."

The former president said in 2023, Nigeria also needed "Somebody that will carry all of us along, most especially, somebody that will take Nigeria as a project," and prayed that Nigeria would have a free and fair election, which will be conducted in an environment that there will be peace and love.

On the reason for his visit to Minna, Jonathan, who described himself as the "The most junior among all the former presidents" said, "From time to time, I used to go round and greet them. For sometime now, I have not seen General Abdulsalami.

"There is nothing special about the visit; it is a regular visit that I normally do before wishing the former Head of state well and speedy recovery."

He said Nigeria needed the services of General Abdulsalami now that "we are talking about election. You know he chairs the National Peace Committee that tries to midwife the Peace Process during election?

"There is so much pressure on him now so that the 2023 election will be conducted freely fairly and in an environment that there will be peace and love."

Jonathan also visited former Military President, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, at his Minna uphill residence.

Falae, Other SDP Chieftains Lament Poor State of Nation

Oghenevwede Ohwovoriole in Abuja

Chieftains of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), including a former Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Chief Olu Falae, and one-time Minister of Education, Prof. Tunde Adeniran, yesterday, lamented the poor state of affairs in the country, saying Nigeria was in dire straits.

Speaking at the official opening of the party's new secretariat in Abuja, Falae, a former national chairman of the party, emphasised the insecurity that has engulfed the entire country unlike in the 70s and 80s, recalling his kidnap experience at the age of 77, in his farm, stressing that all hands must be on deck to rescue the country.

"Nigeria, today, is in crisis. You cannot move from one town today to another without the fear of being kidnapped. I, myself was kidnapped for four days, seven years ago in my farm. When I was a child, I travelled from Akure to attend school by myself. No kidnapper, no problem.

"At 77 years old, I was kidnapped. That tells you the dramatic decline in Nigeria. Only a party properly structured can change it. Not this so-called big parties. When I say they are not parties, they say they control the federal government, state governments. Controlling government does not define a party," he said.

Adeniran, on his part, expressed worry over what he referred to as "cynical manipulation of the political process", saying Nigeria could only work through a liberated ideology backed by a workable legal status.

Ekiti Youths Demand 40% Appointments from Oyebanji

Victor Ogunje in Ado Ekiti

The Ekiti State Chapter of the National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN), yesterday demanded that the incoming administration of Hon. Biodun Oyebanji, should reserve 40 per cent of its political appointments for the youths.

The youth body promised to coopt its national body to partner critical stakeholders like the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) to end the lingering crisis between the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the federal government.

The newly elected Chairman of the NYCN, Ekiti State, Mr. Oluwasegun Bankole, said this in Ado Ekiti, yesterday during his inaugural press briefing.

At the election supervised by security agencies, Ekiti State Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the Independent National Electoral Commission, Bankole polled a total of 109 votes to defeat his closest rival, Mr. Segun Famuyibo, who garnered 19.

Bankole said: "The NYCN is ready to key into Biodun Oyebanji's policy thrust, because we have studied it and found that he makes youth empowerment a priority on his list.

"But regarding youth involvement in governance, we are not expecting anything less than 40 per cent of political appointments from his administration as part of the ways to empower and accord us recognition in government."

He added: "We are going to call the attentions of our stakeholders to the reason why this strike should end now.

"Reports we are getting showed that many of our female students have been impregnated, while the male counterparts are into criminalities, because they were not occupied and productive in the six months duration of this industrial action."

Dabiri-Erewa: Many Stranded Nigerians in UAE are Freed Criminals

Michael Olugbode in Abuja

The Chairman/CEO, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, has said many of the Nigerians claiming to be stranded in the United Arab Emirates were freed criminals, who had served various jail sentences, ranging from drugs to credit card frauds, and robberies, among others.

Dabiri-Erewa said this in a statement issued yesterday by the Commission's Head of Media, Public Relations and Protocols, Abdur-Rahman Balogun.

The NIDCOM boss, while warning Nigerians, who illegally travelled to the UAE and were stranded there not to make an already bad case worse by resorting to media blackmail, said in line with its citizens diplomacy, the federal government had approved the evacuation of over 300 Nigerians stranded in the UAE.

Regrettably, she said many of those affected had not been totally cooperative as they refused to follow the laid down procedures.

She added that investigations also revealed that over 100 Nigerians, who had served various jail sentences suddenly landed at the holding centres, demanding of the Nigerian consulate in Dubai to "immediately "bring them back. Their voices have been the loudest."

West African Countries Urged to Create Legal Framework against Religious Intolerance

Michael Olugbode in Abuja

Countries in West Africa needs to put in place legal framework that will mitigate religious intolerance, a professor of International Relations at Kaduna State University, Professor Usman Mohammed has told the Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

He stated the while presenting a paper at a delocalised meeting of the ECOWAS Parliament on committees on Education, Science and Culture; Health as well as Telecommunications and Information Technology.

has called on members of Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States,

In his paper titled: "Religious Tolerance and Stability: Key factors to peace and development in the ECOWAS region, Professor Mohammed said ECOWAS needs to prevail on the authorities at the national levels to domesticate laws that will be useful in reducing religious intolerance in the region, explaining that due to human behaviour, it would be practically impossible to eradicate religious intolerance, hence, the need for the implementation of appropriate laws to put such tendency in check.

He said although states could differ when it comes to the issue of guaranteeing equal treatments under the law and constitution, the general assumption was that religion is a fundamental human rights as enshrined by the United Nations charter, as such, the inclination to have religious dogmatic adherences abound, posing a fundamental challenge in the region.

Buhari Sacks Dikio, Appoints Ndiomu as Amnesty Programme Administrator

Deji Elumoye in Abuja

President Muhammadu Buhari has approved the appointment of Major General Barry Tariye Ndiomu (rtd) as Interim Administrator of the Amnesty Programme, implying that Col. Milland Dikio (rtd) has been sacked.

This was contained in a press release issued yesterday by the Media Adviser to the President, Femi Adesina.

The appointee hails from Odoni in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, and was admitted to the Nigerian Defence Academy as part of 29th Regular Combatant Course.

He was commissioned Second Lieutenant in 1983 and held several command and staff appointments in the course of his successful military career before retiring in December, 2017.

Ndiomu also trained as a lawyer, and is alumnus of National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Administrative Staff College of Nigeria, Badagry, Harvard Kennedy School, and George C Marshall Centre for European Security Studies, among others.

Experts Raise the Alarm Over Absence of Prostate Cancer Patients' Data in Nigeria

Ibrahim Oyewale in Lokoja

Medical experts in Kogi State have lamented the non-availability of data for people suffering from prostate cancer in Nigeria.

While speaking on the sideline of prostate cancer awareness month yesterday, a team of medical experts under the auspice of, 'Cancer of the Prostate Trans-Atlantic Consortium, (CAPTC) Federal Medical Center, (FMC) Site Lokoja' submitted that prostate cancer remains the second leading cause of death for men in Nigeria.

The team lead of CAPTC site Lokoja, a consultant Surgeon with Federal Medical Center, Lokoja, Dr. Taiwo Jones Olaoluwa said it was very worrisome that there was no available statistics for people suffering from prostate cancer despite being one of the leading causes of death for men in Nigeria.

"We actually run a cancer registry here at the Federal Medical center Lokoja. That is supposed to be something that will feed up to the central cancer registry in the Federal Ministry of Health. But a number of patients that present to the hospital is the only one we have. We cannot feed in data without adequate diagnosis.

NDLEA: One Out of Every Four Drug Users in Nigeria is Female

Adibe Emenyonu in Benin City

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has declared that out of every four drug abuse persons, one is a female.

The NDLEA/Chief Executive Officer, Brig-Gen. Buba Marwa (rtd), made the disclosure in Benin City, capital of Edo State the second edition of Betsy Obaseki Women Football Tournament (BOWFT) with the theme: "Say No to Drugs".

Against this premise, Marwa, who was represented by his Special Adviser, Otunba Lanre Ipinmisho, said focus on the girl-child and young women was strategic in the effort to curb the rising trend of drug abuse among Nigerians.

He also noted that a national survey currently carried out had shown that 14.3million Nigerians, most of them overwhelmingly youths abuse drugs, adding that the countryhas exceptionally high drug of prevalence of 14.4 percent.



CHRISTIAN WAKE FOR MRS WINFUNKE… …

L-R: Mr. Adisa Jolaosho; Alhaja Ramota Noibi; Mrs. Dunni Marsh; Mrs. Funmi Komolafe, and Mrs.Bimbo Onanuga, during Christian Wake for their mother, Chief (Mrs) Oluremilekun Ayoka Winfunke, Nee Jolaosho at Abule Taylor, Lagos State…yesterday

ABAYOMI AKINYELE

2023: Atiku Group Urges S'West PDP Members to Unite for Victory

Kemi Olaitan in Ibadan

A group within the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Atiku Abubakar Southwest Assembly, yesterday, charged aggrieved members of the party particularly, in the Southwest region, to come together and settle their political differences ahead of the 2023 general election.

Chairman of the group, Senator Felix Ogunwale, while speaking yesterday, at its 2023 Summit with the theme: "Atiku/Okowa 2023 - The Southwest Perspective", said the call became necessary to close ranks and forged a united front with common effort and common purpose, stating that the passion and dedication of every member of the party was needed as the 2023 presidential election was approaching.

He added that though there were agitations within the party, the PDP had the capacity to resolve them, maintaining that Atiku also had the capacity to unify Nigerians despite various challenges currently facing the nation.

According to him, the purpose of the summit was to set agenda to effectively articulate the interests of the Southwest within the context of prevailing political and economic realities in the nation, assuring them that the PDP would meet the yearnings and aspirations of Nigerians without regards to ethnicity and religion.

"We are out to register our commitment to the Atiku/Okowa 2023 project by delivering votes to the PDP candidates, we remained resolute and determined to the course," he said.

The Director, All Support Groups for Atiku, Mr Oladimeji Fabiyi, while speaking on behalf of the PDP presidential candidate, said the group was a body that has been working for Atiku since 2015 by promoting and projecting his candidature, stating that the meeting was an avenue to engaged people, supporters and stakeholders on needs to unite members on the present and future of the party.

LASIMRA Warns against Vandalism of Govt Property in Lagos

Ayodeji Ake

The Lagos State Infrastructure Maintenance and Regulatory Agency (LASIMRA) has cautioned residents of the state on vandalisation of government property, saying offenders will be arrested and prosecuted according to the law.

Speaking at the organised press conference scheduled to officially announce the third annual stakeholders conference with the theme: 'Transforming Lagos State into a Smart City Hub in Africa: the Government's Infrastructure Approach', on September 13, 2022, the General Manager, LASIMRA, Bisoye Coker-Odusote, noted that the government is trying all means to ensure rapid development of infrastructure, and won't condone any form of misconduct by any residents.

She said: "We have achieved about 80 per cent installation so far and we should be able to round off before the end of the year. There is a bit of a setback because of COVID-19, but we are moving at a very fast speed on the project.

Zulum Grants N100m to 1,000 Unemployed Youths

Michael Olugbode in Maiduguri

Borno State Governor, Prof. Babagana Zulum, has distributed a grant of N100 million as empowerment to 1,000 unemployed youths from different wards in Biu, one of the most populous local government area of the state.

A statement issued yesterday by the governor's spokesman, Mallam Isa Gusau, said the grant was meant to be used as start-up capital for micro and small businesses and to stimulate the economy of Biu.

Gusau, who said his boss made the distribution in a flag-off ceremony at Kadafur Cinema in Biu town last Wednesday, disclosed that Zulum arrived in Biu last Tuesday and was still on the visit to the local government area yesterday.

He said during the ongoing visit, Zulum inaugurated a mega-size Government Secondary School in Buratai village in Biu for 1,500 students, and also opened a higher Islamic school for 1,200 students and zonal monitoring and evaluation department.

The N100m grant to 1,000 unemployed youths was the fourth of Zulum's activities in Biu.

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We've Designed Strategies to Reclaim Adamawa, Says APC Women Leader

Emameh Gabriel in Abuja

The National Women Leader of the ruling All Progressive Congress (APC), Dr. Betta Edu, has said her party has put all modalities in place to reclaim Adamawa State from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in next year's governorship election in the state.

This was just as she said women would account mainly for the outcome of next year's general elections going by their level of participation in mobilisation and voting.

Betta in a recent interview with THISDAY said while it was too early in the day to disclose the party's plans, fielding a female candidate, Senator Anishatu Binani, gave the APC leverage against other contestants in the race.

She said: "She is winning. I can categorically tell you that Senator Binani is the next Governor of Adamawa State by the grace of God. She is a woman who has done a lot of work in Adamawa State.

"We have special strategy for Adamawa that I will not be releasing here. But take it from me, take it to the bank, Senator Binani is the next governor of Adamawa State.

"I'm very proud of my party. We are the only party in Nigeria that gave its ticket to a woman to run. So it shows you that we have gone beyond the primordial level of politics. We are playing advanced politics.

"She would pull through as the first elected female governor in Nigeria.

Stop Crying like Babies over YIAGA Report, Osun APC Charges PDP

Yinka Kolawole in Osogbo

The Osun State Chapter of the All Progressives Congress (APC) has faulted the State's Chapter of the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) over its daily crying on non-issues in order to fraudulently win the sympathy of the people and the judiciary.

A statement that was issued yesterday by the Media Adviser to the State Chairman of the PDP, Mr. Kola Olabisi, in Osogbo, the Osun State capital, said that the rapidity of the unguided noise over mundane issues from the office of the controversial caretaker chairman of the APC, Dr. Adekunle Adekunle, who has been operating like a colonial district officer has become monotonous and irritating.

It would be recalled that a civil society organisation, which is a major stakeholder in the nation's electoral process, the Youth Initiative for Advocacy Group and Advancement (YIAGA), had pointed out some anomalies in the July 16, 2022, Osun State governorship election.

The Executive Director of YIAGA, Mr. Samson Itodo, had revealed that some issues in the election affected the processing of results on the ERAD platform which, he noted, was targeted at providing credible information.

Fayemi Lauds Makinde's Passion for Devt, Inaugurates Road, Flyover Projects

Kemi Olaitan in Ibadan

Governor 'Seyi Makinde of Oyo State, yesterday joined by his Ekiti State counterpart, Governor Kayode Fayemi, to inaugurate the 7.2km Idi Ape-Basorun-Odogbo Barracks Road and the new General Gas Flyover.

Fayemi, who was the special guest of honour at the event, commended Makinde for delivering such a massive road and flyover project, among many others across all the nooks and crannies of the state, congratulating him for being passionate about the development of Oyo State.

He said the Oyo state governor is living up to the expectations of the people, describing Makinde as broad-minded, focused on the job and a man that builds relationships that transcends political party affiliations.

He said: "I want to thank the governor for this invitation. As the chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum, NGF, my primary duty is to protect the interest of the 36 states in Nigeria regardless of the party they belong to. I cannot deliver the full responsibility without the cooperation of all my brothers across the divide. And I can tell you that Engineer Makinde has been a strong pillar of support.

"For me, this is a duty beyond party. It is recognition of what we have promised our people and the pledges we made when we were elected into office - to serve the people who have elected us without hindrance.

2023: Reject Tinubu, Atiku, Obi, Kwankwaso Charges Nigerians

Laleye Dipo in Minna

TThe New Nigeria Political Party (NNPP) presidential candidate for next year's election, Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, has urged Nigerians to reject the trio of Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu, the All Progressives Congress (APC) standard bearer; Alhaji Atiku Abubakar (PDP), and Peter Obi of the Labour party in the 2023 general election.

Kwankwanso said it is necessary that the APC, PDP, and Labour Party flagbearers are rejected because "they have nothing to offer the country in the new dispensation."

Kwankwaso, who exchanged views with journalists in Minna, Niger State, yesterday, said the candidates cannot show what they have done for the country that qualifies them to be elected president of the country, adding that if they have anything to the contrary they should present it to the world.

The NNPP presidential standard bearer said as governor of Kano State for eight years he didn't take any loan, in addition to sponsoring over 3,500 indigenes of the state to study abroad.

He claimed that as Minister of Defence, he presided over an army that was second to none during which the country was peaceful.

Man Bags 21Years Imprisonment for Defiling Daughter

Wale Igbintade

Lagos State Special Offences Court yesterday sentenced a 52-year-old man, Akin Isaac, to 21 years imprisonment for defilement of his daughter.

Justice Oluwatoyin Taiwo in her judgement sentenced Isaac to 21 years imprisonment following his plea of guilty to a one-count charge brought against him by the state government.

The convict was accused of sleeping with his daughter since she was six to 18 years.

The prosecution counsel, Mrs. Omowumi Bajulaye-Bishi, had told the court that "Isaac, who resides at No 2b Akinlagbe Street, Alapere, did defile his daughter from age six to 18 by having unlawful sexual intercourse with his daughter."

His offence, according to the prosecution, is contrary to Section 137 of the Criminal Law Cap C.17 Vol. 3 Laws of Lagos State 2015.

However, while delivering judgment on the plea bargain agreement the convict signed with the state, the Judge said the 21 years proposed sentenced by the Ministry of Justice was too lenient to the offence which carried life imprisonment.

The Judge held that: "I knew this case very well; I could remember the survivor was crying when giving evidence before the court that she had abortion and how the defendant was beating her.

NEWS XTRA

Benin Monarch Advises Host Communities against Violence

Adibe Emenyonu in Benin-city

In a bid to reduce conflicts between host communities and multinational companies, the Oba of Benin, His Royal Majesty, Oba Ewuare II, has sued for collaboration between the two stakeholders in the state.

He also urged members of host communities in the state to embrace dialogue in resolving disputes and avoid violence that could slow down the pace of development in the state.

Oba Ewuare II, who gave the advice when he received a team of investors from Dupot Mainstream to his palace for consultation, charged investors to look after the welfare of their host communities.

He directed some Benin palace chiefs with elders and youth leaders in Egbokor community in Orhionmwon Local Government Area of the state towards resolving some contentious issues.

According to him, "I have had complaints from the area, Egbokor, where this business is located in the past.

"Members of the community should calm down. Tread with caution. Don't worry; the benefits that are due to you will get to you. Do not become an obstacle to the progress of the state bearing in mind that benefits of such investment are for everyone.

"Communities should support the development of their area to bring about the beauty of the state. We understand that there are concerns and agitations. When you toe the path of violence, development will be far from the people."

Earlier, the Managing Director, Supper Mainstream, Dr. Akintoye Akindele, extolled the sterling qualities of the Oba of Benin, and assured him that the multinational company would carry out its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) diligently.

Wike Promotes Women Participation in Family Inheritance

Blessing Ibunge in Port Harcourt

Female children in Rivers State can now fully participate in the sharing of their family inheritance as the state Governor, Nyesom Wike, yesterday signed into law the 'Rivers State Prohibition of the Curtailment of Women's Right to Share in Family Property Law No. 2 of 2022'.

The bill, 'Rivers in Women's Right to Share in Family Property Law No. 2 of 2022, alongside 'Rivers State Compulsory Treatment and Care of Victims of Gunshots Law No. 3 of 2022', and the 'Rivers State Pension Reform (amendment) Law No. 4 of 2022', were signed into law by the governor after they were passed by the state House of Assembly.

Speaking on the law to prohibit the curtailment of women's right to share in family property law, Wike expressed displeasure at how most cultures, particularly in Rivers State, do not encourage growth among the people.

Wike, who made the observation at the Executive Chamber of Government House in Port Harcourt, wondered why women are deprived from sharing in the inheritance of their families when they are often the most useful members of the society compared to most male children.

The governor asserted that the law is important to the development of the state, "because it will enable its people to actualise their potential, as women will be allowed by law to inherit their entitlements.

"I don't know why it's a taboo; because you're a girl or a woman, you're not entitled to inherit what belongs to your father?

"It is not you who decides whether you will have a girl or you'll have a boy, it is God. So, put yourself in their shoes today where, by the mercy of God, you have three children and they're all girls and you struggle in life to see what you can keep for your children.

CSOs Call for Unified Authority on Regulation of Activities

Kuni Tyessi in Abuja

In finding a unified authority towards the regulation of activities for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and to protect it from repressive legislations, the diverse groups converged on Abuja and have called for the creation of a roadmap towards its actualisation.

Representative of Global Rights and Chairman of the Sub-committee, Mr. Edosa Oviawe, in his address to the press, said that there has never been a unified authority to regulate the CSOs, noting that in a perfect society, there would be no need for such.

Speaking on the first day of the three-day National Conference on Civil Society Operational Environment, which is said to be the first of its kind in Nigeria, Oviawe said: "The broad objective of the conference is to create an opportunity for stakeholders to synergise efforts at improving the CSOs regulatory environment.

"The conference is on appropriate instruments of regulation and effective processes to regulate CSOs operation in Nigeria as well as increasing broad public awareness about the roles of CSOs and the need for an enabling regulatory environment to protect the sector from repressive legislation.

"This convergence is the first of its kind to provide a neutral platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue and ensure that all relevant opinions from all concerned groups are holistically collected.

"It is, therefore, hoped that this conference will result in the development of comprehensive recommendations arising from the resolutions reached and agree on modalities for implementing the recommendations."

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known and addressed as MISS CHIZOBA MARTHA MBADIWE now wish to be known and addressed as MISS CHIZOBA MARTHA NAPOLEON. *The Lagos State University* and the general public should please take note of the change. All of my documents with the former names remain valid.

I formerly known and addressed as EBONWU FAVOUR IFEANACHO, now wish to be known and addressed as IFEANACHO FAVOUR IFEANACHO. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as TIJANI ELIZABETH ANIKE, now wish to be known and addressed as OSENI ELIZABETH ANIKE. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as MINI BLESSING NNENDA, now wish to be known and addressed as TAIWO-AGUNDONU BLESSING NNENDA. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as JOSHUA ANGBASHIM, now wish to be known and addressed as JOSHUA DAVID ANGBASHIM. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known, called and addressed as AKUECHIAMA EMMANUEL MICHAEL, now wish to be known, called and addressed as AKUECHIAMA EMMANUEL UCHECHUKWUMERE. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as OZOR CHIDINMA GERALDINE, now wish to be known and addressed as ILECHUKWU CHIDINMA GERALDINE. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as JUDITH KELECHI CHUKWU, now wish to be known and addressed as JUDITH KELECHI ADABAMU. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as OZIGBU VICTOR MUNACHIMSO, now wish to be known and addressed as OKOYE VICTOR MUNACHIMSO. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as OMALE OLIVE henceforth wish to be known and addressed as ATABO OLIVE AMICHI. All ormer documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and general public to please take note.

Oyo Kicks against Return of Road Transport Workers

Kemi Olaitan in Ibadan

The leadership of the Park Management System (PMS) in Oyo State has raised the alarm that members of the proscribed National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) are making plans to resume operations and return to the parks in the state.

The Chairman, Disciplinary Committee of the agency, Alhaji Mukaila Lamidi (aka Auxiliary), while speaking with journalists in Ibadan yesterday, said electing new executives for a proscribed union is an illegality, stating that the NURTW members should not disrupt the peace in the state presently.

The National President of NURTW, Alhaji Tajudeeen Baruwa, had last Wednesday in Abuja inaugurated an 18-man committee headed by Alhaji Abideen Olajide (aka Ejiogbe) to ensure the unification of all members of the union, including the aggrieved members.

WORLD OF ISLAM

Edited by: MJO Mustapha Email deji.mustapha@thisdaylive.com

Is There an Islamic Humanism?

By: Spahic Omer/IslamiCity

There is no humanism in Islam in the mould of either Greco-Roman or Renaissance traditions. Those moulds are blasphemous. Similarly, they are offensive to the religious sentiment of Islam, and are unreasonable. Despite maintaining otherwise, Western humanism is unnatural and impractical. It is dehumanizing and exemplifies a manner of idealistic extremism. The whole thing backfired spectacularly.

Such humanism is anticlimactic as well, in that several centuries later most of its salient ideals proved to be mere illusions. They were fantasies that yielded very little, yet, in the long run, delivered more harm than benefit. As harsh as it may seem, humanism made man an avaricious wolf, an immoral wretch, and a cultural as well as civilizational hypocrite.

Humanism engendered and actively encouraged a corpus of vices the most important of which were haughtiness, egocentricity, greed, pleasure-seeking, corruption and violence. It is not an understatement to say that most evils of the modern and post-modern world are attributable, by hook or by crook, to the dark sides of humanism as the lifeblood of modern West-dominant civilization. And since the planet earth is the playground of the modern humanism-driven man, consequently the only home of humanity has been pushed to the brink of destruction.

However, there is a comprehensively unique Islamic philosophy of man that accounts for what could be described as the humanism of Islam. In any case, the term of Islamic humanism should be supported in order to provide an alternative to the former, functioning as its antithesis.

Based on that philosophy, man has been created as the vicegerent of Almighty Allah on earth. His creation is in the most beautiful form, consisting of body and soul. Yet, man has been created in the image of his Creator, as disclosed by Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) (Sahih Muslim). Man stands for the culmination of the divine creativity act, with the other tiers of creation, somehow or other, being associated with the honourable status and role of man.

For example, everything in the heavens and on the earth has been subjected to man; angels have been asked to prostrate before Adam, the father and symbol of humankind; the movement of the jinn had been restricted and closely watched due to the revelation of the Holy Qur'an; and Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) has been sent as the final messenger of Allah both to mankind and the jinn.

In addition, man has been created free and innocent. Of his own accord, he is to surrender to and worship his Creator and Master: Allah. His is to be a life of conscious servitude and gratitude. His spiritual, physical and rational abilities notwithstanding, man is not to live his life solely according to his own will, but according to the will of the Creator of all life who at the same time is the Sustainer of man and existence taken as a whole.

Nobody denies that man is given enough talents to execute his vicegerency mission on earth. However, observing man against the background of the total existential reality, he all of a sudden comes into view as an insignificant, weak and vulnerable being. He is disadvantaged and needy. Without the Creator and His revealed guidance on-board, man will be destined to wander from one gamble to another, and from one mirage to another, repeatedly mistaking error for guidance, and untruth for truth. His inherent shortcomings will fail him eventually, and his professed strengths turn into the causes of a downfall. On a civilizational scale, man's life adventures will come to a standstill and prove suicidal.

Not a soul wants to take anything from man's arsenal. However, he is admittedly mighty, but not almighty; his intellectual capacities are immense, but he can never become omniscient; he is ambitious, but still trapped in the confines of matter, time and space. To understand his smallness and helplessness, man should not look far. He should only look around himself and inside himself. Both humanism and Islam agree that man is a microcosm, albeit cast in diametrically opposite moulds and serving diametrically opposite aims.

Hence, Islam teaches that man should be pragmatic. He should recognize both his fortes and weaknesses, optimizing the former and mitigating the latter. Whatever condition he may find himself in, man should neither get carried away, nor become crestfallen. The Creator and His divine teachings are there for him, helping him to genuinely enjoy success and happiness, and to overcome the snags of failure. Both characterize the inevitabilities of life.

Come rain or shine, man is to stay true to himself, without compromising any feature of his life calling. He is to live and die with honour and dignity. This life is nothing except a prelude to the hereafter. The terrestrial context is an estate to be cultivated for the benefit of the after-world. Life is a serious business. It is the only opportunity for procuring salvation and eternal delight. For man to be thrust in the heart of everything just goes to show how serious life is and how serious man's role in it is.

There is so much at stake. Life is too short to be wasted on baselessly suspecting and conjecturing things. The trial and error procedures are as unproductive as any other form of ideological mix-up. Almighty Allah's is the only way. All innate goodness ought to function as a subsidiary to the heavenly goodness, leading to and establishing its legitimacy on it. Isma'il al-Faruqi thus concluded that Allah is the final end, i.e., the end at which all finalistic nexuses aim and come to rest. Allah is an end for all other ends. He is the ultimate object of all desire ***(Isma'il al-Faruqi, Al Tawhid: Its Implications for Thought and Life).***

In pursuit of the affirmation of Islamic humanism, man needs to strike a balance between matter and spirit, body and soul, and between the exigencies of this world and the hereafter. Neither is to be sought out for its own sake, or at the expense of the others. Instead, they are to be nurtured as parts of a harmonious whole. They are to be nurtured also as parts of an ultimately consequential order of meanings and experiences.

By way of example, if pursued for their own ends, in isolation from the areas of spirituality and ethics, neither matter, nor body, nor this world in its totality, will be able to establish its validity. On the contrary, each of them will be doomed to become insufficient, distorted and, at the end of the day, detrimental force. Despite the fact that autonomously they are not saintly, neither matter, nor body, nor this life, is intrinsically evil either. Their utilities as means and carriers of the spiritual realm are to be duly acknowledged and made the most of. What is good and what bad depends on the degree of harmony between the two: physical and metaphysical, orbs.

Man is a small-scale version of this viewpoint. His one dimension represents the lowliness of the material and the other the pre-eminence of the immaterial levels of existence. Man's assignments boil down to overcoming the advances of the former and, allied with the latter, to rise through the ranks towards spiritual fulfilment. The hereafter is the final destination and paradise the targeted eternal abode. In the process, neither the advantageous nor disadvantageous sides of life should impede man in his progress. So as to succeed, those sides are to be considered and dealt with exactly as they are, without exaggerating or devaluing either one of the two. Positively, both sides are required for the success.

In short, Islamic humanism celebrates man in its own way and paves the way for his triumph. It elevates the status of man to the level of Allah's vicegerent or representative on earth. It recognizes man's rights and responsibilities across the spectrum of the multifaceted idea and marvel of life, furnishing him with workable ways and means to prosper.

Islamic humanism acclaims man as the honourable creation, servant and the dependent one, and places him against the backdrop of the idea that Allah is the only Creator, Master and the Self-Sufficient One. Man is great and can see it through exclusively because of the implications of these reciprocal relationships. It is only owing to those relationships and godsends originating therefrom that man can think of the biggest prizes: eternity, immortality and everlasting bliss. These await in the hereafter those who succeed in this world, evading on the other hand those whose humanism patterns espoused and threaded flawed paths.

Nevertheless, regardless of what man's achievements or failures in this world may be, under no circumstances can there be an exchange of titles. The servant remains servant and the Master Master; the creation remains creation and the Creator Creator; and the dependent one remains so, and the Self-Sufficient One remains also so forever. It follows that Islamic humanism is possible only due to the impetus of Islamic spirituality, and its actual results can be achieved and fruits tasted only in collaboration with the hereafter. By no means can man be deified in any way and any degree, nor can Almighty God be anthropomorphized in any way and any degree. This is the singularity of Islamic humanism which stems from the Islamic tawhidic (God's Oneness) worldview. This is also what sets Islamic humanism apart from other types of humanism.

Isma'il al-Faruqi encapsulated the meaning and fundamental traits of Islamic humanism when he said: "A world of difference separates this humanism of Islam from other humanisms. Greek civilization, for instance, developed a strong humanism which the West has taken as a model since the Renaissance. Founded upon an exaggerated naturalism, Greek humanism deified man - as well as his vices… The humanism of tawhid alone is genuine. It alone respects man and creaturely, without either deification or vilification. It alone defines the worth of man in terms of his virtues and begins its assessment of him with a positive mark for the innate endowment God has given all men in preparation for their noble task. It alone defines the virtues and ideals of human life in terms of the very contents of natural life, rather than denying them, thus making its humanism life-affirmative as well as moral" ***(Isma'il al-Faruqi, Al Tawhid: Its Implications for Thought and Life)***

BACKPAGE CONTINUATION

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE: NIGERIA AND THE UK

gap and vacuum in the transition to the Fourth republic politics. To this end I and my peers gathered together to form a group called the progressive action movement, PAM, 'which was conceptualized as a response to the gap and vacuum in leadership reproduction, to whose remedy we programmatically addressed ourselves. We intended ourselves as a kind of political nursery for preparing and producing a successor class at the shortest possible time.

In the formation of this pressure group, we anticipated the obidents movement by 22 years. Unfortunately, PAM failed to realise its potential and went into hibernation for lack of sufficient motivation.The dream is now being relived at the prompt of a pent up frustration and anger of a hitherto inept millennium generation (inclusive of generation z). They found a near perfect foil in the reformist candidature of Peter Obi who happens to speak their language. If luck is defined as a conjunction of opportunity and capability, Obi has become the lucky beneficiary of this moment, the activation of a politically dormant army of restless and bristling youths.

Before the emergence of the obidents, Nigeria was fated to the inevitability of the status-quo candidates of Vice-President Atiku Abubakar and Governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu as the potential president of Nigeria. These two are a made to measure personification of the social reproduction thesis. Both are a reproduction and continuation of the Mohammadu Buhari presidency in the character and ideological profile of their presidential tickets. There are two characteristics that define the Buhari presidency more than any other. They are fulani ethnic chauvinism and pseudo Islamic bigotry.

In continuation of the buhari ideology, Atiku personifies the former characteristic, while the latter is embodied in Tinubu's muslim muslim ticket. They are different sides of the same coin. To appreciate how deeply cut, this ideology has permeated society, the son of the kaduna state governor, Bashir El Rufai, took to celebrating the occasion of the Queen's death to rub it in "The British colonial establishment placed the North at the peak of power in my dear country. For that I will always be indebted to the British royal crown and the method of Indirect rule for my people and our dear monarchs. Rest in peace Queen Elizabeth"

At one point or another, it is incumbent upon me to enter the caveat that I have a good prior personal relationship with Abubakar and Tinubu. These are otherwise good men whom I would have counselled not to throw their hats in the ring this time around. This personal obligation ends where the love of God and country begins. Either candidacy is inherently inimical to the notion of a Nigerian nationhood. The last time I saw him (about a year and a half ago), I told Tinubu as much. For good measure I put my objection on record in this column the following day. It is trite but the point needs restatement. I deem it morally unjustifiable of the south west to contend with the south east for the presidency in this electoral cycle.

If the power rotation principle is in the spirit of equity, fairness and justice how then do we justify another contender from the south-west against the background of the fact that President Olusegun Obasanjo held the office for eight years (in addition to the eight years of Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo) and President Goodluck Jonathan from the south south for six years, when no one from the third zone has held the office for a day?

Two Yoruba precepts are in conflict here. One is the omolúwàbí concept and the other is the proverbial rationalisation of selfishness 'omo eni ò sèdí bebere ká fi ìleke sí ìdí omo elòmíràn' (no matter how ill fitting the waist bead is on your child, you must not give it to another child). In contrast to this amoral vision of society is the concept of Omoluabi (one who behaves as a well born). It is embodied in the notion that 'morality is the central cannon of Yoruba culture and emphasis on it is the cardinal article of daily life. Yoruba culture is defined by the incentives for good conduct and moral rectitude on one hand and disincentives/ sanction against misconduct and evil behaviour on another'.

The utility of the Obi candidacy is that at the end of the day he did not require the extenuation of power rotation to the south east to catch the fancy of the most critical demographic of the Nigerian electorate. He emerged autonomously on his merit. He has done more. According to Sonala Olumehse "What is Obi, then? If you think of him merely as a contestant for public office, you miss the point. Obi is a conversation, a confession, and an opportunity to rethink. He is the epochal conversation Nigeria has not had with itself since the rails fell off following the civil war in 1970. He is a confession that this conversation—demanded far more by the #EndSARS generation than the Grand Ballroom demographic—is not optional". And I couldn't agree more with Dele Farotimi, on the postulation that without the intervention of someone like Obi, through whom the frustrated and angry youths could channel their indignation at the free fall of their country, Nigeria is plausibly headed towards an anarchic implosion.

RE: TWO OF A KIND

this assignment, Okiro credits Asiwaju with the double promotion that made him the country's top cop.

There is always a critical context that defines Tinubu's generosity as a person and elected representative. As the democratically elected governor of Lagos State between 1999 and 2007, Tinubu recognized the role of the student movement in particular and the youths generally in the struggle against military dictatorship and took them under his wings. A former Public Relations Officer of the University of Ife Students Union and later President of the National Association of Nigerian Students, NANS, Opeyemi Bamidele, now a senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was appointed the Commissioner for Youths and Sports. Another leader of the students' movement, Comrade Rauf Aregbesola was appointed the Commissioner for Works and Infrastructures. After eight years as governor of Osun State, he is now the Minister of Interior. Other student comrades such as Segun Maiyegun, Ogaga Ifowodo, Sylvester Odion-Akhaine, Late Rotimi Obadofin, Late Chima Ubani maintained fraternal contact with him.

Indeed, when Ubani died in the course of the struggle of the labour movement against the deregulation of the downstream sector of the petroleum industry, it was Tinubu who solved the problem of accommodation for his bereaved family by donating a three-bedroom flat at the Abiola Gardens to Ochuwa, his widow and children. He also approved yearly scholarships for the children. Osuntokun may want to tell us what "subversion" this "generosity" to the family of a late activist was meant to neutralize.

It is not yet time to ask where Peter Obi was during this tragedy that befell a foremost fighter for working-class liberation of Igbo birth and prominent leader of the international revolutionary movement. We know he will have no answer because he was never in the radical movement whether as a student of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, or worker. He wants to reap from a movement he never sowed into; a movement whose language he cannot speak.

But we have evidence, that, instead of Tinubu, it is Obi who has a very urgent need to apply Osuntokun's voodoo principle of "subversive generosity". How now? There are two "subversive" developments threatening his legitimacy and legality as the presidential candidate of the Labour Party arising from the coup that got him the presidential ticket. The first is the ongoing court case of Callistus Okafor, a fellow Igbo and the deputy chairman of the Labour Party who, according to the party constitution, should succeed the chairman. He is in court to argue that Julius Abure, the national secretary has no constitutional basis to act as chairman. Already, Okafor has alleged that Chief Doyin Okupe claims that he wants N48million to settle his lawyers before he would co-operate with Obi. In another instance, he alleges that there are rumours that he wants N15million to withdraw his case. The transactional character of these developments is enough to puncture the false misrepresentation of the presidential ticket of Obi as a break from the norm.

While Okafor kicks despite the compromising endorsement of Abure by the labour leadership, the supporters of Sampson Uchenna Charles, another Labour Party presidential hopeful of Igbo origin, are protesting the betrayal of the man they allege spent his resources to reposition the party in the belief that he would be given the ticket. In a statement targeting Obi, they stated that "the same politician with the same mind has now seen Labour as a fallback when the heat of their corrupted party is too much to bear."



Tinubu

How well Osuntokun has mastered the strategy and tactics of subversive generosity will be determined by the application of this principle to the resolution of his presidential candidate's problem.

What seems very clear from the above narrative is that the Labour bureaucracy has, once again, confirmed the position of the Marxist thinker and internationalist, Leon Trotsky that whenever there is scarcity, deliberate or contrived, bureaucracy emerges, first to regulate, then, to control. It is true that the Nigerian labour centres- the Nigerian Labour Congress and the Trade Union Congress- established the Labour Party. It is also true that despite the presence of the mass of working-class unionists and professional associations affiliated with labour, the two centres have contrived to create an artificial scarcity in the leadership of the party and put its ticket on sale to the highest bidder. Else how does one explain the emergence of such conservative, reactionary hagiographers of anti- working class oppressors such as Osuntokun in its leadership or famous commercial capitalist who hides investments in proxy accounts as its presidential candidate?

There is a gross disconnect between the labour leadership that has sold the ticket of the revolutionary movement to its oppressors for a pittance and the working class and peasants who ultimately own the ticket and no amount of false consciousness propagated by this insincere leadership will lead workers to vote for a man that was never there when their comrades and cadres fell on the field of battle.

It is thus easy to understand the fixation of Osuntokun with the Muslim-Muslim ticket and similar primordial excrements of a system crying for revolutionary transformation that he defines as "divisive instruments" of the polity. A mind permanently in statis can only conjure a society in stagnation, tied eternally to its weaknesses to the extent that they are perceived as congenital and unchangeable.

Anyone who flaunts friendship with autocratic octogenarians who laid the foundation of the immiseration machine called the Structural Adjustment Programme like Osuntokun can no longer trace the devaluation of the Naira from the introduction of the Second-Tier Foreign Exchange Market to the current status of our national currency. They can no longer connect the privatization and commercialization of public enterprises that led to mass retrenchment with the joblessness that still undermines our economy today.

That such arch-reactionaries are the ones preaching labor to the labor movement is enough provocation. That they have the temerity to point at the speck that may be in our eyes while they are comfortable with the logs in theirs is the tragedy of our times.

The APC Tinubu/Shettima presidential ticket deliberately seeks to demystify religion as the opium which the ruling class has used, for many decades, to manipulate the masses. We seek to prove that Nigerians love fellow Nigerians not because they belong to particular religion or region but because true Nigerians are like fellow human beings all over the world who belong to one global family protected by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Rights. We consciously seek to build a new country where citizenship, symbolized by the Nigerian passport and flag, towers over tribe and bribe. Our campaign will call on Nigerians to heed this call for patriotism and service to the Fatherland. On February 25, 2023, history shall vindicate our mandate.

And to Seun Kolade, who advertised wanton ignorance in his article, "Tinubu and Afenifere", it is important to direct you to seek the report of the committee set up by the Afenifere in 2003 to evaluate how well each governor elected on the platform of the Alliance for Democracy complied with the principles of restructuring, true federalism and welfarism. Former Communications Minister, Chief Cornelius Adebayo chaired the committee. The report will confirm to you that this committee commended Asiwaju Bola Tinubu for excellence in executing the mandate and recommended him for another term.

Tinubu pursued the strategy of executing true federalism by adopting the tactics of administrative and judicial review. Administratively, he removed all the insignia of the Federal Government left by the military administrator, General Buba Marwa on public buildings, vehicles, and items and replaced them with the now familiar Lagos State logo. This logo was created at the inception of Lagos State but since the exit of the Second Republic administration of Pa Lateef Jakande, successive military administrators replaced them with federal insignia in line with the unitary character of the military command system.

The flag of the state became more prominent in all public places and events. Lagosians began to feel autonomous with the changes in the branding of the state outdoors and indoors. Stationeries and public documentation were rebranded to demonstrate this strategic shift to revive the message that "Gedegbe l'Eko was" (Lagos is fit to be on its own).

But more comprehensive and valuable was the tactic of judicial review. The federal constitution of 1999 has three lists- exclusive, which dealt with matters on

which only the federal tier can act on or make laws; concurrent, that is matters that both the federal and the state can make law or act upon with the proviso that where there is conflict, the federal law shall supersede and the residual, matters not in the exclusive or concurrent.

Considering over two decades of arbitrary federal control over states due to military rule, there was an attitudinal closure among the citizens that these powers were irreversible and it took the courage of Governor Tinubu to change this mindset by challenging the illegal practices in court. For instance, the Lagos State asserted its physical planning powers by seeking judicial re-affirmation of its constitutional control over federal land and issuance of certificates of occupancy. Similarly, it sued the Federal Government on its rights to create new local governments, produce number plates and implement the sales tax.

The victory recorded in these cases restructured the constitutional architecture between Lagos and the federal government and became a source of revenue for the sustenance of the government.

Kolade trivializes the serious discourse over true federalism by confusing it with herdsmen and farmers clashes. Pastoral animal husbandry involving herdsmen has been practiced in the Western Region without any problem since the 70s. The introduction of violence leading to insecurity is not, fundamentally, a matter of true federalism and restructuring. Each South Western state has governors elected to protect their citizens and it would amount to baiting a Tinubu who had no executive powers and had left government since 2007 to make a pronouncement on a security matter.

Finally, while it is our interest to work with all groups, experience has also taught us that there is a lot of envy, hatred, and spite in the vengeful disposition of persons whose ambition to control and determine the electoral influence of Bola Tinubu met its waterloo at a critical period in the politics of the region. Such persons have chosen to pitch their tent with presidential candidates other than Tinubu in the hope of asserting their electoral value. As true democrats, we cannot but wish them and their presidential captives the best of luck in the conviction that the script of the 2003 elections will surely and certainly re-create another Last Man standing in the February 25, 2023 polls.

•Kehinde Bamigbetan, press secretary to Governor Bola Tinubu, 2005-2007, lives in Lagos.

FRIDAYSPORTS

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Buhari Rewards Athletes with National Honours, N200m Cash

●*Amusan, Brume conferred with Officer of the Order of the Niger (OON)*

Deji Elumoye in Abuja

President Muhammadu Buhari has approved National Honours and N200 million cash awards for Team Nigeria contingents to the 2022 Commonwealth Games and World Athletics championships.

For their outstanding performances at both competitions, Oluwatobiloba Amusan and Ese Brume are now recipients of Nigeria's National Honour, the Officer of the Order of the Niger (OON).

Speaking yesterday, at a presidential reception at the Banquet Hall of the State House, Abuja, in honour of the athletes, the president said his government was committed to rewarding excellence, no less for members of Team Nigeria who ignited the spirit of victory in the nation through stellar performances at international competitions.

Congratulating all the awardees and recipients, Buhari expressed confidence that this would spur them to greater heights.

The president who described the athletes as champions, worthy ambassadors, national heroes and heroines, heaped praises on them for proudly flying the Nigerian flag in nine sporting events.

According to him, "I watched with millions of Nigerians those exciting moments when you all brought smiles to us and our homes by breaking world, national and games records, as well as achieving personal best in your careers.

"Your outstanding performances in recent times are consistent with the determination of a nation always yearning for excellent performance.

"You all, members of Team Nigeria have ignited the spirit for victory in our nation but even more you have been victorious in major sporting championships and games.

"I have followed keenly your achievements at the World Championships in Oregon USA and indeed your remarkable performance at the recently concluded Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, United Kingdom.

"And I am very pleased that you displayed at both the personal and group levels great sporting talents and delivered for your country great podium performances".

The president told the athletes that their hour of sporting glory beamed the "radar of the world on Nigeria," adding that their exploits have gone a long way in projecting the positive image of the country.

"Twelve times the world stood still as our green, white, green national flag was hoisted and the National Anthem recited. Thirty-five times we made it to the podium. You all Team Nigeria made that possible.

"You brought glory and honour to our country. And today, on behalf of the nation- I say, thank you."

Buhari called out the names of the gold winners and other medal winners including the world champion in the 100m hurdles, Tobiloba Amusan, Ese Brume, Blessing Oboroduduu , Oluwafemiayo Folashade, Taiwo Liadi, Ikechukwu Obichukwu, Bose Omolayo, Favour Ofili, Nasiru Sule, Ifechukwude Ikpeoyi, Ebikewenimo Welson, Hannah Rueben and Elizabeth Osoba.

Reiterating the commitment of his administration in providing the enabling environment for youths to ascend to the pinnacle of their chosen careers, the president expressed satisfaction with the impact the Adopt-An-Athlete Initiative of the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development had on the performance of athletes.

He urged more private individuals and corporate organisations to support government's investment in sports, which has been reclassified from being a recreational activity to being a business in line with modern practices worldwide.

Buhari also acknowledged the many giant strides witnessed in the sports sector under the Minister of Youth and Sports Development, Sunday Dare and his team, commending the numerous and sustained successes recorded in the last few years.

Earlier in his speech, Minister of Youth and Sports Development, Sunday Dare, described 2022 as an outstanding year in the history of Nigerian sports, which shall not be forgotten in a hurry.

According to him, it was a year where many sporting federations have surpassed and are surpassing their previous performances, while many athletic records were broken.

Highlighting the most remarkable feats, Dare said in track and field, Amusan in a span of four months won Nigeria's first ever gold medal in World Athletics Championships in Eugene, Oregon, USA with a world record performance in an event highly dominated by the Americans and Europeans.

She also successfully defended her Commonwealth Games title, which she won in 2018 in Gold Coast, with a games record in 2022 in Birmingham; and Diamond League title in Zurich, Switzerland on September 8, 2022, the Minister said, adding that this remarkable performance has never been achieved by any Nigerian in the history of our sports.

The minister further said Brume, another trailblazer in Nigerian sports, won silver medal in the Women's Long Jump event at the 2022 World Athletics Championships and a gold medal at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham with a games record performance.

Dare recalled that the first time Nigeria won a medal in wrestling at the Olympic Games since 1952, was at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics by Oboruduu, who clinched a silver medal to the admiration of the entire globe.



TEARS OF FULFILLMENT...

Tobi Amusan shedding tears of joy on the podium in Oregon, USA after winning the women's 100m gold medal. She had earlier erased the world record in the semifinal leading to the gold



Roger Federer...set for final bow from tennis

Nadal Rues Federer's Decision to Retire

Roger Federer's decision to retire from tennis is a "sad day" for sport, his great rival Rafael Nadal said in reaction to the exit of the Swiss from the sport.

Federer, a 20-time Grand Slam champion, announced on Thursday that he would retire after the Laver Cup this month.

Only Spain's Nadal, with 22 majors, and Serbia's Novak Djokovic, with 21, have more men's Grand Slam singles titles than the 41-year-old.

"Dear Roger, my friend and rival. I wish this day would have never come," Nadal posted on social media.

"It's a sad day for me personally and for sports around the world."

Nadal defeated Federer 24 times in 40 matches during one of the most celebrated rivalries in tennis history.

"It's been a pleasure but also an honour and privilege to share all these years with you, living so many amazing moments on and off the court," Nadal said.

"We will have many more moments to share together in the future, there are still lots of things to do together, we know that.

"For now, I truly wish you all the happiness with your wife, Mirka, your kids, your family and enjoy what's ahead of you. I'll see you in London."

Federer made his professional debut aged 16 in 1998 and won his first Grand Slam title at Wimbledon in 2003.

The chairman of the All England Lawn Tennis Club, Ian Hewitt, congratulated Federer on a "truly remarkable career".

"He will forever be celebrated as one of our greatest Wimbledon champions, having lifted the trophy eight times from his 22 appearances at the All England Club," Hewitt added.

Billie Jean King, a 12-time Grand Slam winner, said Federer is a "champion's champion".

Police Seal off LMC Offices in Abuja

Officers from the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) yesterday sealed off offices of the League Management Company (LMC) in Abuja.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that no fewer than 10 police officers arrived at the entrance of the LMC office early in the day to seal up the premises.

They took up places to bar workers and visitors from entering the office located at 20, Osun Crescent in the Maitama District, after arriving in a van and two other patrol cars.

The officer who led the team of policemen, after refusing to reveal his identity, told NAN they were instructed from the Force Headquarters to seal off the LMC office.

He also said they were given orders not to allow newsmen take pictures of the scene.

Anyone who wished to do so will have to get a permit from the Force Public Relations Officer (FPRO) before he or she could be granted access," the officer added.

NAN reports that the order to seal off the LMC office may not be unconnected with the directive on Friday by the Federal Government.

The directive, passed through the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development, had advised the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) to immediately withdraw LMC's operating licence.

The LMC had since 2012 been the sole operator of the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL).

The directive, in a statement signed by Ismaila Abubakar, the ministry's Permanent Secretary, had said government was constrained to withdraw its recognition of the LMC.

This, it said, was in view of the several unpleasant incidents regarding the management of the country's professional football league.

The NFF was also directed to set up an Interim Management Committee (IMC) to run the league pending the time the clubs would run it themselves.

NAN reports that NFF, as at Thursday, was yet to react to the directive as well as the sealing off of the LMC office. (NAN)

Amusan: Why I Cried on the Podium at Oregon World Championship

●*Brume reveals never dreamt of bagging OON National Honour*

Multi medalist and World Record holder in women's 100m hurdles, Tobi Amusan, has explained why she cried at the medal presentation ceremony of the World Athletics Championships in Oregon, United States.

Speaking after the awards ceremony held at the Banquet Hall of the State House, Abuja on Thursday, Amusan described her cries as tears of fulfillment sort of, after many near misses in her career.

In response to a reporter's question on what was going through her mind while tears were rolling down her cheeks on the podium at Oregon 2022, Amusan said: "So in regards to your question, pretty much that moment was more of a "finally" kind of moment, for the hard work and the sacrifices, the dedication, and mostly more of the setbacks, failure and, you know, defeats every now and then. So it was just a moment of relief, pretty much."

Also speaking at the ceremony, Ese Brume, said she got more than she expected.

Brume while commenting on her feelings about the honour done to them said: "That was amazing. To be honest, I was expecting something like MFR, but I got a double portion. I'm happy, I'm excited, thanks to the President."

Asked what motivates her when on the jump pits, she said: "My inspiration is divine. It comes from God," observed the Delta-born long jumper.

On his part, Minister of Youth and Sports and Development, Sunday Dare, noted that the award was the first in President Buhari's administration in seven and half years and the highest given to any sports man or woman in the country.

He said: "Just as an aside. This president, since he came in seven and half years ago, has never given a National Award, he said he was not going to do it. But for the very first time in seven and a half years, he decided to give the National Award to our sportsmen and women. And we thank him most sincerely, and give them credit.

"If you also know, this is about the highest award ever given to a Nigerian Athlete, OON - Officer of the Order of the Niger. You can check it out. I think it's about the highest any sportsman or woman has ever received. And that's what Mr. President did to both Ese and Tobi and we're grateful for that distinction."

Nigeria won a total of 35 medals, including 12 gold, 9 silver and 14 bronze at the just concluded Commonwealth games and claimed the best position amongst African nations.

Ronaldo Scores First Europa League Goal at Sherriff



Cristiano Ronaldo scored his first Europa League goal as Manchester United defeated FC Sherrif 2-0 ...yesterday

Cristiano Ronaldo ended his barren spell with the first Europa League goal of his career as Manchester United earned 2-0 victory at Sheriff Tiraspol.

Erik ten Hag's men suffered defeat at Old Trafford in their Group E opener against Real Sociedad but responded by claiming all three points in Moldova.

The Red Devils opened the scoring in the first half as a lovely team move was coolly finished off by Jadon Sancho from Christian Eriksen's reverse pass.

Sancho, who was left out of the England squad earlier in the day, came close to a second but his low shot was brilliantly cleared off the line by Sheriff captain Stjepan Radeljic on the stretch.

But United did double their advantage before half-time courtesy of Ronaldo's penalty, awarded after Patrick Kpozo tripped Diogo Dalot in the box.

Ronaldo could have taken his tally to 700 club goals but side-footed over from the edge of the area while at the other end, Sheriff could not force David de Gea into any meaningful saves.

In the group's other game, Real Sociedad made it two wins from two with a 2-1 victory over Neil Lennon's Omonia Nicosia.

FIDE President, Arkady, Expected in Lagos Tonight

Femi Solaja

AFRICAN CHESS TOURNEY

The President of World Chess Federation, Arkady Dvorkovich, will arrive Nigeria tonight for the much-anticipated African Individual Chess Championship (AICC) which is expected to start tomorrowat the Orchid Hotel in Lekki, Lagos.

The event, which is being organised by Nigeria Chess Federation (NCF) will run from 17th which is the arrival date for all participants till 28th of this monthat same venue.

Arkady, who was recently re-elected to serve another term in office during the last World Chess Olympiad is visiting the country for the first time and the third FIDE Boss after Late Florencio Campomanes and immediate past leader, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov.

According to the Technical Director of NCF, Bode Durotoye, Nigeria will be represented at the tournament by 11 male and seven female players.

"All is set for the tournament to start and we can confirm participation from 23 countries including Nigeria. While some of the players qualified to play based on their current ratings the other players are self sponsored," he explained.

Nigerian players in the male section include; Bunmi Olape, (IM), Chukwunoson, Oragwu, Olufemi Balogun, Isaac Okeke, Toluwanimi Okemakinde, Ogogho Dennis, Joshua Adejoh, Ifeanyi Okonkwo, Musa Keyi, Akomaka Apollos, Chima Kenechukwu and Akinleye Akinseye.

In the female section, Oluwatobiloba Oloruntola (WFM) leads the pack with Jessica Pelomoh, Agbazue Miracle, Rosemary Amadasun, Onoja Oyefu, Oke Abiodun and Mayomi Oyelese made up the list of Nigerian players for the biggest Chess event on the continent.

Meanwhile, Egypt will lead the power house to the tournament with players from Madagascar, South Africa, Cape Verde, Zambia, Angola, Namibia, Botwana, South Sudan, Zimbabwe, Cote D' Ivoire, Cameroon, Sierra Leano, Liberia, Ghana, Somalia, Mozambique and Chad will be contesting for title in the next 10 days.

Boswana staged the last edition.

BOWFT: Yemisi Determined to Lift Trophy with Edo Queens Today

Edo Queens Forward Yemisi Samuel is determined to experience the 'special' feeling of lifting Betsy Obaseki Women Football Tournament infront of the home fans as they prepare to come up against FC Robo Queens in today's final at the Samuel Ogbemudia Stadium, Benin.

The young forward joined the Edo team from Osun Babes two seasons ago and has become an integral part of the Benin-based side.

Samuel, who was Edo Queens top scorer last season, is optimistic that they can lift the Betsy Obaseki Women Football Tournament trophy right at their home ground and knows it's going to be remembered for a very long time.

"It would be a very special moment for me," She noted.

"We have a great squad and want to achieve something different this time around, by lifting this trophy.

"We are already excited about getting through to the final and everyone is ready and so hopeful we can win on Friday (today)," she confided in Tobexmedia yesterday

FC Robo Queens defeated Edo Queens in the final of one of the Pre-season Tournament last year and also crashed them out of this year's AiTEO Cup Championship. But Edo Queens won them in last year's Third place game of the Besty Obaseki Women Football Tournament.

They will face each other at the Samuel Ogbemudia Stadium, Benin in the final of the 2022 Betsy Obaseki Women Football Tournament this afternoon.

HIFL '22: KSU Steelers, FUOYE Dazzlers for Finals

KSU Steelers from Kogi State University have qualified for the finals of this year's Higher Institutions Football League (HiFL) after defeating UNILORIN Warriors 1-0 in a pulsating semi-final match played in Minna. The Steelers will play the FUOYE Dazzlers from Federal University, Oye Ekiti in the finals.

HiFL organised by Pace Sports and Entertainment Limited and the Nigerian University Games Association (NUGA) is supported by StanbicIBTC, Bold, Indomie, and the Lagos Internal Revenue Services and is in its fourth active season.

KSU Steelers qualified for the semi-finals after defeating the BUK Stallions from Bayero University Kano 4-3 via penalty shootout in the quarter-finals with the game locked at 2-2in full time.

In the semi-final match, both the Steelers and the Warriors fought hard to break each other's defence to no avail until the 79th minute when Benjamin Jude capitalized on a loose ball to drive home a powerful shot that left the Warrior's keeper sprawling.

FUOYE Dazzlers qualified to play in the finals following the ouster of DELSU Titans on technical grounds. During their quarter-final game with LASU Blazers, the Dazzlers escaped by the whiskers after the Blazers came back from 2-0 to level the game 2-2 in the nick of time. The Dazzlers goalkeeper and Stanbic IBTC Man of the Match Lawani Clinton saved two penalties to ensure his team advanced to the next stage at 4-2.

Speaking on the games, the Chief Operating Officer, Pace Sports, Goodness Onyejiaku noted that the organisers are committed to ensuring the league delivers more than just a game of football this season.

"HiFL 2022 has delivered its promise to unify lovers of collegiate sports across the country. We have witnessed some fantastic games across different centres of participating schools and the feedback has been good. Now we have our teams for the Super Four to be played in Lagos and we are all waiting to crown the new champion," Onyejiaku said.

The teams that will play in this year's Super Four are KSU Steelers, FUOYE Dazzlers, UNILORIN Warriors, and UNN Lions. The game between the Steelers and the Dazzlers will determine the new champion while the Warriors and the Lions will fight for third place.

Olayinka on Target, as Moses Simon Others Fire Blank

EUROPA LEAGUE

Peter Olayinka was again on the scoreboard for Slavia Prague to beat KF Ballkani from Kosovo 3 -1 in a UEFA Europa Conference League group game.

Olayinka scored his team's second goal in the 34th minute.

He has now scored twice in the competition.

Another Nigerian international, Moses Simon was in action for almost 80 minutes as his Ligue 1 club side Nantes were bashed 3-0 by Qarabag.

Elsewhere on the night, another Nigerian forward, Victor Olatunji, featured for his Cypriot club AEK Larnaca who secured a 1-0 away win against Dynamo Kyiv in Group B of the Europa League on Thursday.

Olatunji, 23, was on from the start of the game before he was withdrawn for Rafael Lopes in the 73rd minute.

The only goal of the game was scored by Adam Gyurcso just eight minutes into the game.

Also in Group B, Bright Osayi-Samuel saw action for 90 minutes as Fenerbahce came from 2-0 down to draw 2-2 at Rennes.

Fenerbahce and Rennes are both on four points in the group standings.

Other Europa League results saw Bodoe/Glimt pip FC Zurich 2-1, Real Betis edged Ludogorets 3-2, Roma thrashed HJK Helsinki 3-0, Union Berlin lost 1-0 to Sporting Braga and Union St. Gilloise overcame Malmö FF 3-2.



Peter Olayinka was on scorer's sheet as Slavia Prague defeated Moldova side Ballkani 3-2 in their Europa Conference League last night



THISDAY

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MISSILE

Stakeholders to Julius Berger

"Julius Berger has been particularly slow in their part of the road construction (Lagos-Ibadan Expressway). We expect them to provide alternative route, but they have not, despite the fact that they are handling the shorter part of the road…the refusal of the police to station their men at intervals along the long bridge is responsible for incessant attacks by robbers " *–Secretary of the Freedom Branch of Transporters Union, Ojodu, Olaniyi Bashorun, berating Julius Berger for the carnage on the long bridge.*

THISDAY 27 years OF ROBUST JOURNALISM SINCE 1995

AKINOSUNTOKUN

DIALOGUE WITH NIGERIA

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Continuity and Change: Nigeria and the UK

Since I signed off two weeks ago, two significant developments had taken place in the United Kingdom, UK, bordering on leadership succession. I will look at them from the perspectives of generational leadership succession and renewal on one hand and that of social reproduction thesis. It is equally apposite to Nigeria as it grapples with another general election cycle especially in regard of the enthusiasm it has ignited among the younger generation.

In the UK the emergence of a new king and new prime minister is remarkable only in respect of its predictability and orderliness. It has adequately responded to the challenge of the management of the transition from former prime minister Boris Johnson to the new prime minister, Elizabeth Truss; and that of the world historic Queen Elizabeth to her son King Charles 111. The seamless change of baton from Johnson to Truss was facilitated by the political party system whose main function is political leadership recruitment. On her part, Truss is distinguished by the uniqueness of being the third female prime minister in British history. The transition was also characterised by the minor drama of a gender swap in both successions. Truss (female succeeded Johnson (male) as prime minister and vice versa with the Queen and her son, King Charles 111.

The real news of the new prime minister's incumbency is the 'assemblage of the most ethnically diverse Cabinet in the United Kingdom's history, with several top jobs given



King Charles III

to Black and other minority ethnic lawmakers. For the first time ever, none of the holders of the country's four so-called "Great Offices of State" -- the prime minister, the chancellor and the home and foreign secretaries -- is a White man". This cosmopolitan composition notwithstanding little has changed to ruffle the British social class formation and representation. A class analysis of this ethnic diversity reveals nothing has changed.

'More than two-thirds of the new Cabinet went to fee-paying private schools, including Braverman, Cleverly and Kwarteng, compared to just 7% of the British population as a whole. The past four Conservative prime ministers all attended the University of Oxford; of the last five chancellors, only Sajid Javid did not study at Oxford or Cambridge, the UK's two most elite universities'.

'Kwasi Kwarteng, who will take charge of the UK's dire economic situation as chancellor, was born in London after his parents migrated from Ghana in the 1960s; the mother of James Cleverly, the new foreign minister, came to the UK from Sierra Leone, while incoming Home Secretary Suella Braverman has Kenyan and Mauritian parents. For that matter, the new secretary of trade, Kemi Badenoh, is the daughter of a friend, Dr Femi Adegoke, who passed on a year ago.

Back in Nigeria, this general election cycle has been characterised by the weaponisation of sociopolitical division; the highest bidder syndrome and the back and forth furtive behavior of the electoral umpire, so called Independent national electoral commission, INEC. Today the electoral agency will bask in the glory of the announcement of electronic transmission of results all the way, only to contradict itself with a counter announcement the following day that electronic transmission will stop short of the final collation stage and give way to manual counting. You can draw your conclusions. And of all the monitors and observers of the presidential primaries of the All Progressive Congress, APC and the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, it was only the Nigerian security agencies including the EFCC that were not aware that the venues of the primaries were active criminal scenes of cash and carry politics.

Prior to 1999, there has been the failure of the political system to fulfill the role of continuous and regular leadership reproduction and recruitment into the civilian political class-to assume political succession from one generation to another. This poverty is the corrolary of the disruption of military intervention in the politics of Nigeria. Conventionally and specifically, the role of leadership recruitment into the political system is that of the political parties. Understood as such, the poverty of the performance of this role is self-explanatory in the non-existence of political parties for the better part of the period spanning 1960 to 1999. Before the onset of the Fourth Republic in 1999, military rule accounted for 23 of the 39 years of independent Nigeria governance. However, uninterrupted by extra constitutional intervention of the military and going on 23 years now, the fourth republic has been the longest subsistence of civil democratic rule in Nigeria.

In year 2001, I spotted an emergent generational

Continued on page 53

KEHINDEBAMIGBETAN

GUEST COLUMNIST



Re: Two of A Kind

Members of the All Progressives Congress and supporters of Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu who read the back page of Thisday on Friday, September 2nd, 2022, must have observed that the two articles –"Two of a Kind" by Akin Osuntokun and " Tinubu and Afenifere" by Seun Kolade were, indeed, two of a kind!

Both oppose the presidential candidature of Tinubu and root for Peter Obi of the Labour Party on grounds that are false and illogical and assumptions that are retrogressive and primordial. Both are not informed commentaries but partisan advocacy, a hagiographic apology to an envious, vengeful ancient regime determined to put old poison in fresh-looking bottles.

What do I mean? Fresh from a media blitz of his decamp from the Peoples Democratic Party, a party that allowed him to become a Special Adviser to President Olusegun Obasanjo on Political Matters despite zero electoral value and Managing Director of the News Agency of Nigeria despite zero reportorial experience, Osuntokun tried to live up to his new title as the "South West Leader" of his new party by dubiously grouping his presidential adversaries in the APC and PDP as birds of the same feather to clothe his party's candidate in borrowed robes.

He should have known that differentiation is the cardinal principle of competition and any attempt to blur the distinctive edges of a brand like Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu in this election to mobilize the mob for his candidate will not succeed.

Osuntokun launches his tirade by disparaging the party primary of the APC as a financial bazaar insinuating therefrom that it signposts that it would not fight corruption. From our perspective, incentivizing delegates who left their loved ones in the country's 774 local government areas to perform the national duty of electing the flagbearer that has the greatest chance of becoming Nigeria's next president is another evidence of Tinubu's legendary compassion and generosity.

It does not compare with the pretentious holier-than-thou posturing of Peter Obi whose media handlers claim does not give shishi but could raise N40million to buy the form to contest for the presidential ticket of the PDP. What Osuntokun should be explaining is how much Obi spent to hijack the Labour Party whose ideology he has never professed and whose manifesto, according to Barrister Kayode Ajulo, a former secretary of the Labour Party, has not read. Osuntokun should be convincing us how Obi was able to get the votes of 97 of the 98 delegates of a party he never associated with since it was established in 2002 and whether the delegates were fed with water and accommodated on the roads to secure their votes.

By rational projections, between Tinubu who brought the Action Congress of Nigeria to partner with other parties to form APC, and Obi, who was a stranger to the Labour Party, who needed to buy any delegate? The answer is Obi who did not just cross parties but is pretending to have committed ideological suicide.

Osuntokun worsens his case by invoking the spirit and letters of the irrepressible Pa Anthony Enahoro who came up with the concept of "subversive generosity" to define the strategy of compromising opponents with handouts adopted by the military junta of General Ibrahim Babangida. Without citing any historic precedent or fact, he engages in insane futurology, alleging that Tinubu believes so much that cash can solve every problem that he would throw money at the problem of insecurity. His allegation: "the first item is going to be the appeasement of sundry bandits and terrorists with tons of cash".

Yet this writer lived in Lagos between 1999 and 2007 when Tinubu was governor. If "appeasement" of bandits was Tinubu's strategy for tackling crime, would he establish the Rapid Response Squad, empower the police officers with arms, ammunition, and vehicles and support them with welfare allowances that enabled them to drive criminals out of town?

To corroborate Tinubu's zero tolerance for banditry, the Commissioner of Police in Lagos State between 1999 and 2003 who later became the Inspector General of Police, Mr. Mike Okiro stated in the Premium Times edition of August 26, 2022, how Tinubu begged IGP Musiliu Smith to deploy him to Lagos to combat banditry. Read him: "Lagos was in a problem. Criminality was at its peak- robbery, killings, kidnapping was at their peak. People were leaving Lagos State.

Asiwaju made a special request to the IG. That was how I found myself as Commissioner for Police in Lagos State". For delivering on

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