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NSA names groups backing terrorist organisations

The National Security Adviser (NSA), Major General Babagana Monguno (rtd), has identified Jama'at Nasr al-Islam Wal Muslimin (JNIM), the Islamic and Muslim Support Group (GSIM) and ISGS as groups bolstering terror activities in Nigeria and other Sahel countries.

The NSA urged Islamic preachers and Imams to deploy their vantage positions to canvas support for ongoing counter-terrorism operations.

He observed that alliances between the clerics and security forces "should be the backbone to rebuilding our terrorism infested communities".

The NSA spoke at the 14th Workshop of the League of Ulama, Preachers and Imams of Sahel countries in Abuja.

He said: "Terrorism and the rapid escalation of violent activities by militant Islamist groups in the Sahel since 2016 have been primarily driven by the Islamic State in Greater Sahara (ISGS), which mainly operates in Mali and extends to Niger Republic and Burkina Faso.

"It is bolstered by activities of groups such as Jama'at Nasr al-Islam Wal Muslimin (JNIM), the

Islamic and Muslim Support Group (GSIM) and ISGS, which have continued to pose an imminent threat to the stability of the region.

"In Nigeria, Boko-Haram

and Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) dominate terrorist activities, especially in the North-Eastern part of the country.

"The situation in the

Sahel has never been grimmer, extremist violence continues to spread; the number of internally displaced persons (IDPS) is growing; and food

insecurity is affecting more people than ever before.

"There are several not entirely congruent working hypothesis underpinning foreign and

regional government strategies".

The NSA added: "It is imperative to reassess and reset the strategy towards the Sahel, setting aside faulty assumption.

"Particularly, the international community and its Sahelian partners should prioritise governance, press for or

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Governor Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State, (3rd left) members of the high table in a group photograph with the Acting Chief Judge, Justice David Mann, 3 commissioners, Chairman, PLASIEC and members after their swearing in ceremony of Monday at the new Government House Banquet Hall, Rayfield, Jos. PHOTO: DANLADI DUK

Lalong swears in Acting Chief Judge, Commissioners, PLASIEC members

By Palang Kasmi

PLATEAU Governor Simon Bako Lalong has sworn in a new Acting Chief Judge including 3 new Commissioners and Chairman, Members of the State Independent Electoral Commission (PLASIEC).

The swearing in ceremony took place Monday at Government House Rayfield with many dignitaries in attendance including Deputy Speaker House of Representatives Rt. Hon Ahmed Idris Wase, Deputy Governor of Plateau State, Prof. Sonni Gwanle Tyodden, members of the executive, legislative and judiciary, traditional and religious leaders and politicians.

The new Acting Chief Judge, Hon. Justice David Gwom Mann who was until his appointment a Judge of the High Court in Jos, replaces Justice Gyang Dakwak whose tenure elapsed last week after reaching the mandatory retirement age of 65 in the civil service, THE NIGERIA

Buhari to deploy full force against bandits

PRESIDENT Buhari has again assured Nigerians of his 'will' to smoke out terrorists in any part of the country.

Buhari gave the assurances during a meeting with Sokoto State Governor, Aminu Waziri Tambuwal at the Presidential Villa on

Monday night in Abuja.

Briefing State House Correspondents on the security situation in Sokoto State, Tambuwal said he advised the

President to declare a full-scale emergency in terrorists' enclaves in the state, adding that the action would enable the

Armed Forces to carry out their operations without hindrance in all enclaves affected by the declaration.

He said that the operations, once conceived and ready for execution, should be carried out simultaneously in the states where the

terrorists have strongholds such as Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, Kaduna, Niger and Kebbi states; as well as elsewhere, where the criminals have hideouts.

Tambuwal called on the President to give a premium to the deployment of more manpower to all troubled areas just as he advocated for the procurement of sophisticated equipment, particularly, modern technology-which use is now central around the deployment of drones globally.

The Governor said, he also appealed to President

—NYSC

Only those vaccinated will serve from next year

THE National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) has stated that on the heels of the new reported cases of Covid-19 Omicron variant, evidence of vaccination will now be made mandatory for

prospective corps members (PCM) from 2022.

It also stressed that it would not let down its guard on strict adherence to Covid-19 safety precautions.

The NYSC Director-

General, Brigadier General Shuaibu Ibrahim, made the disclosure on Monday in his nationwide virtual address to the 2021 Batch 'C' Stream II corps members and camp officials.

He said from the next

orientation exercise, all the incoming PCMs would have to show evidence of vaccination before they would be allowed into the camp for registration.

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STANDARD reports.

While the three new commissioners sworn in were Hon. Brian Bimdin Dadi, a former Chairman of Langtang North LGA appointed commissioner for Housing; Hon Dan Philip Hirkop a tax and revenue expert as new Commissioner for Higher Education; and Hon Idris Gambo an administrator and former Chairman Kanam LGA Commissioner for Physical and Urban Development.

Mr. Fabian Ntung Ari, also a seasoned administrator was sworn in as Chairman PLASEIC for a second term. Other PLASEIC members re-appointed and sworn in are Mr. Lamindi Tagonze Kaiwani, Hon. Joshua Pefun Ndom, Comrade Patrick Mamgin, Hajiya Hafsat Hassan Amin, Mr. Adala Peter DanBenji, Hon. James Philip Dashan.

Lalong challenged the new appointees to serve diligently in their various offices avoid acts of corruption, nepotism and favouritism and take their job seriously to justify the confidence reposed in them.

He equally urged them to ensure a more stable and prosperous democratic environment in the state by deliberately serving the people of Plateau with sincerity.

He commended the former Chief Judge Dakwak who served in the

capacity from 2018 till retirement for serving the state diligently even as he promised the new Judge of completing the new Judiciary complex currently under construction, and creating a good working relationship between the Judiciary and executive.

While challenging the new commissioners to work to help his administration achieve its

3-pillar thrust, Lalong tasked the PLASEIC executives to work hard to deepen democracy and build trust in the minds of citizens through their activities.

Responding on behalf of the appointees, Justice Mann thanked the Governor for the confidence reposed on them promising to keep to the oath they took to execute their duties to

Only those vaccinated will serve from next year

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"We want to ensure that we adhere strictly to the non-pharmaceutical protocols of Covid-19," Ibrahim added.

On the other hand, the DG advised corps members who would complete their orientation course on Tuesday to add value to themselves by acquiring entrepreneurship skills, instead of seeking the scarcely available salaried jobs.

He said the scheme had partnered several institutions like the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Access Bank, Bank of Industry (BOI), NYSC Foundation, Heritage Bank and others to provide soft loans to corps members with good business proposals.

He urged corps members to continue with the post-camp training of

the Skill Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development (SAED) programme they started during the orientation course.

He also cautioned the

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Buhari to consider popular opinions suggesting the recall of retired personnel for engagement in the war against terrorists and the recruitment of more personnel in all the security services.

He suggested that, in view of the security situation in the Sahel, which has escalated tension in the sub-region, the need to ask the Economic Community of West African States, (ECOWAS), to seek

Buhari to deploy full force against bandits

extensive cooperation with the United Kingdom, France and the United States of America on security issues becomes imperative.

President Buhari, however, assured Tambuwal of the commitment and support of the Federal Government, towards the full restoration of peace and security.

Speaking further with

Tambuwal, he said: "I have the full assurance of our security chiefs that these heartless bandits and criminals will be smoked out, wherever they might be, and brought to justice. We will not rest until this is achieved.

"May the souls of the victims Rest In Peace. Amen. My vow is that this tragic loss of lives will not be in vain."



Tambuwal

corps members against borrowing money to execute projects, but advised that they should source for funds from their locality.

Affukoh youths protest, block JUTH entrances

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

TWO main entrances of Jos University Teaching Hospital (JUTH) were yesterday morning barricaded by Affukoh youth of Lamingo community in Jos North Local Government Area, Plateau State who were protesting over lack of employment opportunity denied them as host community.

The protesters denied both staff and relatives of patients in the hospital entrance to press home their demands.

The protest which was peaceful started as early as 5:00am in the morning during which they stated their grievances over the nonchalant attitude and failure of JUTH Management to respect the 75% Federal Character employment slots earlier agreement.

This almost crippled the smooth running of activities at JUTH as staff, visitors and students were trapped with students unable to write their exams thereby causing confusion for more than two hours before intervention by security agencies.

It would be recalled that the youths took to the

streets en-masse on October 3, 2021 carrying placards with different inscriptions along JUTH roundabout in Lamingo, calling on the Chief Medical Director of JUTH, Prof. Edmond Banwat, to respect the Federal Character provisions and employ their youth, because they had donated over 2000 hectares of land free of charge without any benefits attached to it.

Speaking with our correspondents, the youth chairman, Azi Aware protested saying that, "We have approached the management not once or twice considered our plight, but they paid deaf ears to it even after reaching an agreement and list of qualified youths submitted to them.

"We have met on several occasions and discussed even at the Palace of our Paramount Chief, Da Gwom Emmanuel Ajik, and ironed out some of these issues and thought Management of JUTH would apply it in the ongoing employment exercise, but only three names came out which are lower cadre with no single person employed out of many who are professionally qualified.

"This is against our earlier agreement of 75 percent employment slots as enshrined in the Federal Character Article; We are hungry, no land to farm because of JUTH; we say no to JUTH brutality and dehumanization of our people, give us access roads amongst others".

The group also accused the Chief Medical Director of the Hospital, Professor Edward Banwat, of complacency and negligence to the plights of the host community as agreed, that's why they resorted to telling the

world their story by blocking the two gates.

According to Aware, "it was in August this year that they started the process of employing over 300 staff, but none of us from the host community was invited for the interview and we are asking why is it so? We wrote a petition to the CMD of the hospital, we copied the Minister of Health, Chairman House Committee on Health in the House of Representatives, the Federal Character Commission and all relevant agencies, but to no avail.

"We wrote to them to please come and compel JUTH to do the needful to employ our people. The FCC Article stipulate that 75% employment slots must be given to the host community, but we heard reliably that they have started issuing out employment letters to some people", he narrated.

However, the Plateau State Commissioner of Police, CP Bartholomew Onyeka, swiftly summoned the Management of JUTH and leadership of the youth to find out what their grievances were so that, he would settle the two parties.

Represented by the Deputy Commissioner of Police Administration, DCP Faleye E. S. Olaleye, the Commissioner after listening to the two sides appealed to the Management of JUTH to make a special case for the them in the interest of peace and respect for the provisions of Federal Character by managing their host community properly.

He also cautioned the youth group to resort to

dialogue rather than taking to the street to air their grievances considering how fragile Plateau is at the moment. He said peaceful protest could be hijacked by hoodlums causing great havoc to the state urging them to select someone who would stand as a liaison officer so that, all information would be channeled directly through him.

Meanwhile, the Chief Medical Director of JUTH, Prof. Edmond Banwat, thanked the Commissioner of Police for his swift response and that, he was working based on approvals made at the national level and could not narrow it to just Affukoh community alone.

However, he promised that the management would not sleep on their case but look into it in the subsequent employment even as the management has employed Izere sons and daughters from Jos-East thinking they were all the same people assuring them they would do the needful.

On his part, an Izere elder and the Magaji Gari of Lamingo, Ada Izang Kaze, commended the Divisional Police Officer of Nasarawa Gwom, SP Musa Hassan, for his quick intervention to the unfortunate happening and wish he continues with what he has always been doing, but blamed the CMD for his nonchalant attitude that led to the protest.

All efforts to dig deep into reasons why out of the list of names given to CMD, only three junior persons were selected in the employment list proved abortive as he declined answering questions from our correspondent and headed to the DSS headquarters where they were invited.

NSA names groups backing terrorist organisations

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pursue an expanded peace process, cautiously through dialogue, and push for adoption of more non-kinetic measures through affected communities.

"Nonetheless, the possibility of Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) creating an established caliphate to rival Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) countries has been checkmated by series of concerted and reinvigorated efforts of the countries of the region.

"The adoption of both kinetic and non-kinetic approaches by LCBC countries to stem the conflict has yielded tremendous success.

"The adoption of propaganda videos by terrorist groups to project themselves as contending powers in the region, is a mere attempt to garner

support from sympathisers, as they struggle to maintain relevance.

"Thus, it is assessed that while the groups maintain the long term strategic goal of creating a caliphate, the efforts of LCBC countries will continue to frustrate that goal.

"In that regard, it is imperative that ulamas, preachers and community leaders in your localities key in to support efforts of our Security Forces, in order to end this menace. Just as collaborations between governments are boosting the advance of Security Forces in the fight against terrorism, alliances and group effort like LOPIS should be the backbone to rebuilding our terrorism infested communities.

"There's no gun more powerful than enlightenment and education at the grass



Ehenire



Business & Economy

NACOTAN flags-off 2021 wet season harvest

With the dwindling of economic resources currently faced in Nigeria, it is high time for government at different levels and perhaps its citizens to start to look inward, particularly in areas that would further boost the economy of the country, which is acclaimed the giant of Africa. JIDAUNA DARING writes.

IN view of this, what one hand cannot carry needs the other hand to do that successfully. This, of course means that the era of depending on one source to boost our economy is gone, as far as the unfriendly situation is concerned.

Equally too, the untold hardship presently faced by most Nigerian citizens in their land, really calls for several questions from citizens to both past and serving leaders. This is because some of the challenges that are starring most Nigerians in their eyes are even accumulated ones, looking at the abandonment of different industries, particularly government owned that used to boost Nigeria's economy.

It is obvious by virtue of the foregoing, that when we look at the drawing board of what used to obtain in the 60s and 70s, it would tell you that we have remained the architects of some of our economic problems presently faced.

Sadly, some of the industries that perhaps used to be revenue generating hub for Nigeria's economy are not functioning. This is because of the nonchallant attitude of some successive leaders, who did not accord any attention to the abandoned industries.

In fact, what baffles most Nigerians is the fact that so many industries have continued to remain the shadow of their former self. The country has always had all its takes to change or address whatever challenges the country is swimming inside.

History also has it that before the discovery of crude oil, Nigerians were then depending mostly on groundnut, cotton, tin, columbite and iron ore among others. This, therefore indicates that it is also time for Nigerians to know where they are coming from and where they are equally going to as a nation.

It therefore behoves on our government at all levels to put stringent measures that would help in improving the failing economy that Nigerians are losing hope for. It is true that bad economy can cause recession, which the impact results to hardship in the lives of average



At the flag-off of NACOTAN at Wase, Mr Yilzak representatives of Governor, HRH Emir of Wase Alh. Mohammed Haruna Sambo and NACOTAN President, Chief Achimugu

citizens who hardly eat 3 square meals in a day.

What is important to note is the fact that the government strongly needs to imbibe the spirit of revamping all the affected industries.

Indeed, the issue of diversification of the Nigerian economy should not be overlooked but should be taken with all seriousness it deserves, so that the country can beat its chest as a nation that is up to the task of doing the needful for its citizenry.

It is against this background that National Cotton Association of Nigeria (NACOTAN) has cultivated 39,645 hectares of cotton farms across 17 states of the federation as part of its efforts to diversify Nigeria's economy

NACOTAN President, Chief Anibe Achimugu disclosed this at the flag-off of 6,000 cultivated cotton farming for the 2021 wet season

harvest in Wase Local Government Area (LGA) of Plateau State recently.

Chief Achimugu thanked President Muhammadu Buhari for his good leadership and support to reviving of cotton farming and generally agriculture in Nigeria. He also appreciated the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) for its passionate support to this programme and its objective of reviving the CTG sector.

He said that the event provides yet another opportunity for NACOTAN, which is the apex body for all cotton farmers in Nigeria, to prove its commitment in support of government's effort at diversifying Nigeria's economy through the cotton value chain.

According to him, cotton played a significant role in Nigeria's economy from the 60s, 70s to the early 80s, He added further that subsequently, cotton, and the

larger agricultural sector was abandoned for crude oil as Nigeria's major revenue earner; resulting to the collapse of Nigeria's ginneries and textile industries, and loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs by Nigerians.

He said fortunately, in 2019, cotton was included among the crops to be financed by CBN's Anchor Borrowers' Programme, through the efforts of NACOTAN. He emphasized that cotton farming has been revived and harvested cotton available to the ginneries with multiplier effects on Nigeria's textile and garment industries.

NACOTAN President also added that to sustain these achievements and increase the quantity and quality of cotton, the association has adopted contiguous farming method – a large scale farming system of thousands of hectares in Plateau as well as in Kano, Jigawa, Zamfara, Taraba and Adamawa States among others.

Chief Achimugu maintained that the flag-off of the NACOTAN's harvest on the single largest cotton farm in Nigeria and arguably in West Africa, signals a new dawn. He also stressed that their recovery would be used for payment of loans given to their farmers through the CBN's Anchor Borrower Programme and to provide for cotton, for textiles and garment sector as its bedrock raw materials.

He equally used the occasion to sound a note of warning to those they have identified as saboteurs to stay clear of their cotton farms, as they would not find them as easy to deal with as in the 2019 and 2020 seasons.

Chief Achimugu further explained that the future of cotton farming and its value chain in Nigeria is bright. He therefore, encouraged Nigerians to join hands with NACOTAN to improve the role cotton plays in Nigeria's economy

by becoming a cotton farmer and or CTG player.

He thanked the Emir of Wase for donating 20,000 hectares of land to NACOTAN which is the largest in Nigeria to farm the cotton, adding that, they were able to cultivate 6,000 hectares during this year's farming.

In his remarks, Governor Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State who was represented by the Managing Director (MD) PIPC, Mr. Chris Yilzak, appreciated NACOTAN for choosing Plateau as one of the states to farm cotton. And assured them of the state government's continued support, so as to boost the cotton farming in the state.

Country Coordinator, OFAB Nigeria, Dr. Rose Maxwell Gidado expressed happiness with the event, which she described as the first biggest outing of its kind.

Dr. Mrs. Gidado congratulated NACOTAN President and his members for the giant stride that they have made so far, taking the right step to revamping the textile industry. She stated that OFAB Nigeria Chapter supports and identifies with such an important event.

She appealed to farmers and commodity association to work hard at ensuring that cotton farmers and those interested have access to Bollgard 2 cotton hybrid seeds for yield improvement by taking advantage of CBN's windows to reinvigorate and revamp the cotton production and ultimately our textile industries.

Also in his remarks, Emir of Wase, Alhaji Muhammed Haruna Sambo appreciated NACOTAN for finding Wase worthy of the pilot-project. He also assured the association that his people can give them four times of what has been given to do the cotton farming business, since the gesture was aimed at improving Nigeria's economy as a nation.





Business & Economy

NNPC to halt rising cooking gas price

THE Group Managing Director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited, Mele Kyari, on Monday announced that NNPC was currently increasing the supply of Liquefied Petroleum Gas, popularly called cooking gas, in a bid to force down its price.

Kyari, who announced this at the inauguration of a 120-metric tonnes LPG storage and bottling plant by Emadeb Energy Services Limited in Abuja, however, explained that the hike in cooking gas price was an international issue.

The cost of LPG has been rising since this year, jumping by more than 240 per cent between January and October 2021, a development that has forced many LPG users to shift to charcoal or firewood.

Commenting on the hike in LPG price, while speaking to journalists on the sidelines of the event in Abuja, Kyari said, "Two things are in play.



Kyari

"One is the supply in the international market of gas. It moves with the price of every other petroleum product including crude oil and its derivatives.

"So definitely, it is a reflection of what is happening in the international market. However, what we are doing

is to increase supply and once supply increases, price will come down."

The Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Emadeb Energy Services, Mr. Adebowale Olujini, urged the government to support LPG investors considering the cost required to invest in the sector.

Fuel queues in Abuja worsen, supply crisis lingers

OIL marketers on Monday attributed the widespread queues for Premium Motor Spirit, popularly called petrol, in Abuja and environs to the lingering crisis in the supply of the commodity. It was also learnt that many tank farms were not dispensing products on Monday due to hitches in the supply of petrol.

This led to severe queues in most filling stations in Abuja that dispensed PMS, as many others were locked up.

The two filling stations, Conoil and Total, located in front of the Abuja headquarters of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited, had long queues of motorists. The few filling stations that dispensed petrol on airport road, for instance, Major Oil, had long queues, as motorists spent hours in front of the outlets trying to get PMS.

Providing explanation on

what led to the massive queues on Monday, the National Public Relations Officer, Independent Petroleum Marketers Association of Nigeria, Chief Ukadike Chinedu, told our correspondent that the problem in the downstream sector had not been solved.

He stated that many depots were not dispensing products to retail outlets because they (depots) lacked products. "The supply crisis in the downstream is still lingering. We raised this concern some weeks ago and they came out to say they have enough products, but right now we are seeing queues again due to the challenges," Chinedu said.

He added, "Many tank farms or depots are not dispensing products. Only few marketers have products to sell to final consumers. The issue of price is still a concern, because some depots are still selling above the

regulated rate."

This came as IPMAN announced the emergences Debo Ahmed as its new President with effect from December 14, 2021, and assured motorists that it would continue to work hard to manage the concerns in the downstream oil sector.

In November, the concerns in the downstream made private depots to sell PMS at N159/litre instead of the approved rate N148/litre.

Depot owners had

THE Federal Government has indicated the possibility of introducing new taxes, tariffs and levies as part of measures to shore up its revenue.

This is just as the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning has said it is closely following the legal tussle instituted by some states against the Federal Government on collection and sharing of revenue from Value Added Tax to determine its next policies.

The Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Zainab Ahmed, said these at the public hearing on the 2021 Finance Bill organised by the House of Representatives' Committee on Finance in Abuja on Monday.

Ahmed, in a paper she presented to the committee, stated, "Nigeria must diversify its revenues from oil to fund critical expenditures."

The minister noted that as of September, the Federal Government's retained

revenue was N4.56tn, achieving 75 per cent of budget, while the government's share of oil revenues was N845bn representing 56.3 per cent pro-rated performance and non-oil revenues share was N1.31tn or 117.3 per cent above budget.

She added that Companies Income Tax and Value Added Tax collections were N616bn and N274.4bn, representing 121 per cent and 153 per cent respectively of the pro-rata targets, while Customs collections were N418.97bn.

Ahmed stated, "Clearly, our ongoing fiscal reforms of the last six years are yielding tangible results. However, the FMFBNP is closely studying the following issues, developments and policies: "Legal developments and pronouncement of the

interests," it said.

The CBN, however, noted that statutory receipt from the Federation Account rose by 6.2 per cent to N299bn in August, significantly impacting the government's retained revenue during the review period.

It said the aggregate expenditure fell by 18.8 per cent from N962.1bn recorded in July due to a reduction in overhead cost and low capital expenditure.

The report said, "Although recurrent expenditure shrunk by 18.3 per cent to N683.46bn following a 48.9 per cent decline in overhead cost, it maintained its dominance in total spending.

"Recurrent expenditure accounted for 87.4 per cent of total spending in

FG may impose new taxes, tariffs soon



Zainab

revenue was N4.56tn, achieving 75 per cent of budget, while the government's share of oil revenues was N845bn representing 56.3 per cent pro-rated performance and non-oil revenues share was N1.31tn or 117.3 per cent above budget.

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FG revenue drops by 52% amid rising spending

August, while capital expenditure and transfers constituted 7.3 per cent and 5.3 per cent, respectively."

The bank attributed the low allocation to capital expenditure to the lag in capital releases during the period.

The report added that the significant drop in aggregate expenditure outweighed the impact of low revenue outcome on the fiscal balance in August.

It said this led to a 25.2 per cent decline in fiscal deficit, from N541.8bn in July to N405.3bn in August.

On trade performance, the CBN said that Nigeria recorded a higher trade deficit of \$820m in August, when compared with \$340m in July.

It said, "Aggregate export receipts decreased

courts on VAT vs states sales taxes cases;

"Current fiscal policy stance to let tax incentives with sunset provisions to naturally expire and not to automatically renew such incentives without a detailed tax expenditure cost/benefit evaluation of the relative success of the incentives before extending incentives further;

"Acceleration of projected increase tariff and excise duties (so-called 'sin classes') on tobacco, alcohol and carbonated drinks to fund vital expenditure on health, education and security;

"Wholesale reform of antiquated stamp duties and capital gains tax regime;

"Possibility of introduction of new taxes, tariffs and levies, as the economy recovers."



Silva



Business & Economy

Exploring credible alternatives for diaspora investments

Today, goods, capital, people, and ideas are flowing as never before and foreign individuals and companies invest money in productive activities that foster development. According to a report by Inter-American Development Bank, about 215 million people live away from their home country and many of such diasporas are prospering abroad and are eager to extend such successes by investing in their homeland. JIDE AJIA writes.

RECENT years have witnessed a renewed interest in the complex relationship between migration and development. The role of diasporas can be broadly defined to include migrants and their descendants who maintain ties with their countries of origin. These have often been overlooked or are discussed only in general terms.

Yet a growing body of evidence suggests that diasporas play a critical role in supporting sustainable development by transferring resources, knowledge, and ideas back home, and in integrating their countries of origin into the global economy.

Economists and policymakers also emphasise the role of migrants in promoting trade and investment, as the presence of a large diaspora can create markets for products manufactured in their countries of origin and strengthen bilateral trade flows.

Financial flows from migrants and their descendants are at the heart of the relationship between migration and development. There is little doubt that remittances are a large and important intra-family financial flow that can have important effects on financial development.

Substantial foreign financing is necessary to fund investment due to the small pool of domestic savings. Another result of a limited pool of domestic savings is that it is typically necessary to attract substantial foreign capital to fund domestic investment that is important exception to this generalization.

The appropriate balance of foreign and domestic financing has been much considered in recent years particularly in the light of global economic crises. External finance or foreign savings can be highly volatile and susceptible to sudden changes in direction.

Overall, experts agree that financial liberation and integration with the global economy are indispensable for economic growth and improved living standards. But, as noted by the commission on growth and development, there is "no case of a sustained high investment path not backed up by high domestic savings." Domestic savings are necessary but not sufficient.

The recent collaboration between Heifer Nigeria, a global non-profit institution working towards eradicating poverty and hunger with the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) is to link diaspora investments to Nigerian agribusinesses in order to stimulate economic growth.

Featuring its initiatives at the fourth edition of the Nigerians Diaspora Summit held at the Presidential Villa in Abuja, Country Director, Heifer Nigeria, Mr. Rufus Idris, said that the



organization is implementing strategies to attract diaspora investments and innovations into Nigeria's agricultural sector.

Nigeria accounts for over a third of migrant remittance flows to sub-Saharan Africa. These flows amounted to US\$23.63 billion (2017: US\$22 billion) in 2018, and represented 6.1 percent of Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The 2018 migrant remittances translate to 83 percent of the Federal Government budget in 2018 and 11 times the FDI flows in the same period. Over a 15-year period, it is expected that total remittance flows to Nigeria will grow by almost double in size from US\$18.37 billion in 2009 to US\$34.89 billion in 2023.

With over \$25 billion annual diaspora remittance, Heifer International has opened discussions with Nigerians in Diaspora with a view to investing in the Nigerian agricultural sector. The Country Director, Heifer International in Nigeria, Rufus Idris said at the just concluded Diaspora Investment Summit in Abuja, that his organization was working to bridge the investment gap in the agricultural sector with funds from diaspora Nigerians.

"For us, we know that there is a huge deficit in terms of investment in the agricultural sector. So what we are doing is that we are investing heavily in different aspects of the agricultural sector in the country. What we are doing here is to try and see how we can collaborate with other organizations that can help us channel diaspora investments into the agricultural

sector to address areas where we have problems and such investments can help unlock those areas," he said.

On the specific areas of agriculture in which Heifer wants to partner diaspora investors, the country director said that his team was looking at different sub-sectors and the value-chain where Nigeria had a comparative advantage.

"We are looking at sectors and value chains where we can address the issue of food self-sufficiency, Nigeria with over 200 million people and growing to 400 million people by 2050, we cannot feed ourselves. We rely so much on importation. So, we are looking at areas that can help reduce importation that can support local production to meet the growing local demand," Idris said.

Heifer International which has been in operation in more than 25 different countries, globally, for

about 77 years, has commenced a Tractor Initiative in Nigeria.

"We are new in Nigeria; we are piloting collaboration with Hello Tractor that is deploying the 'Pay as you Go' tractor model. It is a way you get more tractor service providers to own tractors closer to farmers so that they can make tractors available to smallholder farmers. Not just the tractor itself, other components that come with the tractor like harrower, harvester, planter and any other component that have shortages in the country as well," Idris said.

As part of Heifer's ambitious target to help 10 million households achieve sustainable living income by the year 2030, the non-profit organization is investing heavily in agriculture to help improve local production to meet fast-growing demands, investing in youth creativity and technology in agriculture to drive

economic growth in Nigeria.

"Today, more than ever, Nigeria's agricultural value chains require investments at transformational scale to unlock their potentials and to improve the productivity and competitiveness of the sector. We cannot overlook the potential of diaspora investments to contribute to transforming this sector."

On the mechanized tractor business for smallholder farmers, he said that the Heifer Tractor Initiative accommodates farmers who do not own tractors, adding that the organisation is in partnership with 'Hello Tractor' to make available usable tractors for farmers.

'Pay as you Go' tractor model is a way you get more tractor service providers to own tractors closer to farmers so that they can be able to make tractors available to smallholder farmers. Not just tractor itself, other components that come with the tractor like harrower, harvester, plower, planters and any other components that have a shortage in the country as well," he said.

The diaspora is a resource and asset for national development. Nigeria is not left out of this understanding of the need to acknowledge the significant contributions of the diaspora.

Nigerians in the diaspora have a significant role to play in the development of Nigeria, now and for years to come because Nigerians in the diaspora constitute an important constituency that contributes to their wealth of experience, exposure, vast human network, among others to the socio-economic development of the country.

"The need to leverage on the diaspora not just for remittances and bonds, but for their unwavering support to join hands in nation-building cannot be overemphasized," Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM), Abike Dabiri-Erewa said.

Ajia writes from Lagos

"For us, we know that there is a huge deficit in terms of investment in the agricultural sector. So what we are doing is that we are investing heavily in different aspects of the agricultural sector in the country. What we are doing here is to try and see how we can collaborate with other organizations that can help us channel diaspora investments into the agricultural sector to address areas where we have problems and such investments can help unlock those areas," he said.

Politics

Dimka to link economic roads, diversify power supply

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

NDE David Victor Dimka a retired Customs Comptroller, currently running for the gubernatorial race of Plateau State in the forthcoming 2023 general elections, FSI, has promised to prioritize linking of roads that would boost economic activities in the state, as well as diversify power supply.

He has also promised to re-strategize and redesign a way off the over dependence on conventional electricity system to adopt a more recently accepted solar or indigenous NESCO power source to feed all communities across the state, making it more reliable and affordable in both rural and urban areas.

The aspirant who is the Chairman of DVD Foundation made the promise last Saturday in an interview with journalists at the Amok Ibaas Foron 2021 Festival, organised by Ibaas Foron Traditional Council in collaboration with Ibaas Foron Development Organisation (IFDO) held at Zaron, the headquarters of Ibaas Chiefdom in Barkin Ladi Local Government of Plateau State.

The former Comptroller said, "I will ensure that roads like this are tarred because it will develop the economy of the state. All they will get from their farms will be taken with ease to the market to be sold, making people to also move in and out without any problem."

According to him, "Also key to me is the issue of electricity. You see, when people depend on PHCN, we



Dimka

will not get anywhere. When I come in by God's grace, I will have windows where we will produce electricity in small, small, communities so that, they can be properly managed.

"You know, we have solar energy now for those that can be used for lightening points and that will be done. Definitely, we are going to put it as a priority point and do something in that regard, particularly, linking up properly with Kura Falls NESCO so that, we will boost electricity in Plateau State", he assured.

While congratulating the Ibaas Foron Traditional Council and Ibaas Foron Development Organisation (IFDO) for the peaceful and successful celebration of Amok Ibaas Foron 2021, Dimka described the cultural festival as unique in recent times.

He further stated, "I am so, so, happy because I have

never seen this in recent times. It is well packaged and this is what will bring Plateau back as the Home of Peace and Tourism. We will showcase this in the future for people to come and see the rich cultural values of Plateau State".

Forum endorses Magaji for Senator Nasarawa West

THE Aliyu Akwe Doma Solidarity Forum has formerly endorsed the Senatorial aspiration of Barrister Labaran Shuaibu Magaji for Nasarawa West of Nasarawa State in the forthcoming 2023 general elections.

Reading the communiqué at the end of its one day meeting held at the New Keffi Hotel, the former Secretary to the State Government under the late Aliyu Akwe Doma administration Mr. Timothy Anjide stated that the forum is highly satisfied with the capacity,

"This administration would continue to be guided by the spirit of inclusiveness with a view to ensure that justice is meted to all irrespective of whatever differences," he assured.

He further said that the government would continue to make its doors widely open for all forms of positive criticisms which are accompanied by alternative proposals to enable it make amends when necessary or provide explanation for its actions or inactions.

The Governor also explained that it was based on the respect and recognition his administration has for the late Aliyu Akwe Doma that it completed the Banquet Hall he started at the Government House Lafia and named it after him.

He further stated that being the Patron of the Solidarity Forum, he would continue to identify with the wishes and aspirations of its members as well as patronize their services whenever necessary.

While congratulating the convener of the Forum for the successful meeting, he assured him of support and co-operation to enable him succeed in his Senatorial aspirations especially

From
JIDAUNA YANUNG,
Abuja

A coalition of the All Progressive Congress (APC) in the North central has zoned the National Chairmanship of the party to Niger State.

According to the coalition, only Niger state had not produced a national chairman I the North central.

Briefing journalists in Abuja coordinator of the group James Pawajok observed that in the immediate past, the chairman of the political parties produce were mostly from plateau, Benue and Nasarawa axis, thus other parties of the North central deserved to be considered this time.

Pwajok emphaised that of the three states of Niger, Kogi and Kwara only Niger state had not produced any party chairman for once.

To this end, the coalition zeroed in on Niger state as the most appropriate and fair state to produce the next chairman of the APC for equity and justice.

APC coalition zones National Chairmanship to Niger



Buni

"The other side of the region that is plateau, Benue and Nasarawa state had it thrice already Solomon Lar, Barnabas gemade and Audu Ogbe, Kogi and Kwara have once each that is Ahmadu Ali and Baraje respectively not withstanding they were Chairman under PDP it will

only be fair if Niger state is considered this time for fairness, equity and justice".

The coalition expressed confidence that APC a party known for fairness equity and justice will do the needful to allow Niger state specifically produce the next chairman of APC.

From
MOHAMMED ABDULLAHI,
Keffi

competence and ability of Labaran Magaji to give the people of the Senatorial Zone the desired representation in the Senate as such it is endorsing him.

"We are indeed highly satisfied and encouraged by the capacity, competence and wherewithal of Magaji to give the people fruitful representation in the red chambers that informed our decision to not only endorse

him but to formerly present him to the people of the Western Zone to give him their mandate for them to reap the dividends of democracy" he stated.

The communiqué further stated that after a careful studies of the meritorious track records of Barrister Magaji both in the public and private endeavours coupled with his humanitarian services that touches the lives of many people from within and outside the constituency that also made the forum to adopt him as their candidate.

While congratulating Barrister Magaji for the remarkable achievements in his carrier and other endeavours, the Forum advised the people of the Nasarawa Western Zone to see his presentation as an opportunity for them to have quality and people oriented representation that would lead them towards reaping the dividends of democracy if elected.

Barrister Labaran Magaji who is the Convener of the Late Aliyu Akwe Doma Solidarity meeting had earlier stated that the purpose of the meeting was to unite all members that have served under the Aliyu Akwe Doma administration, assess the performance of the present administration of Engineer Abdullahi Sule as well as to present his Senatorial aspiration so as to garner their support and blessings to move on with his aspirations.

While praying for the repose of the soul of the former Governor, he stated that the opportunity given them to serve the State

under his administration is still memorable and gratifying.

He then commended the present administration of Engineer Abdullahi Sule for completing some of the legacy projects of the Aliyu Akwe Doma administration especially the Banquet Hall at the Government House Lafia which was named after him as well as for patronizing the services of members of the forum.

Magaji then assured of the resolve and commitment of members of the forum to work and contribute to the re-election of the Governor come 2023 to enable him consolidates on the various achievements his administration has recorded and even break new grounds.

The meeting witnessed the delivery of Solidarity speeches from the various political appointees and those elected to serve key political offices ranging from Commissioners, Permanent Secretaries, Special Advisers, Special Assistants, members of the State House of Assembly, Local governments Chairmen, Head of Development Areas as well as elected and appointed Councillors among others.

With the present development or endorsement given to Labaran Shuaibu Magaji who is now making wave as a Federal prosecutor it could be said that he is being adequately prepared to slug it out with any aspirant that would also make himself available from the Zone come 2023 general elections.

2023: NSSG assures of level playing ground

AS the 2023 general elections starts to gather momentum, the Nasarawa State government has declared its intention to provide a level playing ground for all those wishing to actualize their political dreams or aspirations from the State in the spirit of equity, fairness and justice to all and sundry.

Governor Abdullahi Sule gave the assurance while speaking as the Special guest of honour and Patron at the Late Aliyu Akwe Doma Solidarity Forum held at

From
MOHAMMED ABDULLAHI,
Keffi

the New Keffi Hotel in Keffi.

Speaking through the Secretary to the State government, Barrister Abdullahi Ubandoma, who is also a member of the Forum, the Governor assured that his administration would continue to implement its policy mantra of inclusiveness so as to ensure justice and fairness to all.



Sule

11 aspirants for APC national chairmanship

AHEAD of the national convention of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) slated for February 2022, the National chairmanship aspirants will on Thursday, December 16 gather in Abuja to talk about their ideas on moving the party forward in preparation for the 2023 general elections.

The 11 prominent chairmanship aspirants expected to speak at the Annual Public Lecture Summit, organised by the APC Press Corps include; former deputy national chairman of the defunct Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), Saliu Mustapha, former governor of Nasarawa State, Tanko Almakura, former governor of Borno State, Alimodu Sheriff and Senator representing Niger East District, Mohammed Sani-Musa.

Others are former governors of Zamfara State, Abdulaziz Yari, Bauchi State, Isa Yuguda, Borno State, Kashim Shettima, Gombe State, Danjuma Goje, Minister of Special Duties and Inter-Governmental Affairs, George Akume, Sunny Moniedafe and Mohammed Saidu-Etsu.

Read also: APC chairmanship slot: Coalition makes case for Niger, Kogi, Kwara

A statement released Sunday in Abuja by the organisers said a prominent chieftain of the party and director-general of the Voice of Nigeria (VON) Osita Okechukwu, will deliver a keynote paper titled: 'APC Beyond 2023: The tasks ahead - The Role of Stakeholders.'

The event slated for 16th of December, 2021, will be chaired by the Chairman, Caretaker Extra-Ordinary Convention Planning Committee (CEPC), and Governor of Yobe State, Mai Mala Buni.

The annual public lecture summit, with the theme "...Towards Ensuring Enduring Democracy", is a platform designed by the APC Press Corps to contribute to the intellectual development of the nation's democracy.

"The summit aims at providing workable templates for good governance and serves as a medium for deepening democratic norms and institutions by engaging key players in politics, public administration, academia, and economy.

"Reports and suggestions on the lecture will be made



Buni

available to the party and interested members of the public," the statement read in parts.

According to the organisers, this year's edition of the summit is designed to avail all the National Chairmanship

aspirants opportunity to share their views, present their plans and programmes on how to move the party forward as contenders in the forthcoming National Convention slated for February 2022.

Bokkos Chairman plays host to Daffo Mangai Community

By NAOMI SANTOS

EXECUTIVE Chairman of Bokkos Local Government Council, Hon. Joseph Guluwa has played host to the Daffo Mangai Community Development Association led by Saf Daffo, Dah Dauda Maren.

The message was contained in a statement signed by the Information Officer, Philip Atsen Agwom for Executive Chairman Bokkos LGC and made available to THE NIGERIA STANDARD in Jos, the Plateau State capital.

The Daffo Community who came in their numbers including the National Chairman of Daffo Mangai Community Development Association, Solomon Zakka Asong called on authorities of the Local

Government Council to consider the repair of rural roads and Primary Health Care Centres in the locality as well as the completion of the Police Station fence and roof built by the Community.

Daffo Mangai Community equally submitted that it has over 10,000 hectares of fallow land available which can attract investors for agricultural purposes.

The Chairman praised the people of Daffo Mangai for their desire to partner with his Economic Re-engineering administration to harness the bumper natural resources of the area for the benefit of all.

Hon. Guluwa expressed the willingness of the Council to consider the request presented, as it seek alternative funding for critical Infrastructural

From JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja

THE leadership of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) said its mission is to win the 2023 presidency and ensure that Nigeria becomes a united country.

The main opposition party in a statement in Abuja by its national publicity secretary, Debo ologunagba said Nigerians have suffered untold hardship under the APC led federal government.

According to the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), "Nigerians have continued to experience insecurity ravaging the country, unprecedented unemployment, an economy in shambles, almost collapsing, the naira falling daily, industries are packing up, education standard falling, health sector is comatose, among others".

PDP in the statement assured Nigerians that it will improve security of lives and property of

'Our mission is to win 2023 presidency'



Ayu

Nigerians, improve the economy by implementing well thought out policies and programs as well as pay special attention to infrastructure, especially electricity and rail transport.

It described the inauguration of its national working committee (NWC) as the beginning of a new

dawn and the start of a process signaling the exit of the most clueless, most uninformed and most embarrassing regime since independence.

PDP therefore enjoined Nigerians to be steadfast and vote it in the 2023 elections, "to rescue and rebuild our country Nigeria."



Guluwa

development especially the Public-Private-partnership as it is done in other climes.

The delegation from Daffo included Hon. Danladi Mabas (Former TIC Chairman, Bokkos LGC), Hon Danjuma

Mabas (APC Bokkos LGA Chairman), Mr Matts Macqueen, Alhaji Solar, Alh Audu Bako and all the Community Chiefs, Youth and Community Leaders and many others.

The Chairman along with the Council Secretary,

Pastor Alheri Sagai, Chief of Staff Hon. Adams Mahwel, and several Supervisory Councillors, among others, received the Daffo Mangai Community delegation at the Council's Legislative Chambers.

Promote peace-oriented narratives -Bello

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

GOVERNOR Yahaya Bello of Kogi has urged the creative industry to produce movies that would reshape public perception and preach peace oriented narratives in the country.

Bello made the plea while hosting the 13th edition of Best of Nollywood Awards (BON) in Lokoja.

BON Awards, an annual Pan-Nigerian travelling film industry initiative, had in the last 12 years moved to different states of the federation.

The governor maintained that the creative industry was strategic to the development of any nation.

He stressed that Nollywood was needed now more than ever to assist the government in ensuring that the message of unity, love and peace was once again established to move the

nation forward.

"The creative industry, especially Nollywood, is strategic in ensuring that the right information and perception is spread in the polity.

"As role models, your films and expression are vital to national peace and unity.

"We are at a time in our national history when all hands must be on deck. We must work together to ensure that all the negative elements, who want to divide us from remaining a united people, are put to shame," he said.

Earlier, Mr Seun Oloketuyi, the Chief Executive Officer/Convener of BON Awards, had urged Bello to use the remaining years of his administration to open up the state to the world for more opportunities.

Oloketuyi also appealed to the governor to work with practitioners and the



Bello

creative industry to ensure that the beautiful natural landscape in the state was exposed to the world through filmmakers.

"Today, we celebrate inspite of all we are going through as COVID-19 has dealt a huge blow on the industry, but during this period the impact of the creative industry kept the nation sane as millions relied on our movies to keep their mental balance," he said.

IMAGES

LALONG SWEARS-IN ACTING CJ, 3 COMMISSIONERS AND PLASIEC

Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong swore-in the Acting Chief Judge, 3 Commissioners to fill the vacant position for the 3 that resigned their positions to contest LG elections and Chairman and members of Plateau Independent Electoral Commission (PLASIEC) on Monday at the new Government House Banquet Hall Rayfield, Jos.



L - R: Hon. Brian Bintim Dadi, Hon. Philip Dan Hirkop and Hon. Idris Gambo taking their oath of office as commissioners administered by Governor Simon Bako Lalong (right)

Governor Lalong (middle) Rt. Hon. Ahmed Idris Wase, Deputy Speaker, House of Reps (left) and Deputy Governor, Prof. Sonni Gwanle Tyoden



A cross section of members of the Plateau State Executive Council at the ceremony



Justice Umar Ibrahim Abdullahi, Grand Khadi of Shariah Court of Appeal (left) with the President, Customary Court of Appeal, Justice Blessing Lyop Dalyop



L - R Hon. Noel Dongjur, Chief of Staff Government House, Sir Richard Tokma, mni who stood in for the SGS and Hon. Rufus Bature APC State Chairman



Barr. Chrisantus Ahmadu, Commissioner of Justice and Attorney General (left) with Engr. Sunday Chong Hyat, Head of Service



Miskoom Engr. Safiyanu Suleiman Allahnana III, Long Jan of Namu Chieftdom (left) flanked by other traditional rulers at the swearing in ceremony



Special Adviser, Office of the Deputy Speaker, House of Reps, Chief John Dafaan (right) with some House of Representatives members that accompanied the Deputy Speaker

PHOTOS: DANLADI DUK

Politics

Plateau: Which way to go in 2023?

Electioneering periods are often dicey moments in a democracy. One of the reasons is that such moments are moments of decision making which have future implications. The circumstances surrounding such decision points are mostly featured with so much uncertainties too. The options are not often absolutely defined as those seeking elective or appointive positions are human with tendencies to be unpredictable, especially with power. AYUBA YILGAK'HA writes.

IT is possible for the direction of change of a person who has acquired political power to go towards the wrong side of history. As "power", Shakespearean Macbeth said, "tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Even with the best of intentions, power could corrupt an altruistic patriot. There are very few exceptions especially in developing countries like Nigeria, a lesson of history that cannot be wished away or taken for granted.

As the 2023 general election approaches, Nigeria and Plateau State in particular is at a crossroad and citizens have the civic responsibility to determine the direction the state should go by critically choosing from the many aspirants/candidates who have presented themselves for election. In doing this, the parties, the issues and the candidates are the three fundamental considerations which will shape the choice of the electorate with the most important being, the profile or track records of the candidates.

A party is an established political platform which is recognised by law to screen, select and present candidates for elective and/or appointive positions. The issues are the manifesto of the parties and/or those of the candidates and any other dynamic consideration within the political space or polity. The candidates are individuals who presented themselves for election into an existing political office created by extant laws of the state or country. In other words, a candidate is an aspirant who successfully emerged through a party primary election. Having won the primary election, such a candidate is qualified to contest with candidates of other competing political parties in a secondary election to be organised by a supposed impartial electoral umpire, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

The credibility of each aspirant in an election is indeed a very important factor that must be carefully considered by the electorate since it is the candidate who after being elected has the mandate to galvanise and operationalise the manifesto or mission statement which the candidate and the party presented to the public during campaigns. That is why citizens are encouraged to participate actively in party politics. That is, register as members with parties of their choice to play an active role towards determining who becomes candidate at the party level. This is because once they emerge at that level, even if such candidates are not good enough, they cannot be changed until maybe defeated at the polls or disqualified by a court of competent jurisdiction.

The people are now left with nothing but Hobson's choice when



Mahmood

all the candidates presented by political party are seen as not good enough. Hobson's choice is one that either way you go is a disadvantage. God forbid because the attendant consequences of such situation can be frustrating, to say the least.

The most important gain of democracy which is reputed as 'government of the people, by the people and for the people' wholly lies in the capacity of the citizenry to jointly demonstrate superior wisdom and courage by producing the best of elected representatives through popular votes. If any constitutional democracy does not guarantee this needful benefit, through the instrumentality of election processes which produce the best of us to govern us, then the system becomes yet another political liability - uncivil, unpopular and draconian systems such as facism and totalitarianism, etc. Who can afford this systematic mistake? Not you, not me, even fanthom dreamers cannot contemplate such at all.

No matter how rich or excellent a party or candidate's manifesto is, if the best candidate is not identified and selected, nothing good ever works for the system or polity. A manifesto can be stealthily misleading because its development can be outsourced or contracted out to experts but the responsibility of delivering quality leadership cannot be delegated. Therefore, it takes a tested and practically reliable candidate who wins the election to deliver qualitative leadership.

With quality leadership, even a bad manifesto can be corrected but with bad leaders, the best manifesto could be jettisoned or made nonsense of at any time.

That is also the lesson of history as Nigerians have great reputation for developing sound policy (manifesto) rhetorics but grossly deficient in political will to implement such to the latter. That is the bane of development in the country and Plateau State in particular.

So far so good, not fewer than thirty aspirants have indicated interest to contest for governorship in the next general election in Plateau State. Each of these aspirants has demonstrated their respective intentions by printing and pasting campaign posters with captivating captions or mantras. They are equally intensifying covert and overt consultations; dishing out part of their respective manifesto at any slightest opportunity. The political actors are also busy assembling their foot soldiers' who sell their individual ambitions on both print and electronic media with the overall objective of winning popular sympathy from the public and their respective party platforms.

The game of politics, however, is a dynamic one. Even though the primary goal is to win political power; the process of securing such mandate is fluid and not straight-jacketed. There are several sympathy or votemobilisation platforms which can be explored by political actors. While some contestants rely on tribal affiliations, others explore religious sentiment (intra or inter-religious considerations). Some found school 'old boys' and 'old girls' associations or professional and vocational associations amongst several others promising. There is no extent that political parties and politicians cannot go in a bid to outsmart each other but that is the

nature of the game, really.

It is important to note, however, that no single sympathy or vote mobilisation platform is good enough to guarantee success for any political party or candidate in an election. It takes the combination of several other intervening factors or considerations to determine the fate of each contestant. These factors could be confusing not only to the contestants but to the electorates also. Here in lies the motivation for this write-up.

The main argument of this exposition is that, even though the process of selecting leaders are complex, the fundamental issues that deserve attention are not hidden and should not be compromised for any reason or reasons. Remember, the main essence or use of power is to ensure efficient and effective delivery of service to people. Any use of power that does not guarantee the welfare and security of the citizenry which are the primary responsibilities of government is an exercise in breach of public trust. Therefore, the capacity of a candidate or contestant to deliver on this sacred trust should be the most important consideration when selecting or electing leaders (a governor in this case). Mundane or arbitrary considerations cannot translate into good governance in the polity.

Plateau State has great potentials in tourism, agriculture, commerce and manpower development, but these potentials do not automatically translate into holistic and rapid development until credible human effort is applied to coordinate, especially, at leadership levels. In fact, human tendencies have tended to make rubbish the greatest potentials that states or nations have. These tendencies have often manifested themselves in the form of ethno-religious conflict, leadership deficit and followership laxity. Rather than marshaling its 'can do spirit' to transform the fortunes of the state, the citizenry have always cheaply succumbed to mundane or artificial fault lines that have tended to destroy the collective heritage. The situation becomes more catastrophic when traced to failure of leadership.

The problem with politics in developing nations, especially, Nigeria and Plateau State is that everybody wants the best for himself but only a few are sacrificing for the common good of all. Overwhelmed by greed and corruption, people hardly show objectivity but subjectivity even in the choice of leaders whose actions or inactions could jeopardise the welfare and security of the total population. This is done forgetting that subjective actions or inactions hardly translate into objective outcomes except by accident or mere chance.

Tribal sentiments cannot guarantee the emergence of a credible leader at any level. Religious bias or prejudices will not either. A governor produced on the basis of religious bigotry or ethnocentric considerations cannot deliver good governance within the context of 21st century realities of globalization and innovation. This argument is based on the time tested reality that a man reaps what he sows. Selfish and bias considerations in leadership recruitment can only give rise to selfish and bias leaders. To get an exception to this reality is a rare exception itself.

The task of producing credible leaders is one that cannot be taken casually because leaders shape and reshape the conditions and direction of things in the society or societies. This implies that once a society missed out or misfire in its leadership recruitment obligations, there is bound to be expensive consequences which could be recurrent. Accidental political leaders will emerge. The situation could be likened to that of a man who handed over the key of his car, full of passengers, to a quack driver who knows virtually nothing about driving to drive them on a high way to a destination. The possible danger associated with this costly action can only best be imagined.

Poverty, unemployment, violent conflicts, kidnappings, banditry, terrorism, poor infrastructure, corruption, etc. do not know political party, ethnic nationalities, tribes or religions; they do not also know family ties or denominations; not even sectional and old boys association but the will to demean humans and make them objects of ridicule. These monsters can only steal, kill and destroy but good leadership produced through objective consideration could minimise or stem some of the greatest threats to life outlined above.

In every tribe and religion, local government, zones or state, there are good and bad people. When all citizens objectively exercise their agency to choose, without bias or sentiment, credible leaders will emerge. Plateau State deserves a political leader who possesses the requisite capabilities to galvanise the unique God-given potentials of its people and use same as bargaining power to achieve holistic prosperity for all.

As we make the decisions at the crossroad of general elections in Nigeria and Plateau State in particular, objectivity should be made our guiding angel. If we default in this regards, then we should not complain ending in serfdom or armageddon. God forbid bad thing. When a people think clearly, they shall see clearly. Berational, realistic and resolute in pursuing virtues even in our electoral choices.

NEWS

NAWOJ chair receives ACF award



Mrs. Yarima

THE Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) Plateau State Chapter has presented an award to the Chairman, Nigeria Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ), Plateau State Chapter, Mrs Jennifer Yarima for outstanding humanitarian leadership performance.

ACF Chairman, Plateau State Chapter, Comrade Mohammed N.S. Tali who was represented by the forum's deputy chairman, comrade Henry Jadike Alkali made the presentation of the award to the recipient at **THE NIGERIA STANDARD** Jos.

Tali said that, the forum thought it very expedient to honour the awardee for her hard work and commitment in journalism particularly for championing the fight on violence against women and girls in the society.

He noted that, the choice of the awardee came from some security agents and individuals, considering her efforts in the fight on violence against women, girls and children.

Tali advised the awardee to continue doing the good work that she is doing, in order to stamp

out the increasing rate of violence against women and girls in the society.

Responding shortly after receiving the award, NAWOJ Chairman Plateau State Chapter, Mrs. Jennifer Yarima expressed happiness and thanked ACF for finding her worthy of the award and dedicated it to the entire members of NAWOJ, and also celebrated the association for giving her the platform to serve them in the state.

Mrs. Yarima told ACF that part of the association's mandate was to give voice to the voiceless and the award would further spur her and her members to do more.

In their separate remarks, **EDITOR, SUNDAY STANDARD** newspaper Mrs. Francisca Adidi, News Editor, Mr. Bulus Gambo and Political Editor, Mrs. Lucy Chindaba all said the forum did not make any mistake in the choice of the awardee, considering her hard work as a leader.

They described the recipient as a woman of timber and calibre, adding that the award was very apt because of the passion she has for the work.

According to them, her fight on violence against women and children has indeed changed some negative narratives amongst affected persons.

FEDERAL Revenue Enforcement Corps has deployed a new commandant to Kaduna State to assist the government in its quest to ensure total compliance to tax payments across the state.

This is sequel to its fundamental objectives of assisting Government at all levels towards aggressive revenue generation for societal development

The new commandant is Mr Gomna Andrew Akolo who succeeded Mr Christopher Avong.

The new state commandant of the Federal Revenue Enforcement Corp was until his redeployment the Jigawa State commandant of the Corps.

Speaking to journalists in Kaduna as part of preparation towards assumption of duty, Mr Gomna Andrew Akolo explained that the Corps was designed with the cardinal objectives and mandate as being considered in a bill before the National Assembly to among other things assist states and local government councils in revenue sensitization and generation.

According to the new Kaduna state commandant of the Federal Revenue Enforcement corp, the bill which has passed second reading in the senate, if passed into law would give the Corps constitutional and legal framework that

Commandant to assist Kaduna on tax compliance

From JOHN FWAH
Kaduna

would make it a dependable catalyst for revenue generation, especially from illegal movements of goods and services at night.

Mr Gomna Andrew Akolo also reaffirmed the corps readiness to partner and support all Kaduna state relevant agencies as well as stakeholders in its renewed Revenue Drive.

Mr Gomna Andrew Akolo who is an indigene of Nassarawa-Eggon in Nassarawa state further commended Governor

Nasir Ahmed el-Rufai for his relentless efforts towards uncovering tax evasions also pledged his loyalty and resolve to support the Kaduna state government in its commitment towards providing a peaceful and virile environment for socio economic and political prosperity.

The federal Revenue Enforcement corp Commandant also appealed to the Kaduna State Government to take measures towards addressing the issue of illegal motor parks across the state



El-Rufai

Lalong pours encomiums on retired Chief Judge

By DUMAH RANDONG

GOVERNOR Simon Lalong of Plateau State has described the retired Chief Judge of the state, Justice Yakubu Dakwak as a man of interlectual capacity and judicial depth who has demonstrated deep knowledge of the law and it's application in the dispensation of Justice.

The governor who stated this at the valedictory Court session in honour of Justice Dakwak held at the High Court premises, Jos, recently, also described him as an incorruptible Judge with an unblemish record of service.

The valedictory Court session is usually held for retiring Chief Judges after years of service and was attended by members of the bench and bar, family members, the security, politicians, as well as some traditional and religious leaders.

Represented by his Deputy, Professor Sonni Tyoden, Lalong said he has enjoyed a cordial working relationship with Justice Dakwak who has shown understanding, courage and experience to administer justice without fear or favor, affection or ill will which has restored confidence in

many to believe the judiciary as the hope of the common man.

Governor Lalong said government had worked in synergy with the outgoing Chief Judge to carry out major intervention in the judiciary with a view to improving the working environment and enhancing the comfort of the Judges in the performance of their duties.

One of such according to the governor was construction of the ultra modern High Court complex which has reached advanced stage of completion while other courts have also received attention in terms of renovation. This is in addition to the full autonomy granted to the judiciary.

President, Court of Appeal, Justice Monica Dongban who spoke through Justice Jummai Sanke also a Judge of the Court of Appeal, described Justice Dakwak as a quintessential Judge who was knowledgeable and urged the state judiciary to follow in his foot steps.

She said some stakeholders in the justice sector have either contributed to the success or failure to the delivery of justice in the country and

said as Judges, they have always done their best hoping that erring judges will recognize their shortcomings and address them.

Ofofide Okafor, Senior Advocate of Nigeria, SAN, while speaking through Pius Akubo, SAN on behalf of the inner Bar said Justice Yakubu Dakwak should be celebrated for his glorious service and for leaving behind a commendable legacy of honesty and sincerity noting that he was an

incorruptible Judge in a country where corruption was the order of the day but was never found wanting.

Also taking turns to eulogize the outgoing Chief Judge, Garba Pwul, Senior Advocate of Nigeria, said for Justice Dakwak, it was a question of merit not favoritism adding that, he never had any advantage appearing before him as a class mate.

Pwul, while expressing concern on the security

situation in the country, linked the problem to the justice delivery and said all hands must be on deck to fight it.

Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Plateau State, Chrisantus Ahmadu described the outgoing Chief Judge as an incorruptible Judge who's style of leadership was devoid of any acrimony adding that for the country to be better the leaders and the led must agree on the kind of country they want to

have.

In a welcome address, Plateau State Chairman of the Nigeria Bar Association, Barr Yakubu Bawa described the occasion as a solemn assembly and stressed that he was leaving when the country was full of corruption, impunity and the judiciary was highly politicised and speaking truth to power was an offence.

He has been succeeded by Justice G D Mann who is the next in the line of seniority as the tradition demands.

...Task lawyers on peace, justice and fairness

By PALANG KASMI

PLATEAU State Governor Simon Bako Lalong has challenged Nigerian legal professionals to be at the forefront of promoting the principles of peace, justice and fairness which are the bedrock for a peaceful and stable society, even as Nigeria continues to confront its challenges.

The Governor was speaking at a reunion dinner of the Nigerian Law School class of 1991 held in Abuja to mark their 30 years call to the Nigerian Bar.

He said most lawyers have risen up to the occasion and given account of their call to the Bar where they went on to build careers in the

Bench, the Bar as well as in politics, business and many other professions adding "Ours has been a journey of hope resilience, excellence and commitment to the cause of nation-building".

He asked the 91 set to use the opportunity of the 30 years celebration to assess their achievements and critically evaluate their contributions to the growth of the legal profession and the nation at large.

The Governor challenged the class to use their positions to promote the unity, peace and prosperity of Nigeria.

He said they must rise up and fight every form of injustice, bigotry, division and hatred which unfortunately appears to be

on the rise in the country.

According to Lalong "since assuming office as Governor of Plateau State, he has been doing his best to break all barriers of hate, division, ethno-religious bigotry and crises merchandizing which had eaten deep within the state and exacerbated by politicians".

Class leader of Law Class of 1991 Jibrin Okutepa SAN, said the event was organised in continuation of activities to unite members of the class who are making impact in various capacities both on the Bench, Bar, politics, business, academia and other fields stating further that the class has proven to be very resilient and productive

which is by the grace of God and the determination of members to make use of the knowledge given to them at the law school over 30 years ago.

Chairman of the 91 Anniversary celebrations Prof. Paul Ananaba SAN, in his remarks said the class has shown great potentials and contributed a lot to the development of Nigeria. He admonished the members to continue to do more for the nation by putting their heads together to promote the legal profession and also look out for one another.

Governor Lalong led other members of the class to make contributions for the upliftment of one of the classmate who was involved in an accident and has lost his legs.

News

Lalong mourns former PLASU Chancellor Soun of Ogbomoso

By PALANG KASMI

GOVERNOR Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State has commiserated with the family of His Royal Highness, Oba Oladunni Oyewumi, Ajagungbade III, CFR, the Soun of Ogbomoso and, on his demise.

In a condolence message on Sunday, Lalong described the passage of the royal father and First Class traditional ruler as a great loss to the Government, people of Oyo State and Ogbomoso land, including Plateau State.

He said the late monarch gave a leadership that brought peace, prosperity, reconciliation and tolerance to the people during his 48 years on the throne of his ancestors.

In his tribute Lalong said "The demise of the revered traditional ruler is also a huge loss to Plateau State because the late Kabiyesi spent his formative years in Jos where he founded many businesses as well as built strong relationships which he continued to maintain after being called upon to ascend the throne of his fore fathers".

"During his tenure as former Chancellor of the Plateau State University Bokkos, the late Soun of Ogbomoso inspired the



Lalong

Institution to grow and become one of the leading State Universities in Nigeria with rapid expansion of infrastructure, research and student experience".

While urging the family, Oyo State as well his subjects to be

consoled by his good works, Lalong called on them to keep alive his legacies of humility, wisdom and generosity as well as embracing people from different backgrounds and showing love at all times.

Guluwa attends former chairman's son's wedding

By NAOMI SANTOS

EXECUTIVE Chairman of Bokkos Local Government Council, Hon. Joseph Guluwa attended wedding ceremony of son of a former Executive Chairman of Bokkos LGC and PDP Chieftain, Monday Kassa, Mariyom which took place at Magyi-Mangor.

This was contained in a statement signed by the Information Officer, Philip Atsen Agwom for Executive Chairman Bokkos LGC and made available to **THE NIGERIA STANDARD** in Jos.

Guluwa was received in Mangor with great funfare as he informed the mammoth crowd that Mangor is second Home to him having secured his JAMB form funds from the proceed of a maize farm from

Shorom of Mangor Ward and believed Mangor is a blessed land.

He reiterated the willingness of his Economic Re-Engineering team to give Mangor the needed developmental attention as his Party (APC) having seen the need to make James Donchin its State Deputy Chairman of the ruling party.

Guluwa also praised Hon. Monday Kassa for leaving indelible legacies in Bokkos LGC and urged him to continue his legacy of continuous association with rural communities.

While at Hottom of Daffo District, Hon Joseph Guluwa

graced the wedding of son of another PDP Chieftain, Hon. Emmanuel Macham, whose son Pharmacist Mashingil Emmanuel took a wife in holy matrimony.

Hon Guluwa described Hon. Macham Emmanuel as a great Man and urged him to keep encouraging the Youths into gainful ventures especially in sports where he is known for.

He equally encouraged the new couple to accommodate one another and resolved all rising misunderstanding within themselves without inviting any third party.

The Chairman was also at Ik,ngwakap Musherere to witness the wedding of Prince George Ngudyel Lekshak and Scholastica Peter Dada'ar . The groom is Son of Late Mishkakhm Musherere, Pa Solomon Lekshak.

Hon. Guluwa team met at several wedding grounds with the Rt. Hon. Titus Alams (former Speaker Plateau State House of Assembly) and his PDP Senatorial Aspiration Campaign team.

Pastor Aaron Somshak expressed their profound gratitude to Hon Joseph Guluwa for honouring their invitation and prayed God to grant him wisdom to lead people of Bokkos Local Government.

He earlier attended the wedding of Pharmacist Domshak Tettle Dilang at Jesus Revelation Assembly Jos.



Guluwa



This hate must stop

LATELY, reading through the social media, particularly Facebook has become nightmarish, dull and uninteresting. The kind of hate that is spewed on this space, if not checked, portends grave danger for Plateau and particularly for the young, the so called leaders of tomorrow. The recent commissioning of the Ten Commandments by the Yeshua Foundation, owned by former Governor Jonah David Jang, a religious activity, brought to the fore the hate that has permeated the Plateau landscape.

The event unfortunately in my view was not only politicized but provided the ground for political hangeron and indeed, e-rats to take themselves to the cleaners. Sadly, some conventional media platforms did little to stem the hate which was freely vented. One of the cardinal objective of conventional media, "public good" was clearly breached. It didn't matter to anyone the harm that was being done to the public when clearly hate speech took over the space in clear breach of one of the tenets of journalism.

If the social media turks do not know what I am talking about, what about those in the conventional media? Some of the press statement that graced the pages and airwaves of some of these media should not have seen the light day if due diligence was done and social good was considered. But that is even beyond the issue. What matters at the moment is where the hate is being carried to. Why, for instance, do we as Plateau people give political colouration to every activity that is done in our state? The young are particularly guilty of this unfortunate and unwarranted attitude. Nothing escapes being turned into politics. Nothing.

When a crisis breaks out, it is painted as political instead of it being called what it truly is. What is the gain that accrues from this? Have our youth not learned anything from the political class? Are they really readying themselves to take over the reins of politics in the near future?

Why have they turned themselves into political hunting dogs when they should be fashioning ways to dislodge the politicians who have failed and are united in ruining them? Can these set of people not see the harm being done them by their so called political pay masters? Can't the young read between the lines? Do they not realize that it is to the advantage of the political class to have the productive group at each others' jugular so that they can have the opportunity to perpetuate themselves in power?

The Plateau youth fits the description of Mister President when he called

“ That the world is beginning to shut its doors on us is enough reason to make us unite and look inwards. We must determine to make our society work but we can not achieve that if we bicker about everything and on all things. We must open the doors of understanding, accommodation and tolerance. We must stop seeing ourselves as adversaries and work together to make our society strong and better. The era where tribe and tongue paid is long gone. ”

them lazy youths. It is only here that you find young persons having money to load data on their phone and abuse people instead of putting it to productive use. Imagine the opportunities that abound when one owns an Android phone. But are the young people even aware such opportunities abound exist? Self development which used to be the hallmark of the Plateau person has since taken flight from our climes. All that happens now is to target someone,

rain abuses on him and one pay master would send some crumbs, very little to keep the person going to be used another day. That is not the Plateau spirit.

The Plateau spirit is not a lazy one. The Plateau spirit asks a lot of questions. The Plateau spirit is not one to be used without interrogating to know why it is doing what it is doing. That is what we were known for and that is what we should be advocating for. We can not forget in a hurry the spirit of unity that spawned our landscape and enabled our leaders make their marks and served humanity to the best of their abilities.

Our present day Plateau is so divided along ethnic and religious lines that we have come to define ourselves within these prisms. We forget that humanity long existed before these sentiments ever reared their heads. Indeed, these sentiments only provide the political class the weapon with which to manipulate the rest of the gullible society. As a matter of fact, we have jettisoned our old ways of looking out for the other because of how selfish and self centred mankind has become. We must wake up from this slumber and ensure that our tomorrow is secured for the sakes of our children.

That the world is beginning to shut its doors on us is enough reason to make us unite and look inwards. We must determine to make our society work but we can not achieve that if we bicker about everything and on all things. We must open the doors of understanding, accommodation and tolerance. We must stop seeing ourselves as adversaries and work together to make our society strong and better. The era where tribe and tongue paid is long gone. This is the era where ideas rule and should be put to effective use. We can not afford to be left behind. Wake up. Wrap your hands round the ploughshare and begin the process of rebuilding the Plateau of our dreams.

News

COH partners medical lab science council

By NAOMI SANTOS

PROVOST of the Plateau State College of Health Technology Pankshin, Doctor Fwangje Francis has reiterated his commitment to partner with the Medical Laboratory Science council of Nigeria and stakeholders to deliver on their mandate.

Doctor Fwangje disclosed this at the 5th induction ceremony of Medical Laboratory science students of the college.

Fwangje while congratulating the graduands advised that as they begin to render service to humanity they should bear in mind that the task is enormous and demanding.

Administering oath on the inductees, registrar and chief executive officer of Medical laboratory council of Nigeria, Doctor Toxin Erhabor, said the profession offers opportunity to those who are serious and uphold the virtue of the training.

Represented by Ugochi Akangozhi the registrar challenged the inductees to resist all forms of vices that will tarnish the image of the profession and to show



Lar

readiness to receive the mantle of leadership.

Head of department, Pam Pwajok appreciated the college management and other stakeholders for creating the enabling environment for learning and urged the inductees to be good ambassadors of the school, the profession and humanity.

Longshep Nagari presented a paper on how the inductees should prepare cvs for jobs or aptitude test as well to be self

employed. In his goodwill message, Dean of the school, Helen Nanbol and Nenrot Binshak.

Appreciating all stakeholders on behalf of the inductees, Korwe David thanked them especially, lecturers and their parents for the support and mentorship.

Climax of the induction was the presentation of certificates and practicing license to the fifty seven inductees.

PERMANENT Secretary (PS) Ministry of Finance Plateau State, Sani Alhaji Yahaya has bagged an award of excellence by the National Association of Plateau State Students (NAPSS).

This was contained in a statement signed by the ministry's information officer (IO), Timothy Joseph Zitta and made available to THE NIGERIA STANDARD in Jos, recently.

The statement revealed that the award presentation took place in the PS office at J.D. Gomwalk State Secretariat, Jos.

Yahaya expressed delight and thanked NAPSS for finding him worthy for the award, which he said would further spur him to do more in his endeavors.

He told the students that he has been piloting the day-to-day affairs of the ministry as PS and commended the staff of the ministry for their hard work and also good conduct.

The PS advised NAPSS to remain diligent in the academic pursuits and encouraged them to engage themselves in skills acquisition training so that they would not rely on government work after graduating from school.

Earlier in his remarks, NAPSS National Vice President on External Affairs, Haruna Abbas while thanking the PS for the warm reception accorded them

Perm Sec bags award

By JIDAUNA DARING

said that every award of NAPSS is based on merit.

Abbas added that, the intention of the association is to always give recognition and encouragement to those who have contributed towards the development of their immediate communities and the state at large.

He maintained that the NAPSS patron, his majesty Jacob Gyang Buba has also encouraged them to go round the 17 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Plateau State

to give recognition particularly to those that have contributed immensely to the development of their various communities, which he said informed the recognition of the PS effort in Wase LGA.

In a vote of thanks, Director of Planning of the Ministry, Kenneth Hoorlong appreciated NAPSS for the kind gesture, saying that the award was a well-deserved one as far as the contribution of the recipient is concerned in his locality.

Highlight of the event was the presentation of the award to the recipient by NAPSS Director of Social, Dawap Makplang.



Soemlat

Foundation provides succour for widows, orphans

By JIDAUNA DARING

shadows, "because tomorrow is full of greater hope".

In a short sermon during the event, Brother Emeka Emmanuel took his reading from Psalms 12:6 said God is the husband of widows, therefore, urged them to always put their trust in him in whatever they do in life while on earth, so that he would not forget about them, saying that with God all things are possible.

Also presenting a short talk by a Medical Doctor, Professor Esther Envalu who spoke mostly on dirty surrounding which cause cholera and other outbreak of different diseases, stressed the need for personal and environmental hygiene amongst the people at all times, since health is wealth".

THE NIGERIA STANDARD reports that, the items presented to the widows include rice, maize, salt, seasoning cube, wrapper and white beans.

Some of the beneficiaries who spoke shortly after receiving items appreciated the foundation and all their donors for considering their plight and prayed God to blessed them in whatever they do in lives.

Our correspondent also

reports that the event featured special prayers worship songs, among others.

Gwallson swear-in chief of staffs others

RIYOM Local Government Secretariat witnessed an unprecedented number of people as newly appointed Secretary, Chief of Staff, Director General Research and Documentation and seven Supervisory Councillors were sworn-in.

This was contained in a press release signed by Mangut Bitrus, information officer, Riyom LGC and made available to THE NIGERIA STANDARD in Jos.

The occasion drew scores of officials, stakeholders and supporters of All Progressives Congress, illustrious sons and daughters of the Local

Government area, including staff of the Council who joined the Executive Chairman to ensure the occasion was celebrated in a befitting atmosphere.

Chairman of the Council, Hon. Mafeng Gwallson charged the appointees to play their part in the realization of his administration's vision for the people of the Local Government Area.

Council Chairman told them that their appointment is to add value to the present administration in the Local Government and anyone found wanting, would be shown the way out.

Administering the oath of office, Chief Magistrate, Riyom, Hon. Yenkat Anthony charged the appointees to abide by the oath in which they were sworn in to contribute their quota towards the development of the Local Government Area.

Chairman of the All Progressives Congress, Riyom Local Government Area, Hon. Gideon Ntoy said their appointment is the confirmation the people of Riyom have for them and urged them to support the Council Chairman to enable him to succeed.

Commissioner for Information, Dan Manjang urged the appointees to see their emergence as an opportunity to serve the people and to justify the confidence reposed in them.

Ata'a Aten of Ganawuri, Yakubu Chaimang advised the Secretary and other appointees to see their appointments as an opportunity to contribute their wealth of experience towards the growth and development of Riyom Local Government Area.

Responding on behalf of the appointees, the newly sworn-in Secretary, Hon. Davou Dambo pledged to join hands with the Chairman to impact positively on the lives of the people and add value to the instrumentality of the Chairman in the Local Government Area.



Lubo

AS Christmas celebrations draw nearer, God The Rock of Ages Empowerment Foundation (GRAEF) Jos has put smiles on the faces of hundreds of both widows and orphans drawn from 6 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Plateau State.

Plateau State coordinator GRAEF, Florence Hassana Abadom stated this during the foundation's 10 years anniversary and 2021 Christmas joy presentation to widows and orphans, held at Knight of St. John's Hall Jos, on Sunday.

Abadom expressed gratitude to God, the giver of life, who has spared their lives to this few days before

Christmas and New Year celebration and prayed that God will sustained them to the year 2022 and beyond.

She encouraged them all not to see their situation of widowhood as an end to their lives, but rather a challenge to push on as life them in stock greater things.

The coordinator told the widows that God will exchange their pain to sweetness as well as eating the fruit of their good labour, adding that the hardship, frustration, disappointment, rejection and other issues related to widowhood are more



Guluwa

Interview

'We will encourage people to operate profitably'

Hon. Joseph Goluwa, the Executive Chairman of Bokkos Local Government Council in this interview with EZEKIEL DONTINNA x-rays some issues affecting the council and plans for a better tomorrow. Excerpts:

YOU assumed office as the Council chairman barely a month or two now. What would you say are some of the issues you met on ground?

Yes, it is less than two months now, and by next week I will be two months in office.

So far so good, what we have seen in the office is something that needs overhauling. We met a system whereby the IGR was very low. We met a system whereby our revenue profile from the Federation Account was largely consumed by salaries of workers, so we have very little left particularly on the quest for development in the area.

So, we had to start thinking outside the box on what to do in terms of our IGR improvement. We have looked at our various markets which are the main sources of our IGR and what is coming from there. We want to concentrate our efforts on revamping our revenue profile and the generating capacity of these markets.

We will also look at other windows of opportunity in the area of generating revenue within the local government area especially in the area of sanitation which has to do with environmental issues. We have institutions which are creating a lot of environmental hazards like emitting lots of debris which needs clearance.

We are working on legislations concerning environmental matters which can also be another avenue for revenue generation. If you enter Bokkos and other metropolitan towns, you will realize that we have no refuse collection system in place and for us to implement that; people must pay a little token for their services. The town must be clean; so we are interested in looking at those areas.

We are contemplating resetting a revenue taskforce and advisory monitoring committee which will support our revenue officers in harnessing all the areas of revenue which are not tapped. So by and large, we will place a lot of emphasis on trying to reverse the train so that we can do something tangible for the people of our local government.



Goluwa

Your local government is predominantly occupied by farming activities which is another source of income. What are you thinking in this aspect?

Yes, as an agricultural community, the local government is basically agrarian and our markets are driven by farm produces which we produce so, we will first pay attention to the status of our markets. If you look at Bokkos market, it is congested already.

When you enter the market, you will see dirt everywhere and we need to clean it up, because during raining season; you cannot enter the market. In fact, the status of the market is in shamble. We will do whatever we can to ensure that the state of the market is convenient for our people. You see, the Katako market which is the second largest market in Bokkos has its problem and we intend to look at these problems to make sure that our farmers find a strategic place to sell their produce and get good value for their farm produces.

As a farming local government area, the interest of our farmers is key and that is why lots of hands are on deck in the area of farming. We have a Supervisory Councilor for Agriculture and also a Special Adviser on

Agriculture. That means; our attention is primarily on agriculture in Bokkos LGA.

If we can make our people have access to key farming inputs, we would have achieved a lot for ourselves as a people. Some of the key inputs include; availability of water, fertilizer, pesticides, mechanization services in terms of tractors to enhance our production capacity, this can be great.

Bokkos happens to be one of the major producers of Irish potato in Nigeria, if not Africa. What new innovations do you have as a government to improve processing mechanism and not just producing it?

Ours is to provide an enabling ground for people to operate profitably. The potato value chain progress that we are achieving in Bokkos LGA is something that we want it expanded and there are already plans to start processing potato into other products.

As a local government, we will not go into this business directly, but the investment arm can be a party to it so that, we will have an eye on whatever they are doing. You know businesses are better run by private entities and business concerns. Government is not a good business man.

So, we will not delve directly into it as an entity, but we have our skin involved in whatever that is coming and will give them encouragement. We will also look at how the PPP (Public Private Partnership) can also work well for us as a local Government to encourage whoever wants to come to Bokkos and invest heavily in the agricultural sector.

You have not recorded any serious report of security breach in recent times. What new measures did you apply?

Maybe, you are not aware of the security challenges we are facing. We have had a lot of security challenges even within the short period I have assumed office. There is this issue of kidnapping that has been on the high-side, so, it is something that we have been working closely with security agencies and other support-based organizations in the likes the vigilante group for the protection of our people.

It is one menace that we want to stand our feet on and eradicate it within the local government; else, even the friendly business atmosphere that we are talking about may not be achieved. This has been an issue of great concern, but working with STF and other security agencies, one of the key policies which we have put on ground is that, every household in our communities should have a whistle so that, when your neighbor is under attack, everybody should blow it and alarm the entire community so that, the marauding criminals would know that, the people are on alert and get chased away by the intervention of the locals before the intervention of our conventional security.

Before the end of the harvest season, the security breaches we have been having were those of cows entering farms and eating plants which have not been harvested. We realized that it was becoming unbecoming to the extent that, most of those farms destroyed by cattle was done in the night.

So, during one of our security meetings which we convened, we had to ban night grazing and warned that, any animal found

grazing in the night, it is obvious that it is out to create chaos within the system. So, that was the strategy we adopted to help reduce this menace to the barest minimum and we hope that, with the support of government; we will overcome this.

So on a whole, what is your target as the Executive Chairman of Bokkos Local Government Council?

Yes, my target is to transform the economic well-being of Bokkos Local Government. I came with a campaign slogan of "Economic Re-engineering". What I meant by Economic Re-engineering is to change the economic base of an average man for the better. So, we will create or bring in economic infrastructure which will support our people.

Finally, what would you say is the fate of APC in Bokkos Local Government Area?

The fate of APC as a party in Bokkos Local Government is very, very bright. Our party has been in power since the coming of Governor Lalong's administration which has come to rescue the people of Plateau State from their bad status. I can assure you that since we have transited from APC to APC at this local government, you can be sure that even the person that will come after me would be APC.

What we have done to our people is what is attracting them to keeping fate in us. I can tell you that, they will have no reason to go back to Egypt because we have already taken them to the promised land. APC has come to stay not in Bokkos Local Government alone but in Plateau State, because I can assure you that come 2023, APC will install a new Governor after His Excellency, Governor Lalong.

What is your call to the people of Bokkos Local Government?

My call to the people Bokkos Local Government is for them to cooperate with both the local, state and Federal Government and be patient with the policy which government is putting in place because any new policy is sometimes hurting but I assure you that at the end of the day, the generality of people will be better than if we continue with the status core.

Foreign News

Ghana to fine airlines for unvaccinated passengers



The new penalties came a day after Ghana began requiring all passengers over the age of 18 to provide evidence of full vaccination against the virus

GHANA has said it will fine airlines \$3,500 for each passenger who arrives in the capital's international airport without being fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Under new measures taking effect today Wednesday, air carriers will also be penalised the same amount for travellers who did not fill out a health declaration form before boarding their flight to Kotoka International Airport in Accra, the state-owned Ghana Airport Company said.

While Ghanaians who fly in without meeting the requirement will be allowed to enter the country and undergo a 14-day quarantine, foreigners may be refused entry, the airport authority said.

The measures are just the latest taken by Ghana, which has introduced some of the strictest coronavirus-related restrictions in West Africa.

The new penalties came a day after the country began requiring all passengers over the age of 18 to provide evidence of full vaccination against COVID-19, saying that about 60 percent of the total new cases recorded in the country had come from the airport during a recent two-week period.

"The current increase in cases together with the detection of the Omicron variant among international arrivals and the expected increase during the festive season calls for urgent actions to prevent a major surge in COVID-19 cases in Ghana," the Ghana Health Service said last week in announcing its decision.

Ghana, with about 31 million people, has one of

the best COVID-19 testing programmes in the region. It has had 132,000 confirmed cases and 1,243 deaths since the pandemic began.

According to data compiled by the Reuters news agency, slightly more than five percent of the country's population has so far been vaccinated.

Authorities this month launched an enormous vaccination drive ahead of the enforcement from January 22 of a vaccine mandate for targeted groups, including government employees, health workers and

students. The government plans to recruit more health workers to be able to double daily inoculation from 140,000.

Chaotic scenes erupted after the ruling party deputy tried to seize the ballot box during vote for parliament speaker.

Tributes pour in for designer who brought streetwear aesthetic to luxury fashion and championed diversity and inclusion.

The head of African Union's health watchdog urges moderation in the world's reaction to the new coronavirus variant.

Rebels retake Ethiopian Heritage town Lalibela

TIGRAY rebels have recaptured the north Ethiopian town of Lalibela, Reuters and AFP news agency have reported, citing local residents, less than two weeks after government forces and their allies took control of the UNESCO World Heritage town.

Tigrayan fighters "are in the town centre, there's no fighting," said a resident reached by telephone on Sunday afternoon.

"They came back. They're already here," said another, adding that they appeared to have come from the east, in the direction of Waldia.

"The population, most of the people are scared. Some are running away. Most of the people, they already left because there might be a revenge. We expressed our happiness before when the junta left."

Lalibela is home to 11 medieval rock-cut churches and a site of pilgrimage for the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) rebel group's military leadership said in a statement shared with pro-TPLF media they had launched "widespread

counter-offensives" in numerous locations including along the road linking Gashena and Lalibela.

"Our forces first defended and then carried out counter-offensives against the massive force that was attacking the front at Gashena and the surrounding areas to achieve a glorious victory," it said.

Government spokesperson Legesse Tulu did not respond

to requests for comment on the reported recapture of the town.

TPLF spokesperson Getachew Reda also did not respond to a phone call seeking comment.

One of the witnesses who spoke to Reuters said that special forces from the Amhara region and their fighter allies, both allies of the Ethiopian government, began leaving Lalibela on



Ibrahim

SOUTH African President Cyril Ramaphosa has tested positive for COVID-19 and is receiving treatment for mild symptoms, his office said.

Ramaphosa, who is fully vaccinated, began feeling unwell after leaving a state memorial service for former President F W de Klerk in Cape Town on Sunday, it said.

The 69-year-old leader is now self-isolating in Cape Town and is being monitored by the South African Military Health Service, it said.

He has delegated all responsibilities to Deputy President David Mabuza for the next week.

The presidency did not say whether Ramaphosa had been infected with the Omicron variant of the coronavirus.

The highly mutated variant, which was first detected in South Africa last month, has sparked global panic over fears that it is more contagious than other strains of the coronavirus.

The presidency said Ramaphosa and his team had been tested for COVID-19 multiple times last week during visits to four West African countries.

Some in the president's delegation tested positive in Nigeria and returned directly to South Africa. Throughout the rest of the trip, Ramaphosa and his delegation tested negative.

"The president and the delegation returned to South Africa from the Republic of Senegal on Wednesday, December 8, 2021, after obtaining negative test results.

"The president also tested negative on his return to Johannesburg on December 8," it said.

South Africa's Ramaphosa tests positive to Covid-19



Cyril Ramaphosa

The statement quoted Ramaphosa as saying that his own infection served as a warning to all citizens of the importance of getting vaccinated and remaining vigilant against exposure.

"Vaccination remains the best protection against severe illness and hospitalisation," the statement said.

"People who have had contact with the president today are advised to watch for symptoms or to have themselves tested," it added.

South Africa is currently battling a rapid resurgence driven by the Omicron variant, health officials say.

Al Jazeera's Fahmida Miller, reporting from Johannesburg, said almost a third of the people being tested in the country were returning positive results.

"At the moment, South

Africa is looking at a 29 percent infection rate," Miller said.

"They are still determining whether this is attributed to the new variant and whether the Delta variant is still playing a role in people becoming ill," she added.

In early November, South Africa was recording about 200 new cases, but infections began rising dramatically soon after.

The country recorded more than 18,000 new confirmed daily cases of COVID-19 on Sunday.

More than 70 percent of the cases are estimated to be from Omicron, according to genetic sequencing surveys.

So far, the majority of cases have been relatively mild, and the percentage of severe cases needing oxygen have been low, say doctors.

Saturday night.

"The last batch left this morning. We heard gunshots from a distance last night but the Tigrayan forces recaptured Lalibela without firing guns in the town," said the witness, a hotel receptionist, by phone.

Military sources have told Al Jazeera that pro-government forces are advancing towards the city of Waldia - a stronghold of the TPLF.

Forces aligned with the TPLF had taken control of the town in early August.

But on December 1, Ethiopian troops and their Amhara regional allies recaptured the town.

That news was one of a number of reported gains on the battlefield against the Tigrayan forces, who had in November pushed south and threatened to march on Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa.

Mali's leader promises election timetable next year

THE head of Mali's military-dominated government on Sunday promised West Africa's regional bloc that he would provide it with an election timetable by January

2022.

The head of Mali's transitional government, Colonel Assimi Goita, justified postponing the election and holding a

national consultation which he said would be "indispensable" for peace and stability.

"Mali... commits to providing you with a detailed timetable by January 31, 2022 at the latest that could be discussed during an ECOWAS mission," Goita wrote to the head of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Ghanaian President Nana Akufo-Addo, in a letter obtained by AFP.

"The return to constitutional order is and will remain my number one priority," Goita said.

The ECOWAS suspended Mali following two military

coups in August 2020 and May 2021, sanctioning officials deemed responsible for delaying elections and threatening further measures.

ECOWAS leaders on Sunday threatened to impose further sanctions if Mali's military rulers failed to stick by plans for February polls.

"The heads of state... decided to keep the (deadline) of February 27, 2022 for elections in Mali," president of the West African ECOWAS bloc Jean-Claude Brou told reporters in Abuja, adding sanctions would be imposed in January if Mali did not move to stage polls.

Feature

Unemployment threat to nation's security

Unemployment is one of the most serious problems facing Nigeria like many other countries in the world. However, there is also a growing level of security challenges facing the country, which calls for serious concern. The rising level of unemployment in the country can be attributed for the increase in security challenges in the country. ALEXIS PETER, writes.

MANY school leavers and employable adults are unable to secure jobs and the government is unable to act fast enough in finding a solution to this problem. This paper argues that the high rate of unemployment in the country is directly responsible for the increasing security challenges in Nigeria. For sustainable development to be achieved, the government must urgently address the unemployment crisis facing the country so as to be able to adequately tackle its security challenges. The paper suggested various measures the Nigerian government can put in place to arrest this situation.

Unemployment is a global phenomenon whereby eligible workforce of a nation is disengaged in the service of the nation. It is not only a serious economic issue but has social implications that affect almost all countries and all people either directly or indirectly. It causes social disquiet and is the harbinger of the spate of crimes, perennial youth unrest and unstable socio-economic structure that has bedeviled several nations. The state of unrests witnessed recently in the Middle East, North Africa and even the riots in the United Kingdom in 2011 as well as several others could be attributed to the increasing rate of unemployment in those nations. The world and most particularly developing nations like Nigeria are currently facing serious job challenge and widespread decent work deficits, a development that is capable of increasing the spread of poverty.

In recent times, Nigeria has been facing several security challenges. These include rise in armed robbery, kidnapping, and insurgency by the Niger Delta militants, ethnic conflicts, and recently, activities of the Boko Haram sect. Hundreds of Nigerians and some foreigners resident in the country have been killed as a result of one violent crime or the other, while property worth millions of naira has also been lost to insecurity in the country. Fundamentally, no one and place is considered totally safe within the country. While those in the southern parts of the country grapple with kidnapping and other violent crimes, Nigerians in the North live in utter terror not knowing where and when the next attack will occur. The country's security challenge took a terrorism dimension with the incessant activities of the bandits, herdsmen, and series of communal clashes have occurred in several parts of the country including Benue, Suleja in Niger state, Jos, Kaduna, Maiduguri, Jos, Bauchi and Kano in recent years since 2015.

Also, the general state of insecurity in the country is sending a wrong signal to the international community about traveling to Nigeria. Many international agencies and countries have intensified their warning to their citizens of the risks involved in traveling and doing business in some parts of the country. For instance, in a release dated 12 January 2012, the U.S. Department of State (Bureau of Consular Affairs) warned its citizens of the avoidable risk involved in traveling to some parts of Nigeria and till date there has been no lift of that warning. The Travel Warning reads:

From the picture of the high level of unemployment in Nigeria painted above, it is easy to see how this population of unemployed persons can serve as security threat to the country. The various security



challenges been faced by the country have been attributed to unemployment in many cases. According to the popular maxim, "The idle hand is the devil's workshop"; the situation whereby majority of the people are poor and hungry and a lot of youths are jobless and unemployed, will, doubtlessly, engender high insecurity in the country. It is now the norm to see thousands of the unemployed turn up in response to advertisement for jobs where only a handful is to be employed. The country is faced with a gross abuse and underutilization of human resources with direct impact on national productivity and competitiveness.

Thus, unemployment has driven many Nigerians into various activities that constitute a threat to the country's security. There have been instances in which young graduates were arrested for being involved in one form of crime or another. Most of these criminal graduates attribute their involvement in these crimes to the unemployment situation in the country. For instance, the cover story of The News Magazine (26 September 2017) was captioned "Graduate Bandits on the Prowl". According to the report, most of the graduate robbers that were interviewed argued that they took to crime for want of job.

Furthermore, due to collapse of infrastructures including electricity supply and good road network that is supposed to be taken care of by the government, small and medium scale businesses, which provide employment opportunities for jobless people, are fast eroding. Many artisans such as furniture makers, welders, aluminum window fitters, tailors and so on who cannot afford power generators are today out of work. In desperation, a large chunk of Nigerian youths have taken to riding commercial motorcycles,

while others are into street hawking just to keep body and soul together.

Unemployment in Nigeria has become one of the most critical problems the country is facing. Years of corruption, civil war, military rule, and mismanagement have hindered the economic growth of the country. Despite being endowed with diverse and infinite resources, both human and material, years of negligence and adverse policies have led to the under-utilization of these resources. These resources have not been effectively utilized in order to yield maximum economic benefits. There is, thus, an urgent need for arresting the high level of unemployment in the country in order to address the security challenges the country is facing. Let us examine some of the ways by which this can be achieved and these solutions can be aimed at supporting youth (aged 18-30) across its markets. The key focus is on individuals who are out of school, employment or those that need access to the right training, skills or confidence necessary to pursue their dreams and realize their goals.

There is a need for the provision of enabling environment for businesses to thrive in the country. Currently, the business climate in Nigeria is too harsh. The most debilitating is the lack of basic infrastructure. The epileptic power situation in the country has forced many companies to either shut down or move their production plants to smaller neighbouring countries where power is available and stable. If the issue of power supply is solved, there is assurance that the manufacturing sector will be resuscitated. These will lead to the flourishing of small and medium scale enterprises, translating into the creation of more jobs.

There is a need for the diversification of the country's economy. Nigeria is over-dependent on oil, which is subjected to global oil

price fluctuation and currently the price of fuel is ranges from 165naira to 200naira. Apart from the fact that the country has so many other mineral resources yet to be explored, the country should venture into other sectors like agriculture, tourism and entertainment. It is noteworthy that revolutions in the ICT sector especially regarding mobile communications, created a lot of jobs in Nigeria. Other sectors of the economy can do same.

The Nigerian government should set up a fund for rescuing industries that are at the verge of bankruptcy like is being done in most developed countries. If money is injected into ailing industries, they will be able to resuscitate, reducing the rate of downsizing and retrenchment.

Government at all levels in the country could create more employment opportunities to address the unemployment problem. Although some states have some job employment projects, they are still a far cry from solving the crisis at hand. For instance, the Oyo State Government created 20,000 jobs through its YES-O Scheme launched on December 1, 2011 till date. Though this is small, other states could take similar steps to improve on this. Also, the Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YouWin) project launched by President Goodluck Jonathan in 2011 should be revisited and enhanced, which is aimed at employing about 500,000 youth, though laudable, is not enough. The private sector and non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to create more jobs to accommodate the unemployed in the country. Recently, the N-Power project by President Muhammad Buhari should be extended and supported by state governments at all level ranging from education to vocational and agricultural.

There is a need to place more emphasis on technical as well as

vocational education in the country. This will enable more and more people to acquire practical skills that will help them to be self-employed and not to continue to seek white-collar jobs. Courses tailored along these lines could be introduced into the curricular of schools to encourage the students to learn how they can use these skills to better their lots as well as for them to become employers of labour and which can eradicate the high joblessness for both men and women in the country.

More so, the citizens can only exert their best potentials in the right peaceful environment. The insecurity in Nigeria has taken a dangerous dimension which if not tackled will frustrate all developmental efforts of the government. There is, therefore, a need for urgent measures to be put in place to address the problem of unemployment and security challenges the country is facing, considering the country's position on the continent and in the international community. Nigeria is ranked the 6th largest oil producer in the world. Yet, the country's unemployment rate is one of the highest in the world. Nigeria needs to adopt a skill-oriented education principle to train skilled technical manpower, to build and maintain its critical infrastructure to drive the economy and also, to create employment. There is also a need to promote sound morals and ethical values in the country. There is a need to inculcate discipline in Nigerians, especially the youth, in order to ensure that they do not get drawn into criminal activities all because they are unemployed or out of work for one reason or the other. Although, this may be meaningless if the country's leaders do not lead by example.

Alexis Peter is student of Plateau State Polytechnic Barkin Ladi.

EVIE'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Living

By **MARY KPANTO**

The fear of growing old

FEAR is uncontrollable and unpleasant to any individual. Fear engulfs women when they discover age is not on their side. As the years roll by, the panic of realizing the purpose of one's existence may spread over the individual. The word "panic" is appropriate since with age comes the trepidation of the coming responsibility associated with adulthood.

Because when a girl is twenty or almost, she is filled so much with optimism, favorable expectations and so much hope for gigantic success. It is a period of spending time on self. It is also a period of experimentation and expectations having reached age of thirty.

Life is full of expectations and starts with lots of hope of what should be achieved. People struggle in an effort to achieve certain goals in life. Ageing is a period of self assessment which may not give satisfying results. One of the reasons that hinder most young girls from thinking positively while growing older is the believe that opportunity comes once. I hear married women saying "I feel like going back to make my past right" especially when they encounter some young girls misbehaving. They regret the strength to achieve things during their youthfulness has been wasted. But when aged, she is weak and reminisce on the things she has done.

Youthfulness needs lots of strength and energy. However, with age this energy dissipates with little or no achievement in life. It is obvious that young girls look for ways to make their youthfulness worthwhile by doing things that will help them improve their standard of living when they get older.



We have all heard the saying "oh you should never ask a lady her age": what is with age anyway? I noticed that once ladies reach a certain point in live they start dreading getting old. At this stage they do everything possible to stop the ageing process and maintain that billion-dollar looks beauty industries bank on to promote their products. The reson young girls fear getting old is because when young, they celebrate birthdays with big

parties and cake, doing all kinds of makeups to beautify themselves, having beautiful moments with friends and lots more.

In their twenties the cake turns into champagne but the celebration is still there. In their thirties and forties with time they become nonexistent or don't want to talk about it. Almost every lady is afraid that one day she will stand staring at her reflection in the mirror without recognizing herself. The fear of growing old has made a lot of women dabble into a lot of things in order to remain younger.

Am happy and excited growing into adulthood. But am scared of growing old again. Girls understand that beauty fades away with time. Some ladies can not stand the thought of having wrinkles all over their faces and wish they could remain young forever. Girls fear that as they age they become less attractive to men, and this might discourage men from making commitments to the relationship. Is like a moving van that plies the life span of humans from the days of youthfulness till age comes comes knocking. Its always like a bad dream.

The exuberant youthful expectations to the hopelessness that characterizes old age especially when there is no success story attached to it. This goes to show that from every

direction of life ladies worry about how their lives will look like when age steps in. That's why young ladies should plan their lives aright before the true reality

of life sets in. **Mary John Kpanto is on attachment from Plateau State Polytechnic Barkin Ladi**



EVERY'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Living

By
CHINASA UDECHUKWU

Parenting in a digital world

IT is not uncommon for people to desire returning to the 60s when technology was yet at its infancy, considering the tremendous effects it is having on children and the society at large there by making parenting a difficult task.

No doubt with its advancement life has been made happier and innovations brought by the internet has made living easier and enjoyable but there has been a drift from a more serene and healthy way of living.

Thanks to the internet, traveling miles to attend meetings has been taken care of by video conferencing. Electronic banking has dealt with the dangers involved in carrying large amounts of money from one place to another. The world has successfully been compressed into a global village which you can have access to through your mobile phone. Daily the internet provides information on different subjects that it is almost impossible not to find anything on it. It is indeed a store room of data.

The benefits of technology may be countless yet its adverse effects still stares us to our faces particularly its effects on youth and children. A child who is yet to own a mobile phone is regarded by his friends as one who is still living in the woods yet with this phone, vital time is spent on the internet chatting, downloading videos and so on and when exams approaches the child becomes



confused having lots of syllabus to cover within a limited time hence affecting the reading culture which students should be known for. Some students claim to be reading online but the question is whether they will be able to ignore the messages which pops up occasionally from social media groups while reading.

Listening is fundamental to the process of learning and although schools prohibit the use of phone during lesson hours, that has not been able to completely deter students from using their phones in classes. Less attention in class will amount to lesser grade and when exams begin this student will seek any available means not to fail.

Addiction to phones and other gadgets could trigger health issues. It is heartbreaking when one consider the stress of working every day to put food on the table and using part of this hard earned money to buy phones and at the end the rest of the money is spent in the hospital treating eyes problem and other sicknesses that could have been avoided by simple moderation.

There are no restrictions to accessing data on the internet. Children and youth are therefore exposed to messages, pictures and videos harmful to good morals. In addition to this exposure, children and youths alike pick role models and try as hard as possible to imitate their styles be it good or bad. So parents will have to put up with changes in the speech, character and dressing choices of their

children leading to the promotion of secularism.

The most detrimental effect of this digital world is that we are gradually forgetting our socialization skills. Animals are not able to communicate verbally as we do but yet they understand themselves. It is an eyesore walking in to a house with a family of four or more and hearing no form of conversation but rather seeing everyone buried into his laptop or her phone. For parents and children to live happily there must be communication and for siblings to understand each other communication is equally necessary. Today we find children who are more comfortable playing with their phones rather than with their siblings and although they grew up together they look like strangers to each other.

As a growing child, there will be questions desiring to be answered and there will be confusions needed to be clarified but because these children keep to themselves always, parents will be unable to assist.

The task of bringing up a child is a collective responsibility, it should not be left to the wife or husband alone. There is no law which

states that men should be responsible for the boys and women for the girls. Parents should know what kind of materials their children are likely to be exposed to on the internet but this is not possible with analog parents it becomes imperative for parents to equally go digital.

Parents must learn to discuss with their children and help them to understand that not everything on the internet is suitable for them. The children you fail to make out time for today are the same children you will spend the rest of your life paying for their poor upbringing. There will never be a time that will be most convenient to spend at home with your children except you create one. Pick days at random when you will be at home and watch videos with them. This will keep them in check and they will be careful not to deviate and bring home movies not meant for them. Every child loves to be pampered yet parents must not hesitate in spanking them whenever the need arises. It is safer to correct them at the early stage.

Chinasa is a student on attachment from Plateau State Polytechnic Barkin Ladi.



In support of Nigeria's retaliatory actions

SEVERAL western countries have restricted the movement of people from some African countries since the outbreak of the Omicron variant of the Covid-19 virus, first dictated in South Africa and Hong Kong. From findings, the variant has since spread in at least 57 countries. Britain was the first country to announce a travel ban on Nigeria and placed the country on its "red list".

THIS decision has not only been unjust and unfair but is an infraction on the fundamental right to travel to any destination of choice. The decision was as a matter of fact, hastily taken when there was still little information on the transmissibility and severity of Omicron variant and its origin.

IN retaliation to the ban, Nigeria has since banned flights from Argentina, Britain, Canada and Saudi Arabia as a retaliatory measure for being added to the Omicron Covid-19 virus of these countries.

IT is baffling that compared to the cases these countries record every day, Nigeria's cases are nothing. In every respect, the travel ban smacks of hypocrisy; a case of a kettle calling pot black.

FURTHERMORE, the travel ban imposed on Nigeria could be likened to modern day version of imperialism being perpetrated against Nigerians. For example, when the HIV/AIDS epidemic broke out over 40 years ago, similar denials were foisted on people from Africa and restrictions were also imposed on people living with the disease, increasing stigmatization and discrimination which affected Africans.

PLACING Nigeria on the "red list" in our view does not reflect sound global public health policy, but should be viewed as perpetration of long held prejudices geared towards denying Nigerian citizens the right to mobility and universal right to quality health care despite the call by World Health Organization (WHO) that such ban would not prevent Omicron spread.

IN spite of the FG's pronouncement, the spokesperson of British High Commission in Nigeria said that United Kingdom would not reverse its travel ban on Nigeria.

NIGERIA'S leaders, must however, stand firm and resolute in the defence of its citizens no matter the intimidation from these bullies.

WE must also begin to look inwards and develop our infrastructure as well as our healthcare system so as to depend less on them. In fact, this altercation between Nigeria and these countries should provide a window for our leaders to explore our indigenous alternative medicines to fight diseases.

INDEED, this should be a clarion call on Nigeria to adopt the Chinese and Japanese methods by using our natural alternative medicine to curb the spread of the virus.

CONSEQUENTLY, we support the retaliatory steps taken by the Nigerian government and encourage it to even go further and redesign its foreign policies just like in the Abacha days when we dealt less with Europe and the Western world.

Insecurity: Citizens need protection

THE issue of insecurity in the country has become something else. In the sense that we citizens of the country don't even move freely.

The welfare of each citizen is supposed to be taken care of by the government which is not forthcoming. While the issue of robbery is all over the country while are criminal cases is very much high and nothing has been done about it.

Now come to talk about Plateau Jos, few weeks ago the state prison was attacked and some prisoners were let loose, so one might be right to voice our concern which points to the fact that security officials are not achieving the desired

results. If a correctional center was attacked successfully then what about our homes?

The killing of our people is increasing day by day. The case of killings in Bassa, Riyom and Bokkos calls for concern.

While the people are defenseless and helpless, the government is supposed to take

PLSG, relax operational time for Keke

SHOULD there ever be a reason to close late from work, and getting a tricycle or a cab back home is now a problem. The Plateau State government should ensure that there is free



responsibility of every citizen it is the government's responsibility to protect its citizens and also

ensure their well being. **Mary John Kpanto, Plateau State Polytechnic, Barkin Ladi.**

movement of tricycles around the Jos metropolis especially at the evening rush hour of 7pm.

The problem however, is finding a cab or tricycle to ply around the city especially around Rukuba road.

Driving between 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. one usually sees large number of passengers heading towards Rukuba road while the time available makes the whole situation chaotic as residents struggle to catch up with the dateline for Keke riders which in most cases keep the residents stranded or resort to trekking at odd time of the evening after closing from work or from their businesses.

With insecurity issues on the Plateau, walking long distances is a risk on its own. Getting home late and rising early is not very nice I also call on the attention of the state government to quickly address the issue.

It will indeed be a great relief to Rukuba Road residents if the state government would relax closing time for the operators which would make life more easy for the Rukuba Road residents.

By Chinasa Udechukwu, Plateau State Polytechnic Barkin Ladi.

Water Board should address erratic water supply

SINCE the setting in of the dry season this year, residents of Tafawa Balewa in Jos North Local Government of Plateau State have had a cause for concern on the lack of regular flow of water from the state water board.

For the past few months, the water taps have remained dry as the source of treated water has been in short supply as residents of Tafawa Balewa have now resorted to buying water from water vendors and other sources that may not be healthy for consumption.

Sometimes when the taps starts flowing, it comes with red mud and the flow comes with lack of pressure to even pump into the tanks.

Residents have witnessed the trend where water supply comes twice in a month which does not augur

well for a city like Jos and moreso, when the state government is battling to address the recently reported cases of Cholera and other water borne

diseases in the state.

It is time for the water board to kindly look at the plight of the residents of Tafawa Balewa by taking prompt action please.

Chuks Umahi, Tafawa Balewa Street, Jos.

Abattoir road needs attention

I am writing to appeal to the state government's intervention on the Abattoir, Namwa Junction along Rayfield Road.

The road has been bad for a while now, and this is due to the raining season, which has also made the road unmotorable, and at the dry season the amount of dust coming from vehicles plying the road can be disturbing.

I want to plead with the government through this medium to try and fix the road by providing a proper water channel so as to make the road last longer and also reduce the risk of accidents at the junction as well as the hold up being caused by the bad road.

Alexis Peter, Plateau State Polytechnics Barkin Ladi.

Standard Cartoon



Opinion

Retirement should be enjoyed, not endured

Dr. TIMI OLUBIYI

THE current retirement landscape in Nigeria will change in the next couple of years as the aging workforce is becoming increasingly visible in businesses, government, politics and sports. Besides, with or without employment, the retirement phase will surely come for every individual. However, persistently high rates of unemployment have been a serious concern in the country over the years, without any visible unemployment benefit, insurance or social policy. The reality is that many in the unemployment category will equally be reaching retirement age and transiting in few years. So, the impact of unemployment should be seen as long term and life-long, because it affects living standards even in retirement, when the active age and work life has passed with no palliatives or support.

It is not uncommon for employees, politicians, entrepreneurs and the unemployed to live more than 20 years after the retirement age of 60 but the issue is usually the sustainability of wellbeing, livelihood, lifestyle, status, and social demands. The longer the time spent in retirement, the harder it becomes to be certain about the adequacy of resources to keep the livelihood and lifestyle going. For those that care to know, individuals will need to have enough funds, assets that generate steady income, family support or investments saved to last even beyond 20 years. Unfortunately, with a recent survey in Lagos State of a cluster of

entrepreneurs and older adults, majority may not have enough to meet and maintain their standard of living in an era of uncertainty, increasing inflation, harsh economic environments and much more at retirement.

This piece presents insights from business owners and businesses around Lagos State, the economic capital of the country, on retirement planning. A follow-up survey in Computer Village, Ikeja was carried out where respondents (entrepreneurs) indicated that they will only be willing to grow and expand their businesses at the expense of retirement planning. How ironic? Few mentioned that the only way they can be confident enough to retire is if their businesses succeed.

One of the key findings in the survey was that only a fraction of businesses are aware of the importance of pension and retirement plans. It was a stiff struggle identifying businesses with adequate arrangement of pension for staff, owner manager or the business operator. Even though a retirement plan through pension arrangements can help ensure that business owners and their staff have enough funds to live on in their later years, this all important scheme is missing in majority of small businesses in Lagos State. Recall that small businesses make up over 90% of existing businesses in the country and provide employment, sustainability and livelihood for majority of households. Many entrepreneurs are so busy growing their businesses that they put off

planning for retirement, which is worrisome. As important as a retirement plan is, aging business owners and operators rarely consider it imperative.

The survey further indicated that majority of the businesses, especially the self-employed, do not have retirement savings plans, and 40% of business owners in the survey are not confident that they will be able to retire before the age of 65. Nevertheless, the good news is that the small business owners have more options available to them than traditional 9 am to 5 pm office employees, yet this advantage is not explored. For them, retirement can either be considered early or later. In some cases, business owners might choose not to fully retire. The flexibility gives entrepreneurs the option to determine exactly when to stop working, yet majority continue to operate without cease.

Indeed, according to the survey, 70% of the self-employed and entrepreneurs in Computer Village do not save regularly for retirement. The reason given for this phenomenon is that they do not receive a steady salary pack. The survey further found that some of the small business owners intend selling their businesses to fund their retirement and relocate to the village when the time arrives. However, the risk of this option is that entrepreneurs and small business owners can overestimate the value of their businesses and eventually run at a loss. Counting entirely on the sale of the business to fully fund a long retirement is very risky.

The survey also found that many business owners would appreciate guidance when it comes to retirement plans because they lack knowledge of it. It is important to note that before death, especially under normal conditions in life, there is the old age phase: a period where entrepreneurs have almost exhausted their intellectual values and strength. Consequently, there is a need to prepare for that phase with adequate retirement planning and business succession plans.

Retiring is a real-life changing phase with far-reaching implications. Most entrepreneurs would rather not hear or discuss this reality. However, it is inevitable. Business owners cited cost and lack of resources to administer the plan as the leading reasons why they do not have a retirement plan in place.

Please note if you are a small business owner reading this, you are likely busy running your business and have not had the time to research the best retirement option. While retirement may not be on your mind currently as an entrepreneur, the sooner you start planning for this all-important aspect of your business, the better. Here are simple steps entrepreneurs and small business owners can take right now to prepare for retirement.

A good start is by implementing the 10% rule, which is a lot easier than you think. It is achievable by simply setting up an auto-transfer system with your bank, automatically transferring 10% of your earnings out of your business account into your savings account every month. Then you can place

the accumulated fund into a low-risk investment at intervals and allow compounding interest to grow your fund. This applies whether you are an entrepreneur or not. It is a simple trick to grow your wealth and support your retirement plan. Real estate investments can also help give succour in retirement, but professional guidance needs to be sought.

Another approach is to develop an exit strategy for your business. That is, have in mind right now what will happen to it when you retire, when you intend to eventually quit, and set up strategies to guarantee retirement income. One other important factor to consider is what will happen to your business when you retire. Will you pass it on to family or sell the company to another business or owner? Will you have someone currently working for you take over? A simple retirement model can give you a simple leeway, but you have to plan for it and stick to it. Because retirement age varies so drastically, small business owners need to evaluate their lifestyle, savings, and the company's overall performance to determine an ideal retirement option.

In conclusion, a bit of research, adequate planning, and seeking advice can help with achievable retirement goals. A professional can also help streamline your business and help with the necessary details required to have a comfortable retirement. Good luck!

Dr. Olubiyi is an Entrepreneurship & Business Management expert

ALL the demented facets of Nigerian life today, from brazen kidnappings and robberies to rampant prostitution and political heists, are like the many wonderful tales of Cyprian Odiatu Duaka (COD) Ekwensi, who died on November 4, 2007.

Cyprian Ekwensi lived a charmed life as a pathfinder in the annals of African literature and it is a striking tribute that the current shenanigans of Nigeria read like the yarns of the popular writer.

Ekwensi was arguably the most prolific author in the comity of Nigeria's first generation of acclaimed writers.

A novelist, short story writer, children's literature master, journalist, pamphleteer, columnist etc, Ekwensi gave the world a formidable body of work that can never be wished away.

He was a nonpareil craftsman of popular literature who got to the heart of his readers without any unnecessary dabbling into obscurantism and self-serving ambiguities.

Cyprian Ekwensi is Mister Nigeria, born in Minna in the North on September 26, 1921 of Igbo parentage and lived most of his life in the Western part of the country.

Ekwensi was without question the most Nigerian of Nigeria's tribe of writers.

He was versed in Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba cultures, as much as he equally dwelt on the life and mores of the minorities.

He deservedly earned his celebration across the length and breadth of the country as a pan-Nigerian phenomenon.

Nigeria and the Cyprian Ekwensi yarn

By UZOR MAXIM UZOATU

His work has been acknowledged all over the world such that while I was in Canada as a Distinguished Visitor, I was told by Professor Peter Desbarats, Dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of Western Ontario, that Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana* was the only book from Nigeria he had ever read.

Some critics tagged Ekwensi as Africa's Daniel Defoe, after the irrepressible author of such classics as *Robinson Crusoe* and *Moll Flanders*.

Ekwensi was a progenitor of Onitsha Market Literature when, back in 1947, he published *When Love Whispers* to spur the market literature that flowered in the Nigerian city of Onitsha after the Second World War.

His novel *People of the City* became one of the pioneer titles of Heinemann's African Writers Series, such that alongside Chinua Achebe he gave the world a different view of the canon.

The versatility of Ekwensi can be seen in his novel *Burning Grass* that helped in no small measure to put the Fulani nomads in the global map of literature.

The disease of wandering known as 'Sokugo' was popularised by Ekwensi but let's not go there because of the wandering president!

It is in the documentation of city life that Ekwensi earned lasting plaudits from the literary critics. One of his novels, *Jagua Nana*, dwells on the

travails of the eponymous ageing prostitute and her tango with the young and dashing Freddie.

The book attracted sustained film interest from overseas and it was debated in the Nigerian Parliament of the First Republic, which stopped its filming by an Italian film company.

Ekwensi eventually wrote a sequel of the novel, *Jagua Nana's Daughter*, published by Joop Berkhout's Spectrum Books, Ibadan.

A yarn-spinner with legendary page-turning intensity, Ekwensi authored *The Passport of Mallam Illia*, which remains an everlasting adventure story that grips the reader from the first page to the last.

Ekwensi's titles such as *An African Night's Entertainment* and *The Drummer Boy* are ever-present staples in the junior secondary school curriculum in Nigeria.

An old title of his written early in his career but not published, *For a Roll of Parchment*, was released by Heinemann, Ibadan, and it bore all the hallmarks of the Ekwensi mystique in Nigeria's promotion of paper qualification.

For a man who had his training as a pharmacist and worked in forestry, Ekwensi astounded the world with his high literary output.

Some critics like Bernth Lindfors had said harsh things about the quality of Ekwensi's writings while other equally

eminent literary scholars such as Ernest Emenyonu rose up solidly in defence of the man from Nkwelle-Ezunaka in Anambra State.

He maintained a home in the very heart of the city of Lagos, at Ojuelegba Road to the very end. His service in the public sphere had been stellar. From 1957 to 1961, he was the Head of Features at the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation.

He later earned the distinction as the first Nigerian Director of Information in the Federal Ministry of Information.

Ekwensi was the Director-General of Radio Biafra during the Civil War and became the Chairman of the East Central State Library Board after the war.

He would later become the Managing Director of the Star Printing and Publishing Company, Enugu, publishers of the Star group of newspapers.

He was appointed Information Commissioner, Anambra State, in 1983 and reputedly coined the acronym WAI – War Against Indiscipline – that the military regime of General Muhammadu Buhari put into effect.

All the kidnappers, robbers, debtors, looters, and ill-assorted brigands and prostitutes being paraded all over the nation today are quintessential Ekwensi characters! He created all of them in his many fictions before he died.

This way, Cyprian Ekwensi can never really die!

Change of Name

<p>JAMES</p> <p>I, formerly known as JAMES CHARITY, now wish to be known and addressed as JAMES CHARITY CHUNG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MOSES</p> <p>I, formerly known as MOSES TONGNAAN PETER, now wish to be known and addressed as MOSES TONGNAAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>	<p>SUNDAY</p> <p>I, formerly known as AMLO JESSICA, now wish to be known and addressed as SUNDAY JESSICA UYHILI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>SUWAIBA</p> <p>I, formerly known as MAIRO MUHAMMAD DAN, now wish to be known and addressed as SUWAIBA MUHAMMAD DAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>BWODE</p> <p>I, VINCENT DALYOP, wish to state that my correct name is BWODE VINCENT DALYOP not VINCENT DALYOP as wrongly captured on my NECO,. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>LOYI</p> <p>I, formerly known as JIDAUNA LOYI, now wish to be known and addressed as LOYI JIDONA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>YUSUF</p> <p>I, formerly known as YUSUF SULE, now wish to be known and addressed as YUSUF SULE ISHOLA. My correct date of birth is 28/08/1953. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>VICTORIA</p> <p>I, formerly known as MISS VICTORIA JUMMAI KURDOR, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. VICTORIA KURDOR GWAMZHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>	<p>THOMAS</p> <p>I, formerly known as THOMAS BITRUS, now wish to be known and addressed as THOMAS BITRUS BUBA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>NANFA</p> <p>I, formerly known as MIRI NANJI, now wish to be known and addressed as NANFA NANJI BINFA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>JOSEPH</p> <p>I, formerly known as KASSAM JOSEPHINE, now wish to be known and addressed as JOSEPH JOSEPHINE NANCY. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>EMMANUEL</p> <p>I, formerly known as EMMANUEL SAMSON BALOGUN, now wish to be known and addressed as EMMANUEL OLANIYI BALOGUN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>GUSHEM</p> <p>I, formerly known as MOSES DEDORAH, now wish to be known and addressed as GUSHEM DEDORAH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MUHAMMAD</p> <p>I, formerly known as MUHAMMAD KHUZAIFA ALKASEEM, now wish to be known and addressed as MUHAMMAD HUZAIFA ALKASEEM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>SUNUSI</p> <p>I, formerly known as SUNUSI ALHASSAN, now wish to be known and addressed as SUNUSI ALHASSAN GALADIMA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>OYEDEMI</p> <p>I, formerly known as ALAMU RHODA OLAWUMU, now wish to be known and addressed as OYEDEMI RHODA OLAWUMI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>AGBASIELO</p> <p>I, formerly known as AMAJUA CHINENYE CONSTANCE, now wish to be known and addressed as AGBASIELO AFAM CONSTANCE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>DAKWAL</p> <p>I, formerly known as MICHAEL DAKWAL KINFWANG, now wish to be known and addressed as DAKWAL MICHEAL NWANBU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>EDIDIONG</p> <p>I, formerly known as MBANEME EDIDIONG BERNARD, now wish to be known and addressed as EDIDIONG BERNARD INYANGUDO. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>BONIFACE</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOHN KYERMUN PANPO (MISS), now wish to be known and addressed as BONIFACE, KYERMUN MWAN'AR (MRS). All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>NANCHANG</p> <p>I, formerly known as PONMAK RAMBONG, now wish to be known and addressed as NANCHANG PONMAK RAMBONG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MOHAMMED</p> <p>I, formerly known as ISAH MOHAMMED SHAFI, now wish to be known and addressed as MOHAMMED ISAH SHAFI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>ATANG</p> <p>I, formerly known as DABO RIFKATU ATANG, now wish to be known and addressed as ATANG RIFKATU SALEH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>GOTEP</p> <p>I, formerly known as RABO GOTEP, now wish to be known and addressed as GOTEP RABO NANJAMMA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>SAEED</p> <p>I, formerly known as AUDU HARUNA, now wish to be known and addressed as SAEED HARUNA AUDU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>EMMANUEL</p> <p>I, formerly known as EMMANUEL DACHOLLOM TELE, now wish to be known and addressed as EMMANUEL DACHOLLOM. My correct date of birth is 16/1/1981. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>BINDOM</p> <p>I, formerly known as GWAKMAN FALUM, now wish to be known and addressed as BINDOM GWAKMAN FALUM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>AYUBA</p> <p>I, formerly known as GUFWAN TONGRET AYUBA, now wish to be known and addressed as AYUBA, TONGRET GUFWAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>	<p>ELIZABETH</p> <p>I, formerly known as ELIZABETH TURAKI, now wish to be known and addressed as ELIZABETH NVOU TURAKI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>KEFAS</p> <p>I, formerly known as DITKE KEFAS INNOCENT, now wish to be known and addressed as KEFAS INNOCENT DITKE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>MARYAM</p> <p>I, formerly known as MARYAM ANGO, now wish to be known and addressed as MARYAM ABDULLAHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MAS'UD</p> <p>I, formerly known as BASIMA MASA'UD, now wish to be known and addressed as MAS'UD BASMA SALIHU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>POYI</p> <p>I, formerly known as POYI NANNIM, now wish to be known and addressed as POYI NANNIM LAR. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>PHILIP</p> <p>I, formerly known as PHILIP MARK OLUWATOBA O., now wish to be known and addressed as PHILIP MARK OLAOSEBIKAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>USMAN</p> <p>I, formerly known as RABI'U ABUBAKAR, now wish to be known and addressed as USMAN RABI'U SULEIMAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>LOHKAP</p> <p>I, formerly known as PYENYA WAZHI, now wish to be known and addressed as LOHKAP ESTHER. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>ISA</p> <p>I, formerly known as ISA HASSAN SUMAI, now wish to be known and addressed as ISA HASSAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>BALA</p> <p>I, formerly known as BABA GARBA ABDULLAHI, now wish to be known and addressed as BALA GARBA ABDULLAHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>DAVID</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOYCE NANBOL, now wish to be known and addressed as DAVID JOYCE NANBOL. My correct date of birth is 15/10/1995. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>AMINU</p> <p>I, formerly known as MUSA ABUBAKAR AMINU, now wish to be known and addressed as AMINU MUSA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>BATURE</p> <p>I, formerly known as BATURE SAMUEL PAM, now wish to be known and addressed as BATURE CHOMO PAM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>LEDANG</p> <p>I, LEDANG DIMKA FILIBUS wish to state that my correct date of birth is 24/12/1991. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>NAMAH</p> <p>I, formerly known as JIM ROSE, now wish to be known and addressed as NAMAH ROSE MAMKUK. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MOHAMMAD</p> <p>I, formerly known as MOHAMMAD ADAMU MOHAMMAD, now wish to be known and addressed as MOHAMMAD ADAM MOHAMMAD. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MUSA</p> <p>I, formerly known as HARUNA YAHAYA MUHAMMED, now wish to be known and addressed as MUSA SA'IDU. My correct date of birth is March 13, 2002. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>ABRAHAM</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABRAHAM NENMAN ZAKKA, now wish to be known and addressed as ABRAHAM ADEFUNSO AKINOLA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>DAHIRU</p> <p>I, formerly known as BILYAMINU DAHIRU MULAWA, now wish to be known and addressed as DAHIRU BILYA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>UGOH</p> <p>I, formerly known as RABO HALILU UGOH, now wish to be known and addressed as UGOH RABO HALILU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>USMAN</p> <p>I, formerly known as USMAN M. USMAN, now wish to be known and addressed as USMAN MUSA USMAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>ODEH</p> <p>I, formerly known as ODEH EZEKIEL O., now wish to be known and addressed as ODEH EZEKIEL OGBAJI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>DIWULENG</p> <p>I, formerly known as DIWULENG LUKA, now wish to be known and addressed as DIWULENG LUKA DUBA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>TONGA</p> <p>I, formerly known as NIMLYAT DUMLAM TONGA, now wish to be known and addressed as TONGA NIMLYAT. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>	<p>MUHAMMAD</p> <p>I, formerly known as IBRAHIM MUSTAPHA MOHAMMED, now wish to be known and addressed as MUHAMMAD MUSTAPHA. My correct date of birth is 1/1/1990. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>ABUBAKAR</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABDULKARIM ABUBAKAR, now wish to be known and addressed as ABUBAKAR ABDULKARIM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>DANJUMA</p> <p>I, formerly known as DANJUMA FILOMINA LUKAS, now wish to be known and addressed as DANJUMA PHILOMENA RANMI. My correct date of birth is 27/08/1977. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>BASHIRU</p> <p>I, formerly known as REUBEN SHEM, now wish to be known and addressed as BASHIRU SHEM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>VICTORIA</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOY MALLO UFORE, now wish to be known and addressed as VICTORIA MUSA DACHOMO. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>DALYOP</p> <p>I, formerly known as MUSA SARAH MADAKI, now wish to be known and addressed as DALYOP SARAH DUNG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MUHAMMAD</p> <p>I, formerly known as MOHAMMED AUWAL KACHALLA, now wish to be known and addressed as MUHAMMAD AUWAL ABUBAKAR. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>IDOWU</p> <p>I, formerly known as IDOWU ROSELINE, now wish to be known and addressed as IDOWU ROSELINE AFIWESUA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>RABI'AT</p> <p>I, formerly known as RABI'AT A. MUSA, now wish to be known and addressed as RABI'AT AUDU. MUSA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>KHALEED</p> <p>I, formerly known as KALID SALISU ABDULLAHI, now wish to be known and addressed as KHALEED SALISU IBRAHIM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>SARATU</p> <p>I, formerly known as SARAH JOHN IBRAHIM, now wish to be known and addressed as SARATU IBRAHIM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>JAMES</p> <p>I, formerly known as JAMES TEHLTEI LOHOI, now wish to be known and addressed as JAMES TEHLTEI AARON. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>ELVIS</p> <p>I, formerly known as ELVIS EJIKE SAMUEL, now wish to be known and addressed as ELVIS EJIKE SAMUEL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>VOU</p> <p>I, formerly known as DEBORAH GOTAN SIMON, now wish to be known and addressed as VOU DEBORAH SIMON. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>JOSEPHINE</p> <p>I, formerly known as MISS JOSEPHINE MWATA, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS JOSEPHINE GOSERI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>PWOL</p> <p>I, formerly known as GADU CHRISTY DAVOU, now wish to be known and addressed as PWOL CHRISTY GYANG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>CHRISTOPHER</p> <p>I, formerly known as JUMMAI AGIBI AKASO, now wish to be known and addressed as CHRISTOPHER JUMMAI AGIBI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>SADI</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABDULHAMID NURA, now wish to be known and addressed as SADI NURA. My correct date of birth is 10/01/1993. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MAIGARI</p> <p>I, formerly known as MAIGARI VIORLOG JAMES, now wish to be known and addressed as MAIGARI JAMES MATHIAS. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MOHAMMED</p> <p>I, formerly known as YAHAYA MOHAMMED GANI, now wish to be known and addressed as MOHAMMED ALHAJI GHANI. My correct date of birth is 1/1/1937. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>

News

NAGGMDP hails improved health care services in Kogi

KOGI Branch of National Association of Government General Medical and Dental Practitioners (NAGGMDP), has commended the current improved health care delivery services in the state.

The association gave the commendation during its Scientific Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2021 held in Lokoja.

Dr. Agbana Emmanuel in a paper presentation on the Theme of the Conference: 'Kogi State Health System Strengthen: Where Are We?', maintained that Kogi is currently doing well in its health care delivery services.

The guest speaker praised the State government's approval of full COMMESS for all medical doctors under it services describing the development as a positive boost to stabilise the health sector in the state.

Dr. Emmanuel said the theme of this year's Annual General meeting is aimed at evaluating Kogi health system, input, process and output so far, disclosed that the state at the moment has 4,216 health workers of which 69 are in the category of medical officers, 9 consultants and 2012 registered nurses.

On his part, the State Chairman of NAGGMDP, Dr. Okaungbowa Osaretin Kelvin, in a welcome address, said that the AGM of the association is an annual ritual where professionals in the government medical outfits gather to brainstorm on the success, challenges and way forward in the practice.

The NAGGMDP chairman appealed to government to employ more doctors as the few available once are already over worked, and also called for leadership trainings for medical officers.

Also speaking, Dr. Aledare Adekunle, the Executive Secretary, Kogi State Health Insurance Agency (KGSIA), also in a paper presentation titled: 'Kogi State Health Insurance Scheme: The Journey So Far,' urged states, local governments, corporate organisations and individuals to key into the scheme in view of its importance in the health needs of the people.

Adekunle while speaking on the gains of insurance

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja



Bello

scheme, advocated for mandatory insurance scheme for all Nigerians.

He disclosed that so far his Agency has been able to embark on deployment of staff to administer the scheme in Kogi State, capacity building for staff on Universal Health Coverage, development of operational guidelines, accreditation of 50 Secondary Health Care facilities and 236 Primary Health Care facilities for service provision.

The Chief Medical

Director of the Kogi Hospital Management Board, Zakari Usman who also spoke at the event, assured that the state government will continue to accord health sector topmost priority.

The Kogi State Chairman of Nigeria Medical Association (NMA), Dr. Omakeji Simeon Oyiguh in his speech, appealed to governments at all levels and Nigerians to be weary of the rising insecurity across the country.

Minister harps on need for hard work

MINISTER of Science, Technology and Innovation, Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu says that any Nigerian who is determined to work hard can achieve his/her life goals irrespective of their challenges of their birth.

Dr. ONU said this at the Public presentation of the book 'MY PARTICIPATIONS' BY Bisi Akande, on recently in Lagos.

The Minister, who was the chairman of the event, said that Nigeria needs to continue to build on the efforts of the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari to restore to the nation, the Nigerian spirit of hardwork, determination, perseverance and honesty.

He described Chief Bisi Akande as the "Politicians politician" who despite his success in life remained "humble and ever smiling".

Dr. Onu described the life of Chief Akande as a testament to the immense opportunities that abound in the country.

He said; "The life story of the ever smiling Chief Abdulakareem Adebisi Akande, the Asiwaju of Ila-Orangun, shows that our nation is a country of great opportunities. The changes that took place just within one generation in his life, are awesome. He was born poor, but he never allowed it to deter him. He was elected governor of his state and served as national chairman of four different political

From DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja

parties. He became the politicians' politician. Yet, he remained humble".

He said; "Chief Bisi Akande is a unique personality who deserves to be celebrated. He is a self made man, who worked very hard and was determined to succeed in life. He did not go to any secondary school, he never saw the inside of any university, except for short courses, later in life. Yet, through home studies and learning by correspondence, he worked hard to obtain the certificate of a chartered secretary and later became a qualified accountant at the tender age of 22 years. He always stood



Onu

THE National Directorate of Employment (NDE), has embarked on compliance check/monitoring of the participants of Graduates Attachment Programme (GAP) in Kogi State to ensure effective utilisation of the scheme.

The essence was to ensure that beneficiaries don't misplaced the opportunity offered them by the federal government.

The programme which is under the Special Public Works Department will serve as search light on the participants.

The representative of the Director of Special Public Works and team leader of the monitoring visit in Kogi, Mrs. Benita Nakanda expressed satisfaction with the way and manner the participants conducted themselves saying that it shows their readiness to comply with the rules and regulations guiding the programme especially on their attendance.

She urged the participants to continue to co-operate with the officers of the Directorate for the inspection in their own interest and that of the nation at large.

Police head of chambers bags SAN

ASSISTANT Commissioner of Police, ACP Simon Asamber

Unemployment: NDE embarks on compliance monitoring

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

According to her "The war against unemployment should be a collective struggle between the graduates and NDE as Jobs creator"

She therefore, called on the participants to co-operate with government

in its efforts to make them self-reliant as there are no white collar jobs to accommodate the rising population of youths graduating from secondary and tertiary Institutions year in, year out.



Nuhu

From DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja

Lough, the Head of Chambers, Legal Section of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has been conferred with the prestigious and coveted rank of Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN).

The elevation of the Officer is on the heels of his outstanding contribution to the development of law in Nigeria, in addition to his enviable feats in the legal profession.

He was sworn 8th December, 2021 by the Chief Justice of Nigeria following recommendations and approval by the Legal Practitioners' Privileges Committee (LPPC).

ACP Simon Lough, a Police prosecutor par excellence, was commissioned as a cadet officer (ASP) into the service of the Nigeria Police Force in 2000. Twenty-one (21) years down the line in public service, ACP Lough has served in various departments of the Force including the legal section and held national positions on implementing of legal policies for the country.

Notable amongst his achievements is his record of securing over one hundred convictions of cases of armed robbery, murder, rape, financial

crimes, amongst others. He also successfully defended several high-profile cases and got thirty-three (33) judgments at the Court of Appeal and seven (7) at the Supreme Court of Nigeria. These achievements have earned him several commendations and awards within and outside Nigeria. With his investiture to the rank of SAN, he is the first serving member of the NPF and any other uniform agency in Nigeria to attain the feat in the legal profession.

The Inspector General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba, psc (+), NPM, fdc while congratulating the legal luminary and cop on his investiture to the prestigious rank of Senior Advocate of Nigeria, noted that the achievement is a testament to his exemplary hard work, dedication, tenacity and affirmation to the age long maxim that 'hard work truly pays'.

The IGP further charged the Officer to consider the accomplishment as a platform that should propel him towards the fulfillment of other lofty goals and more professional services to

NEWS

Nigeria wants strict implementation of ECOWAS policy

NIGERIA has called for strict implementation of the competition policy of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Regional Competition Authority (ERCA).

The country also demanded strong protection against anti-competitive practices and other exploitative tendencies against consumers across the region.

Trade experts in the country, Monday, converged in Abuja to discuss ECOWAS competition policy. The sensitisation and advocacy programme was jointly organised by the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC) and ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority (ERCA).

The sensitisation and advocacy discussion was organised to bring Nigerians abreast of the necessary policies guiding trade, competition and consumer protection within the West African region.

Speaking at the occasion, the Executive Vice Chairman, FCCPC, Mr. Babatunde Irukera, underscored the importance of competition in economic development.

He said competition encouraged innovation and efficiency, which in turn bring about quality and decrease in pricing.

Irukera said: "Ladies and gentlemen, it is very important that the competition policy of ERCA is



Nana

strictly implemented across all member states. Additionally, ERCA must provide strong protection against all anti-competitive practices and unscrupulous exploitation of consumers across member states within the region."

The FCCPC boss, who was represented by EC, Operations, Dr. Adamu Abdullahi, also added: "The role of competition as a driver of trade and economic growth cannot be over emphasised, especially in a developing economy like ours. Competition creates a level playing ground for businesses to compete fairly and ethically. It encourages innovation and efficiency among businesses which results in increase in quality and decrease in pricing.

Competition also protects consumers by offering more choices at competitive prices."

Irekefa stressed that "the advent of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), to which Nigeria is a signatory, now underscores the need for a strong and vibrant regional body on competition and consumer protection.

"The goal of AfCFTA is to create a single market economy within the African region. This objective is in sync with the ECOWAS Community Treaty which seeks to promote trade integration among member states."

A member of the Consultative Competition Committee of ERCA, Mr. kola Alabi, said competition and consumer protection affects the day to day living of every citizen, and requires a collective effort both at the national and regional levels for everyone to have an effective competition and consumer protection regime within the ECOWAS region.

The acting Executive Director of ERCA, Dr. Simeon Koffi, delivered a presentation on ERCA among other presentations on cross-border trade issues within the ECOWAS region, competition policy in relation to AfCFTA and competition and consumer protection regime in Nigeria, the NGO's perspective.

The Omicron variant of the Covid-19 virus is virulent and dangerous. Please get vaccinated and observe the non-medical protocols.

CHANGE OF NAME

DADIEL

I, formerly known as **DADIEL CHINZOEN FEDRICK**, now wish to be known and addressed as **DADIEL FEDRICK DAPE**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

HELEN

I, formerly known as **SONG HELEN JAMES**, now wish to be known and addressed as **HELEN AUGUSTINE PAUL**. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

PUBLIC NOTICE

DISCLAIMER

The general public is hereby notify that the marriage between **CLAUDIUS NAANMA MAINASARA** and **GRACE MAINASARA** is dissolved by an order of the court. Therefore **MS. GRACE** will no longer use **MRS CLAUDIUS N. MAINASARA** name. All concerned authorities and the general public to note.

Signed: CLAUDIUS N. MAINASARA

PLATEAU STATE GOVERNMENT

INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION OF CONTRACTORS TO TENDER FOR ACTIVITIES TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) UNDER THE CONDITIONAL GRANT SCHEME TO PLATEAU STATE

In a bid to fast track the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria, Plateau State Implementation Committee is inviting interested competent contractors to handle the following projects within the State.

THE GENERAL SCOPE OF WORK INCLUDE:

- a. Construction of Primary Healthcare Clinics
- b. Construction of blocks of classrooms/office/store
- c. Drilling and Installation of Hand Pump Boreholes
- d. Procurement of desks and Instructional materials to public primary schools
- e. Procurement of essential drugs/hospital equipment to Primary Healthcare Clinics.

PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENT:

- a. Certificate of Incorporation or Business Name Registration
- b. Tax Clearance Certificate for the past two years
- c. Evidence of registration as contractor with the Sustainable Development Goals Project Support Unit
- d. Evidence of work experience in Plateau State or similar terrain
- e. Evidence of financial capability/Bank reference
- f. Audited Account of company for two years
- g. ITF Certificate of compliance
- h. PENCOM and other requirement in line with the Public Procurement Act.

SUBMISSION

All documents are to be submitted within two weeks of this publication to the address below and clearly marked "**Pre-qualification: Conditional Grant Scheme State Track**" The State Project Coordinator, Sustainable Development Goals, Project Support Unit, No. 50 Shaka, Gold and Base, Plateau State.

Note:

- This advertisement should not be considered as a commitment on the part of Sustainable Development Goals Project Support Unit, Plateau State nor shall it entitle companies to make any claims whatsoever.
- This is not an invitation to tender as qualified companies will be communicated to tender.
- The Sustainable Development Goals Project Support Unit, Plateau State reserves the right to verify any claim(s).

**SIGNED:
STATE PROJECT COORDINATOR**



By **KENNETH DARENG**

OMICRON, according to the World Health Organisation [WHO], derived its name from the 15th letter of the Greek alphabet and is equivalent to a short sound English letter 'Q' which also signifies the 13th and 14th Greek letters [nu and xi] which were skipped over because the 'nu' and the 'xi' is also a common surname

The covid-19 variants were earlier given scientific name as, SARS-coV2 virus which had complex names and numbers or letters. The WHO and its international network of experts agreed to name evolving variants according to the sequence of the Greek alphabets. On November 26th the World Health Organisation (WHO) labelled Omicron a "Variant of concern" the fifth version (Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta).

Omicron was not named after

the country it was first detected. However, while the scientific and medical community are knowledgeable on how omicron was named, the disturbing news is that the virus has already been detected in 38 countries with WHO warning that the number could rise speedily globally. It would be recalled, South Africa is already hit by the omicron variant which is sending fears across the African continent.

The spread of Omicron to the shores of Africa means Nigeria is at a greater risk considering its over 200million population with a good number of its citizens in different parts of the world where the variant is reported to have claimed a good number of lives.

In the case of Nigeria with a chunk of its citizen travelling across the globe, there are concerns that Nigeria may be breath away from experiencing the worst of the pandemic if urgent measures are not readily put in place to check especially individuals who are coming into the country via different entry points especially at this time of the year where most people are coming in for Christmas vacation and other festivities.

Unfortunately, there seem to be bad elements within the immigration and other security apparatus who for their corrupt tendency often get compromised thereby allowing people with questionable health status to sneak into the country undetected. As was reported earlier during the covid-19 outbreak, some people who were carriers of the virus were said to have escaped being quarantined.

And as was also reported in

some quarters, some individuals within the medical circles made brisk business from selling the covid-19 vaccination certificate without actually administering the drug. Some one disclosed to me that with as little as 5k, u can obtain the certificate. Then, one begins to wonder what would befall a nation like ours supposing the bad times comes.



Omicron: The scare and politics

WHO, and medical experts have alluded to the fact that Omicron is more lethal than most people imagine which means, a contagious person can easily spread the virus to anybody irrespective of whether one has received the covid-19 jab or not.

It will be recalled that South Africa was the first country on the continent to report the highly mutated new variant and that more than 70 percent of its new cases were related to the omicron virus genomes.

No wonder then, some western countries and their allies have now for whatever reason decided to rope in Nigeria into the political dimension of the pandemic by placing a blanket travel ban on Nigerian citizens. Canada was the first country to ban Nigerian flights, the UK, U.S and a host of other countries who did not bother to embark on critical thinking on finding a solution to the challenge which has once again exposed the double standards of the western world.

Perhaps, the irrational decision reaction of some of these countries could be the reason for

the spark in fears arising from the way the African countries are perceiving the spread of the variant in Africa and are beaming their search lights on the economic power houses of the continent like Nigeria and South Africa, even at the negligence of countries such as; Denmark, Belgium, UK, and other Western nations where Omicron is said to be ravaging them.

However, despite the challenges of the past years that the locust of covid-19 had eaten, and with the way and manner our citizens are treated, it is now a wake up call for Nigeria to begin to think of alternative means of

finding a home grown medicine that would take it off the ambit of Western dictates and politics as witnessed with the supply of corona vaccines to poorer nations of the world.

Therefore, it is time for Nigerian Centre for Disease Control [NCDC] to come up with a workable solution that will mitigate any potential threat to our national health status by stepping up genomic surveillance across all nook and crannies of the country so that the entire country can be safe and well protected from the Omicronic incursion to our shores.

"WHO, and medical experts have alluded to the fact that Omicron is more lethal than most people imagine which means, a contagious person can easily spread the virus to anybody irrespective of whether one has received the covid-19 jab or not."



By **JIDAUNA DARING**

IT has been observed that some people in life have chosen to narrow their income to just one source. They let things be even when they have every opportunity in their hands to explore more sources of income generation in a genuine way.

This kind of notion as far as our lives are concerned has made things very difficult or unbearable for those that have unfortunately find themselves in such a situation.

It is not a healthy practice for a well thinking and reasonable person to tie his or her life to one source of income, no matter what you are getting from that source, when we perhaps talk about its genuineness.

As an individual, it is clear that

Exploring other sources of income

our present lives are full of ups and downs. This is to clearly say in a nutshell that what you have in your hand today may not be exactly what you would have in a minute, hour or the next day. It may be more or less.

Therefore, the importance of having multiple and genuine sources of income cannot be overemphasized since it enables one to have what he or she can fall back on as a rescue plan.

However, what I have personally observed in my little one on one interaction with people is the fact that some are lazy. While others procrastinate that it is not yet time for them to explore more avenues for their income generation. I therefore think that, that is the individual differences that people often have in opinion.

I equally think and believe that some of the challenges faced in life amongst people is mostly

because some have completely planned to fail by deliberately refusing to do what would help them or transform their lives. We have people who always want to get things given them on a platter of gold.

Certainly, if ten people in a family can stick to a notion of placing themselves on multiple genuine sources of income, it is believed that such a family would not in any way lack. It would involve sacrificial living to save up to solve some of its problems whether big or small.

In fact, because of this attitude of keeping to one source of income, a lot people have become very good at begging and collecting loans from different financial institutions, knowing well that they do not have enough to pay back as agreed on their various signed agreements.

What sometimes baffles me is

still the fact that some people, despite their lean resources or income force themselves into living a competitive life with affluent people. It is better for you to cut your cloth according to your coat.

What is more worrisome in this regard, is the fact that some people after collecting various forms of loans from either individuals or financial institutions as alluded above, become restless, sleepless and make themselves scarce. Simply because of what they have committed themselves in. Therefore, what is worth doing, is worth doing well. And what is not worth doing is not worth doing.

However, as a salary earner, it would be good for you to imbibe the spirit of exploring more sources of income, instead of depending only on what you take home at the end of the month. This culture of saving if imbibed,

would no doubt go a long way in addressing some of the issues that may not be necessarily solved the problem with the salary.

Farmers and business people should on their part imbibe the spirit of doing farming and businesses that would of course not be one source. This is because both involve risk taking. Moreso that farmers after planting on the farm, do not know what he or she would harvest during the harvest time. This also applies to those who have ventured into business.

Nigeria as a nation has even made a serious mistake for depending on only one source of income, which is the crude oil. But with what the nation has experienced recently when the country found herself in recession with skyrocketing prices of different goods, thereby making life very unpleasant for all her citizens, was a lesson learnt for the Nigerian government.

With this, it is expected that Nigerian government at all levels should key into diversifications of its resources, so as to boost its economy.

Our states and local governments should as a matter of fact look inward as well as think outside the box, especially on how to explore more sources of income, rather than depending on Federal allocations from Abuja to pay workers and also execute projects.

"However, as a salary earner, it would be good for you to imbibe the spirit of exploring more sources of income, instead of depending only on what you take home at the end of the month. This culture of saving if imbibed, would no doubt go a long way in addressing some of the issues that may not be necessarily solved the problem with the salary."

Fobur Market a melting pot

By **RAYMOND ISHA AJIJI**

FOBUR market is more than just a place for buying and selling, it is a melting pot for people coming from all walks of life.

It is one market that brings together people from diverse ethnic backgrounds and cultures. There, one comes across Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa and other traders coming to join their fellow citizens from Plateau State for one transaction or the other.

Fobur market which is about 15km away from Jos, the state capital, is located in Jos East LGA of Plateau State.

The market came into being in 1970 when the Jarawa Chiefdom, which was under the Bauchi native authority migrated to the present location and over the years, the area became known as a place with an abundance of firewood and bush meat due to the mountainous terrain of the area.

With time the market began to witness the influx of people looking for local delicacy (bushmeat) and it is an avenue to buy either farm produce like grains and livestock which is considered cheap in the area.

Around 1985, the local Chief of Fobur, Adagwom Kaze introduced a social gathering like bazaar where locals come together to sell food, locally brewed liquor every Thursday of the week which was known as; "Boda."

The market which usually opens between 6am to 7pm is a good place for social interaction between the young and old. It is a beehive of activities where most people often escape the hustle and bustle of the city to find a relaxation spot.

Fobur market has now become a unifying place to be

specially with a serene ambience in a natural setting which is a link to other towns such as Angware, Lamingo, and serves as a transit route for traders traveling to Bauchi and beyond.

The Fobur market is also known for assorted vegetables, tomatoes, pepper and local rice among others as well as the

together fun seekers especially those who like the local brew, called "Kunun Magajiya" as well the assorted bush meat brought to the market by local hunters.

The Fobur wood is also in high demand by traders coming from various local government areas of the state as well as from other states of the federation.

There are also other features



tasty local brew called "Kunun Magajiya."

Fobur market has proximity to the Jos University Teaching Hospital (JUTH) as well as the famous Lamingo golf club.

Usually, the market brings

of the market day which comprises, those selling second hand clothing, food and other household utensils.

On the market day, it can be a day of brisk business for tricycle keke operators and other

transporters who make income from conveying passengers to neighboring communities including those heading to Jos North and environs.

However, the market can be a good source of revenue for

Jos East local government if only its present structure can be remodeled to a modern standard.

RAYMOND ISHA AJIJI is a student of Plateau State Polytechnic Barkin Ladi



IMAGES

LALONG SWEARS-IN ACTING CJ, 3 COMMISSIONERS AND PLASIEC

Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong swore-in the Acting Chief Judge, 3 Commissioners to fill the vacant position for the 3 that resigned their positions to contest LG elections and Chairman and members of Plateau Independent Electoral Commission (PLASIEC) on Monday at the new Government House Banquet Hall Rayfield, Jos.



The only female member, PLASIEC, Hajiya Hafsat Amin signing the affirmative letter while Governor Lalong watches



Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong reading his speech at the ceremony



Chairman, PLASIEC, Chief Fabian Ntung (left) flanked by other members waiting patiently to be sworn in



Sir Joseph Ari, Director General, Industrial Training Fund (ITF) with his wife, Lady Victoria Ari



Wives of the appointees, Mrs. David Mann, Mrs. Brian Bintim Dadi, Mrs. Philip Dan Hirkop and Mrs. Idris Gambo watching the swearing in of their husbands as commissioners and Acting Chief Judge



Emir of Kanam, Alhaji Muhammad Babangida Mu'azu (right) who stood in for the Gbong Gwom Jos, President of the traditional council flanked by some 1st Class Chiefs at the swearing in ceremony



Hon. Idris Gambo (left) being congratulated by Governor Lalong after taking oath as a commissioner



Newly sworn in PLASIEC Chairman, Chief Fabian Ntung (right) in a photograph with his wife and the Long Jan, HRH Engr. Safiyanu Suleiman Allahnana III of Namu Chiefdom

PHOTOS: DANLADI DUK

Odd World

'My daughter's toe is bigger than chocolate'

ANNA Devlin has accused Cadbury of "disappointing kids" and slammed the measly chocolate treats in the £9.99 advent calendar that her daughter picked out this year

A fed-up mum has slammed Cadbury after her devastated daughter discovered the chocolates in her advent calendar were smaller than her TOE.

Mum Anna Devlin bought Kitty, a 3D calendar for £9.99 last month after the eight-year-old excitedly selected it herself.

After patiently waiting to open her calendar, she was gutted to only find measly variety-sized bites of her favourite Cadbury classics instead.

In a homage to the classic 80s 'finger of Fudge' TV advert, 46-year-old Anna snapped a quirky picture of her daughter's foot next to the sweet treat, as a contrast.

The art teacher has now urged the chocolate firm to use bigger chocolates in future as she claims children have already 'had a sh** few years' and don't need further disappointment.

Anna, from Winchester, Hampshire, said: "We'd gone to look for an advent calendar. She likes a Freddo and it's supposed to have Freddos in it - but not yet.

"I imagine it might just be a frog leg or something." "I think she thought they [the chocolates] were going to be full size as the actual calendar is so big. She laughed at the size of the Fudge which is what started it all really.

"The picture is a dig at Cadbury. It's not a finger of Fudge - it's barely a toe of Fudge - an eight-year-old's toe at that.

"The advent calendar is a big exciting part of my daughter's Christmas and it looks big.

"Children are generally a little bit greedy and that's what she wanted. She thought she'd get some decent chocolate every day and its sh**.

"They look substantial in the shops and they cost a tenner. I could have bought two or three tubs of Celebrations and she could have gorged herself on chocolate for that price.

"The advert used to be 'a finger of Fudge is just enough to give your kids a treat'. When I saw it, I said 'what can we

measure it against? and then said 'your toe!'."

Anna claims eager Kitty was further disappointed when she then received several of the same chocolate in a row, including three days of Fudge and then three days of Chomp.

Other fed-up chocolate lovers have described similar scenes - with one fuming man dubbing in "choas".

Anna said: "It's a tower, it's full of plastic. You can open the top to peer in and see what's behind every day.

"There's variety-size chocolate in each one which I expected, but I don't think she did.

"There was a Chomp for three days, a finger of Fudge for three days in a row. Then the excitement and the quantity is lacking.

"Every day she says 'oh Mummy, it's this again'.

"There was Curly Wurly two days in a row and on day nine we had a packet of Buttons and a really sh** sticker, that was also wrapped in plastic.

"On Friday she had a nugget of Dairy Milk. She bit into it and said 'oh Mummy, it's not hollow' - as if she was gearing herself up for failure."

After posting her complaint online, Anna claims several other people commented their own disappointment and has now urged Cadbury to be 'more honest'.

Anna said: "Next year, Cadbury need to be more honest. That's a lot of air that I bought.

"They should avoid disappointing children - they've had a sh*t few years with covid.

"On Facebook, my nephew has it and he's disappointed. My husband's best friend's daughter got it and she's disappointed."

Anna's Facebook post reads: "Cadbury UK, very disappointed child with her Cadbury advent calendar, more like a Toe of Fudge, and only Curly Wurlys, Fudge and Chomp so far.

"Day 9 finally got Buttons and one sticker. A lot of plastic for not much product. She's wishing she had chosen a different one and at roughly 40p per door so do I."

Source: The Mirror



Buhari, Nigeria is close to midnight please

AN unspeakable and unimaginable incident occurred last week when commuters plying a road to Sokoto State in North Western Nigeria were intercepted by some bandits and burnt to death in their bus. This particular traumatic incident generated outcry amongst the citizens of this country who are thinking that the leadership of this country has abandoned them completely. Though this was not the first time such an incident is recorded in this country, it is no longer news that many innocent citizens of this country have been killed in their places of worship amongst other places. Thought in the past couple of months, the Nigerian government has unabatedly conscripted us into believing that it was on top of the security situation in the country, the trapping and subsequent gruesome murder of these innocent commuters along Sokoto road has further heightened the disposition of our collective trauma, anxiety and excruciating pains which the peopling of this nation are going through this very moment.

While the citizens of the country were struggling to come to terms with the reality of this sad event, these same bandits stormed the house of a serving commissioner for Science and Technology in Katsina State, Dr. Rabe Nasir some days ago where they brutally forced life out of him. This bitter experience is coming on the heels of the reported killing of a onetime gubernatorial aspirant in Zamfara State, Sagir Hamida at Rijana along Abuja-Kaduna highway.

Reports subsequently indicated that the porous security framework of the nation had grossly degenerated to a point where these bandits were said to have murdered about 80 persons in a single night in Sokoto even as Amnesty International notes with great concern that despite Buhari's order to security agencies on the need to upgrade their operational obligations, nothing had changed as far as this prevailing circumstance is concern. Amnesty International was quick to add in the statement that the perpetrators of such attacks have not been brought to justice adding that the situation leaves Sokoto and other parts of the north feeling completely let down and helpless.

Already perturbed about this uncontrollable killings with impunity in the country, the Sultan of Sokoto Alhaji Saad Abubakar including the Bishop of the Diocese of Sokoto Rev Fr. Mathew Hassan Kuka had voiced out their great displeasure over this disgusting mayhem unleashed on innocent citizens of this nation. On several occasions, both the Minister of Information and Communications, Lai Mohammed and his crony, Special Adviser on Media, Femi Adesina have defended the interest of their pay master and continued to fallaciously contradict without any success the obvious realities on ground while trying to make a fool of many Nigerians.

Mr. President, if yours sincerely can with great nostalgia remind yourself of the excerpts of your campaign manifesto, you indeed promised us that if given an opportunity to serve as a leader of this great nation, you will not only be a servant leader but ensure that the security challenges facing us becomes a historic past phenomenon. If my memory has not failed me, you told us that you will be a leader to nobody but a leader to everyone in this beloved nation's of ours.

Unfortunately, over seven years as the leader of this enterprising nation, Nigerians with all sense of responsibility cannot beat their chest with great satisfaction that our president has done them well particularly in the area of security. If the truth must be told, no matter the height of the impact of people-driven ideologies encapsulated by this administration; without adequate security protection from criminally minded elements, citizens will historically categorize you as a failed leader in the annals of this country's history.

Even as some of us agree that Nigeria is fighting wars from all and every angles and or front, the fundamental questions we should ask ourselves is; Is the country wining this war and or are our leaders getting it right regarding doing the needful to overcoming the problems confronting this country of ours?

In the past few years, Nigeria has spent billions of dollars aimed at perfectly executing this war to its logical conclusion. Most of these funds were or are provided towards updating our archaic weaponry and payments of entitlements and allowances of military personnel at the battle front.

First and foremost, it is becoming more obvious that the needful is yet to be completely done so as to enable our security agents be motivated to confront the reality facing them. Even though the purchase of the tucado planes have added to the sophistication of Nigeria's weaponry, there is still much more to be done towards creating an enabling environment for our security agents to win the war against both insurgents and banditry in the nation.

Thus, all the stakeholders within our security sector must re-strategize on required strategies while confronting these insurmountable security challenges confronting the country. We for too long have continued to make do with a systematic security approach which seems not to be efficiently working considering the guerilla tactics some of these bandits and insurgents have adapted in most recent times.

Consequently, this development has led to the death of several innocent citizens of this nation who are mostly used as human shields. For the mere fact that many citizens of this nation within the northern region have become vulnerable and impoverished as a result of this unending war and or conflict, hardly are many of them surviving talk more of others confined within the Internally Displaced Persons camps. Thus, the signs of our time in this country is not that which we had hoped for and or ever prayed for. Certainly, our country must apt its game so as to secure us and our children.

This anticipatorily President Buhari must achieve before his tenure expires come 2023.

View Point

Knowledge sank in the river, who can save?

Any society that excels in all ramifications of human existence may largely depend upon its established educational system. This is because, education is a pillar upon which every nation and or state lean on to keep its sectors sustainably vibrant. Yet, Nigeria a nation state with both humanitarian and materialistic resource has not achieved much due to the unrepentant lack of attention given to the sector writes Adam Yusuf Muhammad.

IF at all Nigeria will use her human and material resource adequately in the educational sector, the system would be the bedrock of many developmental expectations. Though everything is in abundance, the inability of the policymakers to place more emphasis on this all important sector has caged the country from reaping anything meaningful.

Me think that the act of favoritism and the desire to have cheap Labour are some of the reasons militating against the productive capacity of the country. No doubt, the rate of favoritism and quest for cheap labour has over the years led to the employment of unqualified teachers who cannot teach the students in most schools in the country. Most of our teachers who teach in our primary and secondary schools today are either volunteers, teacher by force, teacher by upper-hand or temporary teacher who can go away any time or moment.

This is totally in discord to our teachers before when teachers that taught were selected on merit basis and treated on equal basis. Not minding where they came from but what they had to offer. We had igbo teachers, yoruba teachers and others from afar who teach in our local communities and know not but school and students only but now everybody has ran to where he know someone. Then how can the students become exposed to other cultures? As far as I can recall, the system was not the way it is today when the student will cry ones and the parents will interrogate the staff for beating their child.

In the same artery, the cost of school today is very high. From school fees to other financial demands. Now everything is in thousands and the menace is both in public and private schools which both became business oriented ventures today. In the pass few years, students pay hundreds of naira as school fees and no other demands. Most learning materials were provided by the government and other financial donors who donate to drive knowledge ahead. But today any better soup money was spent. And the money to be spent has hide in the iron box which is hard to crack.

In addendum, flashing back to those days, peace was as valuable as gold and silver or even naira to the extend that no kidnapping in schools and villages, no robbery in the high ways no massive and selective killings of innocent lives, no waste of precious properties, no inter ethnic and religious conflicts. Live was pearl, simple, and meaningful to the extent that long miles were trakable amid of nights.

Today students listen to lessons



Buhari

with their hearts in their necks. They no more sit down to listen to lectures but Gunshots. In panic they go and come haste upon a haste and in such a situation they are expected to listen to lectures, comprehend, pass exams and become commanders of countries, drivers of factories and potentials of Immense importance in the nearest future.

To stir up the saga, Strike actions are now regular in Nigerian educational system. They have become common in our schools curriculums and the big mountains that bar the flourishing of flowering knowledge to our students and professionals in the academia.

Take an instance of ASUU Strike, NASU Strike, SANU Strike, NLC Strike, ASUP Strike, ASUC Strike SUBEB Strike among others. These Strike actions have been affecting School Calendars and there by destroying the students' plans by adding to their years of graduation. It also affect the quality of the lectures they receives because after the strike, they will be rushed to meet up

"Parents in their own sides adds salt to salt the injury. They watch their children as they go to and fro school without minding to ask of their performances in school, their attendance and attentiveness in class, their moral discipline in school. They just pay the fees thinking that is enough anything beyond fees is not their Palaver".



Adamu

with the calendar and rushing affects their understanding of what was taught.

In an adjacent direction, think of the salary of our esteemed teachers who used both their mental and physical efforts to make us what we are today yet, their salaries are never anything to ride home about. How can a teacher with a family of ten or so depend on 50, 000 in 30 days? Out of which he pays house rents, light bills, buy food stuff, pay for children school fees and also save for unforeseen contingencies. He has to resort to other sources which will affect his class lectures. In this case students always bears the falls.

The Students in their alternates also have a helping hand in the decadence of knowledge. One can go a long mile without getting a single student who read for five hours a day, even those who try only reads for exam sake. In expense they spend most of their time on social media and then snor for the rest of the time even if the next day is exams they don't mind to read.

To support students laziness, teachers and exams officers allow for cheating in both internal

and external exams where they give students room to enter exam halls with books and smartphones to copy answers. Sometimes they give little tokens to the teachers to take a breakfast. Such are students That will get a lot of carryovers, spillovers, or even got withdrawn or graduate with very low grades in the higher institution.

Parents in their own sides adds salt to the injury. They watch their children as they go to and fro school without minding to ask of their performances in school, their attendance and attentiveness in class, their moral discipline in school. They just pay the fees thinking that is enough anything beyond fees is not their Palaver.

When their children are denied admissions or jobs, in volumes they voice it out not considering the merits and inputs of the children. Also forgetting the financial aids they offered for their children to cheat and pass O' levels.

In fact when it comes decadence in Nigerian Educational sector, there are a lot of eggs to be hatched but clock and space signals a stop.

In pencil I pour my points, but pain, panic, tears and sweat had swallowed my heart in thought of the future of Nigeria where education is held with the back of hands. For in voice I say! All hands must be on deck to dig and draw back the quality of education we burried beneath the soil. It puzzled our kids and kins that knowledge is of no value in our own country Getting rid of corruption, laziness and

carelessness is the only thread bridge available.

The government and others in concern, pay teachers and wipe out their tears so that they will be comfortable and teach students to their understanding level. Provide learning materials and scientific equipment to schools, deploy securities to schools in war zones, settle the conflicts by force and dialogue so that students can go savelly to school.

Dearparents, pullandpeelyourp upilsforaromaticmealstomorrow .Feedthemwithsourtodayasthey willfeedthemselvesandyouwiths weettomorrow.Hardtimesnever pastbuttheypersist,forthosewho enduretotheend,theywillhaveag reenerlife.Endurebutamomentin yourfavorislife.

For the students, if you sit down today you will become sad tomorrow where termite will eat your flesh while you watch. To overcome it, get up, dress up and never give up no matter the plights in life. What worth doing, worth doing well. Just rethink and restart. Everything is always from nothing to something, from zero to hero and from grass to grace.

As it goes, that the way you dress is the way you are addressed. Therefore teachers should teach the students both characters and knowledge because the students most atimes copy their teachers' characters.

These should be a wake up call to all. As we know that knowledge is valuable, value it, knowledge is the heart, protect it and knowledge is a flavour, sense it. Let us make a hay while the Sun shines.



ECHOES

From Little Rayfield

Palang K. Kasmi

Unwinding with the business community

LAST week, the Banquet Hall of Plateau State Government House located in Little Rayfield Jos was full to capacity as it housed a gathering of the business community in the state.

It was an outing for the 5th Governor's Business dinner and Dialogue held with businessmen and women in the state from the public and private circles.

The chief host, Governor Simon Bako Lalong was on hand to rub minds and get first hand reports of their performances and activities, during the cool and serene evening, spiced with delicious dishes. Determined to improve the state's Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) by all means, after being hit by COVID-19 pandemic and economic challenges leading to dwindling revenue allocations from FAAC at the national level, the Governor had variously stated his desire to remove over dependence on federal allocations, if the state is to develop. He used the forum to assure the business community in the State that his administration will continue to pursue peace and security, as well as infrastructural development which are key to guaranteeing investments.

Chairman of the Plateau State Internal Revenue Service (PSIRS) Mr Arlat Dasogot had earlier before the dinner announced that the state IGR has hit N17 Billion this year, from January to September 2021.

The state revenue boss said despite the Covid-19 challenges, the IGR for April alone was N600 Million. He noted that despite revenue targets of at least N2 billion monthly, the state was only able to realise over a billion monthly, except for June and August that was lower than a billion, he was however optimistic that with the new Plateau Revenue Law enacted last year in November 2020, it would significantly boost the State's IGR.

Lalong had initiated the forum and dinner with the business community shortly after assuming office in 2015 during his first tenure.

During last year's dinner, the business community had raised concerns like creating pursuing policies and reforms in the areas of taxation, access to finance for MSMEs, business registration, Public Private Partnership, retraining of workers, and land administration among other issues. The dialogue, therefore, availed the opportunity for government and the private sector to meet and rub minds on their progresses and concerns in between meals.

Apart from working to improve economic activities in the State, Lalong said his administration prioritized diversification of the economy by expanding agricultural output with reforms and policies carried out in line with the three pillar policy thrust to drive sustainable development, increase IGR, Land reform, Tax Relief Measures, Establishment of the PPP Agency, Partnership with Agriculture Research Institution of Nigeria (ARCN) to boost farmers production capacity, revitalized judicial system, expansion of physical infrastructure, establishment of the Plateau State One Stop Investment Centre to facilitate investment and also provide ease of doing business in the State, street naming and house numbering among others.

Kaduna state like Plateau is also among northern states projecting to stop depending on federal allocations to fund its budgets. In a statement last November the state government through its spokesperson, Commissioner for budget and Planning Mohammed Abdullahi said the state

government relies only on about 31 percent of Federal allocation while other states rely on 70-80 percent from the federal allocation. He said his state had been able to turn around N13 billion annual IGR to a current N57 billion, from complete reliance on Federal Government allocation to one that is sustainable.

Lagos State has also for long been able to survive on its IGR irrespective of allocations from the FG. Therefore, the Plateau State Government's move to turn the state's economic fortune around needs to be intensified to make the state economically sustainable.

At the dinner, some members of the Plateau business community and heads of Ministries, Departments and Agencies including the German Development Agency, GIZ made contributions about their achievements and prospects, even as all the stakeholders agreed to make things work.

Plateau gets new Acting Chief Judge

A new chief Judge, Justice David Mann Gwom was sworn in on Monday December 13, 2021 at Government House Jos to replace former Chief Judge Justice Gyang Dakwak whose tenure elapsed December 2021 after reaching the mandatory retirement age of 65 years.

The swearing in ceremony at the seat of power drew many friends and well wishers including stakeholders who came to usher in the new head of the Judicial arm of government in the state.

Among them was the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives Rt. Hon. Ahmed Idris Wase and his colleagues, Plateau Deputy Governor Prof. Sonni Gwanle Tyodden, traditional rulers, government officials, politicians, religious leaders, and heads of private and social bodies, who filled the state Banquet Hall to capacity.

Governor Lalong who conducted the swearing in ceremony challenged the new state Chief Judge to play his part well in line with his oath and contribute significantly to the development of the state.

He also swore in new executives to head the Plateau State Independent electoral Commission, and three new commissioners.

The new acting Chief Judge Justice Mann started his Primary School in Ropp, studied in Government Secondary Lafia, School of Basic Studies, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria in 1978, and later bagged a law degree in ABU in 1978-1901. He also went to Nigerian Law school Lagos, and joined the Plateau State Civil service as a Magistrate rising through the ranks to become a judge at the High Court of Justice Plateau State, before his current appointment.

He served as member Local Government election tribunal in Akwanga, Akwa Ibom, Chairman National Assembly election tribunal Niger state in 2012, Chairman Plateau state Local Government tribunal in 2014 including attending courses and seminars at home and abroad he is also a recipient of several awards and honours.



News

Police foils bandits attack, woman, children kidnapped

THE Kaduna Police Command has narrated how bandits attack was foiled in Sabon Tasha, Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna metropolis early Saturday morning, 11 December, 2021, but the hoodlums kidnapped a woman and her four children.

A statement signed by the Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Muhammed Jalige, dated December 11, 2021, said,

"In the early hours of 11th December, 2021 at about 0105hrs, the Kaduna Police Command through Divisional Police Officer Sabon Tasha Division Kaduna acted on a

From JOHN FWAH, Kaduna

distress call received from a good Samaritan to the fact that some suspected armed bandits numbering about thirty (30) with some in military gears and bearing dangerous weapons, were making ferocious efforts to break into a residential area at Sabo GRA in Chikun LGA of the state in an attempt to commit heinous crime.

"On receiving the distress call, operatives were immediately mobilized with the support of other security agents to the scene with a view to thwart the

bandit's intention.

"The criminals on sensing the presence of security agents started shooting indiscriminately.

"However, the operatives did not hesitate in returning fire for fire and succeeded in foiling the attempt.

"The criminals been frustrated by the Police and other security agents, set the resident on fire and fled for their lives," it said.

It further explained that unfortunately, it was discovered that the bandits operated simultaneously with one at Oil Village in the same Sabo location, where they kidnapped a woman and her four (4) children to an unknown destination.

"Meanwhile, investigation into the two incidences has since commenced while effort is ongoing to facilitate safe rescue of the victims of the other sad incident.

"The command is deeply saddened by the setback but is doing everything possible to restore normalcy within the public space in line with the directive of the Inspector General of Police IGP Baba Usman Alkali," it stressed.

The police therefore, urged the members of the public to promptly report suspicious situations and incidences as that will elicit a quick positive response from the Command.



IGP, Alkali

BUA a leading company has formally unveiled BUA Foods under which its food businesses are now consolidated.

The food businesses that were merged into BUA foods are; BUA Sugar Refinery Limited, BUA Rice limited, BUA Oil Limited, IRS Flour and IRS Pasta.

Chairman of the group of companies, Abdul Samad Rabi in a statement in Abuja said the unveiling was held at the company's head office in Lagos.

He explained that the consolidation became necessary to maintain its market leadership in the

BUA foods unveiled

From JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja

Agric business and food processing sector as well as take advantage of the growth opportunities in the economy and the export prospect presented by the African Continental free trade area.

According to him "we have perhaps the largest food business in Nigeria, the West African sub region. To realise our full potential as a business as we drive the food security needs of the

country, we recently consolidated our food business under a single entity to be known as BUA Foods"

"The restructuring will enable us to be number one and more responsive to the food needs of the population as well as continue to build a sustainable business".

He disclosed that BUA food is well positioned to take advantage of African continental free trade considering its investments in the foods sector over the years.

Trailer causes go slow in Nyanya

From JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja

COMMUTERS in Nyanya, AYA Road spend over 13 hours on the road following a trailer carrying timber failed break and completely blocked the road with the timbers.

A situation which made officials of the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) had an excruciating experience trying to control the unprecedented traffic gridlock along the Nyanya kugbo Aya road.

Speaking to newsmen at the scene of the accident, Senior special Assistant on monitoring inspection and

cooperate with relevant security agencies in any emergency situations.

The senior special assistant commended officials of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) Nyanya unit commander, the Karu DPO of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and other horrible experience, which was finally clear around 4:50am.

He charged the construction company that is handling the dualization of the Nyanya, Kugbo and Aya road to hasten the work.

Sports

Bala says sacking Rohr a welcome idea

By DAVID DUNG, MOSES JAMES, HENRY AYIKU AND IGYEM AJIK

REUBEN Bala a footballer with the Plateau United Football Club of Jos has described the sacking of the Super Eagles Coach, Gernot Rohr as a welcome idea.

He disclosed this during an exclusive interview with the **NIGERIA STANDARD** sports desk recently in Jos, Emphasized that since the tactician has been given the ample opportunities to improve in his tactics while in the team.

The former Enyimba and home based Super Eagles player maintained that, as a player with a lot of experience, the coach has been giving enough time to prove himself as a good coach, but it seems he has taken that for granted.

"Gernot Rohr has been in charge of the Super Eagles since 2016 but he has not made a formidable team and no comfortable first eleven that can always start up a match. The tactics he used is not really the best for the Club," he said.

"The NFF has the right to sack him because the employed him and if he



Bala

didn't leave up to expectation he must be shown the way out. If the Super Eagles loss against a country like Cape Verde, because playing a draw with them is a loss, as far as I am concerned," he said.

On his part, also in an interview, Sunday Longbap, Chairman, Plateau State Football Association (PFA) earlier advised that is better for Gernot Rohr to voluntarily

resign then to be disgraced. "The earlier called of Nigerians for the sack of the coach is as a result of his poor performance on the duty assigned to him, but he could have resigned not him to faced this disgrace," he said.

"He was unable to coordinate the team which resulted to his failure and he has nothing to offer us," he concluded.

KYLIAN Mbappe struck twice as Paris St-Germain continued their dominance of Ligue 1 with victory over Monaco.

BBC SPORT said that, Mauricio Pochettino's side were fortunate early on when Monaco's Sofiane Diop struck the post.

But when Djibril Sidibe caught Angel di Maria in the box, Mbappe swept home the resulting penalty with ease.

The Frenchman then whipped home his 100th Ligue 1 goal for PSG, finishing ruthlessly after Lionel Messi had led a counter-attack before slipping him in.

The half-time lead flattered PSG a little as Monaco had played their part, Diop hitting the inside of the upright and Guillermo Maripan unable to apply a finish from close range when unmarked at the back post.

Monaco ended the night with more shots at goal than their hosts but ultimately their errors were punished, none more so than when Messi pounced on a loose pass in midfield and raced at goal before tugging up the confident Mbappe for his

Mbappe helps extend Ligue 1 lead



Mbappe

second. Messi grazed the woodwork in the second half with a low right-footed effort but PSG ultimately eased to a win and extended their unbeaten run to nine Ligue 1 games.

Such form has built a 13-point lead at the top of the table over Marseille - who have a game in hand - and 14 points to Rennes in third.

They look destined to reclaim the title they lost to Lille last season and victories such as this, where they were not at their best, underline a consistency that shows no sign of ending.

Monaco, who went into the fixture off back-to-back wins, will take some pride from parts of their display and remain eighth in the table.

Karim Benzema scores in derby win

REAL Madrid won for the 10th game in a row to beat neighbours Atletico Madrid and move eight points clear

of Sevilla at the top of La Liga. **BBC SPORT** said that, La Liga's top scorer Karim Benzema powered in a fantastic volley from Vinicius Jr's cross to give Carlo Ancelotti's side the lead.

And Vinicius picked out Marco Asensio to slot home their second.

Defending champions Atletico, who are 13 points behind Real, had chances but the clinical hosts deserved the win.

Real have only lost twice in 23 games - and none since 3 October - since Carlo Ancelotti replaced Zinedine Zidane in the summer.

Diego Simeone's Atletico,

who sit fourth, look miles away from the team who won La Liga last season.

They did force Real keeper Thibaut Courtois into six saves, including to keep out Antoine Griezmann's free-kick.

A double change at the break and the introduction of Luis Suarez could not help them find a way through though.

Real deserved their win with Vinicius involved in both goals. Benzema's opener was his 13th La Liga goal of the season and his 36th for Real in all competitions in 2021, his best annual haul for the club. He was replaced by Luka Jovic at the break.

Aguero set to announce retirement

SERGIO Aguero is set to announce his retirement today less than six months after joining Barcelona, reports Guillem Balague.

BBC SPORT said that, the 33-year-old has struggled with injuries and health problems since moving to Spain, making only five appearances for the Catalan side.

In his final game, on 30 October, he was substituted and taken to hospital after experiencing "chest discomfort".

While Aguero's time at Barcelona has not gone to plan, there can be no doubting his status as one of the foremost strikers of the 21st Century.

After starting out with Independiente in Argentina, he moved to Atletico Madrid, winning the Europa League in 2010 and scoring 101 goals in 234 appearances.

That record attracted the interest of an upwardly mobile Manchester City, who paid a reported £38m to bring him to Etihad Stadium. He would go on to become a club and Premier League legend during a 10-year spell in England.

Aguero left City in the summer having broken their all-time scoring record, with 260 goals in 390 games, including 16 hat-tricks.

He is the highest-scoring overseas player in Premier

League history with 184 goals, nine more than France and Arsenal great Thierry Henry.

Only Alan Shearer (260), Wayne Rooney (208) and Andrew Cole (187) have scored more in the competition.

But no-one has a better minutes-per-goal record than Aguero in the Premier League. He averaged a goal every 107.9 minutes. Of players who have scored more than 15 goals, Henry is next on the list with one every 121.8 minutes.

The Argentine is also responsible for arguably the Premier League's most iconic moment, scoring with

virtually the last kick of the 2011-12 season to seal a victory over Queens Park Rangers that earned Manchester City a first top-flight title since 1968 and denied fierce rivals Manchester United by virtue of goal difference.

He would go on to win five Premier League titles, one FA Cup and six League Cups during his time in England.

Martial to leave Man Utd in January

ANTHONY Martial is looking to leave Manchester United during the January transfer window, the French forward's agent has revealed, with regular game time being sought by a man that has been frozen out at Old Trafford.

Goal said that, the France international forward has been struggling for game time with the Red Devils and is looking to take on a new challenge.

The 26-year-old has fallen down the pecking order with the Premier League heavyweights, with just two top-flight starts for the Red Devils taken in this season.

With five-time Ballon d'Or winner Cristiano Ronaldo leading the line and Edinson Cavani providing an experienced alternative in a central striking berth, Martial is ready to take on a

new challenge elsewhere. Philippe Lamboley, executive director of USFA Management, told *Sky Sports News*: "Anthony wishes to leave the club in January.

"He just needs to play. He doesn't want to stay in January and I will speak to the club soon."

Martial joined United from Monaco in September 2015, becoming the most expensive teenager in world football at the time.

A bright start was enjoyed to life in England, as he netted on his debut against Liverpool and registered 17 goals across his debut campaign.

Productivity started to dip from that point, though, with Martial often asked to fill a wide attacking role rather than a spot down the middle.

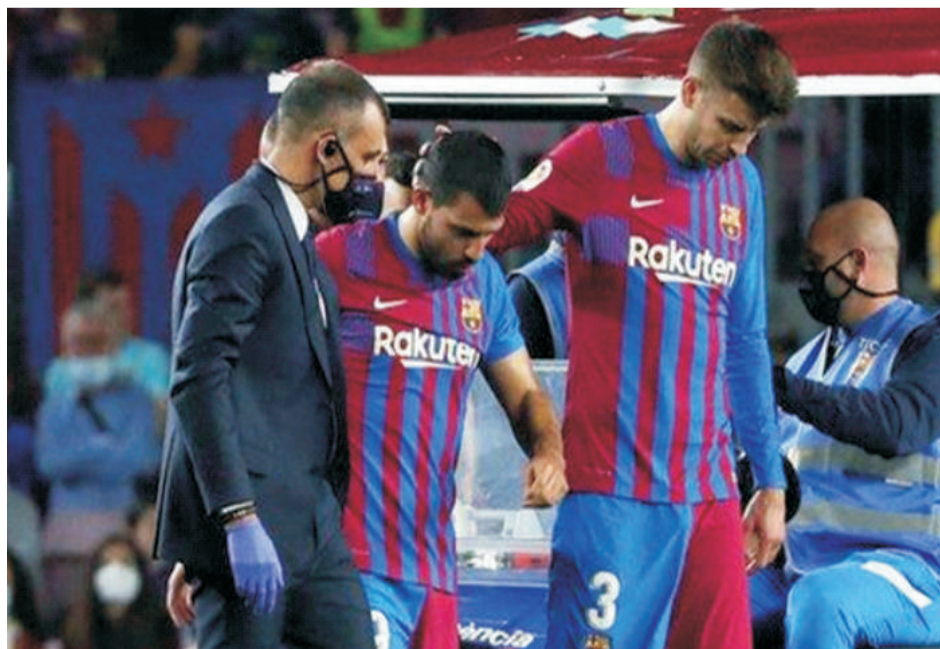
He eventually got his wish in 2019 when, following the

departure of Romelu Lukaku to Inter, he was handed the No.9 shirt at Old Trafford for a second time - having initially given it up to Zlatan Ibrahimovic in 2016.

Martial found the target on 23 occasions with that shirt on his back, with a new personal best recorded, but he started to slip back out of favour again.

Ronaldo's return to English football in the summer of 2021 has proved to be the final straw for the ambitious Frenchman, with a lack of minutes leading him to start exploring other options.

Martial does still have three years left to run on his current contract, which means that United will be able to demand a sizeable fee from any suitors.



Aguero

Sports

Wimbledon champion dies aged 83

Four-time Grand Slam champion Manolo Santana has died aged 83.

BBC SPORT said that, the first Spaniard to claim one of the four major events, Santana won the French Open in 1961 and 1964 and the 1965 US Open.

Despite famously saying "grass is for cows", he won Wimbledon in 1966.

"Like I've said many times in the past, thank you for what you did for our country and for showing all of us the way," said 20-time Grand Slam winner and compatriot Rafael Nadal.

"You were always a benchmark, a friend and a person close to us all. You will never be forgotten."

Spanish football giants Real Madrid, whom Santana supported and was a member of, described him as "one of the great legends of



Santana

Spanish tennis and sport".

"He is one of the greatest tennis players of all time, as well as a passionate Madrid player and a faithful representative of our values throughout his career," Real said.

After retiring as a player in 1977, Santana became

Spain's Davis Cup captain and in recent years was the tournament director of the Madrid Open.

The main court at the Caja Magica, which hosts the prestigious clay-court tournament in the Spanish capital, is named in his honour.

GOALKEEPER Panshak Silas has emerged Plateau United player for the month of November.

The hardworking goalkeeper who has been in impressive performances since last season, still in form as United prepares ahead of the new season which kicks-off next week.

This was contained in a press statement signed by the club's media officer, Albert Dakup and made available to the **NIGERIA STANDARD** sports desk, stating that Silas was promoted from the club's feeder team five years ago, had his breakthrough last season when he kept three matches including a clean sheet in Plateau United's two-nil victory in their last home match of the 2020/2021 NPFL season against Dakadda of Uyo.

According to the statement, the Pankshin born goalkeeper continue with his rich vein of form as he put up a man of the

Silas emerges PL/Utd player of the month

By **ANDRE BISYIT**



Ilechukwu

match performance as the Lalong Boys defeated nearby neighbors, Nasarawa United of Lafia one-nil to win the maiden edition of Abuja Unity Pre-season Football Tournament in October.

Speaking shortly after receiving the award, Silas said he dedicated the award to God and his teammates for their unflinching support.

"I thank God for the award bestowed on me today as the best player for the month of November. I want to use this medium to

assure our fans that the award will only spur me to do more for the team.

Silas is the third person to win the award after Daniel Itodo and Ikefe Andrew who won the award for the month of September and October.

It would be recalled that Coach Fidelis Ilechukwu initiated the award as an avenue of creating healthy competition in the team, shortly after succeeding Coach Abdu Maikaba as Technical Adviser of Plateau United in September.

AYEW sends warning to Ghana's AFCON rivals

JORDAN Ayew bagged an assist during Crystal Palace's 3-1 triumph over Everton in Sunday's Premier League outing.

Goal said that, the forward provided an assist as the Eagles tore apart the Toffees in Sunday's league outing.

The Ghana international was one of the Eagles' star performers as they thumped Rafael Benitez's men at Selhurst Park.

Heading into the clash, Patrick Vieira's men were hoping to end their three-game losing streak, while the Toffees were still basking in the excitement of their 2-1 win over Arsenal last time out.

As it proved to be an eventful day for Palace, they took control of the game from the blast of the referee's whistle.

Ayew was the first to

crack Everton defence, as Odsonne Edouard's snarled the ball forwards through a row of bodies. Meeting it on the half-volley, his shot was driven low but blocked by the feet of Jordan Pickford.

A few minutes before the half-time break, the host got the breakthrough as a loose ball from Demarai Gray was pounced upon by the Black Star - who set up Conor Gallagher to fire home.

Two minutes after the hour mark, James Tomkins doubled the advantage thanks to an assist from Will Hughes. Eight minutes later, the visitors pulled one back with Salomon Rondon beating goalkeeper Vicente Guaita.

With what appeared like the last kick of the match, Gallagher completed his

double as Everton returned home with heads bowed low.

Ayew was on parade from start to finish alongside Senegal's Cheikhou Kouyate, Wilfried Zaha and his compatriot Marc Guehi. Whereas, Anglo-Nigeria Eberechi Eze was an unused substitute.

On the other hand, Alex Iwobi was kept on the bench from start to finish as well as Cote d'Ivoire's Jean-Philippe Gbamin.

A delighted Vieira lauded the fans for their impact against the Goodison Park giants.

"We stuck together through a difficult period, but we felt the support from the fans. This is a really special football club, and the fans make the football club special," he told *Sky Sports* after the game.

"We know what we are capable of doing. We played some really good football in the first half. We will enjoy the win, but we have a game that we have to work over first and to try and perform and to try and win.

"To play at home is a plus, especially when you look at the atmosphere today. We will be ready for the challenge."

Ayew would be hoping to maintain this form as he is expected to play a key role in Ghana's 2021 Africa Cup

of Nations campaign in Cameroon.

Although Iwobi was not played due to unknown reasons, he remains a key figure in the Nigeria squad - who are keen on emerging as African champions for the fourth time ever.

Raducanu tests positive for Covid-19

EMMA Raducanu hopes to "get back soon" after testing positive for Covid-19 and withdrawing from the Mubadala World Tennis Championships.

BBC SPORT said that, the US Open champion was due to play Olympic gold medallist Belinda Bencic in the exhibition event in Abu Dhabi.

Briton Raducanu, who became the first qualifier

to win a Grand Slam title in New York, is isolating.

She is scheduled to play in a WTA Melbourne warm-up tournament next month before the Australian Open.

"I was very much looking forward to playing in front of the fans here in Abu Dhabi," Raducanu said.

"I'm isolating as per rules and hopefully will be

able to get back soon."

Raducanu has had mixed success since her US Open triumph with two wins from five matches and has recently teamed up with **Torben Beltz as her new coach.**

The Mubadala World Tennis Championship takes place between 16-18 December, and will feature two-time champion Andy Murray.

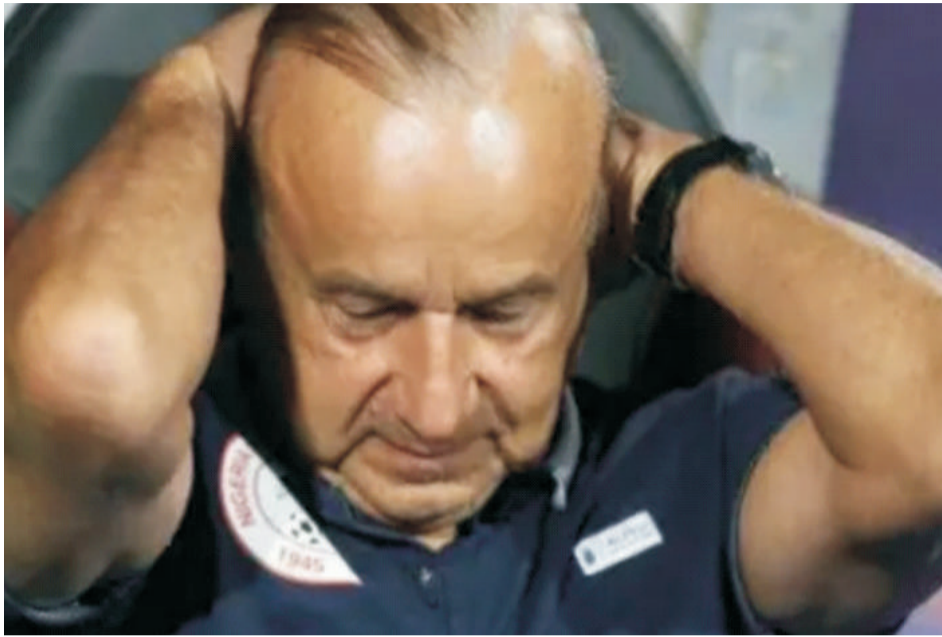


Ayew



Emma Raducanu had aimed to do her training block Middle East before flying to Australia

Sports



The German manager had not failed any of the targets set by the NFF in his contract, but that did not save him from being dismissed on Sunday

I'm going to have a hard time –Rohr

Gernot Rohr has expressed his frustration after the Nigerian Football Federation sacked him as the Super Eagles head coach.

Newsnow said that, the German gaffer is the longest-serving Super Eagles handler after guiding the team for five years and four months.

Rohr was hired in August 2016 after Nigeria failed to qualify for the 2015 Africa Cup of Nations tournament – where the Eagles would have defended the title they won at South Africa 2013.

With Rohr in charge, the Super Eagles made it to the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia and the 2019 Afcon with a game to spare in each case, even as the team finished in third place at the latter tournament.

The former Bordeaux manager was then handed a new two-year contract and charged with qualifying the three-time Afcon kings for the 2022 World Cup and winning the 2021 Afcon.

Rohr was on course to hitting those targets, with Nigeria among the

favourites to lift the title at Cameroon 2021 while the Eagles have booked a spot in the final playoff rounds for Qatar 2022.

But the NFF, on Sunday, announced the dismissal of the former Burkina Faso chief coach, with barely four weeks to the commencement of the continental championship.

Some of the reasons given by NFF boss Amaju Pinnick for Rohr's sacking include indiscipline and the penchant for Rohr's team to struggle to win matches.

While Rohr has refused to join issues with the football administrator, the 68-year-old has pointed out that he worked with a united group of players.

The German gaffer confessed that the Super Eagles are a great side, and it would be difficult for him to live without them.

"It's a huge frustration, but I don't want to argue; it's not my style," Rohr told AFP, as per RFI.

"(I'm) convinced that they will have a very good CAN because the team is in place, and this very united group is ready for the

challenges that await it.

"I'm going to have a hard time doing without these great players and this very united staff, but the environment is not always favourable; we cannot control everything."

Rohr had handled the national teams of Gabon, Niger, and Burkina Faso before he was appointed the Super Eagles coach 64 months ago.

Eagles goalkeeper Maduka Okoye has since penned an emotional tribute to Rohr, who gave him his national team debut just over two years ago.

Eguavoen meets NFF on Nations Cup plans

Super Eagles Interim Manager, Augustine Eguavoen, will have his first meeting with the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) today in Abuja.

Newsnow said that, the coach, who described his appointment as Nigeria's acting head coach on Sunday as a big call to duty, which must be answered successfully, is

Super Eagles goalkeeper Maduka Okoye is the first Nigerian star to pay his respect to former Nigeria coach Gernot Rohr.

Newsnow said that, Rohr was relieved of his duties on Sunday evening after more than five years in charge of the Super Eagles. The 68-year-old had been in charge of the team since 2016, leading the team to the 2018 World Cup and 2019 Africa Cup of Nations, where Nigeria finished third.

However, the team's poor performance over the last 12 months made Rohr's position untenable. And on Sunday, The Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) decided to part ways with the former Burkina Faso manager.

And Following the news, Okoye took to his social media to thank Rohr for turning his career around. The 22-year-old shot-stopper made his Super Eagles debut under Rohr in a 1-1 draw against Brazil in November 2019.

Since then, he has gone on to become Nigeria's number one and also secure a move to Watford from Sparta Rotterdam, where he is the club's number one ahead of the move next summer.

Okoye knew all these achievements would not have been possible if not for the chance Rohr gave

'You turned my young football career around'

him, and he has shown his gratitude with a thank you post.

You turned my young football career around, helped me and gave this career a big boost!

You let me do what I always dreamed of, Playing for my fatherland Nigeria. Thank you for almost 3

amazing years, your support and your trust.

I'm wishing you all the best Coach Rohr! pic.twitter.com/fccBdFebKj

Okoye is currently out injured with a shoulder injury, but he should be fit for Sparta's Cup game this week.



Okoye

that he will do his best to justify his appointment.

Eguavoen, however, pleaded with Nigerians to have faith in the Super Eagles, while promising that the team will be prepared the best possible way for the African Cup of Nations.

"I am delighted to take charge of the Super Eagles as interim coach. I am on a rescue mission, which is a big challenge and a tough job for me. But I am happy because the assistants appointed

to work with me are experienced coaches.

"Right now, I am in Uyo to watch a U-17 youth football tournament, but I will meet with the NFF tomorrow (Today) in Abuja to discuss preparations for the AFCON," he said.

Eguavoen disclosed that the team list for the AFCON and other information on the Eagles' camping site would be announced soon.

Dryburgh qualifies through Q School to reach LPGA Tour

It is professional golf in its rawest form - a test of endurance and nerve as much as an examination of technique.

According to **BBC SPORT**, to come through Q School is the badge of honour that is perhaps the hardest of all to earn.

For Scotland's Gemma Dryburgh there is an enormous sense of delight and relief at emerging with LPGA Tour playing privileges after eight tortuous rounds over the

past fortnight in Alabama.

But for fellow Britons Anita Uwadia and Meghan MacLaren there was the ultimate disappointment, as both missed the all important top 45 by narrow margins. Uwadia was a single stroke shy and MacLaren missed by three after a final-round 75.

"It's very gratifying," 28-year-old Dryburgh told BBC Sport after finishing 22nd of 46 qualifiers.

"When we finished it was such a relief, it was just

like a weight off your shoulders. It's obviously very different from a normal tournament.

"Q school is way more intense, everything matters because it is for your job next year. It's like re-interviewing for your job every time, so its very stressful."

Dryburgh comfortably made it through to the initial stage after a fourth-round 65. Then last week she shot 71-74-70-73 to finish nine under par.

The Beaconsfield-based Aberdonian becomes eligible for the vast

majority of tournaments on the most lucrative tour in women's golf so there is much to celebrate.

But she also had sympathy for the Britons who missed out, especially MacLaren who had earlier come close to securing a full LPGA card by finishing 18th on the feeder Symetra Tour.

To illustrate the stress of the past fortnight, midway through Q School MacLaren wrote in a blog about the importance of what you believe in yourself while in the cauldron of qualifying.



Eguavoen



Quest



writer

JOSIAH MUTIHIR

FRAGMENT

"Nigeria's expedition in the change in traffic flow from the left-hand side to the right-hand side of the road commenced on Sunday April 2nd, 1972, at past midnight of 1st April. This was about 12 years after independence from British rule. General Yakubu Gown was Head of State and presided over the change. Though we keep to the right-hand side of the road, it is where the driver of the vehicle sits in the vehicle that is recognized. The terms right and left-hand drive refer to the position of the driver in the vehicle and are the reverse in terms of right- and left-hand traffic".

JOSIAH MUTIHIR

Grappling with driving norms in Nigeria

THIS may sound as a myth to Nigerians of 49 years and younger. That at a point in time, the Nigerian roads accommodated only driving on the left-hand side of the road. Today, it is driving on the right hand of the road, and anything short of this tantamount to a road traffic offence punishable by various fines depending on the part of the country you are.

Nigeria's expedition in the change in traffic flow from the left-hand side to the right-hand side of the road commenced on Sunday April 2nd, 1972, at past midnight of 1st April. This was about 12 years after independence from British rule. General Yakubu Gown was Head of State and presided over the change.

Though we keep to the right-hand side of the road, it is where the driver of the vehicle sits in the vehicle that is recognized. The terms right and left-hand drive refer to the position of the driver in the vehicle and are the reverse in terms of right- and left-hand traffic.

Before this transition, 99.9% of the vehicles were right-hand drive, and were imported predominantly from Britain. France commenced left hand drive in as early as in 1794, while Britain adopted right hand drive in 1835, and British colonies followed suit. This explains why most British colonized countries like India, Antarctica, New Zealand are still driving on the left-hand side (right-hand drive) of the road to date.

Sunday, 2nd of April was probably chosen because of the usual low traffic across the country. However, for some of us, our Sunday service was aborted that day. The writer and a friend could barely wait for the day to break. Excitement filled the air as to what would happen. What would we see? Were there going to be accidents? Curiosity, anticipation, or apprehension perhaps.

There was this recently tarred road that passed through our village, which was not busy with vehicles on normal days (remember there were few vehicles in those days) let alone on a Sunday. However, we were hopeful that some vehicles would ply the road that day. The two of us got up as early as 6:00am, and hurried off to the road, got a choice position on a rock about midway the stretch of a straight road that allowed us to view both our left and right sides. Our



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curiosity was palpable as we could hear each other's heartbeat.

To our amazement, the first vehicle appeared from our left side, apparently from Jos. It was keeping to the right side of the road. The driver was still sitting on the right side of the vehicle. We saw this with utter amazement and fun. How could this be? This was what was expected but we were at the same time surprised that the change had come to pass. The vehicle drove past, our eyes fixed on it and followed it as it passed where we had turned into an observatory. We were speechless and in a state of utter disbelief and shock.

We stayed on this rock, a vantage position for about 7 hours hoping to witness as many vehicles as possible, obeying the new norm of driving on our roads. An hour later, another vehicle emerged from the opposite direction, and appeared to be heading towards Jos, the only big town known to us then. This vehicle also obeyed the now new norm of driving, keeping to the right side of the road. Our disbelief now gradually turned to belief. It was now a reality and we had witnessed it live! From about 6:00am to about 1:00pm (7 hours), we witnessed the

passage of 4 vehicles, all keeping to the right-hand side of the road. We had now satisfied our curiosity. We had witnessed live the implementation of the change. We had not taken breakfast or lunch but never felt hungry or thirsty. This duo had been suppressed by this long-awaited event.

Another reason advanced for the change was that Nigeria was sandwiched between countries with French colonial masters who were right hand drive with right hand traffic flow. There was said to be confusion at the borders and ports as delivery of goods to those countries encountered much confusion. The domination of the entire west African countries by anglophone countries, and the need for seamless transportation and business flow might have necessitated this change. Another speculation was that many cheap and affordable vehicles were made in France and Germany and were designed for right hand drive roads. Converting these vehicles to left-hand drive was expensive. Another plausible reason for the change was that about 165 countries were left-hand drive and keeping to the right hand side, and less than half this number (74 countries) were

driving on the left worldwide. Nigeria might have chosen this option to go with the majority.

The news propaganda at that time claimed the transition was seamless but failed to tell the people how many accidents occurred due to the change that day and within 6 months. This would have been more gratifying.

Over the years, Nigerian drivers grappled with the new norm of keeping to the right side of the road while driving. Not only was the driving difficult in its own; the vehicles were right-hand drive which compounded the difficulties. Since the change-over had no long-term plan or preparation, the vehicles were largely those imported from the colonial masters, Britain. Conversion of these vehicles to left hand drive was going to be difficult and costly and would take time. Importation of the appropriate vehicles for this change-over could not be done overnight. Thus, for between 5 and 10 years, there was gradual importation of the left-hand drive vehicles from countries of manufacture. Some were largely fairly-used vehicles (Tokunbo) that had to be imported for appropriateness and affordability.

Since control of the vehicle was a bit difficult and cumbersome, for keeping to the right while the driver was on the right-hand side of the vehicle, and as the number of imported left hand drive vehicles increased on the roads, drivers who still had right-hand drive vehicles had a means of identity. They had a bold sticker pasted at the back of their vehicles. The sticker read: "Right hand drive: No hand signal". This was because Nigerian drivers were used to indicating directions of turns with the right hand, while on-coming traffic was now on their left and they could not use their left hand. The use of the hand was no more appropriate, or its use was a waste of effort as the other drivers would not see the hand.

As the years went by, more left hand drive vehicles became more available in the country. Driving became more comfortable. I cannot guess what happened to the now obsolete right hand drive vehicles. It is possible some were converted to left hand drive, but this would have come at a cost.

More than 2 decades later, the writer learnt how to drive and of

course the new normal. However, some funny experiences are worth mentioning. One had cause to travel to the United Kingdom where the driving was still on the left side of the road and the driver was on the right side of the vehicle. It was awkward, uncomfortable, and difficult to comprehend. There was the continuous feeling that there was something wrong with the traffic and commuters. The right hand drive appeared awkward as one was already used to the contrary. I had to manage the road debacle until return to Nigeria when I now felt everything was now 'normal'.

The second experience was at a trip to Sierra Leone. This country has similar drive as that in Nigeria. However, the old SUV that came to pick me from the airport was still right hand drive. I was asked to sit in front of the vehicle with the driver!

This was a most bizarre experience. The moment the driver kick-started the vehicle, there were now two drivers to the same vehicle. The driver was the main driver holding the steering wheel and I became the de-facto driver without a steering wheel to hold. I was a virtual driver. As we drove off, my legs were already on a virtual accelerator and brake pedals. Whenever we got close to a vehicle ahead of us, as the driver applied the brakes by marching on the brakes, I was doing the same on the virtual brake pedals. I was actually moving my legs to accelerate or apply the brakes along with the driver. Only that mine were virtual as these pedals were not there for me to activate. Truly, I was worked up as if I truly drove the vehicle to my place of abode. It was really a fascinating experience which has never re-occurred again. 'Wonders they say, never end'.

I do not know why I came across these life experiences, but they occurred. At each time, I reflected on the transition of driving from the left-hand side to the right hand of the road, and vehicles from right hand drive to left hand drive. If this change had not happened during my lifetime, these experiences may not have manifested the way they did! Do not be in a hurry to laugh at this village boy. He has since grown!!!!

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