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Abubakar denies involvement in thugs' recruitment

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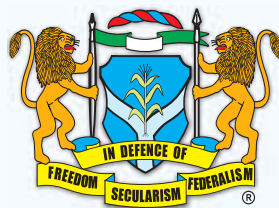
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Nyame



Dariye

Dariye, Nyame leave prison four months after pardon

Former Plateau Governor Joshua Dariye and his Taraba counterpart, Rev Jolly Nyame have regained freedom from Kuje Correctional Centre, Abuja.

They left Kuje

Correctional Centre four months after they were granted pardon by the National Council of States with 159 others. The Public Relations Officer of the FCT Command of the Nigerian Correctional Service, Humphrey

Chukwuendo, confirmed their release, saying the duo was released from Kuje while three others were released from Suleja Prison.

He further confirmed that the release was based on communications sent to

the FCT Command from the Federal Government, expressing confidence that other Commands would have received their letters to release those pardoned.

There have been some administrative issues

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Nigeria loses \$1.9 bn monthly to crude theft

The Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Timipre Sylva, has decried huge crude oil theft in the country.

Sylva lamented that hoodlums, who perpetrate the act, have caused the production level to reduce by 400,000 barrels per day (bpd), translating to a drop from 1.8 million to 1.4 million bpd.

He expressed this concern on Monday, when he visited the Imo State Governor, Hope Uzodimma, at the Government House, Owerri.

Accompanied by a high powered team, made up of the Minister of State for Education, Goodluck Opiah; the Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Lucky Irabor; the Group Chief Executive Officer, the Nigeria National Petroleum

Company Limited (NNPC), Alhaji Mele Kyari, Sylva said they came as part of industry-wide intervention mission to find a lasting solution to curb crude oil

theft in Nigeria, noting that they were also in the state to get the buy-in and support of the state government on how to tackle the problem.

"We've come here to engage the state government to get your buy-in and support", he said.

The Minister said his

delegation was in the state to seek the cooperation of the state government, adding that the oil host communities should play a collaborative effort to stop

the alarming levels of crude oil theft, which has now become a national emergency.

Governor Uzodimma,

Cont'd on Page 2



Buhari

Sylva

Kyari

FG launches Scales 3.0 Strategy for Covid-19

The Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) says it is guided by principles of safety, efficacy, transparency and accountability, in the Covid-19 mass vaccination campaign in the country.

Minister of Health, Dr Osagie Ehanire, gave the assurance on Monday in

Abuja, during the launch of the SCALES 3.0 strategy for Covid-19 vaccination in the country, organised by the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA).

The SCALES 3.0 strategy

is an intensive campaign focused on ramping up uptake of Covid-19 vaccines, childhood vaccines and other primary health care services at public and private health facilities.

The NPHCDA, had in November 2021, introduced the SCALES strategy to rapidly increase Covid-19 vaccine coverage.

The strategy was designed to expand access

to Covid-19 vaccines outside the health facility. The SCALES is an acronym for Service-delivery, Communication, Accountability, Logistics, Electronic reporting, and

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WAEC releases May/June 2022 WASSCE results

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Police dismiss personnel over brutality

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News

Nigeria loses \$1.9 bn monthly to crude theft

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however, declared the commitment of the government to curb the menace in the state.

"We are committed; we are determined. The consequences of oil theft are alarming. Our economy is bleeding", he said.

Uzodimma regretted that the development has led to a drop in the earnings of government, creating environmental pollution

and other health hazards.

He promised that the state government would do its best to support oil-producing companies, as well as collaborate with the Federal Government to achieve the goal.

The governor thanked the NNPC Limited for the 200-bed hospital it is building at the Imo State University Teaching Hospital, Orlu.

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regarding their release since their pardon by the NCS led by President Muhammadu Buhari on April 14, 2022, said a source familiar with the matter.

However as at 11 am, the processes were being documented across the NCoS Commands nationwide preparatory to their release, an official of the NCoS at the headquarters in Abuja said.

Chukwuendo told reporters that Dariye and

Nyame were documented Monday morning and they had since left the prison.

Nyame was sentenced for 12 years for diverting N1.64 billion during his tenure as Governor of Taraba while Dariye was sentenced for 10 years' imprisonment for N1.126 billion fraud.

The State pardon granted the former Governors generated some controversies across the country, forcing government to stay action and carry out more consultation on the matter.

Dariye, Nyame leave prison four months after pardon



Nyame



Dariye

WAEC releases May/June 2022 WASSCE results

The West African Examination Council (WAEC) has announced the release of the May/June 2022 West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) results, 45 days after the last paper.

WAEC's Head of National Office (HNO), Patrick Areghan, made the disclosure on Monday while speaking at a media briefing.

The school examination was taken by 1, 607, 985 school candidates in 20,221 schools nationwide and of this, 800,055 are

males, comprising (49.76%) while 800,724 are females, comprising (50.24%).

The HNO said, while the candidates were examined in 76 subjects, made up of 197 papers, about 30,000 practicing senior teachers, nominated by various Ministries of Education participated in the examination as supervisors.

He said up to 76.36% obtained Credits and above in English Language and Mathematics while 88.04% made Credits and above in a minimum of five subjects among the candidates.

Ortom writes Buhari, seeks firearm permits

GOVERNOR Samuel Ortom of Benue State has written President Muhammadu Buhari for firearm licensing for the newly established Benue State Community Volunteer Guards inaugurated last week to provide surveillance and intelligence gathering in the wake of persistent herdsmen attacks.

Ortom who disclosed this on Monday while playing host to a delegation from the Northern Christian Women Coalition at the Government House in Makurdi said the move became necessary following the legitimated process of establishing the security outfit to help restore peace in the troubled parts of the state.

Ortom noted that the President he knew would approve his request to also empower his people against their transducers, or at best, leave room for a fair level of response on the defences of his people.

During the launch last week, Ortom said the guards were designed to address community security and safety.

According to him, the volunteer guards were not established for political purposes ahead of the 2023 general election.

7. Police re-arrest escapee from Jos jail break

The Plateau State Police Command has re-arrested Mr. Mohammed Ibrahim, one of the inmates that escaped from the Jos

Custodial Centre in November 2021 jail break.

The Commissioner of Police (CP) Bartholomew Onyeka, announced this when he presented him and other suspects to the media Monday in Jos.

Onyeka said that Ibrahim, 39, was re-arrested by anti-kidnapping police squad at Wamba Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

He said, "In a bid to arrest all escapees of the recent Jos jail break that occurred in November last year, our operatives intensified efforts and re-arrested Mohammed Ibrahim.

"Ibrahim escaped from lawful custody of the Jos Correctional Centre and among the master minds of the attack on the facility.

"He had been in prison awaiting trial for alleged case of criminal conspiracy and kidnapping before he escaped."

The commissioner said that the suspect would be handed over back to the Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS) for further action.

He added that other 25 suspects paraded with Ibrahim were arrested for crimes such as kidnapping, banditry, armed robbery, criminal conspiracy and unlawful possession of firearms, among others, noting that they would be charged to court when investigations are concluded.

FG launches Scales 3.0 Strategy for Covid-19

Cont'd from Page 1

supportive Supervision for the ongoing Covid-19 vaccination.

Mass vaccination sites were established at all public places such as markets, parks, shopping malls, schools, mosques, and churches.

Although the government said that the strategy has

proven to be effective in shoring up Covid-19 vaccination coverage, the proportion of fully vaccinated Nigerians is still low. This is partly because the country is using two-dose vaccines.

Most Nigerians are reluctant to take their second dose for various reasons including fear of a

repeat of the mild side effects they may have experienced with the first dose.

The SCALES strategy is using Covid-19 vaccination structures and resources to improve Routine Immunisation (RI) coverage, with improved efficiency and reduced

duplication of efforts by health care workers.

This is to ensure that controlling the transmission of Covid-19 does not become a fertile ground for the outbreak of childhood vaccine-preventable diseases. It became imperative for the government to launch the SCALES 2.0 Strategy.

Police dismiss personnel over brutality



The Nigerian Police Force (NPF) has dismissed one of its personnel, for brutalising a civilian.

The personnel, Liyomo Okoi, with Force No 524503 PC, attached to Ekor Divisional Headquarters, Cross Rivers Police Command, was captured in a viral video on July 31, flogging a man with a machete.

According to a statement from the Force's spokesperson, the dismissal takes immediate effect from August 8.

Meanwhile, the Inspector-General of Police, Usman Alkali Baba, has expressed disappointment over reports of brutality and extortion levelled against some police officers via various complaint channels

available to the public, particularly on social media platforms.

The Police Boss, therefore, directed all supervising Commissioners of Police and Tactical/Strategic Commanders to ensure strict supervision of their personnel.

Baba has also ordered a wholistic overhauling of the Intelligence Response Team (IRT), the Special Tactical Squad (STS), and the Special Weapon and Tactics (SWAT) Units, to ensure that their operations are in tandem with the purpose for their creation, and maximum effectiveness and output in line with the mandate of his administration and public safety.

The statement read: "The Inspector-General of

Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba, psc(+), NPM, fdc, has expressed grave disappointment at the reports of brutality and extortion levelled against some police officers via various complaint channels available to the public, particularly on social media platforms.

"The IGP has, therefore, directed all supervising Commissioners of Police and Tactical/Strategic Commanders to ensure strict supervision of their personnel, as further incidences of this nature would be viewed strictly.

"The IGP has also ordered a wholistic overhauling of the Intelligence Response Team (IRT), the Special Tactical Squad (STS), and the Special Weapon and Tactics (SWAT) Units to ensure that their



Re-inventing tourism amidst dwindling incomes

The World Bank Nigeria's Development Update for June 2022 predicts an additional 7 million Nigerians to fall below the poverty line of \$1.9 per day. This will add to the already existing 83 million extremely poor Nigerians, bringing the total figure to 90 million misery-living, squalor-busted and economically hopeless citizens by the end of 2022. ALIKOR VICTOR writes.

IF Nigeria intends to recover the lost grounds occasioned by the consequences of the drop in oil prices globally, this is the time to pay attention to tourism. ELEJO IDACHABA gathers the views expressed by experts in the industry.

Nigeria, like other countries of the world whose economies are driven largely by petroleum, may in the coming years find it difficult to run the government if they fail to look beyond oil into other thriving sectors like tourism.

This is coming on the heels of the recent announcement by the minister of finance, Zainab Ahmed, that the government revenue was on a steady decline.

This is so because Nigeria is among other countries often hit by the unstable global oil price regime; and that is why there is a need for a re-evaluation of the nation's revenue source aside from taxes. It is no longer news that Nigeria has a highly marketable, but untapped tourism sector. Available statistics show that there are tremendous benefits in the sector if the experiences of African countries like Rwanda, Kenya, Gambia, Egypt and South Africa are anything to go by.

Over the past six decades, for instance, a report indicates that tourism destination countries and sites have witnessed progressive growth from 25 million viewers to well over 1.4 billion. Similarly, earnings from the sector have also leapt from \$2bn in 1950 to \$1,260trn as at 2015, roughly representing 10% of the world's GDP and one in every 10 jobs.

Tourism, therefore, has become one of the fastest growing sectors that drive the economy of the entire globe. There is therefore no gainsaying the fact that it is in the best interest of tourism destination countries, like Nigeria to develop the sector on a sustainable basis to enable them progressively enhance their capacity to reap maximum benefits from this money spinning sector.

Paradoxically in Nigeria, especially under the current administration, the sector is not on its scorecards, thereby fuelling concerns.

Concerns

Recently, tourism operators under the aegis of Federation of Tourism Associations of Nigeria (FTAN) kicked against the planned hosting of United Nations World Tourism Organisations (UNWTO) first conference on cultural tourism and creative industries by the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture.

They said if the government goes ahead to host the fiesta, the tourism umbrella body said they would boycott the conference as according to the association through its president, Nkwereuwem Onung, "it is neither beneficial to the Nigerian tourism industry nor operators."

It would be recalled that the information and national orientation minister, Lai Mohammed, recently inaugurated a central planning committee to organise the UNWTO conference billed to

hold between November 14 and 17 as part of events slated for the reopening of the National Arts Theatre.

Onung, however, said private operators in the sector resolved to boycott the conference because of the neglect they have suffered in the hands of the minister in the last seven years.

According to him, all efforts to have a meeting with the minister to discuss had always proved abortive despite over six letters written to him. He said rather than meet with them or attend any of the local tourism events, the minister prefers the UNWTO conference where he only parades himself as the country's tourism Minister, but with neglected domestic tourism.

"Hosting the November UNWTO conference is not what the country needs to recover from its present economic woes as it is only an avenue to enrich few people and fritter tax payers money away in a mere jamboree that is of no benefit contrary to what the minister has made the Presidency and nation to believe."

Security concerns

As everyone is putting heads together to fashion out a safe haven for tourism operators, a tourism consultant, Dr. Paul Adalikwu, said one of the areas the government needs to look into if practitioners can make any inroad is insecurity that, according to him, has turned many tourism sites into slaughter zones.

"At the moment, I am not aware of any tourism site currently operating at 100 percent capacity due to the insecure environment in the country. We don't even need to talk about the northern part of the country overridden by bandits and terrorists. Right now down south, all the forests are overrun by kidnappers. How can tourism develop under such an atmosphere? Apart from neglect, insecurity is the major killer of the

industry and the government needs to look into that seriously," he said.

Imoke's wise counsel

It was probably in consideration of complains from private operators that informed former Cross River state governor, Senator Liyel Imoke, to task governments at all levels to make incentives a key factor that can stimulate the sector, as according to him, it is the only way to grow the sector towards contributing to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

He spoke recently at the 25th Annual General Meeting and tourism conference of FTAN in Abuja.

Imoke said, "Tourism has to be private sector driven with the government as the enabler but sometimes the government becomes the mover; the government must create incentives as one of the mandatory roles otherwise we would not grow the industry."

"The greatest challenge I find is insecurity and access to tourism, which the government has to provide and when the government fails, then the investors and operators too would fail."

"These are critical issues that we must address. Why is the tourism budget shrinking when we have a sector that we want to grow? How and when do we create capital for the industry? Is tourism a luxury good or is it a necessity? All of these are part of the challenges that we face."

Lessons from Arab nations

A tourism expert, Mr. Mosun Debo, also bemoaned the state of the sector. He said, "Nigeria has everything she needs to overcome the vicissitudes of an uncertain oil climate. He said the country is endowed with breath-taking and sprawling geography, cultural heterogeneity and a plethora of historical sites that would be a tourism delight any day."

"The Nigerian landscape undoubtedly holds great promise for a sector that can compete favourably with the black gold in terms of foreign exchange earnings."

"However, owing to the easy and quick bucks that flow from the oil sector, tourism has suffered terrible neglect like the other sectors of our economy such as agriculture and solid minerals."

"Everyone knows that the Arab nations are endowed with oil, but of all those countries, only the United Arab Emirate saw the need to diversify its economy by using the windfall from oil to develop a robust tourism sector that is attracting world attention today. Today, everyone wants to see the wonders of Dubai and surrounding cities because of the tourism attractions there."

Any deliberate attention to the sector?

On his part, a lecturer in the Department of Hospitality Management and Applied Sciences at Dorben Polytechnic Abuja, Dr. Obinna Ugochukwu Onyeocha, said tourism in Nigeria "has not been taken into consideration as part of the country's economic development plan as it has been relegated to the background."

It's also being managed by non-experts and those who ventured into tourism and activities by investment.

"In looking at the challenges of tourism in Nigeria, it is not only the duty of the government to keep a track on tourism development, but professionals in the field have been very quiet about the management of tourism in Nigeria."

"The merging of tourism with another ministry is not a surprise for anyone who has followed trends in the industry for the past 15 years. Tourism has been relegated to the third or fourth tier of economic generation of the nation."

"The policies of the government

about tourism in Nigeria have not been reflected in the prospects of this nation and the reasons are very obvious though discreet. The persons managing the affairs of tourism in Nigeria have nothing to do with tourism and on many occasions, they are just investors or walk-in persons through politics. The Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) has those that read Geography, Sociology and Anthropology, Public Administration or any other Arts course. If the policy-making body is sick, why won't the national decision on tourism be sick?"

More expert advice

According to tours experts, Ogechi and Kennedy Ezenwafor while writing on The Hospitality Business in Nigeria, Issues and Challenges, the operating environment of the hospitality sector in Nigeria has an effect on the supply of skills and financial performance of restaurant and similar hospitality businesses.

"To improve overall performances of the industry, private-public partnerships between government agencies, hospitality colleges and hospitality businesses, strategic partnerships between expert hospitality institutions and business schools, cooperation among hospitality business owners and improvement in managerial practices could be strategic moves for an industry operating under heavy institutional hindrances peculiar to Nigeria, while at the same time working on deliberate actions to end insecurity. You cannot quantify the number of jobs the sector can create if well developed."

Source: Blueprint.





Cashew remains our focal area for export

- Abubakar

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Dr Mohammad Abubakar, has assured that cashew value chain remains Federal Government's focal area for export and revenue generation.

Abubakar made the declaration while receiving the delegation of African Cashew Alliance, ACA, led by its President, Otunba Babatola Faseru, at the Ministry's headquarters in Abuja.

He commended the ACA on its move to organize maiden ACA conference in Abuja, which he said would bring about new knowledge and productivity along the value chain as well attract investors.

He promised support of the Ministry for the conference to make it a success.

He said cashew is like cocoa that generates high foreign exchange for Nigeria that boosts farmers' profitability.

He also maintained that the Ministry is ready to collaborate with stakeholders in the cashew value chain towards enhancing quality seedlings, increase production and income generation.

According to him, cashew had become a national commodity that grows across the 36 State of the federation, and it is a strong indication of its potential to galvanize the economy, which also cocoa had being a second foreign exchange earner for the economy.

He said: "The focus of the present administration is the growth of the agricultural sector and once that is achieved we have set a base for economic growth."

"Every single value chain in the agricultural sector is important and if they come together, they would make a big difference, in the area of Food and Nutrition Security."

Meanwhile, the Minister promised the Ministry's continued support for the cashew value chain, which he made it known that the Ministry had built capacity of smallholder farmers on cashew production, processing and packaging.

Earlier, in a remark, the President of African Cashew Alliance, ACA, Otunba Babatola Faseru, stated that ACA is a non-governmental organization created in 2005 with the mandate of promoting a global competitive African Cashew industry that would benefit the entire value chain from farmers to consumers.

However, Faseru lamented that Africa loses over 2000 jobs in the cashew value chain annually, and for Nigeria alone cashew value chain alone could provide provide over 1000 jobs annually.

"Jigawa and Kebbi States are doing well in cashew production. We want support from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to move the Cashew sub-sector forward", he stated.

Also speaking was the President of Cashew Association of Nigeria, CAN, Hon Ojo Ajanaku, disclosed



Abubakar

Nigeria has about 600, 000 surviving cashew trees spread across the country.

According to Ajanaku, currently 75 per cent to 80 per cent of cashew nuts produced in Nigeria are exported, as only very few companies are involved in the local processing of the

commodity.

He also said 60 per cent of the world's cashew growth is from Africa, hence more needs to be done to boost cashew processing and investment in Nigeria as a leading African country producing and exporting cashew.

Experts task startups on legal compliance, tax payment

Experts have tasked owners of startups ventures on strict compliance with legal frameworks, collaboration with funders and payment of taxes to attract funding from investors to grow their businesses.

They contend that no investor will put resources into startups that do not meet up legal, tax requirements and are not ready to work with them to identify the challenges and opportunities to make a profitable investment.

The experts gave these indications at a workshop on: 'Getting Funded and Legal Compliance for Web 3 Startups', organised by Convexity/Legalpreneur Consulting in Abuja.

Olaleye Oladimeji, managing partner Legalpreneur Consulting, said for startups to be viable and attract funding internationally and locally, they must comply with applicable laws guiding the operations of such ventures in a given country.

Oladimeji said Web 3 startups with the advice of

lawyers should get operating licences from regulators, structure their transaction, review appropriate documents and stick to the provisions of laws such as the Company and Allied Matters Act (CAMA) even before looking out for funders.

He said: "Basically, we speaking on legal compliance and investment considerations. We are trying to encourage startups to be compliant as much as possible from the early stages of incorporation. Have a proper structure, being able to get licensing, guiding them on how they can set up, the type of incentives, where to set up and how they can also getting funding."

"It is very important for them to raise funding at the right time. Not just raising funding anyhow for the fun of just getting money. They need to know how to do it, what to do, how to structure these transactions in terms of

Commercial banks lent out a total of N26.8 trillion as of June 2022 up from the N24.378 trillion lent out to the private sector as of December 2021, representing a 10.15 per cent growth in 6 months.

Deposit Money bank lending to the private sector was N21.89 trillion as of June 2021 thus adding N5 trillion in

Commercial banks lending hits N26.8trn

loan growth in one year, representing the highest on record so far.

Nigeria's central bank has over the last 5 years pursued an aggressive policy of lending to the private sector, expecting that this will help spur economic growth in the real sector, while also creating jobs. Loans to the private sector were just N15.7

trillion as of December 2015 thus around N11 trillion has been added in under 7 years.

Further insight into the data reveals the Manufacturing sector has for the first time led the pack as the sector with the largest proportion of loans. Total loans to the manufacturing sector printed at N4.53 trillion or 16.9 per cent of the total.

NBCC records 73% revenue growth with new membership

The Nigerian-British Chamber of Commerce (NBCC), successfully grew its revenue by 73 percent in 2021 on the back of increased membership subscriptions as well as more programmes and other activities during the year.

According to the chamber's annual report and financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2021, the NBCC's revenue jumped from N86.3 million in 2020 to N149.4 million in 2021.

Programmes, activities and services held during the year contributed 91.2 million (61percent) to the

general revenue while membership subscriptions contributed N50.4 million (35 percent).

Sola Oyetayo, treasurer, NBCC revealed at the chamber's 43rd annual general meeting held in Lagos that the NBCC's assets grew from N430.9 million in 2020 to N644.2 million in the review year. He noted that most strategic initiatives that began in 2020 were being implemented in 2022 which he hoped will yield positive results in future.

"We invested in providing a beautiful edifice — the NBCC plaza — we have confidence that in coming years, the rental income will be a major source of revenue for the chamber,"

Oyetayo said.

In her address, Bisi Adeyemi, president and chairman of the council, NBCC said the chamber took significant steps to improve its value proposition to members through better engagement, targeted advocacy, more networking opportunities and bespoke benefits designed to meet the needs of members in a manner that directly impact business performance.

"Increased engagement enabled us to offer sector-specific support to members; we have over the last twelve months refocused the sectoral groups for better alignment with the objective of the chamber and expectations of members, two new sectoral groups were also created," she said.

Adeyemi revealed that in the second half of her administration, the NBCC emerging leaders and executive mentoring group programme will be launched, with the aim of providing a platform through which impact can be created with younger demography.

"The programme will pair accomplished professionals and entrepreneurs with their younger counterparts as our own contribution to equipping the next generation of business leaders," she said.

are here on ground our doors are open and we have a great network. To get these funding partners you can draw from our network."

Ayo Akinduyite, tax reporting and strategy associate director, PwC told startups that though they may be starting small but they need to take their tax and regulatory issues very important because that can potentially create reputation issues in the future and them make them lose valuable resources because of non-compliance.

Nigeria loses \$460bn to desertification, flooding, erosion

A University Don and Director, Centre for Climate Change and Development, Alex Ekwueme has warned that, desertification in the North, flooding in the West, erosion in the East and deforestation in the South may cost the country \$460 billion by 2050.

"And all of these things are threatening the existence and the wellbeing of millions of Nigerians," Okereke said.

He said, Climate change is costing Nigeria already \$100 billion per annum. And that this amount will rise to about \$460 billion per annum by 2050.

"From 2020 till now, climate change is already costing N15 trillion, representing two to 11 per cent of the GDP, by 2050 climate change will be costing N69 trillion,

representing six to 30 per cent of the GDP," Okereke said.

The expert, who is also a visiting professor to Oxford University, said that climate change was already having untold effect on flooding and rising sea levels in the country.

According to Okereke, flooding is already affecting 25 million people in Nigeria.

"In Yenegoa, there are 302,782 people estimated to be exposed to high flood risk along the Niger-Benue basin in the Niger Delta area with 630km of land susceptible to flooding."

"In Lagos, 375,000 people are exposed to flooding; the number will increase to about 3.2 million people by 2050."

"The direct estimate of damage and loss is N1.48 trillion. The total damage and loss, including indirect ones due to flooding is about N2.6 trillion," Okereke said.



Adebayo



Business & Economy

Rolling away illegal e-waste shipments from Nigeria

Over the years, Nigeria remains one of the destination countries for illegal trans-boundary shipment of end of life electrical and electronic equipment (EEE). There is convincing evidence that despite the efforts of government, which include the enactment of the Basel Convention and other regional and local regulations, electronic waste (e-waste) still find its way into the country, posing a problem for the environment and humans. IBUKUN FALUYI writes.

The report of the Person in Port (PIP) project published in 2017 reveals that about 19 percent by weight of Used Electrical and Electronic Equipment (UEEE) imported into Nigeria in 2015 and 2016 were found to be non-functional and constituted e-waste.

A common type of illegal e-waste shipment experienced in the Country is Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) screens containing devices such as televisions and monitors. CRT screens are heavily leaded glass screens containing about 35 percent of lead oxide (Step Green Paper Series 2016). The presence of lead: a toxic heavy metal, with adverse effect on human health when inhaled or ingested makes CRT screens highly polluting and difficult to recycle.

The recycling challenge is further aggravated by technological replacement from CRT to flat screens in most devices, thus making CRT screens an obsolete technology. CRT obsolescence makes its recycling into new CRTs impossible and the high PbO content makes the glass unsuitable for other glass applications. CRT glasses in Nigeria, therefore accumulates in repairers' shops and eventually in dump sites.

To confront the challenge of growing stockpiles of CRT tubes across the Country, in 2011 the Nigerian government issued both a regulation and legislation to ensure environmentally sound management (ESM) of e-waste, restrict the importation of WEEE and also banned the importation of devices containing CRT. Despite the enactment of this legal instrument, CRT devices still find their way



into the country. The PIP report revealed that 260 tonnes of CRT are imported into Nigeria annually.

The National Environmental Standards and Enforcement Agency (NESREA), which is the enforcement arm of the Federal Ministry of Environment, over the years have been working collaboratively with the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) to repatriate shipments of e-waste brought into the country right from the port. In 2019 the agency adopted

another application of the polluter pays principle, imposing fines on importers of e-waste and making them responsible for the ESM here in the Country in the Border to Recycling Initiative.

With this initiative, any importer found introducing e-waste is immediately handed over to E-waste Producer Responsibility Organisation of Nigeria (EPRON), made to bear the cost of transporting the e-waste from the port to the recycler and as well bear the

financial responsibility of its responsible recycling through one of EPRON's registered recyclers. Since 2019, six importers of CRT have been apprehended for importing about 2.362 tons of CRT tubes.

These importers have been made to pay for the environmentally sound management of the CRT tubes with E-Terra Technologies (one of the government accredited and registered recyclers in Lagos State). Beyond paying for the recycling of the CRT devices, these importers were fined.

CRT devices are usually shipped into the country by unsuspecting Importers who are ignorant of existing local regulations. They are enticed with the next to nothing cost of the devices sold to them by some cunning business men from the destination countries. Unknown to them, these business men are simply transferring their own liability to them and using them for trans-boundary shipment of hazardous materials.

It is important to note that importation of CRT devices even if given for free, will not make any business sense. The importer will pay for shipping, clearing, will pay a fine and

eventually pay for responsible recycling if apprehended. More importantly it is a crime not only against the government of Nigeria but against humanity to transfer hazardous materials that will serve no value other to pollute the environment, especially the soil and underground water when these products are brought into the country.

Remember, we have only one earth and the environment have no boundaries, the lead contamination from the CRT will not remain localised, the adverse effect may well be at your doorstep tomorrow. In that regard, Nigerian business men need to harm themselves with knowledge of existing regulations governing any business venture they are embarking on.

In the case of EEE, Importers must note that, while it is not wrong to bring in UEEE into the Country, the importation of end of life and near end of life UEEE is illegal. Importers should therefore limit themselves to the importation of tested and functional UEEE.

"With this initiative, any importer found introducing e-waste is immediately handed over to E-waste Producer Responsibility Organisation of Nigeria (EPRON), made to bear the cost of transporting the e-waste from the port to the recycler and as well bear the financial responsibility of its responsible recycling through one of EPRON's registered recyclers. Since 2019, six importers of CRT have been apprehended for importing about 2.362 tons of CRT tubes. These importers have been made to pay for the environmentally sound management of the CRT tubes with E-Terra Technologies (one of the government accredited and registered recyclers in Lagos State). Beyond paying for the recycling of the CRT devices, these importers were fined."

Politics

Plateau APC celebrates gubernatorial candidate @ 54.

THE Chairman of the All Progressives Congress Plateau State Chapter, Honourable Rufus Bature on behalf of the State Executive Committee of the party, Local Government and Ward ExcOs and party faithfuls in the state felicitates with its gubernatorial candidate, Dr Nentawe Yilwatda Goshwe as he marks his 54th birthday anniversary.

In a statement signed by Hon. Sylvanus Namang, APC State Publicity Secretary the party joins your family, friends and well wishers in the state, country and across the globe as you celebrate this auspicious moment in your life which is full of very remarkable accomplishments.



Yilwatda

As a digital system engineer, you have been involved in strategic ICT reforms which have brought about transparency and global best practices, selling points which we are convinced you are going to bring to bear in governance when, by God's grace, you are elected as the next governor of our beloved state in the 2023 general elections.

Based on your track record of achievements in different fields and your humble disposition, you remain a source of pride to our party and a role model to the youth which you belong.

As the gubernatorial candidate of our great party in the state,

the APC is confident that you are going to use your expertise and experience to take Plateau State to enviable heights especially through your well thought Generation Next agenda aptly summarised under Agriculture, Critical Infrastructure, Economic Development, Gender and Youth Empowerment, Education and Security (ACEES).

The APC wishes you robust energy, good health, God's grace and success in your

gubernatorial pursuit which we shall work undauntedly to ensure.

APC suspends Kumalia over anti-party activism

The All Progressives Congress (APC), Borno state chapter, Monday, suspended a former member of the Buhari Campaign Organisation, Hon. Barrister Mohammed Umara Kumalia, for alleged anti-party activities.

Kumalia was also 2007 AC governorship candidate and former Minority Leader of the House of Representatives on the platform of the defunct ANPP before defecting to the Action Congress of Nigeria.

The letter of suspension

made available to journalists in Maiduguri was jointly signed by APC ward chairman, Alhaji Modu Gofama, and secretary, Alhaji Mohammed Kagu of Limanti Ward, Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC).

The suspension letter read: "That you instituted various actions against the party in the following courts contrary to Article 21 (2) (XI) of the APC Constitution, 2022 as amended.

"Consistent engagement in acts that are inimical to the party and other anti-

party activities contrary to Article 21 (2) of the APC Constitution 2022 as amended; gross indiscipline towards the party contrary to Article 21 (2) of the APC Constitution 2022 as amended.

"In view of the foregoing, that you Hon. Barr. Mohammed Umara Kumalia of the All Progressives Congress (APC) Limanti Ward, Maiduguri, Borno State are hereby suspended from the party forthwith, dated this 8th day of August, 2022."

SDP: Agunloye heads presidential campaign committee

THE National Chairman of Social Democratic Party (SDP), Alhaji Shehu Musa Gabam, has inaugurated a 13-man committee

assigned with the responsibility of coming up with defined presidential campaign structures for the party.

The committee is expected to submit a report within two weeks is headed by a former Corps Marshal of the Federal Road Safety Commission, (FRSC) who is also the National Secretary of the party while a veteran journalist, Dr Ibrahim Modibo, would serve as its secretary.

Inaugurating the committee on Monday, National Chairman of the party, Alhaji Shehu Gabam, at the brief occasion in Abuja, said the party was in the race to win the forthcoming presidential election and restore good governance



Gabam

THE Governorship candidate of the New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) in Gombe State, Hon Ahmed Khamisu Mailantarki, has unveiled a renowned grassroots mobilizer from Southern Gombe, Hamma Tanimu Abubakar, as his running mate.

Mailantarki unveiled his Deputy in a message to newsmen in Gombe and said the decision was reached after due consultation with stakeholders.

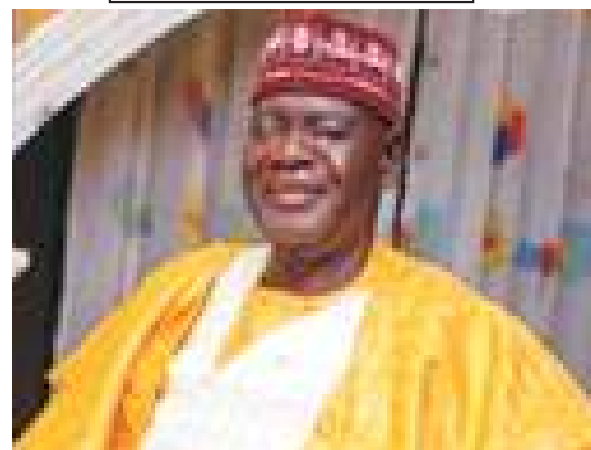
The NNPP has been gaining popularity in Gombe State and the party's guber candidate said, to consolidate on the already established winning ways of the party, the renowned grassroots mobilizer from Billiri LGA was chosen.

According to him, "after due consultation, I resolved to consider Hamma Tanimu Abubakar as my running mate".

Hamma Tanimu Abubakar, a native of Baganje, Billiri LGA, attended Kashere Primary School, Bauchi Teachers

Gombe NNPP Guber candidate unveils running mate

From WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe



Abubakar

College and Advanced Teachers College, Azare.

He was elected Chairman of Billiri LGA in 1999. He was also a one time Chairman of the AC in 2007 and also served as Special Adviser on Environment to erstwhile

Governor now Senator, Muhammadu Danjuma Goje.

The choice of Tanimu, seer as an all inclusive decision, is expected to further swell the acceptability of NNPP not only in Billiri LGA, but the entire Gombe South senatorial zone where he is also very popular.

ADC poised to deliver Nigeria – BoT

(BoT), National Working Committee (NWC) and eminent elders retreat in Abuja.

The theme of the retreat was: "Creating ADC Strategic Pathway to Victory in the National and Sub-National Levels for 2023 General Election".

The communiqué which was read by Ms Mabel Oboh, ADC Diversity and Inclusion Secretary, said the retreat reviewed the state of the nation.

This she said included the on-going Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) strike, insecurity, foreign exchange troubles, the economy and poverty level in the country.

"It was resolved that the party remained focused and will not allow any form of distractions while focusing on offering solutions and strategic pathways to ADC's victory nationwide in 2023.

"Everyone is now affected by skyrocketing inflation and unstable economy and declining healthcare system. Insecurity has now become a central stronghold for everyone, whether rich or

poor.

"We no longer feel safe whether we travel by road, train or air from kidnappers, unknown gun men, bandits and herdsmen attacks.

"We therefore use this retreat as a call to action for all Nigerians to join us on this rescue mission project," she said.

She said it was the responsibility of all Nigerians to work in unity to deliver the country from the hands of the few who were hell bent on impoverishing the unborn generations.

Oboh added that with the bold moves the ADC had been making, including diverse consultations across board, it was convinced that it had tested solutions for the country's leadership problem.

She said the retreat would be replicated in Zones, States, Local Government and Ward levels.

"Nigeria is better off with a political party that has the answer and ADC is that party," she said.

She added that the retreat resolved to leverage on ADC role-modelling leadership

paradigm and alternative strategies for national reintegration, building peace, and putting the country on a reconstructive trajectory.

She said to demonstrate the party's resolve, it shall be unveiling the ADC Arena and African Youth Centre in Uyo, Akwa Ibom and the Handshake across Nigeria Arcade in Kano soon.

"Work is at advanced stage to make this a reality. These are meant to effectively communicate our global perspective and strategic vision of building a super power economic Nigeria.

"The city of Lagos will be well branded as the epicentre of global commerce, while other theme branding of our states and cities remain the strategic signposts of our commitment to effective leadership and governance.

"We also agreed to set up committees for effective leadership and efficient management of all campaign processes and electoral matters to assured victory.

"As a first step, the ADC Global Campaign Council to cover all ADC campaign events nationwide, and activities of the party amongst our large Diaspora members was extensively discussed and approved," she said.

She added that the Director-General of ADC Global Campaign Council was Alhaji AbdulAzeez Suleiman, while Dr Chike Okogwu would serve as Director, Global Strategy and Processes Alignment.

She said the other Directors, deputies and members would be announced in due course.

She assured that ADC electioneering campaign for 2023 general elections would offer solution and leadership as the party had always done.

"Issues like budgeting, staff welfare, logistics and content, messaging, intel and security were exhaustively discussed and proper plans put in place to ensure that we are able to conduct our campaign, especially in this era of high insecurity," she said.

to the country.

He pointed out that the SDP remained the last hope of the nation as such the party should go all out to canvas for the support of all Nigerians who were already clamouring for restoration of good governance in the country.

The terms of reference of the committee are: "to develop a road map and presidential campaign structure; to liaise with the presidential candidate for his inputs to keep in constant consultation with the National Chairman of the party.

"The committee shall report to the National

Chairman in not later than two weeks.

"The committee Chairman may co-opt other members to assist the committee in this assignment."

Gabam expressed optimism that the Committee members would bring their wealth of experience to bear in the assignment to harmonise and guide the Party to electoral victory come 2023.

Responding, the Chairman of the Committee, Dr Agunloye promised that members would carry out the assignment diligently and assured of total victory for the party at the poll.

Politics

Election in times of crisis

Nigeria, the most populous black nation in the world, is set for another round of general elections that would see its more than 96 million voters elect a new crop of political leaders, govern the country for another four years. The 2023 general elections is perceived as capable of either strengthening or setting back Nigeria's democracy, IWOK INIOBONG writes.

ACROSS the country, Nigerians are optimistic that the general elections would usher in a new set of purposeful leaders that would change the narrative in terms of governance and providing the much-anticipated succour to an already disgruntled populace.

Experts say this could be seen in the surge in voter registration and a new wave of civic engagement among young Nigerians, who before now had shown a lukewarm attitude towards the electoral process and real voting.

With a few months left and with the campaigns set to begin, the electoral commission is at an advanced stage of preparation, in line with the election guidelines released earlier towards conducting a generally acceptable exercise.

It is believed that the general election would be significant because the election would be held amid serious socio-economic challenges bedeviling the country presently.

The 2023 general election will perhaps, be the first to be held in the thick of crisis since 1999. Nigeria is facing and existential threat of being run over by increasing army of terrorists that are now on the loose.

For the first time in the nation's history, heightened spate of insecurity, killings, kidnapping for ransom have become more pronounced and a daily affair across the country.

Similarly, agitation for secession by the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the South-East and some groups in the South-West geopolitical zone, have also contributed to the worsening insecurity bedeviling the country.

There have been attacks on security agencies and officials of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) across the country. A video trended online



recently where hoodlums attacked a CVR centre and killed an INEC official. INEC offices have also come under attack, especially in South-East Nigeria. According to reports, as at the last count more than 44 offices of the electoral umpire have been

touched.

The situation has led to increasing concerns among Nigerians and stakeholders about the possibility of the election date set by the INEC.

Although many have said that the ruling class, who would want to protect their hold on power, would do everything to ensure insecurity trends downwards to allow election hold, the general thinking is that the election could be affected.

With Nigeria's political parties soon to begin to embark on electioneering campaigns and the general election some months away, signs are emerging that election-related violence is a real possibility.

There are growing concerns that prospective voters may not be willing to come out and vote, to avoid being attacked; INEC staff may be scared to go to certain places.

Experts fear that the conduct of the polls may be affected, fearing that terrorists could unleash mayhem on Nigerians, most especially in Northern part of Nigeria where they have gained prominence.

"It is a big challenge, as even the Federal Government is banking on luck to solve the security crisis now; they appear helpless with the way things are now. Securing the vast territorial space of Nigeria and electoral materials would be a huge task for security agencies during elections, which may affect voter turnout for the elections," Kunle Okuade, political analyst, said.

Perhaps, such fear could be

deduced from the daily threat, security breaches, attacks and killings, prompting fears that the unknown could happen on election day.

The situation is perhaps, worsened over government seeming hopelessness and cluelessness in dealing with recent terror attacks and kidnappings of Nigerians.

A vivid explanation of the situation could be seen in government's handling of the Abuja-Kaduna train abducted persons.

Hassan Usman, one of the abducted train passengers released recently, told journalists that the Federal Government failed to secure their release.

Usman, a lawyer, said the families of the victims attempted to rescue them, but the government did not allow them to proceed on the journey.

He said the bandits erected makeshift shelters to shield them from rain, adding that they fed them, according to their capacity.

"At times, they even slaughtered cattle and sheep for us. Even yesterday, they slaughtered a cow and we ate; we thank Allah," he said.

According to him, "because of the government's attitude, they (bandits) were angered and they thoroughly beat us. This makes me pity those that are still with them in the forest."

Stakeholders who spoke to BusinessDay, on the implication of the current spate of insecurity on the 2023 general election, called for drastic action by the Federal Government and new strategies by security agencies to curtail the

terrorists' threat.

They warned that next year's general election may not hold in several parts of the country, because unlike the 2015 and 2019 elections, the terrorists had gained more footholds in several towns and communities, especially in Northern Nigeria which may make it difficult for INEC officials to penetrate the areas.

"I don't see the federal government doing anything special to solve the security crisis from them till next year's election. Except they adopt better strategies.

"I think Nigerians who come out to vote would do so at their own risk, or how do you explain the situation that we are in now, where we have been left to our fate.

"Election may not be held in some places, there is no doubt about that," Idowu Omolegan, lawyer and public affairs analyst, said.

Equally, Oge Onubogu, political affairs analyst and Senior Programme Officer with the United State Institute of Peace (USIP), said to curtail violence in next year's general election effectively, it is crucial that much attention be paid to flash points at the state level.

According to Onubogu, to help Africa's most populous nation pivot toward stability and to indirectly bolster democratisation across the continent the United States and other international partners should provide diplomatic, political and technical support for Nigeria's electoral authority.



Mahmood

IMAGES

LALONG PERFORMS ROYAL PALMS ESTATE GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY

Plateau State Governor and Chairman, Northern Governors' Forum, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong recently performed the groundbreaking ceremony of Royal Palms Estate located at Dwei, behind WAYE Foundation, Jos South LGA



Governor Lalong (right) being welcomed by Chikezie Tony, MD/CEO Odigbo Properties Ltd



Chikezie Tony, MD/CEO, Odigbo Properties Ltd (left) in a warm embrace with Hon. Brian Bintim Dadi, Commissioner of Housing at the groundbreaking ceremony



Director General, Industrial Training Fund, Sir Joseph Ari (left) putting heads together with the Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong at the ceremony



A cross section of Ndigbo leaders witnessing the groundbreaking ceremony



Governor Lalong, MD/CEO Odigbo Properties Ltd, Chikezie, DG, ITF and others inspecting the model at the site



Mr. Paul Jatau, NUJ State Chairman (middle) flanked by the NUJ Scribe, Mr. Peter Amine (left) and Mr. Caleb Gochin of NTA Jos Network Centre



Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (middle) laying the foundation stone of the Estate, assisted by the MD/CEO Odigbo Properties, Chikezie Tony, Sir Joseph Ari, Jos South LGC Chairman, Hon. Gideon Dandereng, Chairman, Odigbo Properties Ltd, Gen. Daniel Bako and others



Afizere cultural dancers entertaining dignitaries at the ceremony

Photos: DANLADI DUK

Politics

Conspiracy of silence and Nigeria's democracy

Theoretically, democracy is defined as a form of government organised in accordance with the principles of political education, popular will and majority rule. Therefore, the denial or suppression of political education, popular will of the people and majority control which are critical ingredients of democracy, at any point in time, constitutes serious distress on the political system, Ayuba Yilgak'ha, writes.

IN the words of Madeleine Albright, former US Secretary of State under Bill Clinton, 'democracy promises that each person should be able to go as far as her or his talents will allow'. She further added that, 'faith in the democratic promise reflects America at its best and the world at its most hopeful.' These assertions make the promises of the system look promising. However, when democracy becomes distressed, it assumes a new meaning and realities that are unacceptable within the context human civility. Democracy in its distressed and altered meaning is the reality many developing countries off today.

A renowned poet observed that, "universally, democracy is an award winning failure of this generation... Democracy is a system of lying, cheating and stealing; dictating and manipulating, promising and failing in which no one is ever held responsible to account." In other words, the system holds bogus promise with no guarantee for practical fulfillment.

One major cause of distress in a democracy is the absence of political education regarding the phenomenon itself. Democracy as a concept is a working progress. In order to deepen democracy and make it work for the betterment of all, the citizenry must be educated enough to raise the level of their consciousness about possibilities, tendencies and prospects of the grossly free moral system. With such consciousness, the people who ought to be at the centre of the system, would have been capacitated to exercise their fundamental rights in dictating the tune of the political culture and practice.

The will of the majority, if not deliberately asserted, could be tempered with, thereby constituting another source of distress in the system. It is, therefore, imperative to note that the expression of the will of the majority in a democracy is not automatic. Key democratic stakeholders, especially, the political elites must realise they are the moral consciences and custodians of the system. They must show extra vigilance in checkmating and moderating ultristic but metamorphosing tendencies of power and influence of those in position of authority. In this respect, any elite who is found to be docile is a moral and political liability who cannot aid the survival of the democratic system.

Another source of democratic distress is a quantitative majority that is bereft of morality. When majority of the people lacks quality to the extent of becoming inconsiderate, unkind, selfish and immoral, they will use their numerical strength to load it over the minorities. This, I call zombie or fraudulent democracy which remains the greatest downside of democracy since the system emphasises the issue of 'majority rule' without defining the quality of the threshold majority. Zombie democracy is a recipe for extended domination and violent contestation for equity and justice which might result in political



Mahmood

instability and in extreme cases civil war.

Rent seeking and excessive monetisation of a democratic system is another source of distress in a democracy. Money is said to be the root of all kinds of evil, therefore, when capitalists, merchants and money bags take the lead in the political space, democracy becomes transactionary. In such circumstance, Greek gift becomes a strong tool for political manipulation. Money inducement in a largely impoverished economy like Nigeria distorts any sense of reasoning as to how to get food by any means becomes the only consideration in political decision making. This makes it possible for transactional leaders to hold on to power as long as they please.

The thesis that "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely" as postulated in Shakespeare's Macbeth is not just a theory but a practical reality. The behaviour of Macbeth exhibited this reality throughout the play. The play demonstrated there is strong correlation between the amount of power Macbeth gained and his resultant corrupt actions. In other words, when Macbeth was having no title or, at most, the title of his father (Thane of Glamis), no corruption was exhibited by him. However, as he got more power, that is, becoming the Thane of Cawdor, his corrupt tendencies became more and more glaring.

Corruption becomes emboldened if there are no strong anti-corruption institutions to stem it as it is the

case in Nigeria. The excessive use of money during the recent presidential primaries of the ruling and main opposition parties in Nigeria is classical example of transactional democracy which constitutes a huge source of democratic stress but who is seriously complaining? The institutions charged with the responsibility of fighting crimes and corruption and even the electoral umpire that regulates the process seemed to be looking the other way. This silence against criminal use of money to buy votes is so loud.

Generally speaking, people in power might have been democratically elected or appointed and assumed position of authority with ultristic intentions, but if not properly checkmated, could turn out to be despots or tyrants and still live with the self delusion that they are on course and, for the people they are governing. This is more likely to happen when they are surrounded by bootlickers or praise singers whose only interest is to earn dubious and unmerited means of survival, even if, at the expense of the generality of the citizenry.

It is instructive to note that in the absence of good counsel; fake ones spread. This means that the conspiracy of silence of the moral majority has negative consequences. Hence, profound and timeless hypotheses like: Evil spread when good people keep silent (Edmund Burke); The price good people pay for not participating is to be governed by their inferiors (Plato), etc.

Asa, reported the mood of Africa and Nigeria in her classic song, when she sang: "There is fire on the mountain and nobody seems to be on the run, Oh, there is fire on the mountain to p

And no one is a-running".

The corruption of power has become shared reality in Africa and Nigeria in particular. Examples of democrats who turned despots abound in human history, especially, on the African continent: Paul Biya of Cameroon, Yahya Jammeh of Gabon, Zimbabwean Robert Mugabe of blessed memory, etc. This is, largely, because men of good conscience have chosen to maintain graveyard silence or showed aloofness, either, because of the fear of the unknown or just sheer indifference amongst other flimzy excuses.

When grave silence is maintained in the face of gross injustice, Van Morrison, in his poetic song, "Wonderful Remark" would ask questions as seen in the following lines:

"How would you stand the silence That pervades when we all cry? How can you watch the violence that erupts before your eyes? How can you tell us something just to keep us hangin' on? Something that don't just mean nothing when we see it you are gone clinging to other rainbow while we're standing, waiting in the cold telling us the same old story knowing time is growing old.

That was a wonderful remark I had my eyes closed in the dark I sighed a million sighs I told a million lies - to myself - to myself How can we listen to you when we know your talk is cheap? How can we never question why we give more and you keep? How can your empty laughter fill a room like ours with joy when you're only playing with us like a child does with a toy? How can we ever feel the freedom or the flame lit by the spark? How can we ever come out even when reality is stark?" These are the issues, these are the questions.

The holistic freedom, democracy promises us has grown wings and flow away. Our elites are in love with their hypocritical lies or Omerta, the culture of silence. They tell us everyday, that, they are with us but, also, lie to tyrants that the people are not complaining. This cannot be true: The masses are not only complaining but lamenting what has become of their democracy, especially, in Nigeria.

If democracy is what we see our elites bring to us, then, it is a scam. If democracy is not scamming us then our elites are: Something is wrong somewhere. We are not getting the best of the system and there has to be a way out if we are, really, matured in mind and body. Warriott W.J. (1937) wrote, "If we are to grow up in mind as well as in body we have to give up our youthful habit of idolising great heroes and great criminals." This thesis came over 85 years past but apt in view of contemporary realities.

We live in a praise singing era where people, especially, youth have exaggerated the picture of

public figures who are loading it on us. With the spoils of office, one praise can be sustained forever as those who've learnt to live within their means enjoy no regards and soundly criticised by folks who see praise singing and bootlicking as a meal ticket. But here, the thesis is that not all rich and powerful men are to be celebrated or paupers cursed in pursuit of what has come to be known as 'stomach infrastructure.

There is no sense in a people burying their freedom on the altar of unsustainable and demeaning food drive - stomach infrastructure. Also there is no wisdom surrendering the freedom of man on the altar of fear. To be realistic, "there is no denying that there is evil in this world, but the light will always conquer the darkness." (Idowu Koyenikan).

Therefore, people must learn to pay attention to the historical and empirical promises of light and justice which has often outlived tyrants and their accomplices. Functional people must be seen to be complaining where they are or the weak and vulnerable are under oppression. The man dies in him who keeps silent in the days of tyranny (Wole Soyinka). Conspiracy of silence is a dwarfing factor in a democracy and if the system is to be sustained and flourished, then citizens must be encouraged to speak out against any move that runs fault or antithetical to its dictates.

In 1990, Ellen Wilkie with Judith Gunn, in their book, "A pocketful of Dynamite", recited "Justice Anthem" which can make a suitable and promising conclusion for this piece. Repeating it here is desirable because the anthem is a disappointing caution and reminder to architects and beneficiaries of unjust systems who see nothing good in challenging the status quo but preserving it.

Hear it: "You may have your say today but justice will have the final say, Justice has a strange old way of turning up trumps in unexpected time or place.

Cowards will use trickery to keep injustice as it stands while some claim they fight for human rights but fail to see their glaring inconsistency.

Neutralists in fact support through their lack of opposition those who sit upon the fence adopt their selfish ploy to keep their comfortable position.

Some may have their way today but justice will sweep all before her justice has a strange old way of claiming the victory in unexpected time or place."

Injustice has definite expiry date but Justice is potent and cannot be suppressed forever. No matter how long it takes, justice like a moving river water, will have its way in time. That is the hope of the suffering masses and the nightmare of tyrants, wicked principalities and powers of this age and particularly our falling system!

News

Lalong promises youth participation platform

By DUMAH RANDONG

GOVERNOR Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State says his administration will continue to provide the platform for youth participation in governance to foster unity among themselves.

Lalong stressed that when he assumed office in 2015, youth activities in the state were at a standstill, but he however saw the need to reactivate it in order to awaken their consciousness.

The governor made this position known when he received a courtesy call members, House of Representatives Committee on Youth at the Government House, Rayfield, Jos, Wednesday.

Represented by his Deputy, Professor Sonni Tyoden, Lalong said the National Youth Service Corps, NYSC Camp in the state was working in line with its mandate and government will continue to provide it with the necessary facilities that give comfort to the Corps members posted to the state.

To ameliorate the hardship faced by the Corps members



Lalong

in discharging their duties, his administration provided the NYSC with a bus last year.

He further explained that his administration has a good number of youths appointed into various positions in government including the State Executive Council and commended the National Assembly for the "Not Too Young to Run" Act which rekindled hope in the youth.

Earlier, Chairman, House Committee on Youths, Hon Yemi Adaramodu had informed the governor they were on oversight function to the NYSC in the state and applauded the state

government for providing a befitting orientation Camp for Corp members pointing out that the Camp was one of the best in the country.

He appealed for a construction of a perimeter fence for the Camp, Staff quarters instead of the dormitory currently being used as well as the Secretariat of the NYSC needs a face-lift, utility vehicle among others. He commented the state government for its youth friendly programmes.

IN a continuous effort to address challenges of

By DUMAH RANDONG

PLATEAU State government says it will synergise with Nigeria Immigration Service, NIS, to curb the security challenges bedeviling the country.

Governor Simon Lalong stated this when he received Acting Assistant Comptroller General of NIS, Coordinator Zone C Bauchi, Ibrahim Baburu and other comptrollers of the six zones in his office at Government House, Rayfield, Jos, Friday.

The Governor while commending the Nigerian Immigration officers for their role in addressing the security challenges in the country, urged them to intensify efforts in checking the entry and exit of the country's border to check criminals coming in to the country.

Represented by the Deputy Governor, Professor Sonni Tyoden, Lalong expressed his administration's readiness to support the NIS to enable them carry out their duties successfully.

Earlier, the Acting Assistant Comptroller and Coordinator, Zone C Bauchi, Ibrahim

PLSG to synergise with NIS on insecurity



Tyoden

Baburu explained that they were in the state for their Zonal Conference and appreciated the Plateau State government for providing the state Command with three Hilux vehicles and a KVA Generator which has assisted them immensely in carrying out their duties.

Baburu noted that they

have been carrying out their duties at the border with other sister agencies, and requested for more logistics for surveillance and access road leading to the Command in Jos.

The six states within the zone include Gombe, Yobe, Adamawa, Borno, Bauchi and Plateau.

BASG launches polio vaccination for children

From
ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

maternal deaths among children, Bauchi State government has within the week launched the July 2022 OBR for oral Polio vaccination campaign targeting 2.286 million under 5 years children across the state.

Speaking during the flag off of the 2022 Polio Vaccine Campaign at Unguwa Galadima, Tirwun Community of Bauchi Local Government Area the Executive Chairman, Bauchi State Primary Health Care Development Agency, Dr Rilwanu Mohammed said that a total of 2,367,450 vaccines have been received by his agency for the July campaign.

According to him, the vaccination campaign will hold in 323 wards, and 17,243 settlements across the 20 LGAs of the state, while 4023 number of house-to-house vaccination teams are expected to cover the exercise in the state.

The Executive Chairman further stated that there will be a total of 1280 special teams with 647 fixed teams just as the total number of DOPV teams is 756. The campaign will last for 4 days, 30th July to 2nd August.

Rilwanu Mohammed however disclosed that logistics have been paid by WHO and UNICEF while there will be implementation of the DOPV strategy in 13 high-risk LGAs with the deployment of 400 supervisors which includes national, state and LGAs.

The Agency's boss also said that Routine Immunization (RI) will be intensified in the affected settlements with



Mohammed

circulating virus. The plans have been put in place to conduct regular evening review meetings at the ward, LGA and state.

He then appealed to the chairmen of the 20 LGAs to attend the review meetings in order to be kept abreast with the campaign.

Giving the update of the exercise, the Incidence Manager, Polio Emergency Operation Centre Bauchi, Dr Salisu Idris Isah, said, before the state-wide exercise, there was state-level training for state technical facilitators. While advocacy visits were paid to political, religious and traditional leaders in order to get successful campaign.

In the LGAs, a ward-level trainings of house-to-house teams and special teams were done, just as TFI and social mobilisation committee meetings were conducted at the various LGAs to review the last round of the campaign, examine its successes, challenges and provide action points.

In his remarks, the Executive Chairman, Bauchi LGA, Alhaji Mahmoud Babama'aji, said that his council has trained 1623 personnel for the campaign who will be deployed to all the wards in the area.

Babama'aji assured that the council will continue to be very active in providing quality healthcare services to the people, stressing that the oral polio campaign will be a huge success in the area as people have been adequately mobilised.

Our correspondent in Bauchi who covered the occasion reported that other dignitaries that attended the flag off campaign, include principal officers from SPHCDA, representatives of various health organizations such as WHO and African Field Networks Epidemiology, Tirwun village head and ward head of Unguwan Galadima as well as mothers and caregivers.

GC Makurdi inaugurates old students, exco

From
AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

AS part of measures tailored towards repositioning and laying a solid foundation for its programmes to thrive, the Kogi State chapter of Government College Makurdi, Old Students Association executives has been inaugurated.

The inaugural ceremony was held in Lokoja, the Kogi State capital over the weekend shortly after a successful election conducted to produce new executives that will pilot the affairs of the association in the next three years.

Mr. Noah Ocheni, a veteran journalist and former staff of The Graphic Newspaper of (set '81) of the college was elected as Chairman of Kogi Chapter.

Others are: Vice Chairman, Emmanuel Daku (set '89), Secretary, Moses Onuche (set '91), Assistant Secretary, Martins Abdul Onu (set '92), Treasurer, Dr. Dan Ogala (set '81), Financial Secretary-

Johnson Ocheja (set '92), Assistant Financial Secretary, Cyril Ukwanya (set '92), PRO-Rizama Sheneni Jr (set '91) and Internal Auditor- Simeon Abutu

They were inaugurated by national executives, Comrade John Godi (set '81) and Comrade Toryue Philip during a meeting of the state chapter of old students held at NUJ Press Centre, Lokoja.

Comrade Philip who is the National Secretary of the Old Students Association admonished the new executive committee to strive to create impact in their alma mater noting that government alone could not solve all the challenges facing the school.

On his part, Comrade Godi (set '81) charged the newly inaugurated executives to initiate programmes that would advance the status of the college. He expressed

optimism that the new leadership would reinvigorate the association towards enhanced service delivery.

In his acceptance speech on behalf of other executive members, the chairman, Mr Noah Ocheni who described the event as a milestone in the history of the association, thanked members for finding them worthy to coordinate the activities of the association.

Mr Ocheni commended the national body for its support and commitment towards promoting love, unity and sacrifice for their alma mater.

He promised members of his exco's commitment and determination to drive programmes and activities of the association to enhance the fortunes of their alma mater.

The Chairman expressed joy over the reunion and appealed to all stakeholders of the association in the state to come together to actualize the visions and dreams of the college.



Newly inaugurated executive of Kogi State chapter of Government College Makurdi

News

NIA raises alarm over to members lives threat

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE apex body of Nigerian Institute of Architects (NIA), Abuja has raised an alarm over the continued and kidnapping of its staff and personnel of West Africa Ceramics Limited while on duty.

This was contained in a press statement signed by the NIA President, Arc. Enyi E. Ben-Eboh, and his General Secretary, Ibeanu, and made available to **The Nigeria Standard** in Jos.

The statement said, "on August 5, 2022 the Nigerian Institute of Architects received with shock and grief the terrible news of terrorists attack on the company's vehicle conveying personnel of the West Africa Ceramics Limited, Ajaokuta from their factory premises to their residence noting that 6 lives were lost while several staff were kidnapped.

"It has become necessary to make this statement to draw government's attention to the impact of insecurity on the building industry. Among others, on January 25, 2022 one of our members in the employment of the Yobe State Government was kidnapped by terrorists operating in the Yobe area and has remained in captivity since then.

"On April 24, 2022, an Electrical Engineer was kidnapped in Kaduna while another was killed in Kaduna in August 2021 in spite of payment of ransom demanded. This year alone many project sites under various Government and private housing and related infrastructure projects have either had to be relocated,

closed or completely shelved on account of activities of non-state actors in various parts of the country", its stated.

According to the President, the worst hit were project sites in the North East, North Central and North West some of which included Constituency projects and projects funded by State and Federal Government as well as the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria respectively.

"Rising from the just concluded 11th meeting of the National Council of Lands, Housing & Urban Development it was also well established displaced causing a disruption

to lives", Ben-Eboh explained.

that insecurity has been a major clog in the wheel for the attainment of some of the targets of the numerous housing projects across our nation. In some communities houses and other property are razed and citizens displaced causing a disruption to lives", Ben-Eboh explained.

However, the Nigerian Institute of Architects hereby called on the Federal Government to as a matter of urgency, redesign the security architecture of our nation with a view to minimizing if not completely, eliminating the scourge of insecurity which has permeated the fabric of our nation.



Ben-Eboh

Ohanaeze criticizes Buhari over comments on insecurity

THE Igbo socio-cultural organisation, Ohanaeze Ndigbo, has criticized President Muhammadu Buhari over his recent comments on insecurity in the South-east.

Mr. Buhari, on Saturday, condemned attacks against "non-indigenes" and law enforcement officials by terrorists in the South-east.

In a statement by his media aide, Garba Shehu, the president urged community and religious leaders in the region to "speak more forcefully against the killings, stand up and defend the ethos of our cultural and religious heritage."

The president's reaction came amidst reports of the slaying of six Nigerian citizens and the brutal killing of a number of police officers at their duty posts in the region.

But in a statement on Monday by its spokesperson, Chiedozie Ogbornia, Ohanaeze Ndigbo described President Buhari's comments as "ethnic prejudice taken too far."

Mr. Ogbornia said the statement presented the

South-east as "haven for terrorists that attack non-indigenes and law enforcement officials" and implied that insecurity has worsened in the region because the leaders have not "forcefully spoken."

"This is very unfair to the Igbo, especially when the presidency knows the root cause and the nature of the insecurity in the South-east. It needs to be added that the solution to the insecurity in the South-east lies in the enormous powers of the presidency," Mr. Ogbornia said.

According to Ohanaeze, Ndigbo, the comments appeared to ignore the rising insecurity in other parts of the country, especially in the northern region, citing Boko Haram insurgency, recent attack on presidential guards, and bandits' attacks in the FCT, among others.

"In other words, when insecurity manifests in the North-west, it is a national problem; but when on the other hand, it occurs in the South-east, it is blamed on the inability of the 'community and religious leaders to speak more forcefully' against the killings and to stand up and defend the

ethos of the nation's cultural and religious heritage," he noted.

The Ohanaeze spokesperson explained that the culture of mmed the attacks, and have been calling on security agencies to track down the perpetrators.

Killings was alien to the Igbo-speaking people of South-east and that the leaders of the region have repeatedly condemned the attacks, and have been calling on security agencies to track down the perpetrators.

"Surely, the failure of the Nigerian security agents to fish out the criminals cannot be blamed on the Igbos," he said.

The group accused Mr Buhari of ignoring the South-east and appointing service chiefs based on "ethnocentric and religious considerations as against military competence".

They stressed that tackling insecurity in the South-east would be difficult in the face of the alleged continuous marginalisation of the region.

"It is very uncharitable, if not mischievous, to poison discerning minds by insinuating that non-indigenes and security officials are killed by the terrorists in the South-east," he added.



Striking the right cords

These are certainly trying moments for our dear country. Moments when everything you do, say or consider must be well thought out because of the way and manner it would be interpreted. So many things are not right about our society. Our approach to issues of development, nation building and the likes are not founded on concrete reasoning but rather on emotions and self centred nay warped thinking. If you want your day spoilt scan through the social media. If you wish to wear a sad face and think nothing good about the society just venture to visit any site.

On the internet you would read about the mundane, sad and all the silly lies you can ever think of. You would see the use of the most vulgar and uncouth language. You will come across the murder of the English language. You would wonder whether it is that same language you relate in that is being employed to pass some messages on these sites. I had course at some point to

write long ago about the harm the social media was doing to our young ones unfortunately, that epistle was like a shrill voice in the wilderness. Nothing was seen to be wrong until now that the whole thing is threatening to consume us all and posing serious concerns to our country.

Visit any site, because of the anonymity social media provides, you scarcely see disciplined and refined conversations on them. People use very bad and poorly written prose because they think no one is bothered about them so long as they are not known. It is so horrible that young people are adopting this style of relating with the society without qualms. When you read some of the commentaries you feel like burying your head in shame.

Please do not get me wrong. There are well written and well thought out prose on the social media. There are plenty people who use the space for the improvement and development of the impressionable minds of these set who spend considerable amount of time surfing the net. Illuminating and refreshing articles are resources which are found on that space.

Without doubt, the space has been one of the most abused and often misused. The anonymity it provides kind of shield the faces behind the rubbish being churn our. And, until we begin to think of how to positively refine the psych of these set of individuals we might be heading towards the unknown. For me, some form of control is needed if effective use of the internet is to be made. There are often loud cries each time someone suggest that some control be introduced but we often postpone taking that hard but necessary decision. Whether we like it or not, we would certainly get to the bridge where we must reach a decision some day.

Keyamo's plea

Festus Keyamo, Nigeria's Minister of State for Labour recently came on national television to

plead with parents and students to beg ASSU, the union of our university lecturers to return to the classrooms after months of staying away from work without their demands being attended to. Much as I do not have the energy to join issues with him (he has a right to his opinion) yet I think it is one of the unfortunate slips anyone in a leadership position could make. As a Minister saddled with solving labour issues how much goodwill has he shown and generated in trying to resolve the issue? Are we to assume that he and his principal lack the capacity to solve the issues in contention? Least we forget, leadership is about solving the problems of our society. It is about bringing about creative ways of dealing with issues. But in the instant case, can we in all sincerity say that representatives of the government have done their best? I do not think so.

The recent car gifts to Niger Republic by our government and the justifications churned out in defense of the action smacks of insensitivity on the part of those saddled with the responsibility of finding solutions to our problems. How can we justify such an action when we have not put out the fire that is consuming our own house? Can we fight our neighbours fire on their behalf when our own house is being ravaged by a similar inferno?

Keyamo's statement was a tacit acceptable of the fact that the leadership has run out of ideas as to how to carry through the mandate Nigerians handed him and his co- travelers to solve their problems on their behalf. And it is a shame that such a highly placed officer could speak without thinking through an issue as sensitive as the ASSU strike. This too should help Nigerians to look again at the type of people it elects to represent them run their government.

“
The recent car gifts to Niger Republic by our government and the justifications churned out in defense of the action smacks of insensitivity on the part of those saddled with the responsibility of finding solutions to our problems. How can we justify such an action when we have not put out the fire that is consuming our own house? Can we fight our neighbours fire on their behalf when our own house is being ravaged by a similar inferno
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News

NEPC engages Bokkos stakeholders in potato production

Executive Chairman of Bokkos Local Government Council, Hon. Joseph Guluwa has made a case for the establishment of Irish Potato Seed Tissue factory in Bokkos LGA for massive high quality seed production to increase farmers yield of their produce.

The Council Chairman made the call during a one-day capacity building workshop on 'Strategic Engagement of Stakeholders in Irish Potato Production Under the One State One Product (OSOP) Program' of the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) in conjunction with Bokkos Local Government held at the Conference Hall, Area Directorate Office, Bokkos.

Guluwa while speaking at the occasion said since inception of his Economic Re-Engineering Administration efforts has been made to assiduously and proactively put measures in creating the enabling environment along other government intervention which will soon culminate with the takeoff of the Potato Processing Company in Bokkos aimed at adding value to Irish potato farming.

Guluwa expressed confidence that the area is visibly open for investors to take advantage of the opportunities in the Irish Potato Value Chain and offer a win win approach to potato production for the local farmers and pledged the commitment of the local government to support serious investment partners in the area.

The Chairman further disclosed that investors have been invited to build Cold room warehouses, storage facilities and research laboratories at the Potato International Market, Kopyal, stressing that better days lies ahead for farmers and called on their cooperation and support to his administration.

Resource persons from different agencies delivered technical papers at the workshop highlighting topics on 'Production and Processing of Potato for Exports Competitiveness,' 'Risk Mitigation Options Available for Farmers,' 'Locally Fabricated Equipments for Potato Processing and Export'



Guluwa

amongst others by experts from National Root Crops Research Institute Kuru, Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Corporation (NAIC), Nigerian Export Promotion Council and NAFDAC.

Earlier, in a welcome address, North Central Regional Coordinator of Nigerian Export Promotion Council, Mr Samson Idowu welcomed guests at the event.

Idowu expressed hope that the workshop will give farmers relevant information and know-how to break even and double their return from underexploited food crop which has huge unharnessed potential under the Nigeria's non-oil export.

The workshop was well attended by Bokkos farmers and stakeholders, Baba Chief Samuel Mafuyai and Baba Chief Elisha Dawam led elders of Bokkos while majority of members of the Bokkos Traditional Council led farmers from their domains.

In a separate development, the Executive Director, National Root Crop Research Institute, Umudike-Umuahia, Abia state, Dr Godwin Asumugha with teams of specialists of the agency were in office of the Chairman under directives of Minister of Agriculture to proffer short, medium and long term solutions to late blight diseases affecting potato farms in the area.

The NRCRI are proffering a three way solution in the

Short, Medium and Long Term Solution, the short term is the proper application of anti blight fungicides which is preventive and not curative. The medium term solution is the proliferation and adoption of early maturing potatoes seeds, while the long term plan is to secure the adoption of genetically resistant species of potatoes.

Dr. Asumugha was accompanied by representative of Plateau State Commissioner of Agriculture, Mr Thomas Mouopsum who is coordinator Plateau State Potato Value Chain Support Program (PS-PVCP) and Project Manager PADP, Mr Ago Simon.

Hon. Joseph Guluwa while receiving the NRCRI Team in his office, applauded Plateau State Governor, Rt Hon Simon Bako Lalong for the swift action he took by impressing on the federal government to the plight of Bokkos people on the ravaging impact of the Late Blight Disease which has destroyed almost 50% of 2022 potatoes production, resulting in the matching order by the Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources through the NRCRI to embark on research and proffer lasting solution.

The team were later taken round the Potato International Market in the Chairman's entourage where Dr Asumugha expressed satisfaction, assuring that blight diseases on potato farms will soon be a thing of the past.

Executive Chairman of Jos North Local Government Council, Shehu Bala Usman has appealed to citizens to support the Plateau State government's desire to rebuild the Jos Main Market.

The Chairman who stated this in a statement in Jos, noted that rebuilding the main market in collaboration with Jaiz Bank will boost the revenue base of the state and create job opportunities for the teeming unemployed youths.

Usman explained that what is required of citizens at this point in time is their unflinching support to enable government complete the project.

He stated opposing the take off of the project will not do the state any good.

The chairman noted with regret the action of some people who use the social and conventional media to criticize government's well conceived intentions in reviving the Main Market.

The chairman noted the patriotic zeal of Governor Simon Lalong and encourage citizens to seek clear understanding of the MOU rather than relying on misinformation and rumours from those who may not have clear knowledge of such economic decisions.

He appealed to the people not to be distracted by the

Usman urges citizens to support Jos Main Market rebuild

handiwork of those opposing the project.

The chairman said Governor Simon Lalong has done well to deserve the trust of the people noting that has propelled him to a national team player.

The Jos North Council Chairman acknowledge that in a democracy, people are free to ventilate their opinion, called on citizens to be weary of some who are bent on causing disaffection with their campaigns of calumny to

rubbish government efforts in ensuring the Jos Main Market is rebuilt.

While appealing for cooperation and understanding of the populace, the Chairman applauded efforts of the State government in engaging key stakeholders on the subject matter.

The Chairman noted that the Council is open to receiving suggestions, submission and ideas to proffer an amicable way forward.



Usman

Guluwa praises security agencies, youth

Executive Chairman Bokkos Local Government Hon. Joseph Guluwa has praised security agencies and youths in the locality for their efforts which recently led to the arrest of notorious armed robbers and kidnappers terrorising people as well as cows destroying crops in the area.

Guluwa equally praised them for the arrest of drug vendors, illicit gins and other banned substances.

He warned cow rustlers and

those indulging in farm destruction through open grazing to be weary of their actions which is an offence punishable by law if arrested by security agencies.

Hon. Joseph Guluwa said criminals and their sponsors should stair clear of Bokkos LGA or face the full wrath of the law as there is no more hiding place for them in the locality.

The council chairman reminded those involved in bugging of shops and phone snatching in Bokkos town &

environs to relocate to other places warning that anyone caught will be decisively dealt with according to the laws of the land.

He assured of continuous collaboration with security agencies to ensure safety for all who want to go about with their legitimate businesses and reaffirmed the determination of his administration to a secure and peaceful environment where people can go to sleep with their two eyes closed.

'Okada' riders clash with taskforce

There was chaos on the Goza section of the Airport Road in Abuja following a confrontation between commercial motorcyclists, popularly called Okada riders, and members of the FCT taskforce on Monday.

Soon after the incident started at about 10 a.m. the social media was agog with panic posts, some accompanied with video clips of irate youths, advising residents to stay away from the flashpoint.

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Police Command has reacted to the incident.

Ibrahim Sa'ad, a tricycle rider, who was at the scene when it started, said the incident was triggered by the FCT taskforce who came to impound motorcycles by the Goza bridge for alleged violation of traffic rules.

"Okada riders were standing there, waiting for passengers at the side of the bridge when the (FCT taskforce) came. They seized their machines (motorcycles), about 10, which they put in their vehicles and they started

leaving when the Okada men went to block them," Mr Sa'ad said.

"Except for the tyres they put on the road, they didn't attack anybody. To the best of my knowledge, nobody was killed or wounded," Mr. Sa'ad said.

Another witness, a groundnut hawker, said the motorcyclists armed with tyres, sticks and stones, had crossed to the other side of the highway to prevent the FCT taskforce from going away with their motorcycles.

Meanwhile the FCT police spokesperson, Josephine Adeh, in a statement, described the incident as an "uncultured display of dissatisfaction by commercial motorcycle riders popularly called Okada".

Ms. Adeh said the Okada riders, "took to the streets, burning tyres and other substances following the activities of the taskforce who had earlier confiscated some motorcycles for certain violations."

She said the police had restored normalcy to the area

and warned members of the public against spreading fake news.

"Consequent upon the above, members of the public are urged to eschew the generation and promulgation of fake news or contrary narratives and to go about the discharge of their lawful businesses without the fear of harassment or molestation of any kind or from any quarters.

Meanwhile, monitoring and surveillance continue on the scene while effort is ongoing to arrest miscreants responsible for the disturbance of public peace," she added.

She also noted that "the burning of combustible material on tarred road amounts to the vandalism of government properties and the full wrath of the law will be meted out on erring person(s)."

The incident had sent a wave of panic around Abuja, which recently experienced a jailbreak in Kuje and an attack on the presidential guards in Bwari.



Bokkos LGC Chairman Guluwa discussing with stakeholders

Foreign Commentary

UN demands access to Ukraine's nuclear plant

UN calls for international inspectors to be given access to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station after it was hit by shelling at the weekend. Kyiv and Moscow have traded blame over the incident; the head of the Russian-installed administration in Zaporizhzhia says the plant is operating as usual. DAVID CHILD and FEDERICA MARSÌ writes.

THE Kremlin has said there is no basis for a meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Zelenskyy at the current moment.

In response to a question about Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's offers to broker peace talks between the pair, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on a conference call that Putin and the Ukrainian leader could meet only after negotiators from both sides had "done their homework".

"This is missing, so there are no necessary prerequisites for the meeting," he said, claiming the Ukrainian delegation had "gone off the radar".

Negotiations between Moscow and Kyiv have been stalled for months, with each side blaming the other for a lack of progress.

"Russian forces took over the plant early in the war, in March, but while it has Russian security around it ... the staff working there are Ukrainians who are operating essentially if not literally at gunpoint," Hendren said.

"Ukraine claims that Russian forces have been firing from around the plant, suggesting that they might be drawing fire back, but Ukraine [also] says that it was Russia who struck the plant [over the weekend] and of course, Russia says that it was Ukraine," he added.

Moscow has said that Western countries with influence over Ukraine should push Kyiv to stop shelling the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant.

"We expect the countries that have absolute influence on the Ukrainian leadership to use this influence in order to rule out the continuation of such shelling," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

"The shelling of the territory of the nuclear plant by the Ukrainian armed forces is a potentially extremely dangerous activity... fraught with catastrophic consequences for a vast area, including the territory of Europe," he added.

Both Moscow and Kyiv have blamed each other for strikes in recent days near the power station, which sits in territory controlled by Russian forces.

Russia's Saint Petersburg Stock Exchange (SPB) will restart full trading in hundreds of foreign equities on Wednesday, expanding access for Russians to buy and sell international shares.

From 10am Moscow-time (07:00 GMT) on Wednesday, investors will be able to trade shares of approximately 200 foreign companies, including Apple and Tesla, popular stock choices among Russian retail investors, the exchange said in a statement. Previously, trading was restricted to the afternoon session.

The SPB, Russia's second-largest bourse, specialises in foreign shares and has pushed back against calls from Russia's central bank for brokers to block retail investors from being able to access foreign shares.

The central bank moved in May to restrict trading in some foreign shares in response to sweeping sanctions imposed on Moscow by the West over the war in Ukraine.

Ukrainian forces conducted long-range raids on Russian troop bases and two key bridges across the Dnieper River overnight, the country's military has said.

The attacks hit the only two crossings Russia has to the pocket of southern Ukrainian territory it has occupied on the western bank of the river, Natalia Humeniuk, a spokeswoman for Ukraine's southern military command, said.



"The results [of the strikes] are rather respectable, hits on the Antonovsky and Kakhovskiy bridges," she said on Ukrainian television.

Ukrainian forces also struck multiple military bases in Ukraine's Russian-occupied southern city of Melitopol in the early hours of Monday using US-made High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS), killing troops and destroying hardware, its exiled mayor said.

"According to preliminary estimates, a significant amount of military equipment was destroyed," Ivan Fedorov wrote on the instant messaging service, Telegram.

There was no immediate comment from Russia on the claims. Al Jazeera was unable to independently verify the battlefield accounts.

The head of Ukraine's state nuclear power company has called for military to stay away from the Zaporizhzhia plant and said there should be a team of peacekeepers deployed at the site.

Energoatom President Petro Kotin made the comments on Ukrainian television after Kyiv and Moscow accused each of shelling the nuclear power plant, which is Europe's largest and is currently occupied by Russian forces, during the weekend.

Finland has registered a record number of asylum seekers following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, outstripping a previous high figure recorded during the 2015 refugee crisis, the country's authorities have said.

"By August 4, those fleeing Ukraine due to the Russian military attack had submitted 35,074 applications for temporary protection," the Finnish Immigration Service said in a statement. It added that one-third of those fleeing Ukraine were children.

Overall, more than 37,000 people are currently registered in the country's reception system, "which is more than ever before", the immigration service said. The previous record in the Nordic country, which borders Russia, was about 32,000.

The service said it had processed 33,480 applications for protection so far, meaning about 95 percent of applicants have already received a decision on their case, with less than one percent not granted asylum.

The Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station, hit by shelling over the weekend, is operating "in normal mode," Russia's Interfax news agency has quoted the Russian-installed

head of the region's local administration as saying.

"We have information from the military and representatives of Russia's Rosatom, who are here, just watching the situation. We have information from them that everything is operating in normal mode," Yevgeniy Balitsky, the head of the Russian-installed administration of the Zaporizhzhia region, said.

Balitsky said the facility, Europe's largest nuclear power station, was under the control of Russian authorities. Kyiv and Moscow have blamed each other for the shelling of the plant over the weekend.

Ukraine's creditors will vote this week on a government proposal to defer payments on the war-torn country's international bonds for 24 months, as Kyiv hopes to avoid a \$20bn messy default.

Ukraine's finance minister Sergii Marchenko said he had "explicit indications of support" from some of the world's biggest investment funds including BlackRock, Fidelity, Amia Capital and GEMStock.

Bondholders have until 5pm New York time (21:00 GMT) on Tuesday to decide whether to back or vote down the proposal by Ukraine's government, which faces a \$5bn monthly financing gap and liquidity pressures following Russia's invasion in February.

Former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, one of President Vladimir Putin's closest allies, has accused the United States and Western nations of harbouring long-term plans against his country.

"The goal is the same: to destroy Russia," he was quoted as saying by Russian state-owned news agency TASS.

He added that Moscow would achieve its aims in the conflict in Ukraine, without specifying what they may be.

"Russia is conducting a special military operation in Ukraine and is attaining peace on our terms," he said.

Ukraine's infrastructure minister, Oleksandr Kubrakov, has confirmed that Pivdennyi, the third Ukrainian port included in an export deal brokered by Turkey and the UN, has resumed operations.

The Sacura, one of two ships that left Ukraine on Monday carrying corn and soybeans, departed from Pivdennyi.

Kubrakov had said previously the

opening of the commercial port, located in the city of Yuzhne, near Odesa, would push Ukraine's total export capacity up to three million tonnes a month.

Russia is highly likely deploying anti-personnel mines along its defensive lines in the Donbas region of Ukraine, the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence has said, without citing evidence.

In Donetsk and Kramatorsk, Russia has highly likely attempted the employment of PFM-1 and PFM-1S scatterable anti-personnel mines, commonly called the "butterfly mine", the ministry said in its latest intelligence update, describing the weapons as "deeply controversial" and "indiscriminate".

As the war in Ukraine rages on, the commander of the Hospitaliers Medical Battalion runs combat first aid courses and trains Ukrainian volunteers on how to use firearms before they head out to the front lines.

This is a film about an unstoppable woman and her team of medics as they work tirelessly to protect the injured from the horrors of the war.

Ukrainian forces have again shelled the Antonovsky bridge in the Russian-controlled region of Kherson, damaging construction equipment and delaying its reopening, Russia's Interfax news agency has reported.

Kirill Stremousov, the deputy head of the Russian-appointed administration in the region's main city, Kherson, told Interfax there had been no "critical damage" from the latest shelling. He did not say how long the attacks would delay its planned reopening.

The bridge is one of only two crossing points for Russian forces to the territory they have occupied on the western bank of the Dnieper River in southern Ukraine. It has been a key target for Ukrainian forces in recent weeks, with Kyiv using high-precision US-supplied rockets to try to destroy it.

Two more ships, carrying corn and soybeans, departed from Ukrainian Black Sea ports on Monday, Turkey and Ukraine have said, taking the total to 10 since the first ship sailed last week under a deal with Russia to unblock Ukrainian grain exports.

The Sacura, which departed from the Pivdennyi port in the city of Yuzhne, is carrying 11,000 tonnes of soybeans to Italy, Turkey's defence

ministry said, while the Arizona, which left Chornomorsk, is carrying 48,458 tonnes of corn to Iskenderun in southern Turkey.

Ukraine's infrastructure minister, Oleksandr Kubrakov, also confirmed the two ships had left the country on Monday.

The UN and Turkey brokered the grain export deal last month after warnings that a halt in shipments caused by the conflict could lead to severe food shortages and even outbreaks of famine in parts of the world.

The Ukrainian president has warned that if Moscow proceeds with referendums in occupied areas of his country on joining Russia, there could be no talks with Ukraine or its international allies.

In his nightly video address, Zelenskyy stressed that Kyiv was holding fast to its position of yielding no territory to Russia.

"If the occupiers proceed along the path of pseudo-referendums they will close for themselves any chance of talks with Ukraine and the free world, which the Russian side will clearly need at some point," he said.

Russian and Ukrainian officials held several sessions of talks soon after Russian forces launched their invasion of Ukraine in February, but little progress was made and no meetings have been held since late March.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called for international inspectors to be given access to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant after Ukraine and Russia traded accusations over shelling at the site during the weekend.

"We fully support the IAEA in all their efforts in relation to create the conditions of stabilisation of the plant," Guterres said at a news conference in Tokyo, two days after he visited Hiroshima to commemorate victims of the 1945 atomic bombing.

Guterres also urged countries with nuclear weapons to stick to their no-first-use commitment, warning that the nuclear arms race has returned amid growing international tension.

The head of the UN's nuclear watchdog, Rafael Mariano Grossi, had on Saturday warned that the latest incidents at the Zaporizhzhia plant "underlines the very real risk of a nuclear disaster".

Source: Aljazeera

Foreign News

Kenyans go to the polls

KENYANS have started voting in presidential and parliamentary elections, but many citizens desperate for relief from spiking food prices and deep-rooted corruption have little confidence the next government will deliver change.

Large numbers of young people have not registered to vote in the elections on Tuesday, electoral commission figures show. Many say they are frustrated by widening inequality and an entrenched political system overseen by the same old elite.

The process of how to identify voters at polling sites has been at the centre of debate during the election season, with an appeals court ruling that election officials can use the electric Kenya Integrated Election Management System (KIEMS) kits as the primary means of identifying registered



A Kenyan woman casts her ballot at a polling station at St Stephen School in the informal settlement of Mathare in the capital Nairobi.

voters.

The electronic kits – which also transmit vote tallies – were at the center of controversy in the 2017 election, with proponents saying they protected against repeat voters. The election commission has said new updates to the kits will provide further protections.

Roots Party presidential candidate Professor George Wajackoyah told reporters the electronic kit failed to

identify him and other voters in his stronghold of Matungu in Kakamega County. He said he had been told to wait while election officials sorted the issue.

Rigathi Gachagua, Ruto's running mate, also reportedly experienced some issues with having his finger print read by the electronic identification system, but was eventually able to vote and expressed confidence in the system.

THREE Palestinians, including a senior armed resistance commander, have been killed by Israeli forces during a raid on the occupied West Bank city of Nablus, the Palestinian health ministry said.

The Israeli army surrounded a building in the Old City at 5am local time (02:00 GMT) on Tuesday, where Ibrahim al-Nabulsi – the commander of al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, had barricaded himself in. A gunfight lasted for several hours.

A John Holman said al-Nabulsi had "refused to surrender, and was defended by other armed Palestinians" before he was killed.

"This isn't the first time that Israeli forces have tried to get al-Nabulsi," Holman said. "They tried several times, including in July, in a massive operation again in which two other men died."

Al-Nabulsi, known popularly as "the lion of Nablus", had been on the run for many months, and survived several assassination attempts by Israel. His public appearances at the funerals of his fellow comrades, such as in February and July, had further raised the ire of Israeli forces.

"The terrorist Ibrahim al-Nabulsi was killed in the city

Israeli forces kill armed Commander in Nablus



Palestinians evacuate an injured gunman following a raid by Israeli forces of a house in Nablus in the occupied West Bank

of Nablus," the Israeli army said in a statement, adding that "another terrorist who was staying in the house" also died.

The al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade is the armed wing of Fatah – the movement that controls the Palestinian Authority, which has limited self-rule in the West Bank. However, it is a loose network without a clear hierarchy, and local groups often act on their own.

The Palestinian health ministry confirmed the death of al-Nabulsi almost an hour after his killing, resulting in conflicting reports. Videos shared on social media showed al-Nabulsi barefoot and in military fatigues, being carried by Palestinians, to Rafidia Hospital in Nablus, with a gaping bullet wound in his neck but still alive.

Hundreds of Palestinians surrounded the hospital and some made it inside the operating room, hoping he would survive. Others shared al-Nabulsi's will, which he recorded in an audio message hours earlier.

"Take care of the homeland," he said. "I am surrounded now but I will fight until I become a martyr. I love my mother.

Don't abandon the gun."

Palestinian political groups condemned the killings in Nablus, calling the action "cowardly".

"We mourn our martyrs Ibrahim al-Nabulsi, Islam Sabbouh and Hussein Taha," Fatah spokesman Munther al-Hayek said in a statement.

The leftist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) group said the resistance of the men killed "has emphasised the failure of the occupation", and Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem hailed the "epic heroism" of the fighters.

Israeli forces have conducted near-daily operations in the West Bank in recent months.

On Friday, Israel launched what it called a "preemptive" aerial and artillery bombardment of Islamic Jihad positions in the Gaza Strip.

An Egypt-brokered ceasefire agreed on Sunday ended three days of intense fighting that killed 46 Palestinians, 16 of them children, and wounded 360, according to Gaza's health ministry.

second-oldest son, told Fox News that the FBI's execution of the search warrant on Mr Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate was related to an investigation into the handling of National Archives records.

NA officials say the former president illegally ripped up many documents. Some of them had to be taped back together, they say.

Mr Trump at the time rejected reports that he had mishandled official records as "fake news".

A senior Trump adviser in Palm Beach told CBS the new search by federal agents on Mar-a-Lago was about the presidential records.

In a forthcoming book, Confidence Man, New York Times journalist Maggie Haberman reports that staff at the White House residency sometimes found wads of paper clogging a toilet, and that they believed Mr Trump was the flusher.

MsHaberman has posted photos which she says show paper in a toilet bowl at the White House.

A senior White House official has told CBS that President Joe Biden's administration was given no notice of the FBI search in Florida on Monday.

The White House has said it is limiting its interactions with top justice department officials to avoid any hint of political pressure or impropriety.

Mr Biden pledged during his White House campaign to stay out of justice department affairs. The Democratic president and his family are also waiting to see whether federal prosecutors will indict his son, Hunter Biden, on tax evasion or other federal charges.

Seoul heavy downpour leaves citizens dead

HEAVY downpours Monday night submerged roads, flooded metro stations and caused blackouts across the city and neighbouring provinces.

Some areas received the highest rate of rainfall in 80 years, Korea's meteorological agency said.

Weather officials said the rain was likely to continue over several days.

Images showed floodwater gushing down the steps of metro staircases, parked cars submerged up to their windows and people making their way across streets in knee-high water.

Local reports said three victims were living in a semi-basement apartment known as a banjiha.

Destruction is scattered all around Seoul this morning. But the scene of real tragedy is one pink house, where tiny smashed-out windows peek out from just above the pavement.

The windows belong to a basement apartment where three people, trapped by the

water, drowned last night - two sisters in their 40s and one of their 13-year-old daughters. This morning it is still surrounded by floodwater and debris.

Sun-woo has lived in the flat above the family for 10 years. By the time he arrived home at 8pm, their home was submerged.

He said the family who had died had lived there for 10 years, and that their older sister had learning difficulties.

The home is almost identical to the apartment featured in the Oscar-winning film Parasite. The real life events here evoke the opening scene, in which the leading family tries desperately to funnel the water out of their home during a torrential downpour - only this outcome is far worse.

That South Korea's President Yoon visited the apartment earlier shows these deaths are significant.

They are a reminder that away from the glitzy towers of upmarket Gangnam, where much much of the damage was done, live hundreds of

Koreans in these subterranean apartments that are not fit for purpose.

Parts of Seoul, the western port city of Incheon and Gyeonggi province surrounding Seoul charted rainfall of over 10cm per hour on Monday night, according to Yonhap news agency.

Meanwhile, Seoul's Dongjak district recorded more than 141.5 mm of rain per hour - the highest rate since 1942, according to Korea's Meteorological Administration (KMA).

The other victims included a person who was electrocuted, one person was found under the wreckage of a bus stop and

another died in a landslide. At least 14 were injured and six others reported missing.

At least 163 people in Seoul have been made homeless and have taken shelter in schools and public facilities, according to Yonhap.

The downpour also affected public transportation, as flooded railroads forced suspension of railway services in Seoul and Incheon.

The KMA continued to issue heavy rain warnings across Seoul and surrounding metropolitan areas, and said it expected rainfall for the central part of the country to continue at least until Wednesday.

Trump's Florida home raided by FBI

MR Trump said in a statement that Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach was "occupied by a large group of FBI agents".

Monday's search was reportedly connected to an investigation into Mr Trump's handling of official papers.

"These are dark times for our nation," Mr Trump's statement said. "Nothing like this has ever happened to a president of the United States before."

Neither the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) nor the justice department have commented on the reported search.

An unnamed law enforcement official told CBS News, the BBC's US partner, that the Secret Service was notified shortly before the warrant was served around 10:00 local time (14:00 GMT), and that agents protecting Mr Trump helped the FBI investigators.

Several boxes were taken away, the source said, adding that no doors were kicked down and that the raid had concluded by the late afternoon.

A federal search warrant must be signed by a judge. Though such a warrant does not suggest that criminal charges are expected, law enforcement agencies must first demonstrate the possibility that evidence of illegality will be found.

There has never been a search warrant quite like this in American history, Palm Beach County State



Trump

Attorney Dave Aronberg told the BBC, describing it as "a big deal".

American presidents are required by the Presidential Records Act (PRA) to transfer all of their letters, work documents and emails to the National Archives (NA).

There are also other federal laws regarding the handling of classified documents.

In February, the National Archives said it had retrieved 15 boxes of papers from Mar-a-Lago, which Mr Trump should have turned over when he left the White House.

The agency later told Congress the boxes included "items marked as classified national security information".

Mr Trump's lawyer, Christina Bobb, told NBC News that some papers had been seized during the search.

The dramatic escalation of law enforcement scrutiny of Mr Trump comes as the Republican prepares for a possible further presidential run in 2024.

News of the search has mobilised some of Donald Trump's supporters. A group of fans gathered outside Mar-a-Lago to wave flags and express their anger.

He said it amounted to "prosecutorial misconduct" and "the weaponisation of the justice system" to prevent him from running for the White House again.

Eric Trump, the president's



At least eight people have died and 14 others have been injured as flooding caused by torrential rain hit parts of South Korea's capital Seoul.

Feature

By
AYUBA YILGAK'HA,

Futility of Muslim-Muslim in Nigeria

IN politics, many unimaginable things happen. One of the most happening things some times do in the game is choice making. The act of choice making can be so difficult and in most cases so uncertain. One choice(s) could make or mare the chance of winning any political contests or life opportunity, generally.

Recently, political parties in Nigeria conducted their primary elections. After the emergence of party flag bearers, especially, for presidential and governorship seats, the candidates who emerged victorious were faced with great difficulty of whom to choose as their respective running mates to an extend that some of the candidates had to resort to the appointment of Vice Presidential (VP) placeholders to meet up with Independent National Electoral Commission's, (INEC's) deadline for submission. A placeholder is a Vice Presidential Candidate who is, temporarily, nominated to stand in the position pending his replacement with a substantive one as provided by law. The legality or otherwise of this arrangement is subject to legal contestation, anyway.

The Presidential Candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Alh. Atiku Abubakar who was Obasanjo's Vice President for eight years nominated and presented his running mate, Governor Ifeanyi Okowa, up front; although, not without challenges. The choice of Okowa is threatening to polarised the main opposition party and lower his chances of winning. This is apart from zoning considerations which saw Atiku's emergence as 'stealing' the chance of Southern Nigerians.

The debate surrounding this development is endless: That is the beauty of democracy for you.

The Presidential standard bearers of some political platforms have however found it difficult settling the issue of their respective running mates at once. For instance, the candidate of Labour Party (LP), Mr. Peter Obi had to go for Dr. Doyin Okupe which made it a Christian-Christian (C-C) ticket before Alh. Yusuf Baba Ahmed was later found and replaced him; the candidate of the All progressives Congress (APC), Chief Bola Ahmed Tinubu (BAT) opted for Alh. Ibrahim Masari which made it a Muslim-Muslim (M-M) ticket which was before Alh. Kashim Shettima, former governor of Borno State, replaced him (M-M) ticket retained thereby generating wide condemnation, especially, from the Christendom which is tended to worsen the balance of peace and unity of Nigeria.

The reasons for the wide condemnation of the M-M ticket is obviously connected to two outstanding issues: The relative diversity of Nigeria and the relative novelty of the choice. Nigeria with an estimated population of over 200 million is a multi-ethnic nation-state with over 500 tribal groups which are spread across Islam, Christian and traditional religions, on the one hand, and etheism (free thinkers) on the other. The M-M ticket is relatively novel because after the 1993 Presidential Election which saw the emergence of Social Democratic Party's (SDP's), MKO Abiola of Blessed memory and Babagana Kingibe which was eventually annulled, it never happened again. More so, is that, things have changed and Nigeria has never been this openly divided, especially, along religious lines as it is today.

Before the emergence of Bola Ahmed Tinubu (BAT), I had a transitional projection of how Nigeria will graduate from religious or sectional considerations to have leaders from anywhere within the country. The sequence of the projection is that of a Nigeria which should have a Muslim President from the South with a Christian VP from the North; a Christian President from the North with a Muslim VP from the South; then, a Muslim-Muslim or Christian-Christian ticket or even Traditional-Traditional ticket and,



Tinubu

finally, come to a level where leaders could come from who knows where provided they are Nigerians and have the credibility like it is the case in other advanced and developed democracies like USA, etc.

The underlining assumption of the projection was that by the time the first three sequences are seamlessly achieved, all fears related to regional, religion and ethnicity would have been conquered thereby paving the way for a truly national leaders. When Tinubu won the presidential ticket, therefore, the expectation was that he would commenced the historic process but to no avail, hence leaving a bad taste on the country's mood.

Conspiracy theories and deep seated suspicions on both side of the divide have continued to consume the fibre of the Nigerian state. There are many voter mobilisation platforms, one of which, is religion but when religion becomes the main tool for votes mobilisation in a religiously diverse and delicate country, it causes suspicion and could open old wounds. That is the problem with the present M-M ticket in Nigeria.

Tinubu who should known better ought not to have cited competency as justification for choosing Shettima as running mate if he must do so; but instead, winning votes threshold since it's argued there are more Muslims in Northern Nigeria. In as much much as the man, Shettima, can be competent, it is not correct to assume there is no single competent Christian APC member who can be running mate from the north. The protagonists had told the antagonists of the M-M ticket that the party is not a Christian organisation but they forgot there are Christian members of the ruling platform who cannot be de-linked from their faith.

In his poem titled, "BAT", D. H. Lawrence, referred to the Bat as "Flying madly." The poet further said

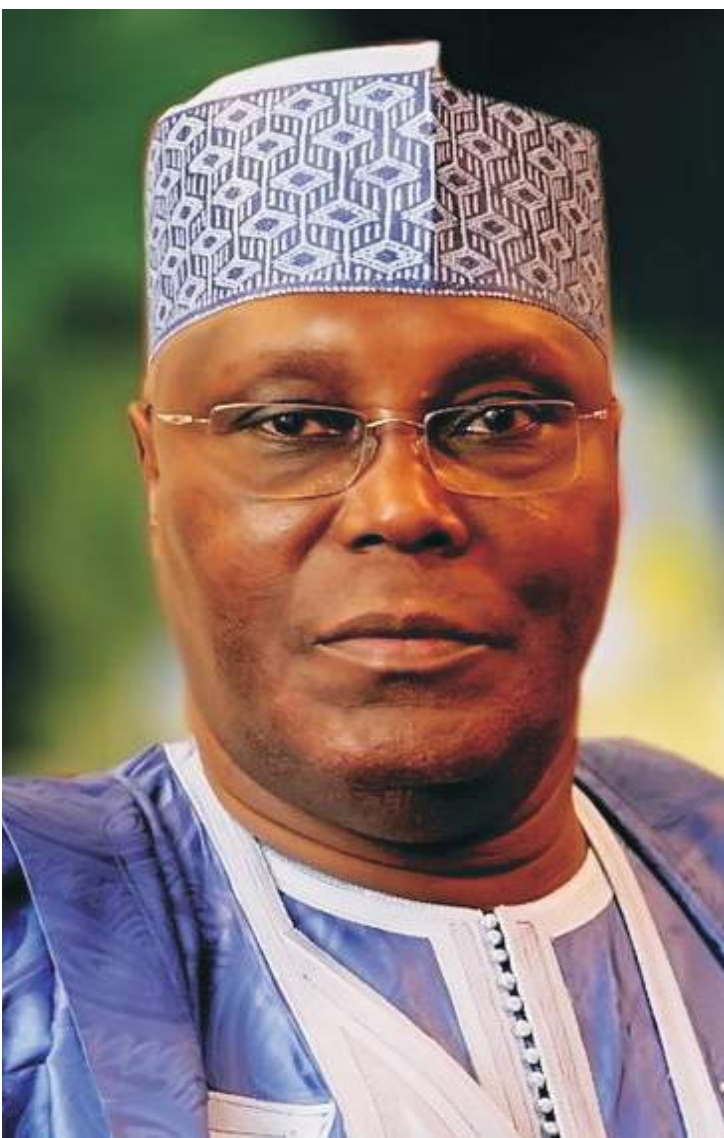
that, "In China, the bat is a symbol of happiness" but concluded: "Not for me". Millions of spirited and patriotic Nigerians, irrespective of creed, tribe and regional inclinations are not happy with the BAT's M-M ticket. The political giant has committed needless and avoidable political harakiri by omitting or discarding very significant Christian voting population.

The APC Presidential Candidate had unusual opportunity to demystify the Nigerian jinx but squandered it. How beautiful could it have been to have a minority Muslim president from a majority Christian South and a minority Christian Vice President from a majority Muslim North? The reality of such combination would have brought Nigeria close to overcoming religious politics which has been our greatest albatross, for decades.

It is unfortunate Tinubu had the chance to balance his political game and balance Nigeria's political chemistry but wasted it. If the insinuation that fake bishops were hired to attend the unveiling of the Tinubu's Vice Presidential candidate is true, then foul. Politicians cannot achieve by political simulation what can be achieved, practically, through natural wisdom.

What hypothesis does Tinubu want to test with the M-M ticket after he himself opposed it in 2011 as recently revealed by his bickering with Atiku (Turakin Adamawa) who is one of his top challengers? And should he won or lose, how will Nigeria looks like beyond 2023? Your guess is as good as mine! Tinubu's quest for political (democratic) correctness has taken Nigeria miles backward. His choice has amplified, further polarised and deepened the country's faultlines. And it's sad the extension of this sharp division is coming from a purported elder Statesman who should know better.

By this choice, Tinubu have decided to throw statesmanship to the wind and, consequently, reduced himself to the



Atiku

status of a typical politician with religious inclination. A typical politician is selfish and thinks only of winning the next election. On the other hand, a statesmen is selfless and thinks, primarily, of the next generation, sustained national cohesion and stability amongst all contending forces in a country or nation (nation-state). They hypothesis here is that with a Muslim-Christian (M-C), mixed ticket at least, anyone could win elections in Nigeria provided the candidate is credible enough. Such victory will be victory for equity and fair representation, at least at the religious levels. It shall be victory for unity and mutual respect too, at least, for now.

There is no need flying madly, as a statesman. Hurring, simulated Bishops cannot make for massive criticisms that greeted Tinubu's "competency" gab which was cited as excuse for denying Christians a chance to be part of his ambition to govern diverse Nigeria. M-M ticket is possible but cannot be easy sell in contemporary Nigeria. With the wide criticism, the APC Presidential Candidate has practically realised that such arrangement is unsettling on a scale he least expected and doing everything with his power douse the tension that is threatening to consume his long planned and most cherished ambition to be president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Tinubu was cautioned but he seems arrogant and rigid about his predetermined decision to go with M-M ticket. This is not surprising, really. This is because, arrogance and rationality do not go together, just as anger and rationality do not get together; arrogance and rationality do not go together, just as fear and rationality do not go together; arrogance and rationality do not go together just as sensation (excitement) and rationality do not go together. In other words, when a man gets arrogant, angry, afraid and or too excited, he does not think, rationally, anymore. Whatever it

is, some have argued democracy is not about rationality but simply the tyranny of the majority.

In times like this, all manner of things happen, meaning any decision that does not translate into making Nigerians more united cannot be rational under any guise. Any electoral victory that does not translate into the unity Nigeria is pyrrhic and of no national consequence. What is desired in development centred democracy is to win popular votes and to win the peace; not to win the votes and lost national peace and unity.

However, in any electioneering season, political schemers always plot all sorts of schemes but, ultimately, the rightness or wrongness of their choices shall be determined at the ballot stations. Therefore, all Nigerians are challenged to show enthusiasm and willingness to activate participates in the process by freely voting candidates of their choice in the next election.

The 2023 general elections is loading. Delegates of political parties have made choices of their respective candidates. Those candidates who are required by law to have running mates have also made their choices. It is now the turn of the citizens of voting age to use their voting power to elect leaders who will govern their respective constituencies in the next four years. Let us prayed God to guide our fingers as we vote in the next poll. We should also pray the electoral process goes rancor free and the best of leaders should emerge for Nigeria and its sub-national levels.

The journey to nationhood is marked by hills and valleys. Part of the challenges of nation building derive from elite contradictions but we cannot allow them to consume us. All patriotic Nigerian, irrespective of region, tribe or religion, are fighting hard to calm frayed nerves, restore confidence and ensure the corporate unity of Nigeria is maintained even after the 2023 general elections!

WOMEN'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Living

Low participation of women in Nigerian politics

By REJOICE WISE

Another electioneering season is here and it will be incomplete without x-raying and mentioning the participation of women in politics and the diverse challenges faced by this gender in the political arena in Nigeria.

The statistics of women in politics in Nigeria has been incredibly low compared to their male counterparts and the ratio has continued to be alarming and signals a great danger to the issue of gender equality as one of the sustainable development goals. If Nigeria is to achieve the sustainable development goal of ensuring gender equality in the political arena, there is a lot of work to be done.

Low percentage of women no doubt puts other women at disadvantage because the voice that needs to be heard in representation of other women folks is over shadowed and extinguished by the presence of a more dominant male in Nigerian political leadership.

The low participation of women in these positions affects their progress in improving the legal and regulatory framework for promoting gender equality since very few women are influencing the legislative process that promotes aspects that has to do with the women folk. Statistics have it that women make up 49 percent of the Nigerian



population but only 4 out of this percentage are lawmakers. In 2021, statistics show that there are currently 7 women out of the 109 senators, with only 22 women out of the 360 House of Representatives members.

The percentage of women in local government seats ranges

from a high 33 percent to a low of 2 percent. Nigeria has the lowest number of female parliamentarians in sub-Saharan Africa and ranks 133rd in the world for female political participation.

Women's political participation in Nigeria remains at 6.7 percent

in elective and appointive positions.

These statistics speak of a looming disadvantaged position for the Nigerian woman in political and leadership realities.

Women have been hampered by a lot of factors, contributing to their poor representation in

politics and leadership positions.

Amongst these factors are the huge amounts pecked on nomination forms for elective positions, poor education, weighed down with a lot burdens and home front responsibilities, cultural norms, poor media coverage compared to their male counterparts, gender stereotype and gender related electoral violence, threats and hate speech. These issues can be tackled when legislations are put in place to give women level playing ground to compete favorably with others. Drastic change must take place if we are to have women occupying electoral positions.

We can learn from countries like Rwanda that has become the only country in sub-Saharan Africa to have the highest number of female representatives as at 2020 with 6.25 percent of women in legislative positions.

Rwanda could achieve this feat because, it was deliberate about its development, knowing that women play a major role in the development of any nation if given the opportunity to serve.

And so they chose the quota system and legislated it and which has worked well for them as a nation.



With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Relationship

Ways you are belittling your partner

By **SALMA IHAB**

WE always want our partners to be the best they can when we're in a relationship, but here's where you might be going wrong: when you try to give your partner helpful advice, it may come out differently than you intended. Perhaps your tone was a little aggressive, or you brought it up at the wrong time. Even though you thought you were helping your partner, your innocent intentions take a troll on you and turn into belittling your partner.

If you are wondering, what is this? We will talk about it all right here and I will help you avoid falling into the same trap in the future. So, to keep you from falling into the same trap, here are some surprising ways you're belittling your partner.

Questioning Every Decision They Make

We all know that communication is very important in a relationship, and you are supposed to talk about everything with each other, but the trap comes when you start questioning everything they do! You must believe that your partner is an adult capable of handling things on his own.

If you're thinking, "No way, I don't do that," here's an example: "What are you wearing? This does not look good on you". You can say, "Do you have any other options?" In the first one, you questioned their decision and



made them question themselves, whereas in the second one, you were subtly helping them. It's all about how you phrase things and how much you trust them!

You Are Constantly Correcting Your Partner

A small reminder: you are not their mother; you are their partner. So, whenever you feel the urge to correct them on something, hold that thought and think about

it. Consider it in a different light: how would you react if you were in their shoes?

If you're wondering, "How am I belittling them like that?" Let me give you an example: if a loved one mispronounces something, you will be quick to correct them and say, "This is not how you say it!" After all, we are all different and most of us mispronounce things from time to time, so instead

of correcting your partner and becoming annoying and belittling them. You could simply ignore it. **The Comparison Game**

This is a trap that is difficult to escape from once you've fallen into it. Comparison, in my opinion, is the thief of joy. Comparing your partner to a previous relationship or a friend's partner is a joy killer and belittles them.

If you're thinking, "It's hard not to," know that you're not alone and that it doesn't mean you're unhappy with your current partner. However, you must consider it from their point of view; while you may have good intentions, comparing your partner to other people can significantly lower their self-esteem and make them appear as if they aren't good enough for you as a partner, which is obviously not the message you want to send to your lover.

Not Letting Them Finish Their Sentence

This is a question for you to answer in order to determine whether or not

you are belittling your partner. Do you allow your partner to speak freely, without interfering in any way? If you don't, consider yourself belittling your lover.

Your interruption sends the wrong message that you don't respect or value what they have to say, which we all know is not your intention. How are you going to solve this issue? Allow them to speak without interfering with the conversation or the story they are attempting to tell you. When they start talking, be the listener.

Not Respecting Their Goals

When you get into a relationship, you realize that you and your partner may have the same goal as well as individual goals, and as a loving and supportive partner, you should always support them, even if they tell you they want to go to space. When you start questioning them, you are belittling their goals and dreams, which will have an effect on them.

This is something to keep in mind the next time they talk about their hopes and dreams, so that you can be supportive rather than discouraging. Remember that each of us is on a unique journey, and you must respect their journey, even if it is a difficult one; they will arrive at their destination at their own pace. If you notice your partner struggling to get started, or if they are aware of their purpose or anything related to their goal, give them space and be as supportive as possible to prevent them from feeling belittled.

My Final Piece of Advice to You

Before you say or take any action related to your partner, put yourself in their shoes and consider whether you would be okay if they did this to you or if you would feel belittled by their action. If you feel belittled as a result of this action, do not proceed. Last but not least, talk to them gently about whatever is bothering you, but remember to keep it between you two and not around others.



Editorial

Buhari, charity should begin at home

FROM all indicators of development, Nigeria as a country is not doing well in all aspects of development, going by the level of poverty, insecurity and other issues that are ravaging Nigerians that have made them easy prey to many unholy activities of criminals. It is gross insensitivity for the government at the center to suddenly become a Father Christmas. It is very ironic that while its citizens are going through hell despite the abundant resources that the country is blessed with, of recent, the Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of President Muhammadu Buhari, came under intense criticism over its benevolence of car gifts to neighboring Niger Republic.

THIS cost Nigeria over a billion naira of tax payers' money. The revelation was made by an investigative journalist, David Hundeyin who tweeted that he obtained a documents from the Budget Office in Nigeria which showed that the President made the approval for the purchase of the vehicles to Niger Republic. While defending the purchase of the vehicles; the federal government through the Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Zainab Ahmed, said it is not the first time Nigeria was supporting her neighbours. Ahmed buttressed that the president had a responsibility to take such decisions, in the best interest of the country. However, the gesture of the federal government is coming at a time that our universities are closed due to disagreement with lecturer over issues that border on finances.

DISBURSING funds to purchase vehicles for another country amid other pressing needs, including the ongoing strike by the Academic Staff Unions of Universities, security challenges and harsh economic realities in the country is not a welcome development. The act is a reflection of lack of priority from the government which is facing lots of challenges from all corners of the country in different aspects of human endeavours.

IMPORTANTLY, Nigeria and Niger are members of the multi-National Task Force that was established to fight the insecurity that is bedeviling Chad and Cameroon. But within Nigeria, challenges of insecurity are everywhere. This is consuming innocent lives every day and the military and police are complaining about lack of equipment to face the dare devil insurgents. Indeed, there is nothing wrong in assisting a sister country in their time of need but this is wrongly tiimed. Considering the peculiarities of the times, this not the time to play Father Christmas or Big brother Africa, as charity begins at home. Nation interest supersedes parochial sentiments when the national is under siege and its territorial integrity violated with impunity by terrorists, insurgents, bandits and militants as if there is no constituted government in place.

IT is also intriguing that while Nigerians are still angry from the use of their resources to construct a controversial railway from Kano to the Niger Republic, an official decision that many read different meaning to it, as it is of no economic importance to Nigeria. They are now being confronted with yet another questionable donation to Niger.

THE presidency is enjoined, to stop forth with, its questionable donation because the country is seriously indebted both at home and abroad. The presidency must be wary of taking decisions that will not be of any importance or add value to Nigeria and Nigerians. This can generate tension among its impoverished citizenry who do not sleep with their two eyes closed due to security challenges.

IT is condemnable that while Nigerians grapple with so many challenges including poverty, unemployment, terrorism, amongst others that need financial intervention, the presidency has placed Niger's problem on the top of its priority list. At a time that our universities and other tertiary institutions have been on strike for a very long time due to lack of funding and other related issues. National interest must be given prominence.

WE call on the president to fix his house first before stepping out to assist other members who may be in need. As the saying goes charity begins at home but it should not end up there.

THIS is to draw the attention of Plateau State Government to the indiscriminate activities of the mobile shop sellers in and around the Jos and Bukuru metropolis which have become a thing of great concern.

Initially, it was assumed to be the normal shop where cigarettes and other little consumables are sold. It will interest you to know that not only cigarettes and common consumables, but illicit drugs are the most patronized commodity by the users and have grossly affected the live of majority youths.

What usually takes distance to get is now at our doorsteps because of how rampant these mobile hawkers walk around our streets and it has increased and become a common practice. Some station themselves at every junction, advertising their products to passers-by.

Other items sold by these mobile shop owners are Man-power, condoms, codine, pacaline, alabokum and other abused drugs and hardly would anybody suspect that such harmful and life consuming activities are going on around our neighborhood.

Therefore, it is necessary for government and other agencies to take drastic steps against these hidden activities so that, we will be able to reduce the high rate of drug consumption in our communities. The Men of



Danger of Mobile shop sellers, drugs consumption

Nigerian Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) should redouble their efforts and arrest any of these hawkers who sell illegal drugs among them.

Nobody is against the sells of cigarettes, sweet, chocolates, chewing gums, bitter cola and other legal items, but smuggling of illegal drugs is what the law should stop. It is also obvious that not all of these Mobile Shop owners sell illegal drugs, but out of 10, only 3 can possibly be innocent.

Since those engaging in this illegal sales of these drugs are always on the move, the agency

saddled with the responsibility of arresting them should proffer new ways of dictating their movement to ensure those supplying them with these drugs be arrested.

NDLEA and the NPF can embark on a stop and search style where as they move around the city, they would have no place to hide but be arrested. This will grossly reduce the sales of these products because the law enforcement action will further discourage them from selling such drugs when two or three of them are arrested through stop and search.

From Gohii Tuwan, Jos.

Significance of political awareness in the church

PERMIT me space in your widely read newspaper, The Nigeria Standard which serves as voice of the common man, where issues of interest are being highlighted to the benefit of the masses to express my excitement on the need for political awareness to our leaders.

I wish to use this medium to appreciate the church of today for bringing to the fore issues that affect masses and their leaders. It is no longer news that Nigerians are weeping over some of their leaders who have obviously turned their backs to the plight of the people they govern and have left them to fate

This possibly happened because the people probably did not adequately seek the face of the

Lord for godly and righteous leaders that could take the interest of the people at heart. The country today has been challenged with many ills like insecurity that has heightened, hike in prices of food items beyond the reach of the common man, banditry and other unpalatable mishaps that have dragged us to where we are now.

I wish to commend Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN) for the very sensitive and all important theme it has chosen for its COCIN week titled: "The unity of the Church: Politics of the righteous, which portrays the church as an agent of transformation because when righteous people are carefully elected or appointed into

government offices, they will no doubt be agents of change without the righteousness of God, one cannot do anything remarkable.

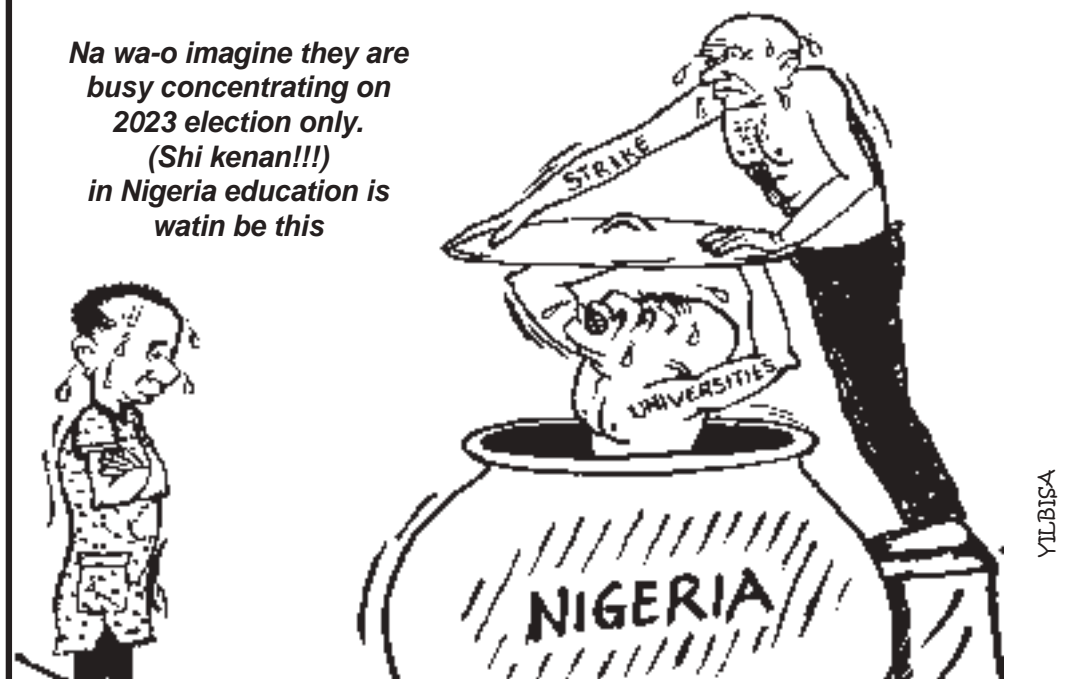
The focus is not just on the leaders but also on the electorate who should avoid the politics of money and exercise their franchise accordingly. Electorate were educated through the teaching to know their voting rights and maintain their spiritual lives.

The Holy Bible affirms that when the righteous is on the throne, the people rejoice with this knowledge, god fearing people should be supported to any leadership position.

Goodness Wakili writes from Jos

Standard Cartoon

Na wa-o imagine they are busy concentrating on 2023 election only. (Shi kenan!!!) in Nigeria education is watin be this



Opinion

Understanding vehicle number platin in Nigeria

By
NENGAK DANIEL GONDYI

RECENTLY, the Inspector General of Police announced the total ban of the SPY vehicle number plates citing internal security. Almost immediately afterwards, the then Corps Marshal of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) Boboye Oyeyemi, ordered personnel of the FRSC to enforce the IGP's directive, and also to "impound vehicles with faded plate numbers and private vehicles with commercial plate numbers". The IGP accused the SPY-plate users of "continuous disregard for traffic rules and regulations and other extant laws guiding road use by individuals hiding under the privileges of SPY police number plates". The FRSC on its part worried that "the use of faded and unauthorised vehicle number plates has implications on national security". In view of the concerns raised by these security chiefs, it is important to consider the system of vehicle number plating and the wider implications of the system for security and orderly management of the road transport system in Nigeria. As I understand, the SPY number plates allowed certain road privileges to approved privately owned vehicles. If this

privilege has become so irredeemably abused that the police found no control measure short of banning and confiscating the plates, then I think we have a serious problem. The IGP did hint that some of the SPY number plates may have been illegal when he ordered the ban "irrespective of whether it is authorised, or not". The FRSC seem to have concurred with this when it flagged the security implication of *unauthorised* vehicle number plate. Recall that the FRSC had announced that the "Peace Ambassador" number plates were illegal as far back as 2016 (some of them are still on the highways, though). But if it is possible that people drive vehicles with fake or unauthorised plates then perhaps a ban is not enough; arrests and prosecution should follow – not just of the driver, but whoever issued unauthorised number plates or licensed the vehicle. How do you know when a number plate is "unauthorised"? I am not sure, but the website of the FRSC has a section for verifying number plates. I imputed a vehicle number plate

and the query returned as "Validated; valid but yet to be assigned" – the problem is, the said number plate was assigned to my vehicle in 2016 and the vehicle registration has been renewed, and road-worthiness tested annually since then. Check your number plates, but I hope the authorities have a more accurate verification system. Who decides when a number plate is faded and constituting a security risk? Is it possible that a vehicle would be licensed and certified roadworthy while its number plate is "faded"? It would make more sense to include the integrity of number plates in the checklist for assessing roadworthiness annually rather than attempting to fish out faded number plates in traffic. Annual roadworthiness test should provide opportunity to check and validate everything about the car. Already, there are concerns that fishing out faded plates is being done in manner that inconveniences Nigerians. The emphasis on number plates is appreciable; however, it must be noted that the number plate is only a part of the string of measures necessary to ensure approved and safe usage of vehicles in Nigeria. Number

plating goes in tandem with the registration and annual licensing, which includes roadworthiness test of the vehicle and certification. Driver training and licensing is part of the regime as well. Therefore, removing SPY, faded and wrongly used number plates from circulation is an important measure, but it must be taken in coordination with other aspects of the process. *Daily Trust's* recent interesting article on lapses in vehicle registration in Nigeria is illustrative of the work ahead. Elected public officials perform critical duties to the state, true. But it is not clear why some of them are entitled to customized number plates based on their office yet on privately owned vehicles which are often driven without the office holder. If the government considers it necessary that office holders should be recognized on the highways, it should provide them with government-owned vehicles and drivers, otherwise they should use regular number plates. However, where number-plates tied to public office are issued, they must be revoked and retrieved upon expiry of the tenure of office.

It is important to also consider the use of customized number plates. In my opinion, plate customisation should only be allowed for privately used vehicles (blue plates). Institutions can have regular plates and then inscribe internal notations as needed on the body of the vehicle. The practice of having customised number plates for brand ambassadors should be discontinued, if at all it was legal in the first place; it is unclear why "SDG Ambassadors" (there are still MDG Ambassador plates on the highways!), or beauty queens would need customized plates; particularly where such plates are green, suggesting government ownership. Perhaps the government is not behind those number plates at all. So if there are illegal an unauthorized number plates in Nigeria, who is making them, are the vehicles they are on otherwise registered and certified roadworthy? How are they able to survive on the roads where a the Police, VIO, FRSC, NSCDC, NDLEA, states' road agencies, and local government "task forces" are all on the road checking vehicles and their occupants?

Borstal homes: Will Nigeria get it right?

By
KEHINDE OSASONA

THE need to review the Borstal Act for Children in Conflict with the law has taken centre stage in recent times following abuse of Borstal Homes in Nigeria. Borstal to some people is a mere coinage usually associated with correctional homes for juveniles, but it was actually a name of a town near Rochester, Kent, in England. In 1902, the town of Borstal, according to history, hosted the first institution for the detention of juvenile delinquents. Away from England now, findings have revealed that borstal homes in Nigeria have been grossly abused with unjustifiable practices so much that the quest for reform has now taken centre stage. Checks by Blueprint Weekend indicated that children in Nigeria's borstal homes were not classified on the basis of their age, length of stay, degree of delinquency and character as well as physical and mental health. Consequently, the situation has now become a topical issue and more people as well as stakeholders are getting involved and proffering solutions. While making the revelation earlier in the year, during one of its trips round borstal homes, the Chairman Presidential Committee on Correctional Reform and Decongestion, Justice Ishaq Bello (Rtd), observed that in the Act provided for the establishment of borstals in each state of the federation, there are only three borstal institutions in the country which was a shortfall of the present law. Few weeks after the tour, the revelations triggered interest in some quarters so much that stakeholders' started asking questions and issues relating to children in conflict with the law and the need to review the Borstal Act has continued to generate fuss. Though the Nigerian Correctional Services Act, 2019, provided for the establishment of borstals in every state of the country and also prohibited Custodial Centres from admitting children under the age of 18, presently, there are only three borstal facilities in Nigeria, and they are situated in Kaduna, Abeokuta and Ilorin.

Commenting on the development, Bello noted that contrary to the provisions of the Borstal Institutions and Remand Centres Act 2004, which allows for only the institutionalizations of offenders between the ages of 16-21, most children in the Borstal home he said had children below or above the stipulated age bracket. He added that most of them seen at the Ilorin Borstal Institute for instance, were in their 30s and 40s with wives and kids. "Additionally, children are not classified on the basis of their age, physical and mental health, length of stay, degree of delinquency and character. "More so, factors like sequence of the delinquency, possibilities of functioning as a contamination risk and requirements of custody, juvenile educational and vocational training needs of children, their background, possibilities of their social adjustment, their prospects after release, as well as rehabilitation are not taken into consideration," the retired jurist noted further. Before now, the country's National Assembly, Federal Ministry of Justice, UNICEF, UNODC, NGOs, legal stakeholders and advocacy groups had made moves to impress upon the government the urgent need for the review of borstal institutions Act in Nigeria. NASS particularly reached a resolution on the matter in one of its motions, asking the Federal Ministry of Justice to ensure that any official of the Correctional Service found complicit in the unjustified incarceration of minors should be prosecuted. The lawmakers, who frowned at the practice, noted that the Borstal institutions had for long kept delinquent inmates away from adult offenders. According to them, such a situation could encourage molestation and negative influence that can make them become repeat

offenders. Giving more insights, the Director, Access to Justice, Mr. Joseph Otteh, noted that the whole thing boiled down to the Nigerian Prisons system framework which according to him was still penitentiary. He identified overcrowding, horrifying sanitary conditions, and poor infrastructure, inhumane nutritional provisions, and the failure of the system to reform their characters as constituting a big challenge. "A lot of industry and effort has been put into reducing the prison overcrowding problem, with the help of many concerned actors. "However, it seems every push is marred with parallel counter-force pushing in the opposite direction to exacerbate the problem. "Prisons should be given the power to reject prospective inmates when the available space and capacity reach a certain threshold that can force States to begin to think of creative ways of handling petty crimes. "On the part of the government, it's important to ensure crime control policies they establish are responsible ones, and take account of the finishing lines," Otteh added. Similary, at various times, the UNICEF Chief Child Protection, Ibrahim Sesay, and UNODC Representative, Dr. Oliver Stople, have advocated reforms and the need to upgrade the facilities. For Sesay, the Juveniles needed to be reformed so that the society would feel the consequences, urging the government to sustain the programme just as it pledged both technical and financial support. In the same vein, the UNODC has also expressed its mission to upgrade the recreational, educational and vocational in the country's facilities in the corrections. As the issues still rage, the federal government which eventually berthed some few days ago. While inaugurating a13-member Technical

Committee on the Review of Borstal Institutions and Remand Centres Act 2004 in Abuja, the Attorney General of the Federation (AGF) and Minister of Justice, Mr. Abubakar Malami said the review was to make the law more effective and conversant with current laws and times. Malami, who was represented by the Solicitor General of the Federation and Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Justice, Mrs. Beatrice Jedy-Agba, lamented that the rights of millions of African children were being violated daily without any effective remedy. The AGF further observed that Nigeria was witnessing an alarming increase in crime and criminal activities involving juveniles that now require effective law to checkmate. "Our recent assessment of these institutes revealed the shortcomings of the present law. Contrary to the provisions of the Borstal Institutions and Remand Centres Act 2004, which allows for only the institutionalisation of offenders between the ages of 16-21, most children in the borstals are either below or above this age bracket. As the committee for the review of the Borstal Act was still settling down, concerned Nigerians are already setting an agenda going forward. Speaking exclusively to Blueprint Weekend, Mr William Ekosan advocated that considering the sensitive nature of the people involved, the federal government newly inaugurated committee for the review he noted should strive to be humane and liberal in its outcome or abolish the borstal totally. "The committee should ensure that only the more serious juvenile offenders are committed to the borstal homes for corrections. "I think it is high time we copied something reasonable from the other climes and replicate it well and save the system some hassles," he stated.

News

Buhari sued over fines on Daily Trust, others'

The **Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP)** and the **Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development (CJID)** have filed a lawsuit against President Muhammadu Buhari, asking the court to "declare arbitrary and illegal the N5 million imposed on Trust TV, **Multichoice Nigeria Limited**, NTA-Startimes Limited and TelCom Satellite Limited, over their documentaries on terrorism in the country."

Joined in the suit as Defendants are the Minister of Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed, and the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC).

NBC had last week imposed the fines on the media houses, claiming that their documentaries "glorified the activities of bandits and undermines national security in Nigeria", and contravene the provisions of the Nigeria Broadcasting Code.

But in the suit number FHC/L/CS/1486/2022 filed last Friday at the Federal High Court, Lagos, SERAP and CJID are seeking: "an order setting aside the arbitrary and illegal fines of N5 million and any other penal sanction unilaterally imposed by the NBC on these media houses simply for carrying out their constitutional duties."

According to the plaintiffs: "The NBC and Mr Lai Mohammed have not shown that the documentaries by the media houses would impose a specific risk of harm to a legitimate State interest that outweighs the public interest in the information provided by the documentaries."

The plaintiffs said: "The documentaries by these independent media houses pose no risk to any definite interest in national security or public order."

The plaintiffs also said, "It is inconsistent and incompatible with the Nigerian Constitution 1999 [as amended] to invoke the grounds of 'glorifying terrorism and banditry' as justifications for suppressing access to information of legitimate public interest that does not harm national security."

The plaintiffs also said, "The documentaries by the independent media houses are in the public interest, and punishing the media houses simply for raising public awareness about these issues would have a disproportionate and chilling effect on their work, and on the work of other journalists and Nigerians."

According to the plaintiffs, "The action by the NBC and Mr Lai Mohammed is arbitrary, illegal, and unconstitutional, as it is contrary to section 39 of the Nigerian Constitution, and international human rights treaties including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which Nigeria has ratified."

The suit filed on behalf of the plaintiffs by their lawyers Kolawole Oluwadare and Adelanke Aremo, read in part: "A fine is a criminal sanction and only the court is empowered by the Constitution to impose it. Fine imposed by regulatory agencies like the NBC without recourse to the courts is unfair, illegal, and unconstitutional."

"The grounds of 'glorifying terrorism and banditry' used as the bases for sanctioning the



Buhari

media houses are entirely contrary to constitutional and international standards on freedom of expression and access to information."

"Imposing any fine whatsoever without due process of law is arbitrary, as it contravenes the principles of nemo judex in causa sua which literally means one cannot be a judge in his own cause and audi alteram partem which means no one should be condemned unheard."

"Article 19 (1) of the

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights establishes the right to freedom of opinion without interference. Article 19(2) establishes Nigeria's obligations to respect 'the right to freedom of expression,' which includes the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, regardless of frontiers."

"Under article 19(3), restrictions on the right to freedom of expression must be 'provided by law', and necessary 'for respect of the rights or reputations of others' or 'for the

protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health and morals'"

"Although article 19(3) recognizes 'national security' as a legitimate aim, the Human Rights Council, the body charged with monitoring implementation of the Covenant, has stressed 'the need to ensure that the invocation of national security is not used unjustifiably or arbitrarily to restrict the right to freedom of opinion and expression.'"

"The grounds for imposing fines on these independent media houses fail to meet the requirements of legality, necessity, and proportionality."

"The requirement of necessity also implies an assessment of the proportionality of the grounds, with the aim of ensuring that the excuse of 'glorifying terrorism and banditry' and 'national security' are not used as a pretext to unduly intrude upon the rights to freedom of expression and access to information."

The plaintiffs are also seeking the following reliefs:

A DECLARATION that the act of the Defendants imposing a fine of Five Million Naira each on the independent media houses is unlawful, inconsistent with, and amounts to a breach of the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality and therefore a

violation of the rights to freedom of expression, access to information, and media freedom;

A DECLARATION that the use of the Broadcasting Code by the NBC to impose sanctions on the independent media houses for an alleged infractions without recourse to the court constitutes an infringement on the provisions of sections 6[1] & [6][b] and 36[1] of the Nigerian Constitution 1999 and Articles 1 and 7 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Nigeria is a state party;

A DECLARATION that the provisions of the National Broadcasting Commission Act and the Nigeria Broadcasting Code which are arbitrarily being used by the Defendants to sanction, harass, intimidate and restrict the independent media houses are inconsistent and incompatible with sections 36[1], 39 and 22 of the Nigerian Constitution, Article 9 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and are null and void to the extent of their inconsistency and incompatibility;

A DECLARATION that the Defendants lack the legal power and authority to impose penalty

unlawfully and unilaterally, including fines, suspension, withdrawal of license or any form of punishment whatsoever on the independent media houses for promoting access to diverse opinions and information on issues of public importance;

AN ORDER OF COURT setting aside of the fine of Five Million Naira imposed by the Defendants, through the 3rd Defendant, each on Trust TV, Multichoice Nigeria Limited, TelCom Satellite Limited (TSTV) and NTA-Startimes Limited for televising the documentary by the British Broadcasting Corporation "BBC Africa Eye" titled "Bandits Warlords of Zamfara";

AN ORDER OF PERPETUAL INJUNCTION restraining the Defendants or any other authority, persons or group of persons from unlawfully shutting down, imposing fine, suspension, withdrawal of license or doing anything whatsoever to harass and intimidate or impose criminal punishment on the independent media houses or any of Nigeria's journalists and media houses for promoting access to diverse information on issues of public importance;

AND any other order or other order(s) that the Court deems fit to make in the circumstances

No date has been fixed for the hearing of the suit.

I'll continue to air my views about Nigeria

THE deposed Emir of Kano, Lamido Sanusi, says he will continue to speak and air his views to defend and rebuild Nigeria.

Mr. Sanusi, who is also the current Khalifah, Tijaniyat Movement of Nigeria, said this in Abuja at a stage play titled "Emir Sanusi: Truth in Time."

The play was written by Ahmed Yerima, a Professor of Drama at the Redeemer University and produced by Executive Chairman, Duke of Somolu Productions, Joseph Edgar.

The 14th emir said he has what it takes to contribute to nation-building because of his long history of service to the country.

He said he served as Chief Risk Officer at the United Bank for Africa, and at First Bank, and also as CBN governor; as Emir of Kano for six years and Khalifah, Tijaniyat Movement of

Nigeria.

Mr. Sanusi argued that he would be ungrateful to God if he expressed regret or sadness over his removal as emir in spite of the positions he occupied in life.

"I don't think that God has taken anything away from me. So, I have no regret."

"I turned 61 years last year and in those years, I had the honour of having been the Chief Risk Officer at United Bank for Africa (UBA) and the Chief Risk Officer at First Bank."

"I was Governor of Central Bank, Emir of Kano and now Khalifah, Tijaniyat Movement of Nigeria."

"If I have sadness, then I'm ungrateful. How many people have had the opportunity to be just one of those things?" he observed.

Mr. Sanusi added that many traditional rulers held leadership positions such as army

generals, governors, Nigeria Customs chiefs and others before their appointment as traditional rulers.

According to him, these traditional rulers gave their bits to serve this country.

"We have a long history of service to this country. My father as first Director-General of Nigeria Intelligence Agency set up the agency in 1960, the record is there to see."

"My parents, grandparents and great grandparents gave their lives to build this country."

"We will continue to devote energy to build this country. It doesn't belong to anyone; it belongs to all of us," Mr Sanusi stressed.

He said if he had a choice between sacrificing his

principles and holding on to his position, he would give up the position.

"History is always the best judge. The things that I said would happen, that caused me so much trouble, have happened."

"For me, I have absolutely no regret and I will continue to speak and voice my views. I will continue to defend this country," he said.

In his remarks, the playwright, Mr. Yerima, said he wanted people to watch how destiny prevailed on Mr Sanusi's grandfather, Emir Muhammadu Sanusi, who spent 10 years before he was removed and Mr Sanusi, the grandson who spent six years before he was also removed.

-Sanusi

"Also, they lived and live in a society. So, we want viewers to see the society's attitudes towards their service to humanity," he said.

The producer of the play, Mr Edgar, said it was the 14th edition produced by Duke of Somolu Productions.

"With a budget in excess of N40 million, this production is truly historical," he said.

Mr Edgar thanked the more than 35 sponsors of the play who took over 50 per cent of the budget for their support.

Lamido Sanusi was dethroned as Emir of Kano in March 2020 by Governor Abdullahi Ganduje, citing "total disrespect to lawful instructions from the Office of the Governor."

Atiku, Wike agree on reconciliation framework

The presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Atiku Abubakar, and Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike, have agreed on a framework for the resolution of the differences between them.

They reached the agreement at a meeting in Abuja held at the residence of a former Minister of Information and National Orientation, Jerry Gana.

It was the first time the two leaders would be meeting since Atiku overlooked Mr Wike and appointed Delta State Governor, Ifeanyi Okowa, as his running mate for the February 2023 presidential election.

The appointment infuriated Mr. Wike, who had been at the top of three names recommended by a committee that the candidate and the PDP set up for advice on the choice of the running mate.

The issue has led to a crisis

in the party, with other stakeholders also complaining that the leadership of the party is lopsided in favour of the North.

At a meeting he hosted last Sunday in Abuja, Mr Wike and his allies demanded the resignation of the national chairman, Iyorchia Ayu, as part of their conditions for reconciliation with Atiku.

But at a meeting on Tuesday, the National Working Committee of the party passed a vote of confidence on Mr Ayu while the Board of Trustees set up a committee to meet with Mr. Wike and his allies.

However, on Friday at the meeting facilitated by Mr. Gana, the two leaders agreed to set a committee within 48 hours that will draw up a framework for reconciliation of their differences.

Atiku and Mr. Wike agreed to nominate seven persons each for the committee, which will look at all the issues raised by

Mr Wike's group and advise the two leaders on how to address them.

It could not be confirmed if the two leaders have constituted the committee and the membership. Atiku's spokesperson, Paul Ibe, did not respond to calls to his phone on Sunday morning for his comments on this report.

CHANGE OF NAME
AZAMAN
I, formerly known as AZAMAN DEBORAH A , now wish to be known and addressed as AZAMAN DEBORAH AMINU . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.
EMMANUEL
I, formerly known as EMMANUEL DANIEL MOSES , now wish to be known and addressed as EMMANUEL ATANG DANIEL . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.



Sanusi

News

NAN applauds PPC for resilience

By JIDAUNA DARING

MANGEMENT and staff of Plateau publishing Corporation (PPC), publisher of **THE NIGERIA STANDARD** and **SUNDAY STANDARD** newspapers Jos have been applauded for keeping the newspaper alive.

Zonal Manager News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) North Central Mr. Kayode Olaitan gave the commendation when he led the delegation of his management team on a courtesy visit to the General Manager PPC, Dr Boniface Gwotbit in his office in Jos, on Tuesday.

Mr. Olaitan expressed happiness with the warm reception accorded them during the visit. He said that the purpose of the visit was for the two organizations to see how they can benefit from each other through partnership in the area of information discrimination as partners in progress.

The Zonal Manager explained that the other reason for their visit was to further build on the existing relationship that has been on ground long before now. He stated that, NAN has



Gwotbit

benefited a lot from the existing relationship with **THE NIGERIA STANDARD**.

Mr. Olaitan maintained that NAN stories are always reliable, adding that the organization is the most credible as it also remains as the giant of Africa, since its news is everywhere and are equally supplied to different medium.

Resounding, the General Manager, PPC, Dr, Boniface Gwotbit who was represented by the Editor daily of **THE NIGERIA**

STANDARD, Mr. Paul Jatau thanked Zonal manager, NAN, North Central and his Management team for the visit which he described as a good one to the corporation.

Dr. Gwotbit said that, PPC has been with NAN for a very long time and assured them of the corporation's readiness to continue with the existing partnership. He added that the organization would also take advantage of some of the agency's newly introduced products as partners in progress.

THE Emir of Agaie, Dr Yusuf Nuhu, and other relevant stakeholders in Niger State have confirmed that UNICEF's intervention to increase girl-child school enrolment in the state had been successful and commendable.

The UNICEF intervention is funded by the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the UK.

The Girl Education Project (GEP3) intervention began in Niger in 2012 and ended in 2021.

It was executed in nine local government areas of the state including Shiroro, Agaie, Gbako, Edati, Mariga, Mashegu, Rafi, Kontagora and Munya.

Speaking with our reporter in Minna, Niger State in central Nigeria recently, the Emir of Agaie, Dr Yusuf Nuhu, said traditional leaders also made useful contributions to the success of the intervention.

He observed that the intervention also encouraged the girl child to stay in school and complete her studies rather than abandoning same for early marriage.

DrNuhu said that the emirate actually put a ban on withdrawal of girls from schools by parents for such premature marriages.

"We had cases where some parents approached school authorities to withdraw girls for marriages, but the schools, with the support of traditional rulers, frustrated the moves.

"It is all the more painful as this usually happens when the girls are about completing their number of years in school.

"It is part of our responsibilities to encourage our people to go to school and we are playing that role well; we will continue to play it by protecting the girl child and making sure that girls are allowed to acquire education," the emir said.

On his part, the Education Secretary of Shiroro Local Government, Usman Tukura Ibrahim said, the authority has mapped out measures to ensure the sustainability of GEP 3 programme as the programme ended last year.

"We have designed a programme which will not allow the programme to die a natural death in Shiroro Local Education Authority; part of it is that the Master trainers in various schools are to be reorganized to train others"

He said they will be trained and will in turn train teachers in various schools to ensure continuity of UNICEF

THE police in Imo State has disclosed they have arrested eight suspected members of the outlawed Indigenous People of Biafra who allegedly killed four police officers at Agwa Divisional Police Headquarters in Oguta Local Government Area of the state.

The police spokesperson in the state, Michael Abattam, disclosed this in a statement on Monday.

it was reported that the four police officers were killed Friday night when gunmen attacked the police facility.

Mr Abattam said the suspects were arrested when police operatives raided their hideouts at about 3 p.m. on Saturday, hours after the attack.

He said the arrest followed a directive by the Commissioner of Police in the state, Ahmed Barde, that those behind the attack must be tracked down.

The police spokesperson said the suspects, on sighting the operatives, engaged them in a shootout.

But the operatives overpowered the suspects and arrested eight of them, while others fled, he said.

Traditional ruler, stakeholders laud UNICEF on girl education

From MATHEW JWANTU, Minna

programmes.

"This has become necessary for the fact that the programme was able to showcase the importance of girl child education. Before now girls were taken out of school for marriages, but now they have realized that enrolment of girl child in school is the best legacy. In most cases, educated girl child takes care of parents than boys", he stated.

Given the statistics of the enrollment in Primary School, the Head Teacher, Sa'adatu Ibrahim said in 2019, enrollment of male students was 37 while that of female was 35 in 2020 male enrollment was 40 while female were 50, in 2021 male enrollment was 35 while that of female was 60. In 2022, male enrollment was 33 while that of female was 50.

In his contribution, Mr Yabagi Ndanusa, Head Teacher of Suleiman Primary School in Agaie Local Government Area confirmed that the intervention had helped in the enrolment of more girls in school.

"Before now, the population of pupils in this school was 699 pupils, now the number has increased to 785 pupils and out of this number we have 485 girls while the boys are 300" Before now, we had more boys than girls," he said.

Also speaking with our reporter, Malam Aliyu Ibrahim, Chairman, School Based Management

Committee (SBMC) in the school, attributed the increase in girls enrolment to continuous sensitisation of parents and guardians.

"In the past, there was not much awareness; parents were not allowing their children, especially the female ones to go to school.

"Since UNICEF's intervention, many parents are now realising the importance of sending their children to school, especially the girls," he said.

Ibrahim said the SBMC had been assisting some of the less privileged pupils with school uniforms and instructional materials. In collaboration with the Parents Teachers Association.

Another respondent, Malam Mohammed Ado, Head Teacher at Islamic Training Centre, Agaie, said girls were now allowed to enrol at the centre consequent upon UNICEF's intervention.

"Before now, the centre admitted only boys, but UNICEF's intervention helped us to accept girls into the centre and they now outnumber the boys.

"We have 257 pupils out of which 150 of them are girls. UNICEF also provided us with school uniforms and instructional materials as well as grant to construct blocks of classrooms," Ado said.

He also told our reporter that the intervention enabled the centre to expand its curriculum beyond Arabic Language to accommodate English Language and Mathematics.



Sani

Police arrest eight IPOB suspects

The hideouts, according to the police, were between Agwa and Izombe communities in the Oguta Local Government Area.

All the suspects are from the two communities, the police said.

Mr Abattam gave the names of the arrested suspects as Chibuike Obioma, 18; Chidiebere Achazie, 22; Onyedikachi Nwadike, 19; Anayo Onyemere, 51; and Ifeanyi Mboyi, 26.

Others are, Chukwudi Onyeausi, 29; Promise Obodo, 17; and Ebubechi Ifeobu, 22 – all males.

"On their way out of the hoodlums' hideouts, one of the overzealous suspects, Ifeanyi Mboyi, attempted escaping from lawful custody of the operatives and was swiftly demobilised by police operatives," the police spokesperson said.

He said the suspect sustained bullet injury on his left leg and was taken to the Federal Medical Center Owerri for medical treatment.

One pump action gun, two locally made guns, six cutlasses, one Biafran flag eight live cartridges, eight expended cartridges and one masquerade apparel, were among the items recovered from the suspects, according to the police.

The Commissioner of Police in the state, Mr Barde, has appealed to residents of the state to join hands with the police and other security agencies in the fight against crimes in the state.

Mr Barde urged residents to report any suspicious activities around their neighbourhoods to the police.

Groups commend Bello for appointing Zakari as commissioner

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE Iyale Progressive Forum (IPF) and Iyale Area Development Association (IADA), have extolled Governor Yahaya Bello, over the appointment of their son, Dr. Zakari Usman as the new Kogi State Commissioner for Health.

The IPF and IADA gave the commendation in a separate statement made available to journalists in Lokoja on Monday.

A statement by the IPF's National Coordinator, Mr Peter Zakari, said the development came as a result of the governor's love and kind heartedness towards the people of Dekina Local Government Area.

"We thank Governor Yahaya

Bello for the appointment of our young and talented medical doctor, who had passed through much medical training with lots of experiences recorded by him over the years.

"It would also ensure the Inclusion of our own into the cabinet level and for the timely and effective management of our health workforce and facilities across the state.

"We believe in the capacity of Dr. Zakari Usman and his ability to take Kogi State health management systems into the world class levels for optimal performance", he said.

The IPF National Coordinator stressed that the former Chief Medical Director of the Kogi Hospital

Management Board, would do more as Health Commissioner for the state and the people by the grace of God.

Also, a statement jointly signed by IADA National President, Mr. Gowon Abimaje; and its Chairman, Lokoja chapter, Mr. Jacob Idajili, thanked the governor for his wit, love and kindness at picking their own, Dr. Zakari Usman as commissioner for health.

IADA described the appointment of their son as the Honourable Commissioner for Health as a great asset to Kogi State and Nigeria in general.

They noted that Dr Zakari's stint as the CMD of Kogi Hospital Management Board (HMB) was the right decision because he is well experienced and groomed to breathe fresh air into the health sector for meaningful and effective service delivery to the people of the state.

They expressed hope that the newly sworn-in Health Commissioner would bring his experience to bear in leaps and bound for the various growth and development of the health institutions in the state.

They stressed that the invaluable experience that Zakari had garnered as the CMD of Kogi Hospital Management Board would be of immense contributions to the state's health sector.



Bello

News

Gunmen kill two vigilante members, abduct several residents

GUNMEN have killed two members of a local vigilante group and abducted several residents of Shola Quarters in Katsina metropolis Sunday morning.

Those kidnapped in the attack that lasted for over an hour include a newly married couple.

Shola Quarters is situated behind the Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Teaching Hospital (formerly Federal Medical Center) Katsina.

The area, which is in the heart of the city, hosts commercial shops and residents as well as government offices.

It was gathered from residents who asked not to be named that the terrorists invaded the area around 1:25 a.m and operated for over an hour without being confronted by state security personnel.

"It was the vigilante members that even stood against them but they (bandits) killed two of them and wounded the other two. The vigilante members had to retreat to their houses when the bandits overpowered them and it was just now (morning) that we retrieved the two corpses and took the wounded ones to the hospital," the resident said.

Usman Masanawa, a cousin of the abducted newly-wed, explained how they were kidnapped.

"These (attacks) are becoming scary. I used to reside in the area but had no option but to relocate. When they came, Yusuf Bishir (the husband) called to inform me but there was nothing I could have done. We went there this morning and they didn't even enter the house through the entrance gate; they smashed the wall and got access into the house," Mr Masanawa said.

Mr Masanawa said the number of residents abducted couldn't be ascertained but "other residents said some houses were attacked and people abducted."

"We need time to know those who have been abducted and those who got scared and ran to other areas," He said.

He added that aside from the wounded vigilante members, other residents who sustained gunshot injuries had been taken to the teaching hospital for treatment.

The police spokesperson in the state, Gambo Isa, responded via WhatsApp, when contacted.

"Our officers are on operations and will communicate with details in due course on the operation."

He refused to provide further details.

Residents of the metropolitan centre have lamented the high rate of attacks on communities in the capital city.

Katsina, like many other states in the North-west and a part of the North-central, has been witnessing bandits' activities for years but the attacks were mostly witnessed in local areas.

In Katsina State, areas like



IGP Alkali

Kankara, Jibia, Faskari, Batsari, Kurfi, Safana, Danmusa, Dandume, Sabuwa, Funtua, Bakori, Dutsin MaMa have been in the grip of terrorists leading to the death of hundreds of thousands of people and displacement of others.

But in recent days, terrorists are becoming more daring and attacking areas in the metropolis.

A public affairs commentator in Katsina, Muhammad - Aminu Kabir, lamented that the attacks were becoming worrisome.

"It's disturbing. Does that mean the bandits are now done with local communities? This was not the first time they're attacking Shola Quarters in a few months.

"Remember they had been seen around the outskirts of the city. Some days ago, they attacked Natsinta village which is not far from the **Natsinta Army Barrack**. They also attacked the Dan Tsauni area on the road to

Babbar Ruga where they killed several people and rustled an unknown number of cows," Mr Kabir said.

Mr Masanawa said he relocated from the Shola Quarters to another area but he still feels unsafe.

"Because we could still hear gunshots in the area I relocated to. Are we going to be building houses just to evade being abducted? How about those who couldn't afford to be building houses or even renting?"

A broadcast journalist, Mukhtar Gazali, a resident of the metropolis, said the attackers are becoming daring.

"When they attacked Shola Quarters the other time, nobody in my house slept. The children cried till morning because we could hear the gunshots. It only means that the terrorists are becoming bold and it's a sign that this banditry of a thing is far from over," he said.

Amotekun intercepts 320 suspected invaders 'coming from north'

THE Ondo State Security Network (popularly known as Amotekun) has intercepted a total of 320 persons suspected to be invaders as they were moving into the state from the northern part of the country.

The Amotekun Corps made the interceptions in two different operations.

The first was on 4 August when they found at least 152 persons around 6 a.m. during a stop and search along Akure-Ado-Ekiti road.

A fresh interception of a group of 168 persons was made on Sunday along with nine kidnap suspects.

The drivers of the trucks conveying the alleged invaders claimed they were coming from Abuja, Kano, Katsina, and Jigawa States to Ondo State.

While addressing journalists in Akure about the incident, after the arrest last Thursday, the Commander of Amotekun in Ondo State, Adetunji



Amotekun operatives

The Governorship candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Bauchi State in the 2023 election, Air Marshal Saddique Baba Abubakar (rtd) has denied involvement in alleged recruitment of 1,000 thugs and militants that would enable him intimidate his opponents and win the election in 2023. Describing the story as "false, untrue, fabrication and maliciously mockery," Air Marshal Abubakar lamented that "this story is ostensibly a fabrication to mislead the average Bauchi voters who are increasingly showing interests in ensuring the success of the All Progressive Congress candidate in the 2023 gubernatorial election."

This defense statement was made by Salisu Ahmed Barau, Chairman, Air Marshal Saddique Baba Abubakar Media & Publicity Committee where he said that "owing to the colossal failure of the ruling party to provide the State with purposeful leadership and dividends of democracy in the past three years it has

Abubakar denies involvement in thugs' recruitment

From ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

resorted to cheap blackmail. This political mischief, wrapped in a news garment, is apparently a dirty political hatchet job that calls for immediate clarification from the Air Marshal Saddique Baba Abubakar Media Office."

The statement titled 'Re: Ex-Chief of Air Staff, Saddique, Ruling APC Recruit '1000 Militants, Political Thugs' Ahead of Bauchi Governorship Election,' said the story is but "a comical political publication trending as news item."

According to the statement: "To put the records straight, the publication in question, which publishers credited their sources to an unnamed Colonel of the Nigerian Army, said it is in possession of a 'security signal' on the said recruitment exercise, without further presenting facts, but only quoted some anonymous 'politicians' who obviously funded the publication.

"Honourable Shehu Aliyu Musa (Barden Gabas of Bauchi), who is member of the

association attended the meeting that was organized to congratulate him on his emergence as the running mate to Air Marshal Saddique Baba Abubakar with the leadership of the Bauchi State Amalgamated Associations of Butchers, Hunters, Cobblers, Blacksmiths, and Barbers after opening the Associations' State Secretariat in Bauchi. "Surprisingly, the newspaper in question only chose to replace the names of Butchers, Hunters, Cobblers, Blacksmiths, and Barbers with 'Militants and Political Thugs', mainly to give dog a bad name in order to justify its hanging."

The Air Marshal Abubakar Campaign Spokesperson explained that "as law-abiding citizens, we did not hold the meeting in question until we officially sought for and obtained the approval of the Bauchi State Police Commissioner who was represented at the meeting by an Assistant Superintendent of Police.

Okada ban has reduced traffic robbery, accidents -sanwo-Olu

GOVERNOR Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State has said that traffic robberies and accidents have significantly reduced following the directive on motorcyclists transportation.

He spoke during a chat on Channels TV's Sunday Politics programme.

Commercial motorcyclists called Okada riders were banned by the governor from plying in six local government areas in the

state - Eti-Osa, Ikeja, Surulere, Lagos Island, Lagos Mainland, and Apapa and nine local government councils areas.

It is not the first time the government would impose the measure.

In January 2020, the government banned the operation of motorcyclists in 15 local councils across the state.

The governor said that since he gave the directive to restrict the motorcyclists in certain areas of the state, residents have written to him commending the development.

"We've also seen a significant drop in accidents. You know, we don't see people being lame, you know, cutting off limbs in our hospitals again, because these were reckless driving that usually terminate people's life, unexpectedly," he said.

"We've seen tremendous improvement in that statistics to support. In terms of death drop in the last two months. At the peak of it, we

saw about 550 Okada-related accidents at the peak of it in January for over a month.

"Now, it's coming down to less than 100 direct Okada accidents that we've seen, from our hospitals."

Mr Sanwo-Olu said there is no need to replicate the Western Nigeria Security Network called Amotekun Corps in Lagos.

Since its establishment in 2020, the security outfit has been operational in five states in the South-west except for Lagos.

He said the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Corps is a replica of the security outfit which "works closely" with the Nigerian Police Force.

"We have the Lagos State Neighbourhood Watch, which are almost 7,000 men that have been trained, that have been energized and are working day to day in the state," he said.

"There's no need to reinvent the wheel."



Sanwo-Olu

Questions our leaders must pounder on...



By **BULUS GAMBO**

Nigeria today is basically under enormous pressure even as many of its citizens are becoming increasingly overwhelmed by these difficulties. Evidently, the past few months have equally been traumatizing considering the number of our citizens already consumed or are presently sitting on the edge.

More than ever experienced before in the annals of our nation's history, we are living in a country which is driven by the interest of a collective few rather than that of us all. Unfortunately, in the words of a former United States of America's President Bill Clinton, though Nigeria is a rich country, many of its citizens are wallowing in abject poverty.

Evidently, Nigerians are facing serious problems which if care is not taken would consume the entirety of the nation. Sad enough, we are presently at a cross road with a slim chance of escape as far as our quest for nation building, integration, socio-economic and political

advancement is concern.

This nasty ordeal has prompted most of us to begin to ask essential questions pertaining to acts of governance and its ripple effects on the polity.

Therefore, yours sincerely is also prompted to ask further crucial questions on hiccups inherent in our quest for nationhood. I am therefore further prompted to ask; are the political leaders of this country really aware that the common man is suffering? Are they in the picture of the reality of the fact that many people cannot afford three square meals a day? Are they still aware of our security problems which have consumed many innocent people and we cannot at the moment travel for an appreciable distance without being molested? Do they know that some parts of this nation are in our authoritative disposition only on paper?

Are these leaders of ours aware of the kind of weapons these ruthless insurgents are using against our defenceless citizens and or incapacitated security agents? Is it true that the Nigerian government has been sincere in its fight against some or all of these criminal elements?

If most of these bandits and criminal elements are not the citizens of this country, should we or our government continue to treat them with kid gloves? Since most of these Boko Haram members are foreigners, what are we rehabilitating them and which society will they be able to fit into please?

What concrete plans do we have to save this country from total collapse and or what modalities do we have on ground to deal with

this ruthless aggression?

Since we have identified religious extremism as one of the key factors creating these problems, what are we doing about it in the country? What are the federal and state governments doing to sanction these extremists who are hell bend on setting this nation on fire? Come to think of it more properly, how can we disengage our young from being drafted into such a misguided mission at our nation's peril?

If at all, most of our vulnerable youth who are conscripted into this sect are the jobless ones, what must we do to help them out? In the first place however, has the Federal Government through its policies been fair to the youth of this country? Have we been carrying our youth who are our future leaders along in times of letting them believe in Nigeria, their motherland? Can any of our youth and even the older ones be proud to die for their country? Have we really been patriotic to the core in our respective obligations to our motherland?

Have the older generations been real role models for the youth of this nation? Are our leaders in the interest of leading this country, as dreamt and fashioned out by our founding fathers?

Are some of our political leaders behaving normally, and are they really their actual selves? Should I be wrong to say that some of them are highly possessed by demons and no longer in control? Are some of our politicians' behavioral attitude exhibited by them today that which we knew them did long before now? Will I be wrong to suggest that some of



our political leaders in this country need deliverance this very moment?

How many of our political and religious leaders in this country can before God and man swear that all and or most of the decisions and programmes they have associated themselves with or taken are in the best interest of Nigeria? How many of them can confidently look at the citizens of this country in their eyes and boldly declare that since this country started facing some of these ruthless challenges; they have stood their ground on the side of justice, equity, and fair play?

But again, how many of our leaders can boldly say that when wrong decisions in the act of governance were taken, they threatened to quit and or have faced their other political colleagues and told them face-to-face that as far as this strategy is concerned, it will not work for Nigeria?

I want to ask our leaders to tell us with all sincerity of purpose that all the decisions they have continued to take are in the best interest of the citizens and will facilitate national integration.

Are we the ordinary citizens of this country supporting genuine candidates who can remove us from our present predicament or is it that monetary gains and ethnic sentiments have

overwhelmed our sense of reasoning?

Are all these clergymen who chastise us in our places of worship seeing the atrocities our leaders are committing with impunity? Are these spiritual fathers of ours talking to some of these leaders of ours who have derailed from their anticipated obligations? Have our clergymen really not compromised and collected monies from these political leaders hence decided to stay mute even as the country is on the edge of total disintegration and chaos?

Have we learned our lessons and are prepared to change our unpleasant narratives or are still neck-deep toying with our future? Are we tired of what we see and are genuinely preparing to elect good leaders or still test trying our democratic experimentation? Are we still longing for this Maggi and salt Greek gifts from our politicians or this time around prepared to hold them to account? Do we know how many months our children have remained at home as universities stay closed or we don't even care about the prospects of our kids anymore?

We must answer some of these fundamental questions and re-examine ourselves on our expected obligations to our beloved nation.



By **HOSEA NYAMLONG**

WIKIPEDIA defines incest as human sexual activity between family members or close relatives. This kind of practice, include sexual activity between people in consanguinity blood relations and sometimes those related by affinity marriage or step-family, adoption, or lineage.

Incest taboo is one of the most widespread of all cultural taboos, both in present and in past societies. Most modern societies have laws regarding incest or social restrictions on closely consanguineous marriages

A common justification for prohibiting incest is avoiding inbreeding, a collection of genetic disorders suffered by the children of parents with a close genetic relationship. Such children are at

greater risk for congenital disorders, death, and developmental and physical disability, and that risk is proportional to their parents' coefficient of relationship a measure of how closely the parents are related genetically.

In both Christianity, Traditionalist and Islamic laws, marriage or sex among close relations like parents, step parents, uncles and Aunties are prohibited.

Today, it is disheartening that some fathers had canal knowledge and impregnated their daughters, while some adult males have also mated same kind of crime to their own blood sisters. No any day would passed without recording of incest cases in our communities.

Similarly, some mothers have engaged to have sexual knowledge of their male children.

Reportedly, incest mostly occurs when there is divorce, separation or prolonged sexual starvation within parents, giving room to some sexually active fathers to have sex with their matured daughters.

It was suggested that economic hardship and the shift in the role of women were also contributory factors because fewer women now stay at home and watch over their children. This often translates into pregnancy, abortion and untimely death,

stigma and social shame.

Again, when siblings are raised separately by different parents, because of divorce, they may ignorantly enter into sexual relationship with each other because of genetic sexual attraction.

Incest is a crime in Nigeria by virtue of Section 3, subsection 1, sub-sub section b of the Matrimonial Causes Act. Also, Section 33 of the Marriage Act forbids sexual relations and marriage among people who are related by blood. It is captured as "Prohibited degree of consanguinity."

Incestuous relationships or marriages are further prohibited in the 1st Schedule (Section 3) of the Matrimonial Causes Act, Cap 220, Law of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 1990, where it lists the prohibited degree of consanguinity to include that between father and daughter, mother and son, brother and sister, uncle and aunt, niece, and nephew.

In addition, Section 214 (3) of the Criminal Code Act (a criminal law that is applicable in and covers all parts of Nigeria), Caption 77, Law of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) prescribes a minimum of 14 years' imprisonment for those found guilty of incestuous liaison, which it referred to as "offence against morality."

However, the Nigeria legal system seems to prioritize more of the electoral offenses than the cases concerning the vulnerable citizens who are abused on daily basis.

Handling cases of electoral offense and other related matters have a time frame to conclude without delay, within the legal time frame.

Likewise, most cases of incest, linger in courts for a longer period of time without much attention. Perpetrators of such evil act continue to have field day on the vulnerable.

The effect of incest on the victims includes low self-esteem, trauma etc. Sometimes incest can result to other virginal diseases like, Vesicovaginal fistula (VVF), Gonorrhea, Syphilis and Bacterial Vaginosis etc to under aged girls or female victims.

It is a traumatic situation that renders victims into hatred or isolation. Most of the time the offenders of such criminal act do

threaten their victims against reporting them to any relevant authority.

However, the victims are forced to live with the fear and timidity of not exposing the offender for life

To this end, all hands must be on deck to fight this evil practice in our society. Nigeria under the Penal Code Law/Act has provisions for 'incest' as an offence and it can also under the Nigerian Criminal Laws be termed as rape and criminalized.

Parents, caregivers, guardian etc should be on the alert to ensure that families should avoid things that would cause separation or divorce within the family marriage circle. Children are to be properly cared for, protected from any incest practice.

It is expected that the National Assembly would make haste in passing the Sexual Offenses Bill, without any further delay and that States of the Federation would legislate similar law in

"Likewise, most cases of incest, linger in courts for a longer period of time without much attention. Perpetrators of such evil act continue to have field day on the vulnerable."

By JIDAUNA DARING

IN information dissemination, it is a fact that journalism profession entails a high degree of public interest when it comes to dishing out information to the public whether good or sad.

In order to maintain the profession, it is imperative for every member of the pen profession to as a matter of fact observe the highest professional and ethical standard, since truth remains its cornerstone.

With this, every member of the profession should strive diligently while carrying out his or her professional assignment in order to always ascertain the truth of or happenings in reportage, since journalists are saddled with the responsibilities of keeping people inform or abreast base on the happenings in the society at all times.

The members of the pen profession on their part should know that the public also have rights to know factual, accurate, balanced and fair reportage which remains the ultimate objectives of good journalism and of course the basis of earning public trust and confidence.

It is also on this note that every member of the pen profession must imbibe the culture of staying away from publishing or airing inaccurate and misleading information that can tear the people apart.

To sustain the tenet of this profession, every journalist should neither solicit nor accept bribe, gratification to suppress publishing any information.

It equally behooves on journalists to strive to employ open and honest means, particularly in gathering of information, exceptional methods may perhaps be employed only when the public's interest is at stake. Be that as it may, journalists should also inculcate the spirit of promoting universal principles of human rights, democracy, justice, equity, peace and international understanding for the betterment of the society.

However, it may interest you to know that, it was not a misplacement of vision or priority by late J.D Gompwalk to have established **THE NIGERIA STANDARD** newspapers in 1972 whose aim was to amplify the voice of the Middle Belt. The organization since it's establishment has trained many veteran journalists who are scattered across Nigeria.

Interestingly, this reputable organization is still adjudged as a training ground or centre of journalism profession practice and other directorates despite some of the challenges faced, particularly in the area of working tools. With such challenges, the entire workforce of the organization is still doing its best in keeping the newspaper alive.

Again, the organization did not stop at training good hands in journalism profession, but it has also produced sound Executive Council (EXCO) of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Nigeria Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ) and Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN) at state and National levels.

Indeed, records have proven or shown that, all those that have served at both levels have left important legacies that their members would live to remember them for based on their various outstanding performances both serving and former while in office.

In this regard, one would not forget about the likes of Mr. Katdapba Gobum and Mr. Paul Jatau former and current state council chairmen of NUJ, Mrs. Jennifer Yarima, NAWOJ, Mrs. Lucy Chindaba national secretary of NAWOJ; Mr. Ibrahim Lot and Mr. Andre Bisyt former and present SWAN state chairmen among

others.

In fact, if PPC chapel has gone that far to produce and is still hatching more of such wonderful leaders, then what else can one say? The only thing for people to say is "don't mine the building but mine the staff who in turn are engine room of the organization".

It was in view of this that newly elected Executive Council (EXCO), Nigeria Union of Journalists ((NUJ), Plateau Publishing Corporation (PPC) chapel, Publishers of **THE NIGERIA STANDARD** and **SUNDAY STANDARD** Jos, have

Political Editor of **THE NIGERIA STANDARD**, Mrs. Lucy Chindaba told the new exco that any position of responsibility given needs to be taken with serious commitment. She urged the exco to come up with some new ideas particularly, progressive ideas for the chapel.

Earlier in his remarks, Electoral Committee Chairman (ELCOM), Mr. Fwengji Go'ar told the congress that the candidates were all returned unopposed but were affirmed by the congress before the oath of office was administered to them by Barrister Mrs. Nenrot Thomas.

NUJ PPC chapel gets new EXCO



Newly sworn-in officials of the chapel



Former Managing Editor, Katdapba Gobum and Jennifer Yarima



Paul Jatau, NUJ state council chairman

been charged to take the responsibility bestowed on them with seriousness while discharging their duties.

Chairman NUJ Plateau State council, Mr. Paul Jatau who was represented by the council's Assistant Secretary, Mr. Jabbe Wudetawo gave the charge shortly after the inauguration of the new EXCO of the chapel, held at the corporation's Newsroom, recently.

Mr. Jatau congratulated the exco and urged them to support the leadership of the state council so as to move the council to greater height. He said that journalists remain the watch dog and agenda setters of the society.

He also told the exco that as far as leadership is concerned, they have a lot of work to do for the chapel. The Assistant Secretary also advised the exco to always keep record of whatever programmes they will do at all times.

Mr. Jatau, the state council chairman while also speaking as a member of PPC Chapel encouraged the chapel members to always frequent the council's secretariat to interact with others. He emphasized that they are praying and also hoping that the uncompleted work at the council's secretariat will soon be completed and put to use for its members.

In her goodwill message,

Mr. Go'ar emphasized the need for all hands to be on deck. He also appreciated all members of the chapel for the support and cooperation accorded them before and during the election which was conducted peacefully.

In his acceptance speech, the new chairman of the NUJ, PPC Chapel, Mr. Israel N. Lar expressed delight and thanked its members for finding them worthy to serve in various capacities, assuring them of their readiness to carry everybody along during their tenure for the next 3 years.

THE NIGERIA STANDARD reports that other Exco members elected and sworn-in, include, Celestine Attasar, Vice Chairman; Kenneth Dareng, Secretary; Hosea Nyamlong, Assistant Secretary; Lois Daduut, Financial Secretary and Namu Sanusi, Treasurer.

Giving the vote of thanks, chapel secretary, Kenneth Dareng appreciated all members for the confidence reposed on them and promised to make transparency and accountability their watch word.

Mr. Dareng while thanking the General Manager, Dr. Boniface Gwotbit and his management team for the support given them to conduct the election also promised to have good working relationship with the management as well as the leadership of the state council.



State council assistant secretary, Jabbe Detawo and Ezekiel Izang, council Auditor



Pauline Dallong and Yvonne Ishola, News Editor



IMAGES

PPC GENERAL MANAGER RECEIVES NEW NUJ PPC CHAPEL EXCO

Plateau Publishing Corporation (PPC) General Manager, Dr. Boniface Gwotbit yesterday received the new Executive Council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists, PPC Chapel on a courtesy call in his office, Jos



Dr. Boniface Gwotbit KSM, General Manager, PPC (right) shaking hands with the new NUJ PPC Chapel Chairman, Mr. Israel Lar



A cross section of PPC Management staff on hand to receive the NUJ PPC Chapel EXCO



A cross section of the newly elected Chapel officials during the courtesy



General Manager, PPC, Dr. Boniface Gwotbit, Management Staff in a group photograph with the NUJ EXCO of PPC Chapel

Photos: JOHN LAR

...ALSO RECEIVES NAN ZONAL MANAGER

The General Manager, Plateau Publishing Corporation, Dr. Boniface Gwotbit also received the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) Zonal Manager, North Central Zone, Mr. Kayode Olaitan in his office, Jos. The GM was represented by the Editor, The Nigeria Standard, Mr. Paul Jatau



Mr. Paul Jatau, Editor, The Nigeria Standard (right) receiving the Zonal Manager, Mr. Kayode Olaitan



Mr. Paul Jatau, Editor, The Nigeria Standard who stood in for the PPC General Manager responding to the message by the Zonal Manager, NAN



Representative of PPC General Manager, Mr. Paul Jatau, Management and the Zonal Manager, NAN in a group photograph



A cross section of some PPC Management Staff during the visit by the NAN Zonal Manager

Photos: JOHN LAR

Odd World

Women who 'came back from dead want to go back

JESSIE Sawyer and Betty Eadie both 'died' after undergoing hospital procedures and have shared what the afterlife is really like - and they've relived their brush with death on America's Inside Edition TV programme.

Two women who momentarily died have shared what the afterlife is really like - and one said it was so nice that she wants to go back.

Jessie Sawyer and Betty Eadie both had a brush with death after undergoing surgery and have shared their insight into life, death, and "heaven".

One told how she met up with her best friend who had died two years before, while the other said she met Jesus Christ, God, angels and "three really ancient men", as the Daily Star reports.

They shared their stories on America's Inside Edition TV programme, and one of the women said it was so nice they would "quite happily die tomorrow".

Betty, who is now 78, had her afterlife experience after a hysterectomy operation.

She said: "I was in the recovery room and suddenly felt every drop of blood had drained from my body and then this sensation of my spirit coming out of body at tremendous speed. I looked down and saw my body lying on the bed.

"I knew I had died and thought, 'oh my God, I'm dead'."

Betty said she then saw three "really ancient men" who told her she had died.

She told them that she very much wanted to see her family, so she "flew" out the window and went to her house.

"My husband was sitting in the armchair and I stood next to him, I was concerned because he didn't know I had died, nor had my children, and I was worried for all of them.

"But then I was given a glimpse into their futures and saw they'd all lead good lives."

Betty said she then returned to her hospital bed and went into a tunnel and into black space where she felt "extremely relaxed and comfortable".

At the end of the tunnel she was met by a figure. "It was Jesus Christ," she said. "He hugged me and said, it's not yet your time.

"Then three women - angels - appeared and Jesus told them, show her everything she needs to know, and I

was taken to the most beautiful garden I'd ever seen, like nothing I'd ever seen on Earth.

"The angels then took me around every planet and then Jesus told me I had to go back to Earth but I didn't want to.

"Then the most beautiful man I've ever seen appeared and it was God and he told me I had to go back and I saw my body and went back into it."

Betty said five years later she told her doctor about the experience and he confirmed that medically she had 'died' for a short time.

Jessie had a near-death experience.

She said the experience was so profound that she wants to go back to the other life she briefly experienced.

Mum of two Jessie told how she 'died' aged just 31 after being rushed into hospital with internal bleeding after a gynaecological procedure.

Now, years after the experience, Jessie said she no longer fears death. "I have no fear of dying now, I could die right now and I'd be perfectly OK with it."

Jessie said: "If you'd have told me 10 years ago I would have a near-death experience I wouldn't have believed you, I don't even believe in God."

Jessie Sawyer, in her hospital bed after recovering from her near death experience.

Describing what her 'death' was like, Jessie said: "In the distance I could see a figure and I recognised it as one of my best friends who had died two years before.

"I also saw a bright light and that's when I realised this is death, this is my death."

Jessie said she then saw how her death had affected her husband and two children.

"I was shown how my death would impact my family - that my two children, although grief-stricken, would grow up and have good lives," she said.

Her near-death experience didn't last very long and Jessie said she then saw herself fall back into her body, "which hurt".

Afterwards she told doctors what had happened and they told her she probably had briefly died. "They said I was walking the line between life and death for a while," she said.

Source: The Mirror



Municipal militarization strategy at Nigeria's peril

BENUE State recently joined the list of other states in Nigeria currently creating frontline groups to help in countering unrelenting attacks perpetrated by various criminal clusters who are always unleashing acts of terror on the citizenry. During the brief induction ceremony for the 500 community Volunteer Guards members drawn from 23 local government areas, the state Governor, Samuel Ortom was unequivocal about the huge menace these unending acts of banditry, herders/farmer kidnappings including other terrorist activities have continued to create in this country.

In Benue State alone, these marauders have killed many countless gullible citizens with impunity even as the state continue to face such challenges without the central government doing anything about it. In the past few years, many other states in the likes of Nasarawa, Plateau and Taraba States amongst other states in the Middle Belt and the country at large have been subjected under these difficulties. Though as vulnerable as these states are, nothing quite convincing has been done to help these states overcome their outrageous difficulties.

But again, one cannot forget the fact that some states in the north western and north eastern states have also had their own share of these unpalatable experiences. This unacceptable nefarious activities of Boko Haram sect have left behind gory sights to excruciatingly watch. This ill-starred development has resulted in several schools being closed, large number of Internally Displaced Persons, (IDP's) on the increase while the proliferating excruciating poverty level in the nation has continued to wreck the lives of ordinary citizens.

Yours sincerely recalls with inordinate nostalgia that prior to both the 2015 and 2019 elections, the leadership of this country had promised to secure the nation through provisions of efficient strategies to the best of their abilities. At a point, the President of Nigeria, Mohammadu Buhari intuitively based on his workable timelines disclosed his government's objective to salvage the nation from this unabated security predicament. Since then, President Buhari has continued to reassure citizens that the days of terrorists and insurgents are numbered. We have equally witnessed several Executive Council meetings and heads of security agencies appearing before the Senate telling Nigerians that our security agents are still on top of the situation.

Yet, in the midst of these unresolvable security challenges, many state Governors, regions and stakeholders have opted for the establishment of community based security networks as the only efficient remedy and alternative to the issue of growing insecurity concerns in the nation. This evidently shows how clueless the hierarchy of these organizations have become in most recent times.

Within this same period under review, many community motivated security organizations, state and or regionally backed security outfits have also been fashioned out to help tackle some of these challenges. Just recently, the Governor of Zamfara State Bello weary of the persistent horrid murder and annihilation of the citizens of his state called on all to carry arms and defend themselves.

Within this same line of thoughts, vigilante groups in Wase Local Government Area of Plateau State who have adopted this methodology are testifying on the possible workability of the strategy.

Mind you, sometimes back, some communities in the area came under heavy attack where more than one hundred people were killed. This sad re-occurrences forced the community to organize themselves through a proficient security network to defend themselves by repelling some of these senseless attacks which for now has successfully repelled some of these attacks against their communities. So far, we have witnessed other states and regions touring the same line of thoughts with the emergence of the Amotekun in the South West, the Civilian JTF in the North East and other vigilante groups almost everywhere in the country.

Even as many communities are arming themselves to significantly repel these attacks so as to reduce acts of insecurity to the bearable level, many individuals have equally expressed worry and great concern over the growing militarization of our communities in this country. Just recently, a security expert was quoted as saying that should Nigeria fail to overcome its security challenges in few years to come, many more communities would be left with no other option than to venture into more illegal weapons purchase so as to contain the obvious.

Basically and from all indications, Nigeria has sincere been overwhelmed by the complex nature of insurgency and banditry attacks on its citizens. Though more resources are pumped into the security sector, the zeal and spirit of patriotism exhibited by managers of these resources including security agencies' hierarchy have not just been convincing.

Thus, it is becoming more obvious that such resources only end up in private pockets than for the jobs it was intended for. In some cases, such funds' managers do fail in justifying how and where most of these resources were deployed and efficiently used to better our nation's security architecture.

This colossal show of ineptitude through persistent acts of personal aggrandizement has left us where we are as a people today. This consistent acts of administrative ingenuity exhibited by our leaders has forcefully taken us back to Egypt and left full of lamentations.

Now that our communities have taken it upon themselves to arm themselves, we must reexamine some of these activities and its long implication on the polity. We must also think with all sense of responsibility the kind of country we intent to transit to our children and children's children.

It is quite true that Nigeria's security situation has deteriorated and become a laughing stock in the comity of nations. It is becoming a huge disgrace that as the giant of Africa, Nigeria cannot defend its citizens from any kind of either external and or internal aggression.

This ugly trend of obvious incapacitation has left us with no other option than to confront some of these violent non-state actors by ourselves. Consequently, many more illegal weapons are finding themselves in the hands of wrong people all the time.

As the stark reality of this unfortunate unfolding developments stare us in the eye however; we must also come to terms with the devastating implications of militarizing our respective communities in the past few years. Though we must hold to account our leaders who have failed in implement policies and or strategizes intended to secure us; arming our respective youths for them to protect us may spell doom for this country.

Feature

As St Lukes Cathedral (Ang) Primary School holds graduation

When the time comes for parents to witness the graduation ceremony of their children after years of toiling to provide funds for their education, their joy certainly knows no bound. In some cases, particularly amidst harsh economic realities of our time as such, it is these parents', responsibility to pay all the necessary bills and provide books for this same children of theirs. BULUS GAMBO writes.

THEREFORE, appreciating God in the aftermath of overcoming some of these huge challenges comes from the bottom of the parents' hearts. Thus, such parents become more appreciative if their children graduate with flying colors.

It is in this same spirit of thanksgiving and appreciating their children for successes recorded that the parents, well-wishers, staff and management of the famous St. Luke's Cathedral Anglican Primary School adjacent West of Mines in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State gathered to celebrate God's mercy on the lives of these children.

Therefore, the school's annual Speech and Thanksgiving/Graduation ceremony for 2022 was held by the proprietor and the management of the school to thank God for seeing them through another rigorous academic session and also granted the pupils of the school wisdom to overcome inevitable educational hiccups to achieve this feat.

Speaking at the event, the Head Teacher of the school, Oyelana Felix explained that "Today marks a very special day for us as a school and our graduating class of 2022. Our graduands are all radiant, happy and looking forward to their next challenge in life. Coming thus far is a testimony to the glory and mercies of God coupled with a great deal of work and dedication from you our graduands. A kind reminder is for you to remember that completing primary school is the first step in your journey of educational pursuit. As the saying goes, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step," Now you have taken the first step and have succeeded. Now, we send you out as our ambassadors in the midst of sheep and wolves."

He encouraged them noting that, "Remember all that you have gained from this institution and apply them positively in handling the challenges that lie ahead of you. Remember the word of the Lord in Mathew 10:16 which says, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Strive to acquire greatness, strive to acquire



Felix

knowledge, strive to acquire excellence and most of all strive to love and obey the Lord your God more as you grow. I have no doubt in my mind that if you choose to walk this path, there lies a brighter future ahead of you."

Interestingly, as a Christian faith based school, St Luke's Cathedral (Ang), School Jos, has over the decades continue to impact the fear of God, good leadership qualities and educational excellence on its pupils. The hard work and dedication to duty by both the management and teachers of the school is reflecting on the distinguished performance of the pupils in their various fields of educational engagements and assignments. The pupils who have represented the school in various educational competitions and championships have remained tops.

Some of these testimonies to

the glory of God can be seen in the last Mathematics Olympiad organized by the Nigeria Turkish International Colleges where the school came 57th out of over 2400 schools in the northern zone which participated in the competition. The pupils also performed excellently during a competition organized by the Children Leadership and Transformation Project Nigeria for a seat in Jos South Local Government Area's Children Parliament where one of the pupils clinched the post of Director of Agriculture. The pupils also participated in a PRTVC children's programme called Children's Panorama where it was adjudged as one of the best.

In consideration of the adage, all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, the school also participated in many outings including a visit to Fresh Bakery, Lawal Farm, NASCO Household



Teachers and other staff



Pupils

and Jos Wild Life Park. They had a wonderful and enriching experience.

Also contributing, Guest Speaker at the occasion, Rev Dr. Paul Cookey who spoke on the topic, "The Influence of Social Media on Academic and Spiritual Learning on Pupils and Student noted that many parents are always happy seeing their children adding that these pupils ought to be celebrated after the achievements recorded.

He mentioned that parents must always monitor the usage of phones by their children to avoid negative influence on their lives and urged the school authorities to establish a strong curricular which would guide pupils on how to use their phones and communication gadgets for the betterment of their lives.

Contributing, chairperson of the occasion and Councilor Vanderpuye Ward, Evangelist Grace Vanderpuye expressed appreciation over the school management and staff's effort towards sustaining the feat

which is continuously achieved.

For the outgoing Head Boy of the school, Joseph Jacob, their stay in the school significantly affected their lives for the better adding that "our school gave us precious memories that are truly priceless. The day I first walked into this school is still fresh and new in my mind, at that time life felt so difficult and hard.

"Furthermore, I know that for many of us, thinking about the future is an unsettling experience. Moreover, this is something which we all like to avoid. Some of us even undertake procrastination whenever the talk of the future comes up. This is certainly not a good attitude on our part. The future is not something that we should fear but a challenge that we should all gladly embrace." He added.

Though the 2022 edition of annual speech and prize giving/Graduation ceremony has come and gone, the sweet memories of this event will continue to linger on the minds of the pupils for years to come.

"Some of these testimonies to the glory of God can be seen in the last Mathematics Olympiad organized by the Nigeria Turkish International Colleges where the school came 57th out of over 2400 schools in the northern zone which participated in the competition. The pupils also performed excellently during a competition organized by the Children Leadership and Transformation Project Nigeria for a seat in Jos South Local Government Area's Children Parliament where one of the pupils clinched the post of Director of Agriculture. The pupils also participated in a PRTVC children's programme called Children's Panorama where it was adjudged as one of the best."



Lalong performs groundbreaking for housing estates

Last week, aside government's consultations with various stakeholders concerning the MOU of the rebuilding of the Jos Main Market by Jaiz bank, a major event that took pre-eminence at the seat of power was the groundbreaking ceremony for two housing estates.

Plateau Governor, Simon Bako Lalong who performed the historic ceremony a day after returning from Abuja after his appointment as the All Progressives Congress (APC) party Director General of the Tinubu/Shettima Presidential Campaign organisation could barely be audibly as expected, and apologised as he held the microphone to speak saying he had actually lost his voice due to the euphoria and series of celebrations that greeted him on his arrival home, after the appointment.

The groundbreaking ceremony of the two housing estates located in Jos South and Bassa Local Government Areas was done on August 5, 2022. They are the Palm Estate located in Dwei, Du District of Jos South LGA constructed by Odigbo Properties Ltd., and the Workers Housing Estate constructed by The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and Drallop Services Ltd.

In his speech at the Jos South Palm Estate, Lalong described the Developer, Mr Chikieze Tony Odigbo, who presented an overview of the project as his son because of his interest in embarking on such a 300 unit housing development oriented project.

"He is my anointed son because he wants to come and invest in my state. The investment and development is for Plateau people and their generations unborn who will benefit from it for many years to come" and "I'm sure you will not take it to your land, will you" he said.

The Governor said host communities have a role to play when it comes to being a host to such development projects by giving their land and creating an enabling environment for them to be executed and accomplished.

He said his government is willing to cite projects in communities willing to donate land to government to use saying many federal agencies have come to Plateau because of the cooperation to donate land to them to cite projects that have not only state, but federal ownership and missions.

He lamented the fracas witnessed between the Faith Based University owned by COCIN, Karl Kumm University and its host community in Vom which has caused a great delay in the progress of the University, and used the forum to urge citizens to know when to release their land for development of their community, state and the nation.

"Let us guard our land and also know when to give it for our own development" said Lalong.

He equally stressed that such projects create jobs for the youths and professional in other spheres from the state and then gave an example of how the Project Manager. Engr. Sam Gyang Yakubu from Plateau is handling the job of developing the Jos South property.

He paused and said "You see an Igbo man from the East is investing in Plateau, but a Berom man from Ropp is the Manager executing the housing project here in Jos South, all for the development of our state. We should welcome investors into our state because we will also develop and benefit".

He called for cooperation from citizens and host communities concerning some of the Federal Government institutions and projects cited and spread across various local governments so that the entire state benefits from it.

Sadly, the Governor said some investors have expressed fears of coming to invest in the state due to crisis experienced in the state. He recounted how popular business mogul Aliko Dangote wanted to invest in Plateau but the crisis affected the process, and further narrated how the African rated billionaire ended up investing in Nassarawa State, a situation that resulted in creating employment for thousands of youths.

Relating it to the housing projects, Lalong said, "I can imagine how many youths will be employed under the housing projects, ours is to provide peace and the enabling environment so that you and your children will benefit".

"Indeed, housing has become an important issue, population is increasing and housing is scare creating overcrowding that is why my administration has engaged the private sector to get housing for citizens".

While inspecting the projects, he called on other developers from the private sector to come and cue into the development opportunities of the state even as he also challenged such developers to always ensure they do their corporate social responsibility to the host communities. He also assured developers that his government will continue to support them.

At the Bassa workers housing estate named "The Governor Lalong Housing Estate" by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) to honour the Governor for spearheading the process and success of the project, the Irigwe cultural troupe performed their traditional dance to welcome and entertain guests and the Governor joined in their colourful dance display.

Before his speech, he sang the popular workers song "solidarity forever" and said as a former Secretary of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), he was also a onetime union leader who understands the struggle for welfare and other workers incentives.

He tasked citizens of the state to understand that peace is paramount to development and it is not only Plateau people that can develop their state, but developers and investors from outside Plateau State. In the same way he said Plateau people also go out to work as developers of other states.

Lalong called on Bassa people to honour the peace agreement signed recently between the Irigwe and Fulani's. Other speakers like the developers and NLC said work had commenced in earnest because of the assurance of peace in the community and the first quota will be delivered before the tenure of the present administration elapses.



News

Jos Main market: PIDAN discard rebuilding endorsement claims

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Plateau Initiative for Development and Advancement (PIDAN), has disregarded claims in some quarters that stakeholders in Plateau State have endorsed the rebuilding of the burn down Jos Ultra-Morden Main Maker describing as false and misleading.

This came in a press statement signed by the PIDAN Secretary General, Comrade Nanle N. Gujur, and made available to The Nigeria Standard in Jos, the Plateau State capital on Monday, as a rejoinder to the statement credited to the Director of Press and Public Affairs to the Plateau State Governor that;

"Stakeholders endorsed rebuilding Jos Main Market".

The statement said, "for those who do not know what Plateau Initiative for Development and Advancement of the Natives, PIDAN stands for, we want to tell you that, PIDAN is Plateau, Plateau is PIDAN by implication, every citizen of Plateau is a member of PIDAN. Every community is represented by their Presidents and Secretaries on the council.

"These are men and women of integrity, former Ambassadors, Retired Senior Public Servants, Professors and

Technocrats in different fields of endeavors, etc. These we do with the view to sustain and maintain the solid foundation our founding fathers structured and bequeathed on us at the cost of their lives.

"We therefore see the statement credited to the Governor's Director of Press and Public Affairs captioned, "Stakeholders endorse Rebuilding of Jos Main Market" as not just surprising, but embarrassing and ridiculing to the integrity of our highly respected eminent elder statesmen and groups who gave their counsels during the parley, because it did not reflect the position taken at the meeting.

"We believe that government would have put the perspective of meeting it in its true position of keeping it on hold, and awaits the outcome of further consultations with the grass roots at the local government level, rather than the conclusive headlines", he explained.

Gujur, thereby, reiterated PIDAN's position that the project should be kept on hold until all the grey issues raised at the meeting were properly scrutinized and solutions found and encouraged the leadership of the various development associations to mobilize their membership to attain and present their sincere positions at the various parleys.

In a similar development, the Youth Wing of Christian Association of Nigeria

(YOWICAN), Plateau State Chapter has also reacted to statement made by Director of Press and Publicity to the Governor on the endorsement of rebuilding of Jos Main Market by the said stakeholders.

The Youth Wing said, "with due respect to the leadership whom God has placed over us on the Plateau, this brief statement is crucial to addressing the above reportage taking an unwholesome turn in the public domain as credited to the government of Plateau State as per the outcome of the Stakeholder's meeting of Saturday, the 6th day of August, 2022 which was held at the Lady Victoria Gowon Hall, Government House Little Rayfield.

"It must be unequivocally and succinctly stated here that stakeholders at that meeting never endorsed the rebuilding of Jos Main Market. This narrative as captured by the Press Release from the Director of Press and Public Affairs to the Governor of Plateau State, Dr Makut S. Macham, is at best the manifestation of the wishful desperation displayed by the state government.

It is expected that the government would present the true reflection of the deliberation as captured at the meeting rather than a sensational misrepresentation of facts which has ridiculed the integrity and disrespected the goodwill of all stakeholders who in all honesty, respected the government's call and seeming desire for sincere advice and observations on the subject", the association enthused.

Buhari's nephew dumps APC

THREE months after threatening to destroy the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) after his defeat during the party's House of Representative's primary for the Daura S a n d a m u / M a i a d u a Constituency, President Muhammadu Buhari's nephew, Fatuhu Muhammad, has exited the party.

Mr Muhammad, whose father was Mr Buhari's oldest brother, announced his exit from the APC in a letter addressed to the Sarkin Yara Ward APC chairman in Daura Local Government Area dated, 13 July 2022.

"This is to notify you that I have resigned my membership from the All Progressives Congress (APC) with immediate effect commencing from Wednesday the 13th day of July 2022. Attached herewith is my Party Membership Registration slip with slip No. WT/DRA/10/00002

"While I thank you and the Party for the opportunity given to me to serve the interest of the people of Daura-Sandamu-Mai'Adua Federal Constituency while working with the party, accept my best wishes please," he said.

Though he did not mention if he was defecting to another party, his media aide, Ahmad Ganga, told that his principal met with the PDP's presidential

candidate, Atiku Abubakar, recently.

If it is confirmed that Mr Muhammadu has defected to the PDP as it is being speculated, it means Mr Buhari is being represented in both the House of Representatives and Senate by members of the main opposition party.

The Senator representing Katsina North (Daura zone) Ahmad Babba Kaita, defected to the People's Democratic Party PDP following a misunderstanding with the Governor of the state, Aminu Masari

Mr Muhammad had in June threatened to destroy the APC, alleging that he was cheated out of the primary election that produced Aminu Jamo as the party's flagbearer.

In six-minute audio the lawmaker was heard telling someone he referred to as Ranka ya dade, (meaning: Sir) that he would destroy APC in Katsina State.

He said he was not going to participate in a fresh election if the party decides to do one as he was the rightful winner of the primary election held last week.

"They can't do any election (primary) because I won this one while they broke the law. They should just give me back my ticket, or we meet in court or else I destroy the party and bring a new one (party)," he said.



Lalong

Sports

How Chelsea splashed over £800m on transfer

Chelsea's considerable success in the last 20 years or so can be partly attributed to the significant amount of money they have spent in the transfer market. Indeed, the Blues have never had any issue splashing the cash on talented players, especially after Roman Abramovich took control of the club in 2003.

While there have been some notable flops, many new signings played a pivotal role in an unprecedented era of success for the club featuring Premier League triumphs, two Champions League wins and five FA Cup successes.

Goal said that Abramovich may now be gone but Chelsea's new owners, a consortium fronted by Todd Boehly, have already demonstrated their willingness to continue spending big, as underlined by the signing of Raheem Sterling, who was brought in from Manchester City to fortify their attack in a deal worth around £50 million (\$60m).

Tiemoue Bakayoko £36m

An integral part of the Monaco side that won the Ligue 1 in 2016-17, Bakayoko had seemingly got his dream move when Chelsea made him their second-most expensive signing of all time in the summer of 2017. The box-to-box midfielder was expected to slot into the Blues' starting line-up seamlessly as they tried to build on their Premier League-winning campaign.

But the Frenchman failed to impress during a season which ended with Chelsea dropping out of the top four. His poor form meant Bakayoko was sent on loan to AC Milan in August 2018. Bakayoko, still contracted to Chelsea, has been on loan continuously ever since, at Napoli, Monaco and Milan again.

He has seemingly found his feet during his second stint at San Siro, helping the Rossoneri win the Serie A last season.

Hakim Ziyech £36m

The talented Moroccan arrived in West London in the summer of 2020 after a remarkable spell at Ajax. The attacking midfielder was meant to add a bit of technique and finesse to Chelsea's attack under Frank Lampard.

But Ziyech hasn't quite managed to nail down a spot in the starting XI, even under current manager Thomas Tuchel.

After two full seasons at the club, Ziyech's future at Stamford Bridge remains unclear. Safe to say that the move has not quite worked out, neither for the club nor



Bakayoko

the player.

Andriy Shevchenko £39.5m

Another Chelsea signing which did not turn out as expected at all. The Ukrainian had established himself as arguably the finest forward in the world during his prolific spell at AC Milan, so Abramovich thought he had pulled off a major coup when he managed to sign the striker in 2006.

But Shevchenko never managed to hit the same heights at Stamford Bridge, scoring just 22 goals in 77 appearances. Eventually, he went back to Milan on loan in 2008 before joining Dynamo Kyiv a year later.

Mateo Kovacic £40.5m

The Croatian is an integral part of the Chelsea midfield these days. He joined Chelsea from Real Madrid in 2018, initially on a season-long loan.

Though his first season was nothing to write home about, the Blues decided to sign him permanently under new manager Frank Lampard in 2019. And that decision has been vindicated, with Kovacic a key member of the Chelsea side that won the 2021 Champions League.

Ben Chilwell £45.2m

Having established himself as one of the best left-backs in England, it was not a surprise to see Chelsea spend big on the Leicester City youth product in the summer of 2020.

He had a great first season at Chelsea, making 42 appearances in all competitions. He played the entire 90 minutes as Chelsea beat Manchester City in the 2021 Champions League final.

Though a cruciate ligament injury curtailed his 2021-22 season campaign, Chilwell is already back in Thomas Tuchel's starting line-up and will be battling out with new signing Marc Cucurella for a starting spot this term.

Timo Werner £47.7m

Signed for big money on the back of a prolific season for RB Leipzig, Timo Werner's move to Chelsea has not gone well, with the Germany international now tipped to return to his former club.

Werner cut a frustrated figure right from the off, his confidence clearly affected by a succession of glaring misses. He slowly fell out of favour, as Chelsea desperately searched for more dependable attacking outlets.

In fact, there was a marked decrease in his game-time in the 2021-22 season and has long been linked with a move away from Stamford Bridge.

Raheem Sterling £50.6m

The former Manchester City winger has only just arrived at the Bridge and is expected to add a cutting edge to an attacking unit that struggled for goals a bit last season.

Despite falling out of favour a tad during the final year of his time at the Etihad, Sterling's quality cannot be questioned.

He won four titles at City, scoring 131 goals in all competitions, and also played a pivotal role in England's run to the final of Euro 2020.

Given he's still only 27,

Sterling could well prove one of Chelsea's best-ever buys.

Jorginho £51.3m

Despite being wanted by Pep Guardiola at Man City, Jorginho ended up joining his former Napoli boss, Maurizio Sarri, in West London.

However, while Chelsea won the Europa League in his first season, the cultured midfielder did not have a great first season, as the team struggled under Sarri.

Jorginho, however, did start to live up to his billing in the following seasons, under Frank Lampard and then Thomas Tuchel.

He is a trusted member of the team now, as reliable as his famous 'Hop, skip and jump' penalty technique.

Fernando Torres £52.7m

Torres' shock move to Chelsea in January 2011 was one of the biggest transfers in Premier League history. The Spaniard had established himself as one of the most feared strikers in the world during a sensational spell at Liverpool. However, he never looked at home at Stamford Bridge.

While he failed dismally to replicate his fearsome Anfield form, Torres still managed to score some big goals, most notably on a famous night at Camp Nou in 2012, and ended up winning the Champions League, Europa League and FA Cup at Chelsea.

Christian Pulisic £57.6m

Pulisic was one of the best young players in Europe when Chelsea snapped him up in January 2019.

However, the American has blown hot and cold during his three years in the Premier League to date.

While capable of producing stunning moments on his day, Pulisic has struggled to deliver on a consistent basis, with his cause not helped by incessant injury issues.

Consequently, despite being Chelsea's youngest hat-trick scorer, the United States international has failed to nail down a spot in the starting XI.

Marc Cucurella £58.8m

A product of La Masia,

Cucurella had looked set to join Manchester City but the Premier League champions were unable to agree a fee with Brighton for a player who had excelled during his debut season at the Amex, in 2021-22.

Chelsea swooped in, picking up a high-quality replacement for the Barcelona-bound Marcos Alonso. The size of the fee has surprised many, though, given the Blues still have Chilwell on their books, even if the England international has only just returned to full fitness after a serious injury.

It remains to be seen, then, if Cucurella will prove worth such a significant outlay.

Alvaro Morata £59.4m

When it comes to signing strikers, Chelsea don't have a particularly good record, resulting in talk of 'The curse of the No.9'. Alvaro Morata is one of the most high-profile victims.

The Spaniard arrived from Real Madrid for big money and with a fine reputation. However, he struggled to adapt to the rigours of the Premier League.

His profligacy became a massive talking point, too, he ended up leaving the club for Atletico Madrid after an initial loan spell at the Wanda Metropolitano.

Chelsea did, at least, manage to recoup most of their original outlay on him.

Kepa Arrizabalaga £72m

When Thibaut Courtois left Chelsea for Real Madrid in 2018, the Blues had no qualms about making Kepa Arrizabalaga the costliest goalkeeper in history.

Kepa had built up quite the reputation for himself in Bilbao and had even been linked with Madrid six months before arriving in London.

He started off well in the Premier League but then things started to go wrong. A series of high-profile errors and a public spat with Maurizio Sarri in the 2019 League Cup final, when he refused to be substituted, meant his stock plummeted. He was benched for Willy

Caballero for the 2019-20 season.

Eventually, Chelsea brought in Edouard Mendy while Kepa became the club's second-choice goalkeeper. A quite expensive one at that!

Kai Havertz £72m

Kai Havertz became Chelsea's most expensive signing at the time when they spent £72m to prise him away from Bayer Leverkusen. The attacking midfielder was one of the most sought-after young talents in the Bundesliga at the time.

At Chelsea, the German has sporadically shown his quality, though he is yet to blossom completely. He did give Chelsea their most memorable moment in recent times, though, scoring the winner against Manchester City in the 2021 Champions League final, which, incidentally, was his first goal in the competition.

Still only 23, the technically gifted player has enough time to justify his transfer fee.

Romelu Lukaku £101.7m

As already mentioned, Chelsea have had rotten luck with signing high-profile strikers and Romelu Lukaku represents just the latest chapter in this sorry story.

Lukaku, who was first, acquired way back in 2011, had been in stunning form in Serie A with Inter. And Chelsea, desperately seeking a goalscorer to lead their attack, made the Belgian their club-record signing in the summer of 2021.

However, despite a bright start, Lukaku struggled to adapt to Tuchel's requirements. The goals dried up and Lukaku did not help his cause by publicly stating his desire to go back to Italy.

After being left out of the squad by Tuchel, Lukaku worked his way back in but never quite convinced. The Belgian did get his wish after all as Chelsea allowed him to re-join Inter on loan for the 2022-23 season.



Ziyech

Sports

Henwan to support handball association

By **ANDRE D. BISYIT**

IN an effort to promote sports in Plateau State, the General Manager, Plateau United Football Club of Jos, Pius Henwan has assured the Plateau State Handball Association of his maximum support in order for them to succeed in their coming competition latter in the year.

He gave the assurance when the association presented an award of excellence to him, saying without the association he won't have been where he is today.

The award presentation which held at the Handball Court of the Rwang Pam Township Stadium, recently witnessed the presence of the Director of Sports, the Management of sports council, Chairman of the association, among others dignitaries.

Henwan expressed happiness with the award, stated that, it will spur him to do more.

"I am overwhelmed with the award, because I never expected it, I started my carrier from this association when I was employed in the sport council and I never knew they were watching me, I am very happy.

"I started here as a sport administrator and there is no way I can forget in promoting sports. So I will do everything humanly possible to develop sports on the Plateau, as Plateau United is moving forward, I will carry them along to enable them move to the next level," he said.

When commenting on the feat of Plateau United, the General Manager emphasized that the secret of the club's achievement is hard work.

"If you are giving an assignment to do, you need to be sincere and with the support getting from the press, the Governor who is the captain of the club and my colleagues, who have been telling me what to do and not to do. I am not forgetting the Technical Director of the team, coach bros, he has been by my side, helping financially and other wise," he maintained.

He further disclosed that they are preparing hard for the CAF Champions league which will kick-off next month.

"We are doing everything humanly possible to ensure that we start the champions league from the beginning to the end, we are recruiting players to fill in the gap of those we don't have, in order to reach the group stages of the championship", he ended.

Also, Simon Moven, Director of Sports, Plateau State Sports Council described the award as well deserved.

"The General Manager was one time secretary of the association and he did well, he has been assisting them for a longtime, so, I think this award is in the right direction," he said.

He urged them to be serious in their training as they have many competition ahead in order to make the state proud.

Earlier, Cyprin Donjur,



Henwan

chairman of the association, said that the players have to put more effort to enable them win more medals to the state.

"These players standing before us, have been doing their best, but is not good enough in the sense that more need to be done, they need to stretch a bit in order to do better.

"I have witnessed a number of competitions they played, but somethings are lacking and their performance was not too encouraging," he said.

He disclosed that the board of the association will continue to do its best in ensuring that the players are motivated to enable them make the state proud.

Abia APC celebrates Gold medalist Onyekwere, team Nigeria

CHIOMA Onyekwere, the gold medalist in the Discus event at the just concluded 22nd Commonwealth Games has received accolades from her home state of Abia over the historical feat she achieved.

Newsnow said that, her 61.70m throw on the opening day of the track & field events not only set a new Games record but also put her name in the history books as the first Nigerian female athlete to win a gold medal in discus event of the Commonwealth Games.

The only other gold medal that Nigeria had ever won in discus came from male thrower, Adewale Olukojun, at the Auckland 1990 Commonwealth Games.

In a congratulatory message to the golden home girl, the Abia State chapter of the All Progressives Congress (APC)

said that it received the news of her heroic feat with a high sense of pride as the discus thrower has become a national hero and an icon here in Abia, her home state.

"The APC family in Abia congratulate our golden girl, Chioma; We share in her joy and wish her more successes in the field of sport and her other endeavours," the Abia APC Chairman, Dr Kingsley Ononogbu, noted in the press statement.

He noted that Onyekwere, who is also the reigning African champion in the female category of discus event, has shown that "Abia brims with sporting talents waiting to be

ESE Brume hopes a gold rush by Nigeria's women on the penultimate day of the Commonwealth Games will inspire girls in the country to take up sport.

Newsnow said that, the 26-year-old reclaimed her long jump title on a day when Tobi Amusan won 100m hurdles gold and they also triumphed in the women's 4x100m relay.

That took Nigeria's Games tally to 12 gold medals, making them Africa's top performers in Birmingham, England.

"I know this will be an inspiration for them," Brume told BBC Sport Africa. She added: "Of course, when you see someone you look up to doing well, you want to definitely be like them. So, this is going to motivate and inspire them.

"I hope it works." Three-time African champion Brume set a new Games record with a leap of 7.00 metres to win, adding a second Commonwealth gold to the one she claimed in Glasgow eight years ago.

After two jumps of 6.99m and one of 6.96m – which would all have been enough to secure top spot on the podium – Brume said her record jump demonstrated her consistency in her discipline.

"This is one thing I really wanted – to get the Games

discovered and given the necessary push to become world champions".

The discus gold medalist, whose father, Engr Chima Onyekwere is a prominent Abia APC stateholder, hails from Umuokpara in Umuahia South Local Government of Abia State.

"My assurance to Ndi Abia is that if they give us their mandate in 2023 our government would ensure that Abia would continuously produce more champions like Chioma in every area of sport," Dr Ononogbu said, adding that God's own state would become a resource hub of sporting talents."

Wikki Tourists vow to mobilize votes for Bala

IN appreciation of financial and moral support to Wikki Tourists Football Club of Bauchi by the state

Government under the leadership of Governor Bala Abdulkadir Mohammed, the Chairman Wikki Tourists FC

Brume believes Nigeria's Gold can inspire young girls

record," she added. "This is special for me, because it shows consistency. It shows the hard work of all those that have supported me, and my coach who has been backing me up.

"Sometimes it's about how you're able to show that what you're doing is not a fluke."

Amusan set a new Games record of 12.30 seconds to add the Commonwealth 100m hurdles title to her gold at the World Athletics Championships in Eugene.

The 25-year-old then returned to help Nigeria to 4x100m relay victory alongside Favour Ofili, Rose Chukwuma and Grace Nwokocha, who said the result was all the sweeter after they finished fourth in Oregon last month.

"We've been working so hard to get ourselves a fast time so that we could be at world level and we could be champions," the 21-year-old Nwokocha added.

"It is what we have always wanted to be. When we went to the Worlds, we felt so disappointed we didn't get a medal." Elsewhere at the Alexander Stadium on day 10 of the Games, Kenya had track triumphs as Wycliffe Kinyamal won the men's 800m, while Beatrice Chebet took the women's 5,000m title as compatriot Selah Busienei came third.

Zambia's Muzala Samukonga won the men's 400m in a personal best of 44.66 seconds. Nigeria won bronze in the men's 4x100m relay, and Kenya's men picked up the same colour in the men's 4x400m relay.

The East Africans had another medal when Julius Yego took men's javelin bronze with a season's-best throw of 85.70m, and Ghana's Deborah Acquah won bronze in the women's long jump with a personal best of 6.94m.



Brume

From Abbas Gungura, Bauchi

Alhaji Balarabe Douglas has promised to mobilize over five hundred thousand votes for the Governor in 2023 Governorship elections in Bauchi.

The Wikki Tourists boss made the promise while interacting with Sports journalists in Bauchi after a thanksgiving prayers to appreciate Almighty God for enabling the team to end the 2021/2022 league season in a comfortable position against the previous years where the Tourists escaped relegation in tears.

He said the success of the team in the league table last season was born out of the encouragement of the Management, Technical Crew and Players by Governor Bala Mohammed through personal and Official interest developed in the team by financial and moral support that boosted

their morals.

Douglas further commended the Governor for his kind gesture in ensuring that both technical officials and players get their salaries, match bonuses and other allowances as at when due.

The chairman said "in recognition of this gesture I will do everything humanly possible to reciprocate and justify the confidence reposed in me by the state government to mobilize support of over five hundred thousand Wikki supporters and fans to vote for the return of Governor Bala Mohammed in 2023 to serve for the next four years".

Douglas said "sports particularly football is a political weapon used to achieve success, therefore we will use Wikki Tourists popularity across the state to achieve success for my Boss Governor Bala Mohammed the workaholic and sports loving Governor come 2023".



Onyekwere

Sports

Moses out for six months following rupture

FORMER Nigeria international Victor Moses is to undergo surgery on the Achilles tendon injury suffered during Spartak Moscow's 2-0 triumph over Ural in a Russian Premier League fixture on Saturday.

Goal said that, the 31-year-old was forced off injured during Saturday's Russian top-flight encounter at Ekaterinburg Arena.

The winger - who has been in fine form so far for Guille Abascal's men was stretchered off in pain after 33 minutes and was subsequently replaced by Mikhail Ignatov.

The former Chelsea and Liverpool player is now set to have an operation, after which he will be out of action for at least six months on the sidelines.

"Spartak midfielder Viktor Moses, who was injured in the match of the 4th round of the Russian Premier League in Yekaterinburg, underwent a medical examination," a statement from the club website read.

"The Nigerian was diagnosed with damage to the Achilles tendon. The player will have to undergo surgery. It will take about six months to recover from the injury.

"We wish Victor a speedy return to the field,"

This news comes as a massive blow to Spartak



Moses

Moscow's bid to win the league title for a record 23rd time.

In the 2021-22 campaign, Moses featured in 25 league matches with two goals to his credit at the Otkritie Arena.

So far, the former Super Eagle boasts two goals (against Krasnodar and Akhmat Grozny) from all four matches played.

His form has been a bright point in a solid Spartak Moscow side, who are yet to lose any match in the ongoing campaign. They are currently second on the log behind leaders CSKA Moscow.

Moses recently discussed his impressive start to the new

season. "It is good to get on the scoresheet. I'm not that player that everyone knows for scoring goals every week," he told Spartak's official YouTube channel.

"But I will do my best to help the team, the team comes first. The only thing is to add my quality to what we already have here.

"We'll keep working together as a team. I am pleased with the way I have started and hopefully, I'll keep the momentum going."

Spartak Moscow will face PFC Sochi at Otkritie Arena in their next league encounter on Sunday.

'Haaland is 'another weapon' for Man City'

ERLING Haaland's insatiable hunger for goals is a trait he shares with Lionel Messi, according to Manchester City head coach Pep Guardiola.

The new signing scored twice on his Premier League debut against West Ham on Sunday to fire the reigning champions to a 2-0 win in their opening game of the season.

Goal said that, the striker was not happy with just two goals in his Premier League debut and his coach was happy to hear it.

The Norway international opened his account with a penalty in the first half of the match in London before latching onto a pass from Kevin De Bruyne and firing in his second just after the hour mark.

Despite his decisive start to life in the English top-flight,

Haaland was not satisfied with his double, saying that "it's sh*t" that he did not get a hat-trick.

Guardiola was happy to hear of the 22-year-old's desire to keep scoring, saying it reminds him of his days at Barcelona with iconic attacker Messi, who now plays for Paris Saint-Germain.

"That's good, I like it," Guardiola told a post-match press conference.

"I was fortunate as manager to be with Messi and when he scored two, he wanted three, and when scored three, he wants four.

"The top goalscorers are never satisfied, they are always hungry and starving and want more."

.Haaland's performance allowed him to recover from his previous outing for City.

The Norway international was left embarrassed when he missed a great chance at the end of his side's 3-1 defeat against Liverpool in the Community Shield.

Guardiola added: "I know how he handled a lot of criticism this week. He was really calm, he trained really well but the way he took the ball for the penalty, I said 'I like it'.

"[He's] so direct and I think if someone is taking the ball, he would punch them in the face even though they are his mates. And that is a pretty good sign. To be so confident, I like it."

Much is expected of Haaland at City following his impressive exploits in Germany with Borussia Dortmund.

Haaland netted 22 times in 24 appearances in the Bundesliga last season and 27 in 28 matches the previous year.

Although Guardiola is confident he can keep scoring, he insists the team cannot be reliant only on the striker for goals.

"Erling scoring the two goals, it's important for him and the team and for us, and it's another weapon we have now," he said.

"But at the same time, he's not going to solve all our problems, he's going to add something to us as a team. That's what we are looking for.

"Today, the two goals, they were balls in front of the centre of defence and we had the feeling we could find him more.

"In the past we didn't have a

NIGERIA striker Umar Sadiq is on his way out of newly-promoted Spanish La Liga side Almeria after the club's CEO Mohamed El Assy confirmed they have accepted a €30 million bid for him.

Goal said that, the Super Eagles forward did not feature in the club's final pre-season game and the club has now confirmed that his sale is imminent.

Sadiq, who has been with Almeria for two seasons, helping them to top flight promotion last season, has been the subject of speculation this summer with Villarreal particularly credited with an interest while Borussia Dortmund have been the latest rumoured interested club.

The striker missed Almeria's final pre-season match against Saudi Arabia champions against Al-Hilal in Burton, England on Sunday and El Assy has now confirmed that his absence was because a sale is imminent.

Article continues below

'Messi chat helped make my decision' - Suarez returns to Nacional

The former Liverpool and Barcelona forward has made his return the club that gave him his professional debut

"Umar Sadiq has not travelled to England to avoid any type of injury that could stop a transfer that is close at this time," El Assy told Mundo Deportivo.

"He will be sold for a little less than €30 million. We have 12-13 other players that have

Sadiq on Villarreal, Dortmund radar

received offers, they are players who have a prestige in the market and you hope that they have a great future.

The Kaduna-born striker, capped seven times for the Super Eagles who he has scored one goal for, has been too hot to handle since joining Almeria from Serbian club Partizan Belgrade in October 2020.

The Nigerian was brought in to replace now Liverpool striker Darwin Nunez when he left Almeria to join Benfica two years ago and needed little time to settle in as he scored 22 goals in his debut campaign in Spain.

He was Almeria's leading scorer in 2021-22, managing 18 league goals (19 in total) as the Andalusia club secured a return to the top flight after

seven years in the second tier, having finished the season top of the table.

While his next destination is still unknown, whoever signs the Nigerian will be getting a proven goal scorer given the 25-year-old hit 41 goals in 74 games in two years at Almeria.

Villarreal are looking for more firepower to bolster their ranks after finishing a disappointing seventh in La Liga last season with injuries to Gerard Moreno disrupting their season.

Dortmund, meanwhile, are in the market for a striker again after new signing Ivory Coast international Sebastien Haller was diagnosed with testicular cancer last month, keeping him out for an unspecified period of time.



Sadiq

De Jong wants to stay says Laporta

FRENKIE de Jong "wants to stay" at Barcelona despite interest from Manchester United, says the club's president Joan Laporta.

BBC SPORT saidn that, the Premier League side agreed a £63.5m deal for the Netherlands midfielder, 25, last month, but the move is yet to be finalised.

De Jong came on at half-time and scored in Barcelona's 6-0 friendly win over Pumas UNAM on Sunday.

"He is a Barca player of great quality and we want him to stay," said Laporta.

"He has offers but we want him to stay and he wants to stay too."

De Jong has been linked with a move to Chelsea, but is also

a key target for new Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag, whose side lost 2-1 at home to Brighton on Sunday in his first game in charge.

Barcelona want De Jong to take a wage cut should he remain at the Nou Camp, amid the club's financial troubles.

The club are currently involved in a disagreement with De Jong over wages deferred by the Dutchman in the last couple of years which are now due to be paid.

Barcelona have so far spent over £120m this summer on new signings Robert Lewandowski, Raphinha and Jules Kounde, with Andreas Christensen and Franck Kessie arriving on free transfers.

Meanwhile, Chelsea's Spain left-back Marcos Alonso is also close to joining the club.

Barcelona raised money for transfers this summer by selling shares of their domestic television rights and in-house production company, Barca Studios.

However, the club has failed to register the players with La Liga requesting that more money be raised.

Should Barcelona not register their new signings in time, they will not be available for their season opener against Rayo Vallecano on Saturday.

Four of Barcelona's new arrivals were involved during their 6-0 friendly win over Mexican side Pumas, with Lewandowski impressing on his debut.

The Poland striker, who joined from Bayern Munich for £42.6m last month, opened his account in the third minute with a neat finish from a tight angle, while also providing two assists for Pedri.

Raphinha, who moved from Leeds this summer in a deal worth up to £55m, was also in the starting line-up, while Kessie and Kounde came on as second-half substitutes.

Goals from Ousmane Dembele, Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and De Jong completed the scoring.



De Jong celebrated with team-mates after adding Barcelona's sixth goal against Pumas UNAM



Haaland



Quest



writer

Ambassador Usman Sarki

FRAGMENT

"The book *For the Liberation of Nigeria* published in 1978 still remains one of the most influential and authoritative writings on the governance and administration of the Nigerian State and an expose of the deficiencies and improvisations that have beset the progress of the Nigerian nation from colonial times to when the book was published. The lamentable situations in Nigeria that Dr. Usman tried all his life to expose and correct still remain with us, unfortunately, and this requires that all Nigerians of goodwill should see it as their patriotic duty to continue to be seized with such challenges and seek remedies within their individual abilities and compass of existence."

AMBASSADOR USMAN SARKI

Bala Usman and 'national question' in Nigeria

It is also a clear indication of the ignorance of Nigeria's history or the belittling of its significance in the contemporary scheme of things in the country.

This atomisation of the nation along ethnic lines has ensured that no genuine and rational constructs can be created along important elements of the "National Question" such as the progressive development of policies and programmes towards the enhancement of the quality of life of the people. The fact that all attempts at basic endeavours like the conduct of a national census or the crafting of national development plans have eluded us point to the inability to arrive at national consensus on most matters of great significance. The difference between the time when Dr. Usman lived and now, is that rigorous scholarship was observed and practiced to a very large extent by the ideologues and academics of the age, unlike today when they are liberally in disregard of these issues of integrity and credibility in research and making their findings public. While in those days painstaking examination of issues underlined critical thinking and studies, today they are characterised largely by "banalities and quibbling" to quote Dr. Usman himself, with issues of dubious provenance being paraded and peddled as "gospel truths" on matters that affect the wellbeing, peace and security of the entire country.

For the Liberation of Nigeria does not merely offer insights into existential issues for Nigerians, but goes beyond this to outline concrete programmes of action towards attaining a better and progressive Nigeria, and in the process, an exalted status for the Black people all over the world. It is a visionary project if one can call it so, and a simplification of fundamental issues to make them more intelligible to the average person. It is not a book about polemics or ideology, but a practical guide to correctly understanding social, political, economic and other issues surrounding the mystical notion of government, which it totally demystified in basic and unassailable manner. While Nigerians were recently entrained by the National Assembly in the debates on the adoption of the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) and the dramas associated with its controversial passage, Dr. Usman had already written in the 1970s



Usman

on the essential aspects of the petroleum industry in the Nigerian economy, as the first subject matter in chapter one of his book. The related subject of the role of multinational companies in the development of the Nigerian economy was also taken up and examined in the same breadth in chapter one, thereby forming a link between the two underpinning factors governing all other developments be they political or social in the Nigerian milieu.

The much discussed and overly contentious issues of governance and administration which are the relative superstructures of the state based on the foundations of the economic system of the country were also not neglected by the penetrating insight of Dr. Usman. He dwelled, for instance, in chapter two on constitutional issues, democratic practices, the military administrations of the past and the public service as key components of the growth and evolution of the Nigerian State around which the "National Question" could be correctly understood and analysed. Unlike during Dr. Usman's time, today's discussion on the national constitution, for instance, has been reduced to mere posturing on its "acceptability" or not, and the "desirability" or not, of its continued existence as the fundamental legal document of the state and country. Much hype as he would say has been heaped

around the notion that it was a "military" constitution therefore; it should have no place in a democratic dispensation such as ours today. This argument conceals a fallacy and self-serving deception about the general deficiency in the way democracy has been practiced in Nigeria since 1999. The concept of "true federalism" and resource control and other superficial distempers created around these questions also fall into the same category of misinformation and manipulation.

More importantly, it conceals and obfuscates the failure of the ruling classes to ameliorate serious discontents among the masses by providing them with honest, upright, conscientious and accountable governance that attends to their basic needs like healthcare delivery, education, decent housing, food security, and all other basic necessities that should make their lives wholesome and enjoyable. The argument about "restructuring" glosses over the inability of succeeding administrations in Nigeria from 1999 to adhere to the fundamental tenets of the national constitution as provided for in Chapter 2 of the document, where the principal purposes and directive principles of the Nigerian state were enunciated. None of those provisions have been consciously realised by the Nigerian ruling elite in the last twenty-two years of democratic

governance. As a result of this situation, the country has been thrown into serious existential crisis and general confusion underlined by dwindling confidence and trust in government and in the democratic system. The greatest and most remarkable failure of both the political and bureaucratic ruling classes is the inability to provide a direction for the whole country toward which it would progress in confidence and assurance, with the united purpose of excelling as a nation and leading other Africans in turn. This manifest failure has created room to division, dissension and disquiet all around the country, with expressions of separatist sentiments now in the ascendancy. Such distempers are now being exploited by an assorted group of malcontents who today pose the greatest threat to Nigeria's unity and collective wellbeing.

The most spectacular dissonance is created around religious differences, whereby deep seated sentiments of the people are exploited to create fissures that have today become wide chasms or gulfs between practitioners of the two dominant faiths in the country. This "malice of religious zeal" as Edward Gibbon termed it has so pervaded the national space that it has become a dominant factor in the mental conception and appreciation of who we are, or what we should ultimately seek to become. No other idea or sentiment has captured and enthralled Nigerians today more than this intrinsic instrument, whose very objective should ordinarily reform, improve and guide our manners and approaches to mundane matters of existence. Dr. Usman treated this melancholy subject with great erudition and finesse in his article "The Manipulation of Religion in Nigeria Today: Its Social and Political Basis". This analysis still serves as a basis towards understanding the issues surrounding the religious dimension of the "National Question" and the most insidious threat to Nigeria's unity and progress which is being maximally exploited by the enemies of our country. The liberation of Nigeria today first and foremost, is not from some foreign domination or imperialist control per se. It is actually from the clutches of the bourgeois and

petty-bourgeois elite classes that have been ruling the country and have succeeded in running her into the ground through their incompetence, lack of patriotism and clear understanding of the place of Nigeria in history and current situation of the Black people in world affairs.

This is the fundamental task of politics today over and above the mere exercise of the freedom to elect our representatives and leaders in periodic exercise of some ill-understood franchise that has little or no significance anymore to our collective wellbeing and interests. It is this form of domination that Dr. Y. B. Usman addresses in *For the Liberation of Nigeria* in sequentially arrange order, touching upon the essential elements of the "National Question" in their concrete manifestations and not in their idealistic and superficial renderings as is the vogue in the public discourses in Nigeria today. For us to clearly, intelligently and constructively discuss the "National Question" in Nigeria and indeed the larger aspect of the "Nigerian Nation" itself, we must follow the prescription of Dr. Usman and answer the questions – what state, whose nation? The answers are provided in the article of same title in the book, which should be the beginning of any genuine inquiry into the Nigerian State and Nation and the current conditions of the country. The existential quest for national unity should not, therefore, be left in the hands of the detractors of Nigeria. As Dr. Usman warned, "For this class, whose economic and political role has been compared to a gateman collecting tolls, national unity is not a means of forging the productive and political forces of the nation into new, coherent and enduring synthesis. National unity is for them merely an arena for bargaining. And the discontinuities, imbalances and blockages in the national system enhance their bargaining capacity". Let Nigerians pay heed and take whatever steps that are necessary to retrieve the fortunes of their country and draw her from the brink of destruction and oblivion.

The author is a former Deputy Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations, New York.

Concluded from last week