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Nigeria: Alarming back log of workers' salaries

There is clear evidence that several state Governments in Nigeria are now struggling to meet up with monthly payment of workers' salaries which in the midst of the present economic realities is adding an excruciating pain to families who rely solely on their bread winners to put bread on the table. KENNETH DARENG examines the situation and its impact on civil servants.
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Alkali



**Lalong flags-off 1bn WB
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Police must stop incessant brutality

THE Nigeria Police Force (NPF) is an important organ of the security networking in the country saddled with the onerous task of maintaining internal security. It then means that the force should be courteous, civil and friendly at all times since its jurisdiction of operation has to do with the citizens of the country. Little wonder, a popular saying goes thus: Police is your friend!"

RECENTLY, the news media, particularly the social media variant, were agog with the story of a Nigeria police personnel brutalizing openly, a Nigerian citizen, for no crime done. This perfidy of brutalization of Nigerian citizens by the Nigerian police, whose taxes of the citizens are used to maintain and pay (police) has become legendary.

EVEN with outcry from the citizens, the police personnel seem emboldened with this aforementioned instance. The police personnel was said to have boasted that "nothing dey happen." Allegedly adding that after all he will give return." This is not only shameful, but a scandal of monumental proportion. After being caught in this heinous act, you are talking of returns. Returns to who?

WE believe that, so many things have gone wrong with the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) over the years. The recruitment process into the force of recent has been without proper security thereby allowing crooks and criminals to get access into the system. Again, apart from the recruitment process being faulty, it has also been monetized. How can you collect money from a recruit and once he/she gets successful, you want such a personnel to be loyal and patriotic without resorting to all means possible for him/her to recoup the recruitment money?

MERIT as a prime criterion for joining the Force has since taken a flight. Today, the field is wide for misfit and charlatans whose mental status is questionable. If not, why should police personnel embark on this brazen bizarre act of brutalizing the Nigerian citizens? We are therefore of the opinion that, there should be a comprehensive mental and drug tests for people who want to join the force and even periodic tests for those who are already in the system.

IT is equally on record too that politicians of all colours have sadly hijacked the police institution. Notoriously known for this are a large number of members of the National Assembly. At every recruitment, they have their allotted number of recruits given. Playing politics with such a sensitive exercise will not augur well for the security of the nation and the safety of its people and their property. But it must be said here that, it is not only members of the National Assembly that are guilty of this misdemeanor. Other elites, the high and mighty, are equally involved.

WE believe that decentralization of the Police Force will go a long way in curbing the excesses presently being exhibited by the Nigerian police. For instance, with community policing, it is expected that those to be recruited must be known by most, if not all members of that community. That done, monitoring of such a personnel will equally be easier and the recruit will avoid all acts of misbehavior.

AGAIN, we strongly discourage payment before recruitment into the Nigeria Police Force (NPF). It is obvious that anybody that pays before getting the job, that persons loyalty and patriotism cannot be guaranteed and it is an ill wind that blows no one any good! Therefore, recruitments not only into the Police Force but elsewhere should be seen to have followed due process with merit as a sine quo none.

WE are aware that the brutal police personnel has been dismissed from the Force. As commendable as it may be, they should be arraigned, prosecuted and if found guilty, commiserate punishment should be meted out to him to serve as deterrent for his likes. The victim too, should be adequately compensated.

Lalong flags-off 1bn WB AGILE grants to 300 schools

By PALANG KASMI

Plateau Governor Simon Bako Lalong has flagged off the Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment (AGILE) as well as the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) to 300 schools to facilitate the education of girls from poor backgrounds.

This is part of efforts of his administration to improve access to education among rural and indigent girls in the state.

While distributing the grants on Friday, August 19, 2022 at New Government House, Little Rayfield, Jos, Governor Lalong said the programme which is a partnership between the World Bank, Federal Government and Plateau State was initiated to encourage and restore hope to girls that have dropped out of school as a result of lack of funds for fees, cultural hindrances to education, or non-availability of schools in their immediate communities.

He disclosed that Plateau is among the 7 pioneer states for the project and assured that his Rescue Administration places high value in the girl-child education, hence, the commitment on seeing to the successful launching of the conditional cash transfer and school improvement grants.

He said his administration has made frantic efforts in providing safe and accessible learning spaces, fostering an enabling environment for girls, and in the recent past, signed into law bills passed by the Plateau State House of Assembly to protect girls, children, womanhood and the vulnerable in general from molestations of any kind.

Lalong explained that, "The World Bank in collaboration with the state and federal government intervention facilitated this counterpart arrangement which involves large expansion in infrastructure which is intended to support adolescent girls in junior and senior secondary schools to enjoy special scholarship programmes, adding that, "the programme is also meant to provide

conducive learning environment for the girls in the pursuance of their education career".

"My administration is committed to the project inaugurated in April 2022 in the state because it protects girls and children on securing education", the governor said.

While commending the World Bank for extending this timely funding partnership to Plateau State, Lalong said the entire project, when fully completed, will change the face of education in Plateau State and give the girl-child a brighter future, while the state will eventually benefit from a total sum of \$3,972,000 dollars in scholarship and infrastructural expansion.

Tasking the implementing partners to desist from corrupt practices that will jeopardise the success of the project, Lalong urged the beneficiaries to strive to make Plateau and Nigeria proud.

"I wish to warn all those that will benefit from the programme and those who shall be responsible for implementation that we shall not tolerate any act of corruption, manipulation and abuse in this journey. I will personally carry out my surveillance on the implementation through anonymous channels that will report directly to me about the progress of the project. Anyone found in breach will not be spared", he warned.

Plateau State Commissioner for Secondary Education, Mrs. Elizabeth Wapmuk, disclosed that the first tranche of the disbursement covers 9 selected Local Governments with funds to be disbursed for School Improvement Grant, and Conditional Cash Transfer to adolescent girls of between 10 and 20 years in both junior and secondary schools.

She said "under the Schools Improvement Grant, various public secondary schools across the State will get between 3 to 6 million naira to carry out critical interventions that address the challenges of the girl child in order to enable them stay and complete their studies".

The commissioner appealed to the beneficiaries to use this opportunity to make their families proud, register

Plateau State in the map of successful States in the utilization of the intervention, and also put Nigeria in the map of very serious and committed nations so that others can enjoy similar gesture in the future.

Giving the project overview, State Project Coordinator Mr. Saje Joseph Adeh said over N828 million will be given to 309 Junior and Senior Secondary Schools for the Schools Improvement Grants while over N183 million will be accessed by 18,036 students in 618 schools across the entire State for the Conditional Cash Transfer.

He explained that the selection of the benefitting Local Governments and schools is carried out with a strong focus on areas with low Secondary transition rates for girls from the poorest households.

"The project is part of FG's long term education agenda to curtail high rate of our of school girls, early marriage, adolescent pregnancy and other challenges to school education and the aim is to improve rate of completion of secondary school and encourage girl child education, and the project area is across the 17 Local government areas", said the Coordinator.

Consultant of the Agile Project, Engr Aliyu Hamman in his remarks said his team has gone round the 3 senatorial zones of the state on assessment tour.

He said the state will benefit immensely from the project and commended the government for being proactive and the next benefiting state after Katsina to kick-off the project.

Responding on behalf of the benefitting schools, All Nigeria Confederation Of Principals of Secondary Schools (ANCOPSS) Chairman Plateau State, Mr. James Dimlong, said the step taken by Governor Lalong to pursue this funding will revolutionise education in the state by addressing many pressing challenges that have to do with infrastructure and capacity building.

Also, a Good will message from Zenith Bank representative assured of proper distribution of the money through internet banking.

Nigeria revokes 52 radio, TV stations licenses

The Nigerian government has announced the revocation of the broadcast licenses of 52 television and radio stations. It also ordered the affected station to "shut down their operations" within the next 24 hours.

The Nigeria Broadcasting Commission (NBC) in a statement said the licenses were revoked because the stations failed to renew their licenses as required by law.

The commission said it had, in

May 2022, given the affected stations "two weeks to renew their licenses and pay their debts or consider their licenses revoked.."

"Three months after the publication, some licensees are yet to pay their outstanding debts," NBC wrote in the Friday statement.

It listed some of the affected stations. They include Silverbird TV, Rhythm FM, AIT/RayPower FM, and MITV.

While many of the affected stations are privately owned, there were also some public stations such as Kogi State Broadcasting Corporation and Kwara State Broadcasting Corporation.

NBC, which regulates the broadcast industry, has been criticised in the past for arbitrarily imposing fines on TV and radio stations over controversial programmes.

Police launch manhunt for 'serial killer'

The police in Ogun State have raised an alarm over the activities of a yet to be identified "serial killer" disguised as a commercial motorcyclist.

The command in a statement on Friday warned residents against boarding commercial motorcycles at night, especially at or to an isolated area.

Abimbola Oyeyemi, the police spokesperson in the state, advised residents, in a statement on Friday, to henceforth demand the phone number of okada riders before boarding their motorcycles.

The warning comes days after the murder of Happiness Odeh, a student of the Moshood Abiola Polytechnic (MAPOLY), Abeokuta,

in Ogun State.

Ms Odeh was murdered 10 days after she won a beauty pageant contest in the school.

She was killed by suspected kidnappers while on her way to Ipara, in the Ode Remo area of the state.

She was said to have boarded a commercial motorcycle at night before her disappearance.


"The modus operandi of the serial killer is to pretend as a commercial motorcyclist popularly known as 'okada' and pick his targeted victim as passenger," Mr Oyeyemi said in the statement.

Such victim who are mainly women will be taken to an isolated area, raped and brutally murdered in cold blood.


While the Command is doing everything possible to apprehend the hoodlum, it is necessary to alert the public to be on their guard and be wary of any okada man with whom they want to embark on a journey, most especially in the night.

"For safety reasons, the command hereby advise that passengers should endeavour to demand for the phone number of okada rider who wants to carry them in the night. They should also make a call to such number to ascertain its authenticity.

"This will give security agencies a lead in their investigation in the event of any untowards development."



With
Katdapba
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On Sunday



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"Depending on which side of the divide you may be placed, an answer to his style of governance may be acerbic and caustic; however for many others, they may be circumspect as to where we are coming from with a view to correct and move ahead with our development."

Lalong: The humble 'Cowboy' from Ajikamai

TRUTH be told, I cannot lay claims to knowing the Plateau State Governor, Barr Simon Bako Lalong to the point of holding fort for him, however, if there is nothing that may attract you to him; I am nonetheless challenged by his humility. It is the price he has paid from being a local Ajikamai boy to the exalted position he now occupies. Only God can be responsible for such a transformation.

For those who do not know, Governor Simon Bako Lalong came to our aid when I served as state chairman, Nigeria Union of Journalists. My colleagues had given us the nod to establish an Endowment Fund for the purpose of helping journalists who had challenges, without resorting in most cases to government, corporate and individuals for assistance.

Pronto, when he was informed that we needed his assistance to get a link to then Rivers State Governor, Rotimi Amaechi, who has had a personal relationship with him, he agreed without hesitation. That opened for the Council, the doors by him: Not only did the Rivers State governor agree, he represented him on the launch date and donated a whopping sum of N7m to the Fund. He didn't charge nor ask us for a penny; as he had to travel to Port Harcourt several times for the task and other personal engagements.

I thought you needed to know the details, so that what you are reading will not be misconstrued as patronizing. If you thought so, I have a hundred reasons why he deserves to be supported. But these four may suffice: He is governor of my state and he had come to my aid in the past, when at that time he was out of power as Speaker and needed to also 'struggle' to take care of himself and family.

School schedules had made us cross paths in Keffi and Zaria; but more importantly, the Bible admonishes that I pray for those in authority, whether we support them or not. And his case cannot therefore be exceptional.

In the last couple of years, Governor Lalong has come under intense attack on the social media and other platforms. As usual, he has maintained his cool without 'hitting' back at the band of his attackers; knowing him as many do, his humility would not let him.

But occasionally, we have had a few explanations from his media managers; and I know that such may not be satisfactory to the army of young men and women demanding more of such about his performance. That may shut their mouths.

They think and believe more needs to be done. But I am at a lost when we got to this station of the kind of attacks leaders go through. The question to ask is: Who has bewitched us as to descend to this despicable level of hating one another for a cause that we can't even explain? The hatred is spread as if our future depended on the dose that are sent into the hearts of community members; whose



Lalong

gullibility is exploited to maximum advantage, but to our chagrin and disadvantage.

Criticism of any nature if well conceived is to the advantage of the state and or any society. While any that is ill-conceived drive motives that are insipient with destruction in tow. Make no mistake; there is a place of criticism in government, as well as holding our leaders accountable to their actions, no doubt.

We have had governments in the state that were bashed from all fronts, Lalong's from all intent and purposes have largely been embroidered with grains of ethnic hatred. I do not belong to his ethnic group; however, the thread of the venom suggests that we have reached a station that we must look at ourselves with respect.

Let me enter a caveat here: I hope this makes sense at the end of your reading. This is not a publicity stunt for the government; I believe the media managers of the Governor are indeed capable and able to come to his defence of the many areas a number of people are asking questions about.

You recall the interview involving JayFM and a commissioner in the state. For me, I did not listen to the altercations between the Reporter of JayFM and the State Commissioner for Information and Communication, Dan Manjang over a year ago. I made efforts to, but discovered it had been yanked off from the station's platform. How ingenuous that could be! Such always happens, if a station believes that it may work against their business and or had injured the person involved.

Those who followed the interview discussion have different opinions about what took place. I have reason to believe that issues of governance, particularly here in Plateau take dimensions when they come up for discussion, obviously for reasons that may take nomenclatures that are laced with

divisive tendencies.

The manner of the 'ethnic mongering' and 'political disagreement' are alarming, just so that 'the worse of the Plateau man' is clearly displayed and could even make us vulnerable to various pursuits which may not favour our togetherness. Our concern is to kill the drift and recalibrate understanding for the future.

In the course of all these, over time, we have witnessed vicious hatred, vitriolic castigation of his person and office; and indeed of his tribe. Those who know, governance on the Plateau has remained largely a thankless job, no thanks to a band of young men and women acting on various fronts of frustrations and inhibitions they believe government has placed on their path to cast aspersions on those in authority.

Prof John Wokton Wade, the Director General, Directorate for Research and Documentation, Government House has an ingenious way of describing the personality of the governor. A few months ago after reading a post titled: 'The Lalong Enigma' by Nde Jonathan Ishaku, a man who has remained a model in journalism; I arrived at the conclusion that the drift has got to be refined by schooling this band of young men and women to have an introspection of their attitude to governance and criticism.

The avalanche of criticism against the governor and his administration are so nuanced in the social media space, so much so that one may imagine that everyone in this government has had nothing to offer. That is a rather sour conclusion from a band that feeds on costly assumptions. Note that criticisms are expected, but when they are from imaginations, they create more problems than their solutions.

In that post, he had described the governor thus: 'Lalong the cowboy, riding high on the Horseback'. What that means is that the governor,

"God may have used a number of people to catapult him to where he is today; that is enough reason to believe in the efficacy of the powers of God to raise men from grass to grace. It is understood, much was expected of him when he rode to Government House. The question to ask is: Have we remained where we used to be since 2015?"

whose humility knows no bounds, is increasingly rising as a cowboy would use the back of a horse instinctively protecting and aiming steadily from relative obscurity to where he has found himself today; even if he may not have succeeded in all endeavours as the governor.

God may have used a number of people to catapult him to where he is today; that is enough reason to believe in the efficacy of the powers of God to raise men from grass to grace. It is understood, much was expected of him when he rode to Government House. The question to ask is: Have we remained where we used to be since 2015?

Depending on which side of the divide you may be placed, an answer to his style of governance may be acerbic and caustic; however for many others, they may be circumspect as to where we are coming from with a view to correct and move ahead with our development.

From what we may have observed, it will be difficult for the youths to be dissuaded from criticizing; as they know they have a responsibility to hold leaders to the best of standards, even if they have to bring the heavens down. The manner may be harsh and or nice, it is the responsibility of the leader to read through and discover if he needs help from the myriads of "the noise of malice or avarice or politics or sycophancy and do what they should do. Whether it is said with sugar topping or served with bitterness. We pamper politicians too much and that's why we get what we get: Underperformance, entitlement, arrogance. Little wonder (some of) our leaders will never understand that leadership is about service".

The tilt towards the hatred for one another rather than the pursuit of other engagements opened to us is not for the want of better things; they are consistently recruited and found willing tools in the hands of 'aggrieved and failed politicians'.

The fact that they are sacrificing their future to be engaged for motives other than challenging endeavours and initiatives which the state should address could be areas that need attention to give them a desired end.

It is in this regard that the government is challenged to encourage the youth (not) to dissipate their energies but put them to productive usage. Truly, I am aware of challenging entrepreneurial initiatives by the (then led) Haggai Gutap-run Plateau Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency (PLASMEDA) that has made younger persons acquire skills that will help them stay off the streets by creating over 50,000 jobs. If the state concentrated on implementing SDGs, and I know Plateau has leapfrogged several states in that regard. There cannot be hindrance to the expression of their potentials, if we consider that the following agencies: Plateau State Primary Healthcare Development Agency, Plateau Rural and Urban Water Agency and the Plateau Information and Communication Technology Development Agency (PICTDA) are up and doing to change lives and communities.

To address these challenges, we must know that if the state administration focuses its attention; as it has done, towards attaining SDGs that are spread across education, health, human capital development, job creation and infrastructure development, but particularly peace and justice for an inclusive society, we can change the direction for the state and assuage feelings that may sound genuine but badly couched.

But the issue is: "We cannot all be praise singers, we cannot all be critics. We cannot all be quiet. The course of society is advanced when there is a fair mix of all three categories. Young people should not be told to lower their expectations, or how to express their disappointments. There are (constructive) criticisms that are aimed at achieving some positive changes, adding value or pointing to a direction. On the other hand, there are criticisms that are aimless, self serving, misleading and, sometimes, vengeful. Examining the motive of the criticisms often gives a clue about the purpose. These days of politics sometimes pure undiluted hatred is the basis of criticism; whether such hate emanates from politics or ethnicity I consider it destructive."

At this point, I dare to say that the ideals of "not too young to run" for the benefit of all and sundry must be embellished with sustainable mentorship in civic education and leadership.

NOTE: This material was published over a year and a half ago again; however, given recent events involving the Plateau State Governor Simon Bako Lalong, the Editor is republishing it. Next week's shall concentrate on the recent outburst of the governor on the Tinubu/Shettima ticket's DG role.



Taming the monster

THERE is a lingering problem, a global problem which seems to be claiming more and more people as it assumes a monstrous nature. It is cancerous in nature and loves to recruit more people on a daily basis. Yes, like Satan's mission, it goes around like a hungry lion looking for who to devour. And like wild fire, it is very destructive. Leaving only waste, pain and death in its wake.

Some people became hooked by the monster due to youthful exuberance, peer pressure and or quest for experiment. But for Daniel, a young promising undergraduate, he was lured into it and unfortunately, it has cost him his education and responsible friends. On top of it, he has been blacklisted as an ex-convict due to the influence of the monster.

So many vices are perpetrated under the influence of this monster. When it takes over somebody, it takes control. No wonder some of the recruits said they need the monster to boost their confidence, make them brave and courageous. And in that condition, they feel they can do anything good or bad. They can murder, steal, kill, rape, beat to death, maim and commit unprintable crimes, when the monster possesses them.

Narrating their ordeal with their younger brother who is a recruit, Halima, a friend said he has taken the nature of the monster himself. "He is now a nocturnal person who keeps very late night and wakes up very late-(from 10:00am). Halima says he roams around the house with red shot eyes and easily snaps at his younger ones. For that reason, they are all in dread of him."

Halima said her brother eats like he is eating for himself and the monster that controls him. And no matter the hour he comes back every day, he heads straight to the kitchen where he eats anything he can lay his hands on.

"Because of him, we can't keep our soups in the kitchen but in our parents' room", Halima lamented. "We have learnt the hard way that at times like that, it is the monster in control and he can do and undo; which includes making eba and eating straight from our pot of stew", explained Halima.

One of the attributes of the monster that manifests in the recruits is that it turns a good boy/girl bad. This nature does not only manifest itself when they are possessed by the monster. It showcases itself when they need the monster but lack the money to get it. A friend whose brother has been a recruit for the past 10 years said "We can't keep anything valuable in the open. My brother who is an ardent lover of this monster, would take anything he can lay his hands on and sell it at a give-away price to enable him to have access to the monster."

Recounting how much the family has suffered in the hands of their brother, my friend said, "he has sold our phones, new sets of food flasks, wall

clock, flower vases that is apart from his own belongings. His room is now bare. Unfortunately, he has started selling our own shoes, clothes even weave-on caps," my friend lamented.

Their case is so bad that the doors to their rooms- girl's rooms and parents' rooms now have sophisticated locks as if they are living with criminals. Even with that she said, "one can't go to the toilet or bathroom and leave one's door open, it may be one's undoing. Even something like bedsheet could be taken and sold cheaply to give my brother access to that monster."

Most of the monster's recruit turn to stealing to patronise it because there is no responsible parent that will continue giving his child money when they know the child will use it for something destructive.

Another family is today licking its wounds because their child who is the monster's recruit has smeared the family name with shame. Their relative who got married about a year ago had left most of the gifts she got in one of their rooms because they couldn't take everything with them to Lagos where her husband resides. She came back recently to get her things, and was shocked at what she saw. Nobody needed to be told what happened to her things. He was caught only twice. The family never knew he continued stealing his cousin's gifts. More than half of the gifts were gone. The sad thing was that the thief was unrepentant.

My problem is, we all know the root cause of this problem. It is weed, cannabis, (Coke) cocaine. Some of these drugs are sold on street corners and the community knows those involved. But we don't take it serious until our children- our very own become victims and we start suffering from things mentioned above.

We often forget that if we don't do something, we will suffer the consequences all the same. Our streets will be unsafe, thieves, rapists, armed robbers, will abound and operate without remorse under the influence of drugs.

You may be among the categories of parents whose children are addicts and yet live in self-denial, refusing to take them to rehabilitation centres. Their problem is: 'What will people say?' What about what is the best in this situation?

You could be an onlooker who seems nonchalant with what is happening around you. Whether we like it or not, we are all victims. One person's actions or inactions affect us all.

The ball is in our courts parents to draw our children close and lead them on godly paths. Spend quality time with them and pray together.

Government on its part should be proactive and give the society legislatures that will serve as deterrent against sell and intake of illicit drugs. Please we must act fast to salvage the next generation.

NEWS

VVF Foundation to conduct free surgery in Sokoto

FROM ANENE AIKE, SOKOTO

FISTULA Foundation Nigeria (ffn), an NGO, in collaboration with UN Population Fund (UNFPA) with support from global affairs Canada (GAC) have commenced free repair surgery on 50 VESICOVAGINAL Fistula (VVF) patients in Sokoto.

VVF is an abnormal opening between the bladder and the vagina that results in continuous and unremitting urinary incontinence.

The condition is among the most distressing complications of gynecologic and obstetric procedures. The common causes of VVF are obstructed labour, early marriage, poverty, and women's limited control over the use of family resources.

The condition can cause a lot of discomfort, and if left untreated, it may cause serious bacterial infection, which may result in sepsis, a dangerous condition that can lead to low blood pressure, organ damage or even death.

However, the condition can be reversed and repaired through surgery. The FFN Director, Mr Musa Isa said in Sokoto on Wednesday that the repair surgery, scheduled for between August 15 and 19, would be carried out by a team of specialized doctors.

He added that the team, including auxiliary workers have so far performed surgery on 13 patients and hoped to do more as 50 patients are being targeted.

He explained that 73 patients had already been screened, saying that the exercise is ongoing at the Maryam Abacha Women and Children Hospital in Sokoto, a VVF treatment centre and urged fistula patients from any part of the country to access the centre for treatment.

Isa, who said that a patient from Niger Republic and three from Lagos State were among the patients to undergo the ongoing free surgery,



Tambuwal

explained that VVF is treatable, and that women living with the condition should not be scared or ashamed, as it can be reversed.

He thanked the government and people of Canada for making it possible to have VVF treatment in the country through the Global Affairs Canada, the Department of the Government of Canada that manages Canada's diplomatic and consular relations and humanitarian assistance.

He also thanked UNFPA Nigeria for the support, as well as the Sokoto and Federal government for their respective support toward ensuring the success of the patients who registered and are awaiting surgery (names withheld as they are below 18 years) some are 15 years old one is 15 year old and another, who is 13 years, expressed joy for the opportunity and thanked the sponsors of the free surgery.

The 15-year-old from Wababe community in Dange Shuni Local Government Area said that she contracted VVF ery at

home as she was married off at the age of 13.

during her first delivery at home as she was married off at the age of 13.

She said she is the only wife to her husband, Hamisu because he is a young man and a farmer, while her father is also a farmer and her mother is a housewife without any business.

Also waiting for the surgery, the second 15-year-old said that she contracted VVF as a result of an accident when a wood used to tie small animals for domestic livestock got hooked in her vagina when she was nine years old and could not access proper treatment.

The 13-year-old said she got VVF during childbirth after a local barber carried out the traditional cutting of unwanted flesh from her vagina called Yankan Gurya. She added that it was after the cutting that she continued to leak urine without control and without medication until some relatives forced the father to bring her to the Maryam Abacha Hospital, Sokoto, for the free repair surgery.

Auto crash kills 3 in Kogi

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) Sector Command in Kogi State on Wednesday confirmed the death of three persons after an vehicle rammed into a stationary bus.

Our correspondent reports that the crash occurred at Ogudar village along Okene - Auch Road at 10.00 a.m. Corps Commander Stephen Dawulung, Kogi Sector of FRSC, said that the corpses of the three occupants of the bus had been deposited at the Morgue of Okengwen General Hospital, Okene Local Government Area.

The FRSC commander described the incident as "very sad" and "unfortunate" considering the way and manner the crash occurred.

"The Nissan Sunny Sedan Bus was parked behind a truck at a military checkpoint when another truck lost control and rammed into the bus squeezing it in between.

"Investigation showed that the brake of the truck failed, resulting in it smashing the bus from the rear leading to

the death of three people; all males, while two others, were rescued unhurt.

"The truck was believed to be mechanically deficient leading to its loss of control and the crash," he explained.

Dawulung said his officers and men had been able to clear the traffic obstruction for i Road.

free flow of traffic along the

Okene - Auch Road.

He said there was the need for motorists to ensure routine checks and maintenance of vehicles to avoid unfortunate incidents along the highways.

He also charged motorists to always observe stipulated speed limits and other rules and regulations as they drive.

"This, we believe, will not only reduce the rate of crashes but also the severity of injuries," he said.



Bello

NEWS

Mavo drags APC, Maje, W

INEC to court

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

M E M B E R representing W a s e Constituency in the Plateau State House of Assembly and aspirant in the just concluded House of Representatives primaries, Hon. Yahaya Adamu Mavo, has dragged his party the All Progressives

Congress (APC), Deputy Speaker, Rt. Hon. Idris Ahmed Wase and Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) to the Federal High Court in Jos for his exclusion and lack of due process in the conduct of the congress held.

Counsel to the aspirant, Barr. Vincent Orifummishe, said the matter came up for mention and all parties have been duly served with the processes where Counsel to 1st, 2nd and 3rd defendants admitted receiving the service of motion on notice from him.

According to him, "the whole issue was concerning the primary election conducted in Wase Federal Constituency and my client was completely sidelined from the conduct and not allowed by APC to participate in the exercise so he was aggrieved by the action of the party.

"As counsel to the plaintiff, we have the right to respond to them on points of law through our counter affidavit. That is why the matter sought an



Maje

adjournment and we can't oppose the application.

The way and manner the exercise went did not follow due process of conducting party primary elections in Nigeria.

"The aggrieved APC congress purported to have been conducted didn't take place because my client was not served with pre notice for the conduct of the election which is not so, we challenge that the purported primary election is a nullity so we want the court to dismiss the election and conduct fresh elections into the seat of Wase Federal Constituency Representatives".

Responding to the allegations, Counsel to 2nd defendant, Barr Sunday S.

Obende, explained that they moved their application for extension of time which was filed and the appearances of the time including counter affidavit and their preliminary objections challenging the competency of the claimant.

He, however, said, "We oppose the application because the suit is challenging the election of my client, Rt. Hon. Idris Ahmed Wase so we have filed against the merits of the application which we are entitled to do so.

The presentation which he has given in processes is clearly not correct which the court will determine in the long run".

WITH the internal crisis eating deeper into the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), pitching some governors of the party against the leadership and the Presidential Candidate, Atiku Abubakar, some other parties seem to have begun moves to harvest from the internal political impasse.

In the last one week, many chieftains of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), including Governors Dave Umahi of Ebonyi; Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State and Femi Gbajabiamila, Speaker, House of Representatives, had visited Port Harcourt to commission some projects completed by the Governor Nyesom Wike administration.

The latest visit by Peter Obi, presidential candidate of the Labour Party (LP), has set off conversation on the social media, with the permutation by Nigerians that Wike may be "porting" to Obi's party with his team of aggrieved PDP chieftains.

Among those being suspected to have something up their sleeves in that regard are Governors Seyi Makinde, Samuel Ortom, Okezie Ikpeazu and Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi of Oyo, Benue, Abia and Enugu respectively.

The basis for the

Political realignment likely as Obi meets Wike, others

permutation is predicated on the disposition of the afore-mentioned politicians and others towards the party since the emergence of Governor Ifeanyi Okowa of Delta State as the PDP vice presidential candidate, a selection, the process of which did not go down well with many party faithful, which also has deepened the internal rancour in the umbrella organisation.

Since he declared his intention to run for the presidency, Peter Obi has become a serious brand in the country, particularly on the social media, which is believed would shape the 2023 general election.

The Labour Party candidate has continued to tour round the country making consultations. He has met with some important personalities

more than once.

He had visited Governor Wike two months ago. He also had a meeting with Olusegun Mimiko, a former governor of Ondo State, recently.

It was also the consultation that took him to Port Harcourt for the Monday night meeting.

Among those he met with at the residence of the Rivers State governor in Port Harcourt were Wike, Mimiko, Ikpeazu, Ortom, Donald Duke, a former governor of Cross River State, and Ibrahim Dankwambo, a former of Gombe State.

The details of the meeting were not made known to the press, fuelling insinuation that it must be something in connection with 2023 and a possible alliance.



Obi

'All we get is criticism, negative publicity

ABDULLAHI Adamu, the National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress

(APC), has said that all that the party gets from most Nigerians is criticism and negative publicity while the good works done by the party's government go unnoticed.

Adamu made his feelings known when he received the APC professional forum led by Isa Yuguda, former governor of Bauchi State who paid him an advocacy visit at the party's national secretariat in Abuja on recently.

He said all the good things that have happened in the APC-led administration have not received the kind of publicity it deserves and urged the group to take up the task of projecting the party.

The former Nasarawa State governor said: "See the social programmes that this government is having for

teachers, for farmers, for market women; the school feeding programme. These are critical programmes that have not been undertaken by the PDP for the 16 years they were in government.

"We are doing it but nobody praises government for it. All that we get is criticism. If we get ourselves involved in positive reporting of what is happening, the electorate will know the difference. They will know what is the truth.

"One thing we want you to pay attention to, to see how you can be of help, is the activity of the party at the grassroots. It is very critical. It is driven by those who are uneducated thus, the leadership at that level is very vulnerable.

Bulkachuwa to IPAC: Abide by codes of conduct

THE Council of Wise of the Savannah Centre for Diplomacy and Democracy, an NGO, has urged the Inter-Party Advisory Council (IPAC), to abide by its codes during the forthcoming 2023 General Elections.

Chairperson of the council, retired Justice Zainab Bulkachuwa, made the appeal when she led her colleagues on an advocacy visit/engagement with the leadership of IPAC, in Abuja.

Bulkachuwa also enjoined the leadership of IPAC to ensure that political parties discharge their responsibilities to their members in the country without recourse to violence.

"Let me on behalf of the

council appeal to the leadership of IPAC to always abide by its Code of Conduct and declared objectives.

"They should be encouraged to be guided by democratic principles such as: inclusive participation, equity and fairness in all their activities.

"We wish to advise that the leaderships should also take steps to compel their members and officials to fully comply with the electoral laws.

"They should also follow guidelines issued by the electoral umpire (INEC), in order to develop a culture of integrity and trust.

"It's also the responsibility of the Advisory Council to

ensure that the political campaigns by political parties are devoid of rancor, hate speech, inflammatory and unguided utterances capable of instigating violence," she said.

The former President of the Court of Appeal stated that Nigeria deserves peaceful, transparent 2023 elections, adding that for Nigeria to develop, there must be stable good governance which could best be put in place through free and transparent elections.

"The council believes that the ability of Nigerians to once more prove the prophets of doom and our detractors wrong largely depends on the conduct of the parties during the forthcoming 2023 elections:

"They owe it a duty to the Nigerian people to improve upon and consolidate the democratic successes so far achieved in Nigeria," she said.

Bulkachuwa assured that the council would continue to remind stakeholders to always listen to their own wise counsel before they act.

According to her, the council played a very important role in ensuring a free, fair and violence-free election in 2015 through its numerous

engagements with many stakeholders.

Earlier, the Executive Director, Savannah Centre, Amb. Sani Bala, explained that the council of wise which comprise of credible and reputable Nigerians is a platform for early detection and deliberations of major issues around the general elections.

Responding, the IPAC National Chairman, Mr Yabagi Sani, commended the efforts of the council towards ensuring violence-free, fair and credible 2023 General Elections.

According to him, IPAC stands on nothing short of peaceful, transparent and credible elections come 2023.

He said; "our meeting with the council was very informative and highly educative in the sense that we learn a lot.

It has further confirmed the need for Nigeria to have credible and transparent elections.

"We will take the message of the council of wise to other political parties and we will deepen interaction and interface with the council in order to benefit from the fountain of knowledge.



Yabagi



Adamu

POLITICS

Mahmood calls for promotion of issue-based campaigns

CHAIRMAN of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Mahmood Yakubu, has expressed the commission's willingness to co-operate with media organisations to promote issue-based campaigns in the country.

The INEC chairman observed that issue-based politics is central to electoral democracy, and noted that the more media organisations engage parties and their candidates on issue-based politics, the better our electoral democracy.

The chairman made the observation when he received a delegation from the Media Trust Group, led by the Chairman of the Daily Trust Advisory Board on 2023 General Election, Prof. Jibrin Ibrahim, at the INEC headquarters, in Abuja, recently.

Yakubu observed that "the Nigerian Election Debate Group and media outlets have been doing their best organising debates before major off-season elections and during the general election."

He said, "I am happy that one of the major media organisations in the country is also joining to advance the cause of our democracy. The more organisations engage the better the electoral democracy."

The chairman appreciated Daily Trust for its objective and professional coverage of INEC and its activities, as well as the electoral process generally.

He welcomed their involvement in election debate and urged them to extend their advocacy and engagement to cover areas usually not covered by the mainstream media.

He assured that the commission is a willing partner in progress and will continue to operate an open-door policy with the media in terms of content and information sharing.

Prof. Yakubu maintained that INEC is duty bound as a public service institution to do so, and would respond to specific request by Media organisations in the interest of the electoral process and the country.

Earlier, while explaining the purpose of their visit, the leader of the delegation, Prof. Jibrin Ibrahim, said they were at the commission's headquarters to brief the management of INEC on their plans for the 2023 general election.

He said Daily Trust and its associated media platforms were very committed to the promotion of issue-based politics in the country.

"We believe that this 2023 election is the opportunity to raise the question of issue-based politics to its highest point in our history. We are aware that the Commission itself is very much part of that culture of the promotion of the issue-based politics", Prof. Jibrin added.



Mahmood

The leader of the Trust delegation added that "given our commitment as a media group, we are planning a number of specific interventions that relate to making the campaigns a central fulcrum around which issues will emerge on which voters will take their decisions on which candidate and party to support".

Prof. Jibrin explained further that INEC will be one of the pillars around which the series of media activities will be organised due to its key role in the electoral process. He requested members of the Commission to be part of some of the programmes to provide clarification where necessary for INEC to provide content and information as well.

Court strikes out suit seeking Adeleke's disqualification

JUSTICE Obiora Egwuatu of the Federal High Court, Abuja, has struck out a suit seeking nullification of submission of name of Ademola Jackson Nurudeen Adeleke as the governorship candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the July 26, 2022 election.

The Judge struck down the suit on the grounds that the plaintiff lacked locus standi to institute the case.

Plaintiff in the suit, Awoyemi Oluwatayo Lukman, had dragged the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), PDP and Adeleke before the court seeking order to void and set aside the submission of Adeleke's name to INEC on grounds of alleged unlawful action.

The grouse of the plaintiff was that Adeleke's name was hurriedly submitted by PDP on March 11, 2022 as against between March 14 to 18 as contained in the INEC guidelines.

Adeleke's name having not been submitted within the period fixed by INEC, the plaintiff asked the court to declare the submission, illegal, unlawful, null and void and be set aside.

He claimed that INEC

must be bound by its official guidelines and that anything done outside the guidelines is against the provisions of the Electoral Act 2022.

However, in his judgment,

APC-SMT drums support for DG-Tinubu/Shettima Campaign

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

The All Progressive Congress Strategic Monitoring Team (APC-SMT), has thrown their weight behind the choice of Governor Simon Bako Lalong as the Director General of

AHEAD of the 2023 general elections, Ahmed Bola Tinubu, the presidential candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), recently met with former President Olusegun Obasanjo in Abeokuta.

Tinubu, who arrived in company of Femi Gbajabiamila, Speaker, Federal House of Representatives; Nuhu Ribadu, pioneer chairman, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC); Bisi Akande, ex-interim APC chairman, among others, held a closed-door meeting with the former president in Abeokuta.

The closed-door meeting is not unconnected with Tinubu's presidential ambition as the two-term governor of Lagos State is said to have begun political consultations as part of a move to seek people's endorsement, especially ex-presidents and statesmen like Obasanjo, ahead of the presidential election.

Tinubu consults Obasanjo ahead 2023

While arriving at the Penthouse residence of the former president located within the Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Library (OOPL) in Abeokuta at about 1 pm, Tinubu went straight to a closed-door meeting with Obasanjo, including Governor Dapo Abiodun of Ogun State,

former governors, Segun Osoba and Gbenga Daniel.

The APC presidential standard bearer, whose arrival was greeted with fanfare by his supporters and party spoke with APC leaders and supporters later at the Moshood Abiola International Stadium in Abeokuta.



Obasanjo

The Judge held also that the suit was statute barred having been fixed outside the 14 days stipulated by section 285 of the 1999

Constitution that all pre-election suits must be filed, and that the instant suit was filed after 28 days.

the Tinubu/Shettima Campaign Team as a round peck in a round hole as it would foster equity, justice and also strengthen national cohesion.

This was revealed by the Coordinator of APC

Strategic Monitoring Team, Golepji Wambutda, in a press briefing at the State Headquarters of the Nigeria Union of Journalists in Jos, the Plateau State capital.

The team saluted the support and decision of the APC and the flag bearer of the party, H.E. Asiwaju Bola Tinubu in appointing the Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong to serve as the Director General of his campaign saying, "his selection provides the other leg of the tripod on which the much-yearned inclusion, fairness and equity are needed to stand."

"For most of us, a Presidential Campaign Director General is not just a mere appointment in the Campaign Council, rather, it is in the heartbeat of the whole transition process and negotiations that the foundation of a new government is set after winning an election."

"Should he be vilified for his decision to accept the position of a DG Campaign? No! Not at all! Because it does not make sense for the whole field to be

deserted and be left without a mark and effort to correct the anomaly. Also, is the leadership or the quest for leadership going to end in 2023? What about getting involved to make a huge leap in the future?

The appointment of the DG did not come to us as a surprise because he has never lost an election and has led several successful elections around the nation. It will undoubtedly be on record that he has achieved a great feat by fighting doggedly for the entrenchment of fairness that has ensured the APC Presidential ticket moved to the Southern part of the Country", the Coordinator said.

He, therefore, congratulated Governor Simon Bako Lalong on his appointment as the Director General of the Tinubu/Shettima Campaign Organisation and reiterated the team's unalloyed support for his resolve to sail the campaign ship and ensure that he delivers on this national assignment.



Tinubu

SUNDAY POLITICS

Politics: Strengthening frameworks for improved women participation

After the just-concluded party primaries, many stakeholders are at loss as to why the participation of women in politics this time around has been abysmally low. The stakeholders, especially women activists, have decried the decline in women's political fortune and their political entrepreneurship in this dispensation, writes GRACE YUSUF.

THEY have attributed this development to the patriarchal nature in the country's environment, while others have pointed to the culture that does not encourage women to go into politics. However, the most important factor, they aver is the mercantile politics that is practiced in Nigeria.

The mercantile and monetisation of politics, makes the political terrain not to be favourable to women, who obviously most cannot afford such political enterprise.

Statistics by the Gender Strategy Advancement International, (GSAI), on the low political participation of women in Nigeria showed that their participation falls below the world and African continental standards.

According to the report, the national average of women's political participation in Nigeria remains at 6.7 percent in elective and appointive positions which is far below the global average of 22.5 percent and Africa regional average of 23.4 percent and the West African Sub Regional average of 15 percent, according to the report.

Prof. Joy Ezeilo, the Founder of Women of Aid Collective (WACOL), and an activist with over 20 years experience, frowned at the dismal participation of women in politics in this dispensation, saying they have continued to be disenfranchised. She said it was unfortunate that the efforts to get affirmative action entrenched in the nation's constitution or to get gender equal opportunities bill passed have not yielded expected results. The moves were meant to enhance women's chances at running and winning election, she says and the country has never seen this type of retrogression in women's political fortune and a decline in their political entrepreneurship.

"In Nigeria, to get gender equal opportunities bill passed that would have enhanced woman's chances at running and winning election, failed. And then, now the results from the primaries have shown poor performance for women and we are really worried. I have done this work for two decades and I am saying when are we going to get it right?"

"We have done it in other countries and we have seen how they succeeded. In Rwanda, I was part of the movement for affirmative action and getting it into their constitution and more women are participating in politics in that country. The rejection of the five Gender Bills presented to the National Assembly early this year, which resulted in weeks of massive protests by women activists has also contributed to the low participation of women."

The demonstration described as the "mother of all protests" was aimed at calling on the federal lawmakers to reconsider all the gender bills that were rejected during the Constitution amendment earlier in the year. The National Assembly in early March voted against bills providing for 35 percent affirmative action for women in political parties' administration, they also voted against the bill to create special seats for women in the national and state assemblies.

Another activist, Ms Ene Obi, the Country Director of ActionAid, also lamented the low participation of women in politics in this dispensation as compared to 2011 and 2015. "I think there are several factors responsible for low participation of women, there are very few women right now in politics, because of the patriarchal nature we have in our environment. And because of our culture and also not receiving the encouragement from the political class from the government of Nigeria," Obi said.

She said governments lacked the political commitment to implement the 35 per cent affirmative action for female participation in governance, both appointive and elective, even though the National Gender Policy has stipulated it. According to her, with the present 6.7 per cent of women representation, whether it is an appointive position or elective position, the impact of women cannot be felt. This, she said stemmed from lack of recognition of women in the political parties.

"Do the major parties recognise women participation? Let's come down to the current one where we have 109 senators and we have only eight women and we



have 306 house of representatives and we have only about 13 women.' So what we should be saying now is that we are at a point where things need to be done and that is why the gender bills was sent to the National Assembly, because we try to review and reflect on what is done in the other parts of the world," she said.

Obi says the 35 percent affirmative action women are seeking for now is that political parties need to make it as a rule to insert in their own constitution 35 per cent of women representation in both appointments and elective positions.

She cites Rwanda, which is in Africa, as a country which deliberately encourages women's participation and the percentage of their women in governance "is very impressive." Making reference to the Federal Character Commission, she says it came into being because of diversity in the country's representation, and advises that the concept should be reflected to correct the imbalance in the quality of the population in the national life that will lead to quality decisions.

"When decisions are taken in the board room; who are those present in these boardrooms? And the reason why we are taking it seriously now is because women are dying in the maternity wards, dying in road accidents, and through terrorist attacks, they are dying, their husbands and children are also dying. But women are not there to make decisions that will help them survive the vagaries of the system."

Obi praised the role played by the late wife of the military president, Mrs Maryam Babangida, after the Beijing Conference of 1995, when through the Ministry of Women Affairs created the National Women Commission.

"You remember that under her husband then, she was very active and very concerned about the women of Nigeria and so because of her, women that were not ordinarily coming out had to be coming out."

"She will ask for the wives of the local government chairmen to come out, likewise, when she goes to the states, she will want the wives of the state governors to come out and that was the time that many women in the north were not coming out."

"And that made it look like a fiesta but then it actually brought women out and when you come out and learn about new things, you would not go back and do the same. Women started becoming politically active then," she said.

The ActionAid boss is of the opinion that men are just being insensitive to the choices to be made for quality living, quality population and quality decisions by not including women in the scheme of things.

She says the call for the creation of an extra seat in every senatorial zone, to bring them on board for quality discussion was not taken.

"This extra seat in the house of representatives for example accounts for only one percent of the budget and you can easily accommodate it because the Nigerian parliament is one of the highest paid in the world in a place where is the poverty capital in the world," Obi said.

According to a GSAI report, Nigeria ranks 181 of 193 countries on the Gender Equality Index, for countries with low women representation in governance. The ranking took into consideration reasons such as poor resource allocation in the economic and social sectors, frequent conflicts, forced displacements and inadequate inclusion of women and girls' perspectives in policy-making decisions.

"Despite all efforts to promote the contribution of women in the domain of politics and decision making, women have continued to record low representation at all tiers and levels of governance although they constitute almost half of the electorate."

"Findings reveal that males constituted 94.2 percent of the members of the National Assembly in the periods from 1999 to 2015 (on average), while female participation remained low at 5.8 per cent (National Bureau of Statistics, 2019)," the report said.

The Executive Director, GSAI, Ms Adaora Onyinchere, wonders why the Federal Government has not considered certain policies on gender inclusion.

Onyinchere spoke at a two-day capacity building workshop with the theme: "Capacity Building Workshop for Reporters and Editors on Media Independence to Promote Women's Economic Inclusion and Gender Accountability in Governance", in Abuja.

"Statistics of women from 1999 to date both in governance, in politics and the way government has tailored their implementation of gender budget has totally been null and void, for a population with over 49.2 percent."

In the same vein, Hajiya Lami Adamu Lau, the National President of the National Council of Women Societies (NCWS) calls on political parties to restructure their policies to reflect gender balance.

Lau says that is why the council has been embarking on advocacy drives to all political parties seeking ways of working together with them to strengthen the country's democracy to ensure that women are actively involved parties politics.

"A truly egalitarian nation is possible when we embrace our differences and give every Nigerian a sense of belonging, irrespective of gender and other mundane considerations," she said.

Lau decries that Nigerian women have continued to register poor representation in politics and leadership in spite of the huge numerical strength and various national, international legal instruments on gender inclusion and mainstreaming.

According to her, "in the history of

Nigeria's democratic rule, women have not attained up to 11 percent representation in both elective and appointive positions thus denying the huge population of capable and credible women with robust credentials and sound moral values the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the economic development of our dear nation. Political parties play very key roles in leadership selection in any democratic system", she said.

Lau also condemns the National Assembly's recent rejection of five gender bills, saying women have continued to experience subtle discrimination bias and stereotyping within the party leadership structures. None of the major parties live up to the recommendation of the 2008 Electoral Reform Committee of 20 per cent of women in governing boards of political parties," she said.

Another activist, Ms Ene Ede, the Executive Director, Equity Advocates says apart from corruption and corrupt practices which are the bane of political parties, there has been no will for women to push hard in making demands on leaders on their exclusion and marginalisation.

Ede says if legal actions are taken against violations of compliance to affirmative action principles of minimum of 35 per cent reserved positions on both elective and appointive are for women, then the attention of the government will be drawn to their issues.

She added that, if media as watch dog keeps track of published documents, then the issue of women participation in governance and politics, will be effectively pushed to the front burner," she said.

According to Ede, women and other people of conscience must stop this democratic retrogression. See the composition of Presidential campaign organisations of the two main political parties - APC and PDP is very retrogressive by standard and intention. The two parties are ready for war and distraction," she said.

Specifically, the U.S.-based National Democratic Institute has expressed concern over the exclusion of women as running mates in the presidential primaries for the 2023 elections. It, therefore, emphasises the need for the media to beam attention on the marginalisation of women in the last presidential primaries by political parties.

These recommendations were among the highlights of a communiqué issued at the end of a two-day media training in Calabar for 25 journalists on gender reporting. The event was organised by Women In Politics Forum (WiPF) for selected journalists, and the communiqué was signed by the President of WiPF, Ebere Ifendu.

Ifendu said that the media needed to be intentional in projecting women in politics through the publication of stories that

would focus on issues rather than irrelevant personal matters.

"The media should beam attention on the marginalisation of the last presidential primaries in this regard. Journalists should generate story ideas and write stories on women in politics and amplify women's success stories either in politics or other spheres of life. The media should ensure that more women are featured regularly on guest programmes."

Also on the way forward, Ezeilo expresses belief that women can raise the quality of leadership, adding that for 2027, women have to start working towards that now and expressed hope that the female members of National Assembly will not give up the good work of pursuing the passage of the gender bills, which she describes as "a beautiful piece of legislation, progressive piece of legislation".

She says the problem is deep seated and women have to get to the root of it and says it is time for decisive action by women to negotiate power, we can't be waiting for them to serve us. We just have to serve ourselves. We have to just serve our interests.

For Obi of ActionAids, a lot of education is going on about the Continuous Voters Registration for people to make sure they get their PVCs. "If I see a woman on a ballot paper and no matter the party, and if you are bold enough to come out to contest, you will get my vote," Obi said.

She also stresses the need for unity among women to overcome the patriarchal struggle.

"If we can unite and come together it will result to a lot of bonding. And we are working with other organisations to make sure the needful is done. We have not given up on the gender bills, because there are conventions that Nigeria that signed into that have not been domesticated, so will continue until those gender bills are represented," Obi said.

Beside recommitting and reconsidering all the five gender bills, women are also asking the lawmakers to pass the Gender and Equal Opportunities bill currently before the Senate and immediately domesticate the African Charters Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, which Nigeria ratified in 2004. The National Assembly is also being asked to domesticate the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which Nigeria ratified in 1985.

For Dr Abiola Akiyode-Afolabi, the Nigeria's legislature, which is male-dominated with a very poor women representation, which spreads across political and elective positions, must be changed to also favour both genders.

"Nigerian women have resolved to continue to struggle to push back on the misogynistic attitude of some of the lawmakers and the pattern of neglect toward women concerns and disregard for "womanity".

"We reject further dehumanisation of Nigerian women. The constitution should cure the defect and we will continue to protest to show our dissatisfaction."

"We call on the Senate President and the Speaker to call an urgent meeting to discuss how to readdress the wrong, if not we shall continue to occupy the National Assembly," Akiyode-Afolabi, the Co-convenor of Womanifesto, said on behalf of protesting women.

A member of the All Progressives Congress, (APC), and former Deputy Speaker, Lagos State House of Assembly, Adefunmilayo Tejuosho, says nobody will give any woman free position; rather, women will continue to ask for affirmative action.

"We will continue to encourage more women to be in positions of authority. We should be able to come together as women to say, "No Women, No Vote. If we do not put women in positions of authority, women will not vote. I think this affirmative action will help to bring women on board."

"Stepping down is not only a woman's issue. I think we need to re-organise ourselves to make sure that our grassroots are intact, that the delegates that will vote are those who will vote for women. When we look at the population of women in Nigeria, we have more women than men. When we look at the population of voters, we have more women than men," Tejuosho said.

(NANFeature)

SUNDAY PEOPLE

LALONG KICKSTARTS IMPLEMENTATION OF WORLD BANK PROJECTS

The Governor of Plateau State and chairman, Northern Governors' Forum, Rt Hon Simon Bako Lalong recently kickstarted and presented 1.012b naira grants of the World Bank Assisted project (AGILE) at the Victoria Gowon Multi Purpose Hall, Government House Rayfiled,



Plateau State Governor, Rt Hon Simon Bako Lalong delivering his speech



Governor Simon Bako Lalong (middle), his Deputy, Prof. Sonni Gwanle Tyoden (right) and the Commissioner of Secondary Education, Hon. Elizabeth Wapmuk



Deputy Governor, Prof. Sonni Gwanle Tyoden (right) with the Plateau State APC chairman, Hon. Rufus Bature



A cross section of Commissioners at the event



A cross section of Principals of secondary schools at the ceremony



Hon. Mrs. Elizabeth Wapmuk, Commissioner for Secondary Education making some remarks



Governor Simon Bako Lalong (middle) in a group photograph with a benefitting secondary school



Rt Hon Simon Bako Lalong in a photograph with students of one of the schools at the ceremony

WATER they say is life and as such very essential to human existence.

Its many uses cannot be overemphasized. So when a bill is introduced to restrict people from gaining full access to it, it makes no sense at all. When the National Water Resources Bill, 2020 failed to get a concurrent passage by the eight assembly under Senator Bukola Saraki, it resurfaced again during the ninth assembly under Senator Ahmad Lawan despite the public outcry and outrage it generated. With barely ten months to the end of this administration, the same bill has found its way back for the third time and is set for second reading at the House of Representatives.

The bill which was first presented by President Muhammadu Buhari in 2017 basically, seeks to transfer the control of water resources from the states and local governments to the federal government. What this portends is that all water resources in the country such as rivers, lakes, streams and even underground water will be under the full control of the federal government.

Nigerians have expressed concern at some sections of the bill which they felt will breach their right to water, with the most disturbing part being Section 120 which makes it mandatory for one to obtain a driller's permit before sinking a borehole.

In clear terms the bill if passed into law, will clip the wings of both state and local government as well as individuals from making use of the water in their environment without a permit from the federal government. This development many believe will not augur well for the country. The result they say, will be disastrous, and may lead to serious chaos, crisis and even water wars. Recall that this same water resources bill almost tore the National Assembly apart, to the extent of pitching lawmakers from the north against those from the south.

With the initial bill titled: "A bill for an act to establish a regulatory framework for the water resources sector in Nigeria, provide for the equitable and sustainable redevelopment, management, use and conservation of Nigeria's surface water and groundwater resources and for related matter". Section 98 of the bill states that the use of water shall be subject to licensing, Section 107 says a license might be cancelled if the licensee fails to make beneficial use of the water. While Section 104 addresses emergency powers in case of shortage of water, the bill will empower the federal government to direct a person who has a supply of water in excess of his needs for domestic purposes to reduce the amount he is permitted to extract under the terms of any license or general authorisation.

Aside the contentious sections of the bill, stakeholders have continued to question the real motives behind the reintroduction of this particular bill. For one, many are asking why the President has so much

interest in the said bill. From every indication, the federal government seems to have vested interest which makes most people believe that there is a hidden agenda. The way and manner the bill keeps resurfacing lends credence to the fact that indeed, a plan is being hatched to deprive certain people of their inherited land and resources. There are concerns that the bill seeks to give control of all waterways to certain group of people who are predominantly cattle herders to the detriment of



On the controversial Water Resources Bill



others who are farmers.

At the plenary few weeks ago, some lawmakers again kicked against the bill when it was presented. The bill was this time around sponsored by Hon. Sada Soli from Katsina who is also the Chairman Committee on Water Resources. A little drama ensued as the short title of the bill was being read when Hon. Mark Gbilar from Benue raised a point of order, reminding the Speaker Femi Gbajabiamila that the bill in question generated a lot of controversy the last time it was brought up, hence should not be entertained. The lawmaker wondered why the issue was still being brought before the floor of the House since majority of lawmakers are not in support of it.

As the plenary progressed with arguments and counter arguments on whether the bill should be stepped down or not, the bill's sponsor Sada Soli allayed the fears of Nigerians by promising that some contentious issues in the initial bill will be addressed in the new bill. He went a step further by vowing to his colleagues that if the issues come up again, he will have no choice but to withdraw the bill. Even though Nigerians are yet to see the content of this new bill, one thing is certain, the bill will still

which has led to controversies over the years are not addressed.

Meanwhile, stakeholders and some individuals who have reacted to and expressed concern on the reintroduction of the bill include the Middle Belt Leaders Forum, South - South/South-East Elders Forum, Prof. Wole Soyinka and Dr. Femi Falana amongst others. Accusing fingers have been pointed at the federal government for making a clandestine move to revive the rejected Water Resources Bill which has the capability of causing disunity in the country. The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has also condemned the reintroduction of the bill. In a statement credited to the NLC President Ayuba Wabba, he categorically warned against legislative abuse or betrayal of Nigerians if the bill gets passed without public acceptability.

On his part and in response to the controversial bill, the Minister of Water Resources Engr. Suleiman Adamu believes the contrary, insisting that the bill will manage all surface and groundwater for the benefit of all, both for domestic and non domestic uses as well as for irrigation and agricultural purposes. In his opinion, the bill will ensure that the nation's water resources are protected,

used, developed, conserved and managed in a sustainable manner for the good and benefit of all Nigerians. He is however, not happy with the misconception and controversies the bill has generated since its introduction.

Arising from a recent meeting, the Nigeria Governors Forum (NGF) through its Chairman Kayode Fayemi disclosed the forum's position which is that the bill should be reviewed to accommodate all concerned states. You will recall that at the reintroduction of the water resources bill, the governors had raised concerns that the bill did not adequately address the interests of states and is not consistent with the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. They described it as a ploy by the federal government to secure lands around the riverine states in the southern part in order to resettle foreign herdsmen, after the failed attempt at introducing the cattle colony and Rural Grazing Area (RUGA) initiatives.

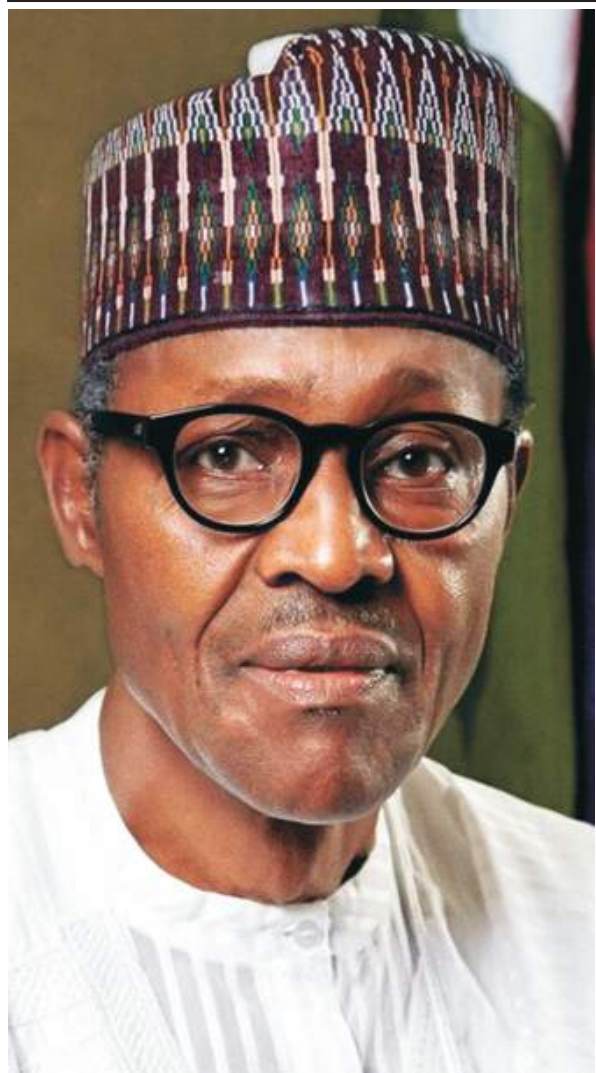
In the meantime, the National Assembly has sequel to the passage of the Copyright Act Bill by both chambers unanimously passed the bill for an act to repeal the Copyright Act, CAP

C28 LFN, 2004 and enact a new Copyright Act 2022. This followed a clause by clause consideration by the Committee of the Whole, consequent upon which the House had a third reading and eventual passage of the bill.

The bill which seeks to provide for the effective regulation, protection and administration of copyright in the digital environment in line with global best practices, has four main objectives as outlined in clause 1. They include strengthening the copyright regime in Nigeria to enhance the competitiveness of its creative industries in a digital and knowledge based global economy, effectively protecting the rights of authors to ensure just rewards and recognition for their hard work and intellectual efforts while also providing appropriate limitations and exceptions to guarantee access to creative works, yet encouraging cultural interchange and advance public welfare

Other objectives are facilitating Nigeria's compliance with obligations arising from relevant international copyright treaties and enhancing the capacity of the Nigerian Copyright Commission for effective administration and enforcement of the provisions of the Copyright Act.

SUNDAY MAGAZINE



Buhari



Fayemi



Waba

Alarming backlog of workers' salaries

There is clear evidence that several state Governments in Nigeria are now struggling to meet up with monthly payment of workers' salaries which is in the midst of the present economic realities is adding an excruciating pain to families who rely solely on their bread winners to put bread on the table. KENNETH DARENG examines the situation and its impact on the civil servants.

ACCORDING to a recent survey conducted in 36 states of the Federation including the FCT, by BudgIT, a civic-tech organization leading the advocacy for transparency and accountability in Nigeria's public finance, listed Abia, Adamawa, Ebonyi, Ondo, and Taraba as states with the worst cases of owing up to 3 years arrears of salaries.

SUNDAY STANDARD sources also revealed that, states like Kogi, Nassarawa, Benue, Niger, Osun, Plateau and Edo, have joined the league of states with huge salary arrears ranging from three months and above respectively.

Although some states not listed have been up to date in the monthly payment, yet delays and gaps are in most cases witnessed which the BudgIT in its statement following the survey result expressed its disapproval over some state Governments' refusal to pay monthly salaries accruable to their civil service workers as at when due.

It said the survey was conducted to spotlight and identify state governments that have consistently failed to meet the requirement of governance and employee compensation, thereby subjecting their workers to unpaid wages of labour and exposing them to harsh living

conditions.

And while the findings from the survey favoured some states that are not in arrears, it was however alarmed that states like Abia, Adamawa, Ebonyi, Ondo, and Taraba owe three years or less in payments.

The survey also further revealed that, at least 12 states out of the 36 states in the country are owing civil servants not less than one month salary as at July 2022 with some owing up to six months while some are yet to receive their salary for over three years.

In a chat with **SUNDAY STANDARD**, a senior citizen and a retired civil servant in plateau state, elder Moses Muhanang, decried the present ordeal of the Nigerian workers saying; "During our days in the civil service, the government saw a delay in payment as an aberration not to talk of going into arrears. Then every state government tried to compete in early monthly wages. By the 15th of every month our salary slips were ready and by the following week everyone received his salary. Unfortunately the civil service is now dead.

"Look at corruption and incompetence everywhere, those in leadership positions have crippled the system and have succeeded in killing the morale of

an average worker with this kind of situation. I wonder what the situation will be in the next 10 years to come by then the civil

“The situation might be worse in the coming months judging from the fact that most state governments have collected so much loans from many financial institutions and have smartly tied the repayments to Irrevocable Payment Order,[IPO], which is deducted from source by the Central Bank of Nigeria [CBN], from the monthly allocation accruable to each state.

“

service would have been completely dead and buried. God forbid." Muhanang said.

A plateau state civil servant working in one of the government's parastatals who spoke to **SUNDAY STANDARD** under anonymity said; "I have a family of seven including my wife and five children apart from my old parents and other relatives in the village who depend on me for feeding or other needs. My salary is just N80,000 per month, and for the past 3 months, I have not been paid. Just imagine the stress of going to work and the cost of transportation alone is taking almost a quarter of my earnings. We are just hanging our faith in God as I have all of a sudden become a debtor.

"I am in default of paying my children's school fees as well as my rent and these days, our stable food in the house is mostly garri or kunu because we cannot afford buying food stuff due to lack of payment of salary." He noted.

Another civil servant in one of plateau state Local Government areas, also laments the delay and lack of payment of salaries which he disclosed; "from May and the month of August, we are in the fourth month now and no salaries. Worse still is the fact that, no one is coming out to tell us what is responsible. I am

highly disappointed that our Labour Union seems to be looking the other way while government is denying us our legitimate wages.

"Sometimes I wonder how some of our leaders go to sleep without examining their conscience as to how workers fend for themselves at this challenging times where the cost of living is far beyond the reach of every ordinary Nigerian and in a situation where one is not paid. It therefore means that if one is not careful the temptation of going into crime may just be the only option if not for the strong religious faith in me I might have gone astray which many others cannot be patient enough."

According to Mr Ishaya Timkur A public commentator in Jos in his opinion; "The situation might be worse in the coming months judging from the fact that most state governments have collected so much loans from many financial institutions and have smartly tied the repayments to Irrevocable Payment Order,[IPO], which is deducted from source by the Central Bank of Nigeria [CBN], from the monthly allocation accruable to each state.

"Now tell me if a particular state had signed such order and does not have fluidity in its internal

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NEWS

'Media, viable platform for promoting EBF'

By JIDAUNA DARING

PARTICIPANTS at a two day workshop on promoting exclusive Breast Feeding *(EBF) have described the media as a viable platform which can help in championing the course of creating more awareness on EBF among the nursing mothers.

THE participants disclosed this during a media dialogue to promote awareness on EBF and infant nutrition in commemoration of the 2022 World Breast Feeding Week Bauchi Field Office (BFO) States, organized by Bauchi Radio Corporation (BRC) in collaboration with UNICEF Bauchi Office, held at the Crest Hotel Jos, recently. The participants pointed out that there was a strong need for more education to care givers and policy makers among others on the need to



Ehanire

encourage EBF. He stressed that EBF awareness was supposed to start right from the day the pregnant women start their antenatal.

They also discouraged artificial food during EBF by nursing mothers. They

emphasized the need for the mothers to be eating good locally made family food.

Earlier in his welcome remarks, BRC/UNICEF Desk officer, Umar Muhammad Shira expressed optimism with the programme and

thanked all the participants for honoring the invitation for the two day workshop. Shira who also read out the meeting's objectives said that it was to strengthen the capacity of media partners toward child reporting, particularly nutrition using EBF approaches, to strengthen the capacity of media partners to promote safe EBF in Covid-19 era, create awareness on the role of chain actors in promoting Safe EBF and to also use media as advocacy channels for positive policies towards nutrition especially EBF. He said that UNICEF Nigeria has shifted its focus to prevention of mal-nutrition and called on the journalists not to relent in their effort, in promoting EBF practice through their various medium at all times.

Also in her remarks, Nutrition Specialist UNICEF, Bauchi Field Office, Philomena Irene said that the issue of breast feeding was becoming alarming amongst the five states.

PLSG approves 133 Specialists hospital staff replacement

PLAKEAU State government, has signed and approved the replacement of over one hundred and thirty-three (133) exiting staff of the Plateau Specialists Hospital Jos, after the Memo forwarded by the Management of the hospital and the Hospital Management Board which attracted strike action since February this year.

The Chief Medical Director of Plateau Specialists Hospital, Dr. Filimon Golwa, disclosed this while in an interview with SUNDAY STANDARD in his office shortly after the suspension of a six months strike action embarked upon by staff Wednesday.

The CMD, said, "right before now if you go down memory lane, the staff had embarked

on a strike action sometimes in February and they had air marked few items concerning the requirements for the tertiary hospital. They made me understand that they were fighting for the good of the hospital and mine was to comment.

"One of the major things is the issue of man-power need which has fallen short of the expected requirement and the second thing was concerning the real status of the Specialists Hospital after it been accepted, gazetted and assented to be a Specialist Hospital, while the third component was the differentials in salaries.

"I quickly ran to the office of Head of Service and he quickly arranged for a meeting with the union members, but they could not agree so, that was why they continued with the strike. Government and the Commissioner of Health went and had dialogue several times and we tried to intervene, but they could not understand.

"So, it was just last week

that they had to put government into commitment in terms of MoU. During that MoU, the meeting agreed on everything that they are also going to look into salaries differentials. The government also approved the memo that we have earlier sent for the replacement of 133 existing staff in the system", he disclosed.

Golwa, however, assured that this development would further serve as a stimulus to greater, better and quality services because that was what they were expecting saying, "you do not expect one staff to come in the night controlling a Ward.

"This time around, at least, we will be able to have two, three and four staff that will come in night so that, we do not have those lapses on the management of the patients and I think that is a very big stimulus to all the staff for improved services in the system", he enthused.



Lalong

2022 NMA/AGM: Taraba has only 86 medical doctors

TARABA State has the lowest number of medical practitioners in the country with only 86 general medical practitioners and 37 consultants/specialists.

This was disclosed by Dr. Wanonyi Kwala, during 2022 Annual General Meeting and Scientific Conference in Jalingo.

Kwala who delivered a keynote address titled: Post Graduate Medical Education: The benefits, challenges in Taraba State and the WayForward, noted that poor roads, insecurity, low internally generated revenue, shortage of manpower in the health sector were factors affecting post graduate medical education in the state.

He said the way to deal with

that was through political will, commitment and improvement of infrastructure.

In his address, the Chairman, Nigeria Medical Association, NMA Taraba State chapter, Dr. Nkanta Edet, said the association had to swing into action to tackle the challenges they met in the State which include: poor remuneration of medical doctors, perennial shortage of medical doctors, lack of houses for most doctors, attacks and kidnapping of doctors, lack of life insurance policies for health personnel and leadership tussle of federal health institutions by other health professionals and poor budgetary provision for health, among others.

He therefore called for access to quality healthcare

for Tarabans, a functional Taraba State Contributory Health Insurance Agency and the domestication of the National Health Insurance Authority, (NHIA) Act in the state.

The Guest Lecturer at the occasion, Dr. Kenneth Tijos, while speaking on the sub theme, Involvement of Medical Doctors in Partisan Politics: The Challenges and the Way Forward, charged doctors on political involvement by identifying with political parties at the grassroots and that they must not leave politics to the unlearned.

Chairman of the occasion, Dr. Philip Duwe warned doctors in the state civil service against hasty involvement in politics but that they must first resign

from service or take a leave of absence in order to get involved in politics and not to be drawn by the allure of politics.

In line with the sub theme of the programme, he admonished medical practitioners to join politics and attempt to gain more knowledge and be strategic in their decisions.

In his remarks, the Taraba State Governor, Arc. Darius Ishaku, represented by Commissioner of Health, Dr. Innocent Vakkai, listed the challenges the administration met in the health sector and the successes achieved so far. He however encouraged doctors to join politics in order to influence decisions and policies that would impact on their affairs



Kidnap kingpin wadume bags 7 years imprisonment

Federal High Court, sitting in Abuja, has convicted and sentenced Taraba based kidnap kingpin, Hamisu Bala, popularly called Wadume, to seven years imprisonment, for unlawfully dealing in prohibited firearms and for escaping from prison custody.

The court specifically convicted the kidnapper of escaping from lawful custody and unlawfully dealing in prohibited firearms.

Justice Nayako also convicted Wadume on counts two and 10 of the 13-count charge brought against him and six others by the office of the Attorney-General of the Federation.

Archbishop accepts Lalong apology

Catholic Archbishop of Jos, Plateau State, Dr. Matthew Audu, has told Governor Simon Lalong that the apology he tendered to the Church has been accepted.

The President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) has already accepted your apology, and so it goes for all of us," Audu said at the opening of the 19th General Assembly of the Catholic Archdiocese of Jos, on Wednesday.

Theme of the General Assembly holding at St. Louis Parish, Jos, 'The Eucharist Our Strength Towards a Better Nigeria'. According to the cleric, since the Church encourages its members to go into politics, the intention is to work at making a difference in politics, in line with the mandate of the Church.

Matawalle okays death penalty

Governor of Zamfara State, Bello Matawalle, has signed into law a death penalty on anybody found guilty of banditry, cattle rustling, cultism, or serving as a bandits' informant.

He announced this in a broadcast to the people of the state on Tuesday. The broadcast was preceded by an expanded security council meeting that lasted for more than eight hours.

He said "On the 28th of June this year, I passed the bill on Prohibition and Punishment for Banditry, Cattle Rustling, Cultism, Kidnapping and Other Incidental Offences, 2022.

Paris club refund deduction: Malami claims fraudulent

Nigeria Governors Forum (NGF) has berated the Attorney General of the Federation (AGF), and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami for describing them as noising-making and with no basis for rejecting the proposed deductions of \$418 million from the Paris Club Refund to pay the consultants.

Malami said that state governors have no basis to complain about the \$418 million deductions from the Paris Club Refund paid to consultants they hired.

The governors also said that they rejected all the claims made by the AGF and that they are ready to take every legal means to ensure that the purported claims are litigated upon till the highest court in the land.

Blackout as electricity workers shut transmission stations

NIGERIANS were thrown into darkness Wednesday after the electricity workers under the auspices of the National Union of Electricity Employees

(NUEE) embarked on a strike over labour dispute with the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN).

Workers shut down a power station in Abuja as they sang solidarity songs.

It was gathered that distribution companies (DisCos), including Ikeja Electric, Eko Electricity Distribution Company, Ibadan Electricity Distribution Company, Abuja Electricity Distribution Company, and Kaduna Electricity Distribution Company, confirmed service disruption via their social media channels.

They blamed the outage on the ongoing industrial conflict between the TCN and the electricity workers union.

Buhari rejects Asuu demand for six months salaries

President Muhammadu Buhari opted to invoke the no work, no pay policy against striking university lecturers on Thursday after receiving report on the negotiation with the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), from Education Minister Adamu Adamu.

The President was shocked that the lectures have reduced their demands to only payment of their six months salary arrears.

Government drew the attention of Nigerians about its inability to resolve the dispute with ASUU, while Prof. Emmanuel Osodeke, chairman of ASUU told Federal Government to forget getting his colleagues back to the class rooms to conduct the unfinished academic session, if their salary backlog of six months are not paid.

Compiled by Hosea Nyamlong

SUNDAY FEATURE

Avoiding violent election campaigns in Nigeria

The fact remains that competition is healthy because it improves, strengthens, and increases one's chances of success. This is widely acknowledged in business and politics. In the context of Charles Robert Darwin's "survival of the fittest" which contends that competition is not only beneficial but also natural, it carries an air of scientific validity. AUSTYN OGANNAH writes.

HOWEVER, as Maxwell A. Cameron, professor at the Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, University of British Columbia argues, the tremendous evolutionary advantage that humans have comes from our ability to cooperate, not compete, because competition, by itself, has never been the foundation of a great society.

This train of thought was what occupied my mind recently as I read the series of propaganda and outright falsehood being bandied about by mostly supporters of the presidential candidates of the major political parties: the All Progressives Congress (APC), the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the Labour Party (LP).

The fact that it is the first time we are seeing the emergence of a potent third force in our presidential elections since the return to democratic rule in 1999 has meant a triplication of the usual competitive tendencies of the electioneering campaigns.

More than most countries, the competitive Nigerian election experience has given evidence to the claim that "elections are war by other means," an extension of the quote of Prussian General Carl Philipp Gottfried von Clausewitz (1780-1831), who believed that war is the "continuation of politics by other means" in his seminal work 'On War,' which became a standard textbook for the military leaders of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

From the election campaigns that followed the return of power to civilian control up until this historic three-way pre-campaign propaganda, the country has witnessed a hotbed of political tensions, unbridled violence and a combination of misinformation and disinformation campaigns to sway the voter's thinking one way or another in much the same way as military generals do in the war theatre.

When former President Olusegun Obasanjo stated that the election that would determine his successor would be a 'do-or-die affair' in 2007, he was expressing the crudeness of this reality.

Obasanjo was insisting on the PDP retaining power in the 2007 general election and putting every machinery in government's control and beyond, to see that the party did and it was a success. There was violence and rigging in certain parts of the country as the PDP muscled its way to retain power at all costs.

If anything, it got even worse in 2011 in the election cycle before the general election with Goodluck Jonathan on the PDP ticket and both Muhammadu Buhari and Nuhu Ribadu representing the opposition.

Despite that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), under Attahiru Jega's leadership, made efforts to introduce reforms, at least 800 people were killed in three days of



post-election violence, according to the Geneva-based Human Rights Watch. The pontificators who evoked that violence began with propaganda during the campaigns.

In addition, even though Nigeria did not record a large number of deaths, following the 2015 elections that brought the incumbent to power, the weeks before then claimed the lives of 58 people, at least, killed across the nation during election-related violence between December 2014 and February 2015, according to the National Human Rights Commission.

This was considered a good outcome in the end, because the fear of a full-scale war was very real, with many families who had the means relocating abroad to avoid being caught up in the crossfire, especially after the vitriolic levels of hate campaigns that preceded the polls. Perhaps, the acceptance of the election results by Jonathan spared further bloodletting.

As we approach another election season, this dangerous warring by other means through the instrument of campaigns has started. That is why, as I witness pre-campaign shenanigans begin to sow seeds of division, distrust and even hate before the campaigns begin proper next month, I am considering it a duty to sound a strong note of warning.

Our natural tendencies to be competitive must be balanced by our collective responsibilities to ensure that the country that we call our own before the elections next year continues to exist during and after the results have been announced and a winner has emerged. The smoke of misinformation and disinformation typical to the propaganda of elections often points to the existence of an unwatched fire that has the potential to bring the house down to ashes if caution is thrown to the winds and our need for peace and coexistence is sacrificed on the altar of victory at all costs.

The attribution of the supporters of one candidate as card-carrying members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), a nationalist separatist group aimed at the restoration of the Republic of Biafra via a breakaway from Nigeria, is the exact type of political mudslinging that cannot but foster virulent outbursts and can go off the rails to result in actual violence against those on the other side of the divide.

There was enough vituperative back and forth going on online, with a popular newspaper columnist publishing an article that twisted the "Obedient" movement of the Labour Party presidential candidate with the title 'Obi-tuary' that the author became the target of real threats of violence and, at the very extreme, death. And, that is a path down the rabbit hole that is best avoided.

This warning is made more paramount because the main distinction in political propaganda today is not necessarily the content, but the audience that it targets. Political propaganda may now reach more people faster and much more easily than ever, partly due to the Internet and social media, as well as a media industry that is pushed by sensationalist reporting because it is profitable.

As we have experienced recently, some governments that frequently employ propaganda

have taken over official and private media outlets, allowing them to disseminate their propaganda through these channels and give it a false air of legitimacy. Donald Trump, for instance, disseminated his propaganda via social media and the assistance of a small number of supportive media outlets, such as Fox News. However, the mainstream media did contribute by identifying and disseminating the false information. The act of spreading his messages, regardless of the circumstance, promotes their propagation even when it is done to elicit criticism.

Political propaganda, however, is more than just a means of deceiving people. Instilling mistrust by leaving people unsure of the facts is a crucial component of propaganda. In the long run, this will lead to people completely tuning out of political conversation since it will be too difficult to choose who to believe.

That was why the Ghanaian president's debunking of fake news attributed to him and emanating from the pre-campaign disinformation cycle in Nigeria was a warning to everyone: the political parties, their fervent supporters and the general voting public.

President Nana Akufo-Addo took to Twitter to officially remove his name from claims on Facebook that he had asked Bola Tinubu (APC) to give Peter Obi

(LP) a chance, while the APC leader sought treatment for his health, calling the claim "completely false and mischievous, with no iota of truth whatsoever in it." This followed another prominent call out from the eminent Professor Wole Soyinka, who distanced himself from the political leanings of the National Association of Seadogs, popularly known as the Pyrates Confraternity, which he co-founded, and members of whom were seen in a viral video making fun of Tinubu's health.

These are just two examples of a growing wave of propaganda actions that are gaining in spread, but which those who know how they can go off the rails and degenerate into a lawless free-for-all must immediately call out and stand against.

National progress is based on our ability to empathise, solve social problems and make moral decisions.

As humans, we would not have evolved language, tools, art, or even war without our capacity to copy, cooperate, learn from and comprehend one another, if we only competed and waged war. We must learn not to be driven to extremes.

Despite Obasanjo's declaration of the 2007 general election as a do-or-die matter for his candidate and party, neither the retired General himself nor any of the other participants in the extreme verbal political campaigns died. Rather, it was a set of unidentified Nigerians that undoubtedly were sacrificed as a result of the tension, bloodshed, and fraud that surrounded the elections. Those who evoked violence during the 2011 campaign cycle also are still active in politics and may be seen on the streets today.

We must not let ourselves become victims of this cycle. As we support those whose manifestos and policies resonate with the type of country we want to belong to, it is our responsibility to practice high standards of political engagements without rancour or bitterness, argue policies, debate standards, disagree on principles and vote on convictions without sowing seeds of division, distrust and hate. We need to remain a country and our coexistence will be hinged on how we can navigate the campaigns in peace for the brighter tomorrow we seek.

"Despite that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), under Attahiru Jega's leadership, made efforts to introduce reforms, at least 800 people were killed in three days of post-election violence, according to the Geneva-based Human Rights Watch. The pontificators who evoked that violence began with propaganda during the campaigns. In addition, even though Nigeria did not record a large number of deaths, following the 2015 elections that brought the incumbent to power, the weeks before then claimed the lives of 58 people, at least, killed across the nation during election-related violence between December 2014 and February 2015, according to the National Human Rights Commission"

SUNDAY FEATURE

Valueless perception of girls, women: A societal shame

The agitation for the recognition of women and girls in every facet of life seems to be a tedious lifelong journey that requires patience, hard work, commitment, confidence building and getting others involved in actualizing this dream. For this task to be accomplished, however, the young, elderly women and male would have to advocate for women on the need for a more formidable force to create the expected safe space for the voice of women to be heard and be part of decision making processes towards nation building. JENNIFER YARIMA writes.

IT'S basically high time for all citizens of this country to jettison this book of lamentation so as to get others involved in changing the myth around women whose primary duty is assumed but to just support the man to blossom. The greater percentage our citizenry today is of the notion that women are scrambling for liberation and representation in decision making at all levels to compete with the men. This is one of the misconceptions which has been deeply rooted as the greatest obstacle towards achieving remarkable success on issues affecting our women folks in particular.

The relevant roles women play as viewed by some people should start and end in the home. Unfortunately, the lots of chores at the home front gives man the right footing in the society which sadly enough emanates from the efforts of the woman at the background. They should only be seen and never be heard because the society feels women have little or nothing of value to offer in the larger space.

The greatest significance of a woman can best be appreciated if a man has her in his life. Her presence in the family earns the head of the household undeserved respect. Over the years, the women have played supportive roles at home front by handling tougher responsibilities than most men. Every activity seems to revolve around the woman in most, if not, all cases.

No wonder she is termed an organizer, and the Holy Bible further buttress, her importance in Proverbs 18.22 which says, "He who finds a wife finds good thing and obtains favour from the Lord".

Women today, because of the little value placed on them, have unfortunately become subject to public ridicule. They are seen as second class citizens.

It has become so bad in some cultures that the woman does not sit with the male folk within the family circle to take decisions on what affects the family, rather, her youngest child is expected to take decision on her behalf even if the matter affects her. This has been tolerated over times because the anomaly has its roots from the family. If a mother does not have a voice, who then is her daughter to challenge such norms, propagated by the elders?

Building the capacity of women to appreciable level must start from homes where basic moral teachings, discipline, love and equal treatments among children should give room for healthy competition among them irrespective of their sex. Stereotypes should be avoided to create safe space for the smooth maturity of the children in the society.

Girls over the years have been subjected to all forms of torture and abuse at home and in the wider world. Most young girls, because of unfair treatments on them by their parents and guardians and close associates, have been forced to leave their homes in search of where they can be better tolerated. In their quest to find succor, they find themselves in wrong hands where they are used as sex objects or sacrificial lamb by unscrupulous elements. The better option for some is to get married and stay in abused marriages where they are beaten or deprived of basic needs by their spouses since no one bothers about their safety.

A teenager recently narrated her bitter



experience with her biological father who insulted her personality and made her felt disrespected wondering whether her presence is actually needed in the family. "Recently, my father returned home in the evening and met me fetching water from the well which is situated outside the compound. After fetching the water, I kept his food on the dining table and went out to buy recharge card in one of the shops around the neighbourhood to call my brother whose call I missed while fetching the water. Few minutes afterwards, my father called me on phone and ordered that I should quickly come back home".

The unkind word the father used to rebuke her according to this young lady shocked her to her marrows as he called her names and said he's waiting for her to be pregnant she would see how he will use his hands to kill her. Provoked by the utterances of her father, she challenged him to take her for virginity test if he is in doubt of her purity and she would let her mother know what ensued between them. He vowed that if she reports the matter to her mother, he would kill her. This anonymous lady said she told her father that his approach is never the ideal way parents should talk to their children." He shouted all the more and said parents who are not hard on their children are the reason why their children have gone wayward like one of your friends whose parents did not handle her well and she became pregnant."

Every reasonable person who

understands the psychology of children upbringing should know that they should be talked to in love and the corrective measures must never be moderate considering their fragility. Many young people have left their homes because of the attitudes of some parents who handle their children with iron hands. Our children should be our friends no matter how bad they provoke us. It's our duty to bring them up responsibly or we might lose them because of unguided temperament.

Yours sincerely met a young lady whose name is Faith Gyosmen Ishaya a few days ago, who engaged me in a discussion at a workshop where we were both participants and took time to share the vision of a campaign she is involved. Guess what, young ladies have organized themselves to demand power, freedom and representation for girls and young women in a movement known as "Girls Get Equal" (GGE). It is a global campaign which is an initiative of a nongovernmental organization known as PLAN INTERNATIONAL.

Nigeria has one of the youngest populations in the world with 63 percent (123 million) of people under 24 years old. Around 60

million or 31 percent of young people are between the ages of 0 and 9, with more boys (31 million) than girls (29 million). The primary focus of Plan International Nigeria is committed to supporting ten million girls to learn, lead, decide and thrive by 2023.

It is a known fact that girls want a world they can leave freely without fear of attack, where they are treated with dignity and respect, where they are equally seen, heard and valued. Yet for the vast majority of these girls, this is a distant dream as they live in communities and countries where harmful gender norms and practices hold them back. Every day, the hopes and aspirations of girls the world over are being crushed by violence by violence, poverty and discrimination. Girls Get Equal is not just a platform for females alone, but males who are advocate for women and the girl child are welcomed.

According to the state coordinator, Faith Ishaya, the group is a youth led movement and an avenue for youth actors to influence and lead other youth, girls and young women especially to be influencers in their communities, state and nation at large. "It encourages women to be leaders, decision makers, be bold to speak and partake in nation building initiatives".

Girls get involved campaign was officially launch in Plateau state January, 2022 with the hope of empowering girls to be financially independent, learn, strive and be part of decision making processes in their communities and to speak for themselves. Creating safe space for our girls to be leaders tomorrow is the responsibility of each one. Let's give the girl child same opportunity with the boys because you never can tell exactly where the help would come from.



Faith Gyosmen, Girls Get Equal, Plateau State Coordinator

I love my country. I have been to 20 African countries and on each occasion, I have longed to come back home. I have been to only one European country. I was indifferent. I wanted to come home. However, the love for Nigeria has not made me blind in any way. Much as I love Nigeria, I have to tell it like it is. That is tough love. True love is tough love.

Nigerians, we are in the habit of normalizing the abnormal. It starts as a habit and ends up as a lifestyle. For example, long time ago, when advanced fee fraud started, we all thought that it would be a flash in the pan but today, it has been normalized to the point where young men and women consider 419 to be a career path. Today, it is yahoo plus, where ritual murders are committed for money rituals. Young men and women are involved in these for wealth and the parents of some of these young men and women accept the wealth that their children bring home without any questions asked. If they know, they endorse it because their "poverty" has been put to an end. Others use their parents for same and countless have run mad, yet society is beginning to accommodate these types. Add to these, kidnapping of all colorations. This only happens in my country. The end justifies the means. We have come to accept these and leave with them. In essence we have come to normalize this just the way we have normalize corruption and exporting women to Italy for prostitution. That is the society we live in, where the end justifies the means.

I truly wish that this mentality would stop because the end often does not justify the means because there are always colossal damages and losses and people get hurt in the process. An average Nigerian is satisfied with his or herself notwithstanding the consequences, as long as his or her needs are met.

The end justifies the means. The more we continue to accept and practice this mentality, the more it eats into the fabric of our existence as individuals, groups, community and society. The more we are accepting it the more we and other members of society lower the thresholds of conscience and engage in it. In little things and in big things, we say to ourselves that the end justifies the means. However, there is a catch in all of these. There is and African adage that says that one should be careful when throwing stones in the market place because that stone could hit one's own family member who could be in the market place at the time. I could go on and on.

The matter of normalizing faeces

That is the crux of the matter. Recently, the story was told of Nigerian young ladies who travel to Dubai for prostitution. These young ladies do not only engage in sexual acts with the Arab men but they also engage in bestiality and the ingestion of human faeces. This is the fetish that some Arab men enjoy. To see young Nigerian ladies ingesting their Arab faeces. This young ladies get handsomely paid and some of the Arab men have video-taped this acts and put them on social media for the whole world to see. Some of these young ladies have also confessed to engaging in these acts. Is this normal? No. But because we come from a culture that normalizes the abnormal, because we believe that the end justifies the means, a lot of Nigerian ladies are still travelling to Dubai to ingest Arabian faeces so that they can return home with stupendous wealth.

Nigeria has normalized quick wealth, ill-gotten wealth, stolen wealth, wealth of any kind, wealth by all means as long as we achieve wealth. Some call it survival. Are we the only society that has poverty? No. What we have is a skewed value system that glorifies money and

looks upon labour with condescension and this is why we can do anything to make money not minding what the consequences will be. This is what we teach our young by word and by actions.

Nigerians have come to be seen as dubious people globally. In fact, some people refer to Nigeria as the most hated country in the world or the most corrupt country in the world. We keep trying to address this global bad image without getting down to brass tags.

Last week, I was reading the news and I read about how farmers are now using faeces as fertilizer because of how expensive fertilizer

law to punish him or grants to help him buy fertilizer? Why should I become a constant patient at the hospital because of the food I eat? What stringent measures is the government taking against farmers that use human faeces as fertilizer? Or are we going to normalize this one as well? How much is the Government spending on preventive medicine? Where are our agricultural extension workers and our health inspectors? Does the end justifies the means?

When other countries start banning our agricultural exports in order to protect their populace, we start talking loud and saying nothing

Normalizing the abnormal in agriculture



has become. Please, who does this? We are one country that has been preaching diversification of our economy through agriculture and yet our farmers cannot afford fertilizer to the point of garnishing our food with human faeces! What are we doing? I do not even want to know if these faeces are treated or not. What relationship has human faeces with food?

If this is the Nigeria I know, the press will report this and nothing will be done to stop this. Do we still have health inspectors? Do we still have agricultural extension workers? When we say diversification of the economy through agricultural development, we are talking about farming for exports. If we do not have fertilizer for subsistence farming, is it export farming that we are going to have fertilizer for? It is only when we can export our farm produce that agriculture can be said to be a diversification or a foreign exchange earner. So what are we doing?

Furthermore, using faeces for agriculture is the type of thing that will soon start making other countries reject our agricultural export. As an individual, I find it extremely disgusting. I went to the market this week after a long while and all I could do was stare. My imagination would not let me buy the tomatoes when I saw the green flies on them. Right now, I am going to my friend's farm, Queen Iwang Farms in Abuja, to buy tomatoes, because I am sure that she does not use human faeces as fertilizer. I am also going to start growing my food or buying imported food. Period.

I think of catching one million diseases that one can contact through human faeces in my food. I am not sure that many people have the expertise of washing out germs from vegetables. If they do, I am not sure that they can afford the amount of salt or vinegar involved. Why should I expose myself and my family to germs because one farmer has normalized the use of human faeces for fertilizer and there is no

because they are right. This is how we consistently allow the rot of our bad image to permeate every sphere of our polity, starting with the things that seem small and inconsequential.

I did some research to find out how many diseases could be transmitted through human faeces and the forgoing is for our education. According to Very Well health, disease could be spread through the oral-fecal route. According to this article titled "How Diseases Spread Through the Fecal-Oral Route: Proper handwashing is your best defense (By Charles Daniel Updated on February 23, 2022, Medically reviewed by Jay N. Yepuri, MD, MS):

"There are many microbes that can be passed along through the fecal-oral route, including two of the hepatitis viruses, hepatitis A and hepatitis E. The other hepatotropic viruses spread by direct contact with infected blood, such as from sharing used needles, bodily fluid, or through childbirth"

It goes on to add a few diseases that can be spread through the fecal-oral route and these include hepatitis A, hepatitis E, cholera, adenovirus, and E. coli. These diseases occur due to the viruses, bacteria, fungi, and parasites that can spread through fecal-oral transmission. The article proposes proper hand washing. These writers are unaware that in one part of the world called Nigeria, faeces is not passively transmitted but actively and calculatively applied to food as fertilizer. Imagine if these writers, people who educate us on global health, know this. Imagine that Nigeria exports food to their countries. Imagine what advise they would give their government on food importation from Nigeria. With the western world, there is no half-stepping. Since they do not know who does what and who does not or if the sewage is treated or not, they will but a full ban on Nigerian Agricultural import. This will happen from one country to the other while we sit here



in Nigeria, deceiving ourselves that we are diversifying our economy through agriculture. What country is going to import food that has the potential of spreading cholera and hepatitis? What are we so proud of as a nation when we cannot provide basic fertilizer to our farmers? The same farmers we are looking up to, not only to create food security but earn foreign exchange for our country.

I love this country but sometimes I feel like running away as fast as my legs can carry me. Why do we keep doing this to our collective self? The end may justify the means for us but it is appalling for other countries. It is a sickening aberration, a taboo, a stigma. It is nauseating and disgusting. It is taking them back ward in their quest for good health care. I will eat all the GMOs in this world before I put one morsel of food in my mouth that has been fertilized with human faeces because there is no fertilizer. Are the farmers compelled to tell their buyers that what they are selling has been garnished with human faeces and they stand to spend more in the hospital or are we all expected to say as usual, "what is the big deal" and normalize the abnormal?

The Following is an excerpt from drgreene.com. Dr. Alan Greene is a practicing physician, author, national and international TEDx speaker, and global health advocate. He is a graduate of Princeton University and University of California San Francisco:

What is fecal-oral transmission?

Fecal-oral transmission occurs when bacteria or viruses found in the stool of one child (or animal) are swallowed by another child. This is especially common in group-daycare settings, where fecal organisms are commonly found on surfaces and on the hands of providers. Usually, the contamination is invisible.

With some infections, such as rotavirus, only a few viral particles are needed to cause an infection. These can spread directly through a group-care setting quite quickly, often spreading by fomites. Other infections, such as salmonella, require a larger number of organisms to establish an infection. In the absence of visible stool contamination, these infections often travel through infected food or beverages.

Swimming pools and water parks can also be locations of fecal-oral transmission. If the water is not visibly contaminated and is adequately chlorinated, just getting the water in the mouth is usually not enough to cause an infection; the risk is greatly increased by swallowing.

Many common infections can spread by fecal-oral transmission in at least some cases, including: Adenovirus, Campylobacter, Coxsackievirus (hand-foot-mouth disease), Enteroviruses, E. coli infection, Giardia, Hepatitis A virus, Pinworms, POLIO, Rotavirus, Salmonella, Shigella, Tapeworms, Toxoplasmosis

How can fecal-oral transmission be prevented?

Frequent hand cleansing, including with instant hand sanitizers, is the most significant step to help prevent fecal-oral transmission. Hand cleansing is most important after toileting or diapering and before eating.

Safe and careful food-handling practices are also vital.

Teach children never to swallow water in pools or water-play areas.

In daycare settings, the fewer children in diapers or under age 3, the smaller the risk for fecal-oral transmission of infections. Diaper-changing surfaces should never be close to food-preparation areas and should be sanitized between uses. Soiled diapers need to be properly disposed of.

Using disposable towels and cups reduces the risk for infection. Cleaning or disinfecting commonly, infected surfaces (doorknobs, faucet handles, shared toys, sleep mats) can also help.

HEPATITIS

Hepatitis is an illness of the liver. It can have many causes. The alphabet soup of hepatitis can be confusing for parents. Hepatitis A, B, C, D, E and G are all different viruses. They differ in their symptoms and in the way they are spread. In the United States, hepatitis A is one of the most commonly occurring of the vaccine-preventable diseases. It is even more common in developing countries.

What is it?

Of all the viruses that can cause infectious hepatitis, hepatitis A is one of the most important. It is the most common and the easiest to catch. (Other viruses include adenoviruses, arboviruses, CMV, enteroviruses, Epstein-Barr virus, herpes simplex, HIV, parvovirus, rubella, varicella, and the hepatitis viruses themselves.) The hepatitis A virus is one of the enteroviruses (enterovirus 72).

Who gets it?

Anyone can get hepatitis A. In the United States it is most common in school-age children. Those that are most likely to get it are those who have close personal contact with someone with hepatitis A, those who swallow the virus in infected food or water, those who are part of an outbreak (such as in a day care center), or those who travel internationally.

What are the symptoms?

The classic symptoms are jaundice (yellow skin and eyes), fever, fatigue, nausea, and loss of appetite. It is important to note that most young children with hepatitis do not have jaundice. In fact, most have no symptoms at all – but they can still spread the disease. Also, hepatitis A can cause other symptoms, such as vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, or tummy aches.

Is it contagious?

Yes. It is spread when the virus (usually in stool or on hands, food, or water contaminated by stool) gets in the mouth and is swallowed. People who are sick are most contagious for the weeks before they develop symptoms. By the time they have been jaundiced for about a week, they are usually no longer contagious.

NOW it is important for us to know more about our thoughts. Thoughts do not just occur randomly but they have an origin or a source; they come from somewhere. Many have thought that they cannot do anything about the thoughts they think about. This is not the case.

We usually make this analogy, that just as you cannot stop birds from flying over your head but can stop them from landing and making a nest on it, so also you may not be able to stop thoughts from coming into your mind but you can decide which thoughts remain there. This is where the real authority is and this area of authority is the one that is most advantageous for you.

If a thought comes into your mind which is not producing peace in your heart, or joy in your life, or confidence concerning God's ability to take care of you; to preserve, protect and fight for you; know that you have the right to eject that thought. Just as you have the right to tell someone you do not want in your house to leave, you can tell those thoughts to leave your mind also.

Thoughts do not have to remain in your mind if you do not want them there. Now some people have not understood this and it has made them powerless. They think, "oh, the thought is in my mind and there is nothing I can do about it". No, you can do something about it. You can choose not to be afraid. You can choose to refuse to accept any thought, any idea, any imagination or any suggestion that is attempting to sell the lie to you that nothing can be done about your circumstance.

Refuse any thought suggesting to you that God is not able to protect you, provide for you or preserve you and the lives of your loved ones in any situation or circumstance you may find yourself.

Thus, thoughts are not just thoughts. They have origin. What is the origin of thoughts? Thoughts are as a result of association (people whose company you stay in most of the time), observation (what you observe all the time) and teachings (the teachings you are exposed to).

Thoughts are also a result of the environment you find yourself. If you want to change the kind of thoughts that dominate your life, you must make sure that you bring your associations, your observations, your environment and the teachings you expose yourself to, to agree with the word of God, which is truth. Jesus, in John 17:17 says, *Sanctify them through thy truth: Thy Word is truth.*

It is very important for us to understand that it is a combination of these things (the associations, the kind of company you keep, your environment, the teachings you are exposed to and what you constantly observe), that influences the thoughts you

think. You must make sure you bring these four areas into agreement with the Word of God.

Now, of these areas, let me highlight associations and teachings because some people may argue that they are unable to do anything about the neighbourhood they live in or their environment. I want you to know that even if this is the case, yet you can still do something about your mental

you can determine what eventually will be the outcome of your life. This is what we call the inside out philosophy of life.

The word of God, in Matthew 12:34, teaches that, *out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh*, and Proverbs 23:7 says, *for as he thinketh in his heart, so is he...* You can do something about your thought life; you are not helpless. You can refuse a fearful thought that comes into your mind to remain

Fear not, trust God (21)



environment. If you cannot do something about your physical environment, you can do something about your mental environment.

Your mental environment is controlled by the associations and teachings you expose yourself to. Firstly, The strongest influences in your life, your inner circle, the people you consider your closest friends, must be people of faith. They must be people you can draw from and encourage yourself with. They must be people who are not negative, people who have exalted the Word of God in their lives. Your inner circle must consist of people who have more respect for the Word of God than for anything else.

Secondly, the teachings you are exposed to must be teachings that exalt the truth of God's Word; that make the Word of God the final authority. Teachings that put the word of God and what it says ahead of man's experiences, the philosophies of men and the traditions of men.

If you can handle the associations of your life and the teachings you expose yourself to, two things that are based solely on your own choice and nothing else, then you can control your internal environment. I tell you, when you control your internal environment - the environment of your mind and heart; where you live life essentially, you begin to attract the right things into your life.

You handle the environment of your mind and your heart and

there.

Now the Bible teaches the principle of taking thought captive. Let me conclude by saying this - you do not have to be captive to any thought in your mind. If an unfavourable thought comes into your mind, you can decide to disconnect from it. You can decide to refuse to allow that thought to become a permanent resident in your mind. You may not be able to stop its entry into your mind but you can facilitate its exit. You can use the name of Jesus. It is available to you as a child of God.

You can say in the name of Jesus, I refuse to think that thought. My mind is my mind and I refuse to think any thought that is not consistent with the Word of God. You can choose to begin to rehearse and speak God's Word. This is how you displace thoughts that you do not like out of your mind. You can choose to say, even though I may not know how I am going to come out of this situation, I

believe that my God will preserve me, that he will provide for me, defend me, I believe my God will take care of me. Hallelujah!

As you think and speak God's Word out loud, it creates a different environment in your mind and in your heart. As the environment of your heart and mind begin to change, faith begins to come into your heart and faith is released out of your mouth as you speak God's Word. As you begin to speak God's Word, you literally give Him authority and authorize Him to function and to pour out His blessings in your life and to use His power to do whatever is required and necessary to give you a testimony and a favourable outcome.

God is able to provide for you abundantly. God is able to preserve you, to take care of you. He is able to defend you against anything that can threaten your security. If you will learn to trust God's word,

you will see God doing amazing miracles in your life. If you will learn to trust God's word and to speak it out of your mouth and refuse thoughts of fear, you will begin to give God permission to start operating in the natural circumstances of your life.

God will start doing things that you never knew how to do. God will start bringing things to pass that your own natural expertise, resources or connections can ever bring to pass in your own life.

Give God the opportunity to do the impossible in your life today. Give God the opportunity to protect you. Give Him the opportunity to preserve you. Give Him the opportunity to manifest His great provisions in your life today.

I bless you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I bless you with the blessings of Almighty God. I declare that as you receive grace to act upon these words, God will be a mighty defense and a mighty deliverer for you in the name of Jesus. Amen!



"If you can handle the associations of your life and the teachings you expose yourself to, two things that are based solely on your own choice and nothing else, then you can control your internal environment. I tell you, when you control your internal environment - the environment of your mind and heart; where you live life essentially, you begin to attract the right things into your life."

INTERNATIONAL

Palestinian rights groups' offices raided by Israeli troops

ISRAELI troops have sealed the offices of several Palestinian human rights and aid organisations, after saying last year it would designate them as terrorist organisations.

Soldiers raided the offices in the occupied West Bank at dawn, taking away paperwork and welding shut front doors.

Israeli authorities allege the groups are a front for a militant faction.

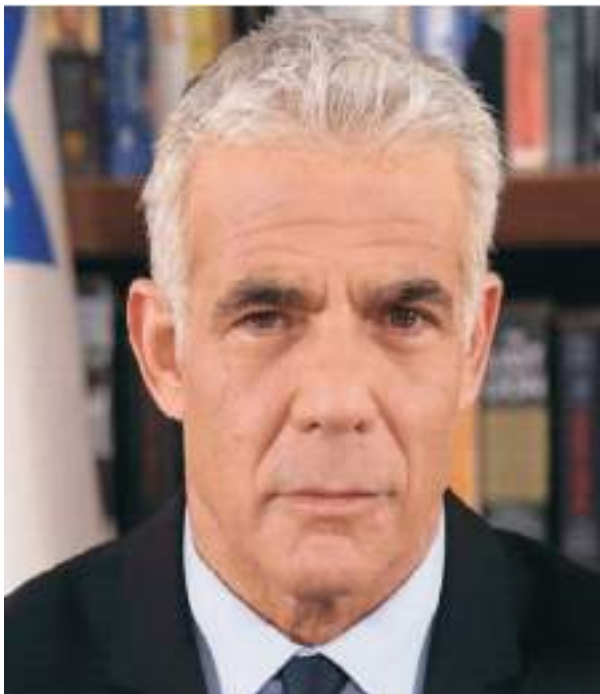
The claim is rejected by the groups themselves and has been dismissed by European donor countries.

The human rights group al-Haq said soldiers entered the city of Ramallah at about 03:00 (0000 GMT) to raid its office, along with those of Addameer, the Bisan Center for Research & Development, Defence for Children International-Palestine, the Union of Agricultural Workers Committees (UAWC) and the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees (UPWC).

After confiscating various items, the troops welded a reinforced iron door to the outside of al-Haq's office to prevent re-entry and attached a copy of a military order warning those administering the organisation that it had to shut down immediately, the group added.

In October, Israel designated six Palestinian rights organisations as terrorist groups, saying they were diverting funds to an outlawed militant faction, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), which has carried out deadly attacks.

"The organisations operate under the guise of performing humanitarian activities to further the goals of the PFLP terrorist organisation, to strengthen the organisation and to recruit operatives," Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz said.



Lapid

Israel offered no documentary evidence for the claim - telling the BBC at the time its evidence was classified.

The groups see the raids as an attempt to silence them as some back international attempts to prosecute Israel for possible war crimes.

"They committed war atrocity actions against us to silence us," ShawanJabarin, the general director of al-Haq, said in a video posted on Twitter. "We will continue our work. We will not stop. Working in human rights is not a job."

Nine European Union states, including France and Germany, have said they will keep funding the organisations as Israel has not proved its claims.

The UK has also expressed concern at the terrorism designations.

"The evidence which forms the basis for this decision is a

matter for the government of Israel. The UK maintains its own criteria for designation," a Foreign Office spokesperson said.

The BBC understands British officials in Tel Aviv have raised concerns with the Israeli government and made clear their support for rights groups in the occupied territories.

Meanwhile, a 20-year-old Palestinian man was shot dead by Israeli troops in the city of Nablus before dawn on Thursday, Palestinian health officials said, as violence intensified in the West Bank.

He was reportedly hit during a gunfight as soldiers escorted worshippers to a Jewish shrine known as Joseph's Tomb. The desire to tackle corruption and chaebol influence remains, experts say. But it is mingled with fear and concerns over a looming recession - and residual pride over Samsung representing Korea on the world stage.

INDIA'S decision to allow voting rights to any Indian citizen living temporarily in Indian-administered Kashmir has again ignited anger and fears of an attempt by the Hindu nationalist government to change the demography of its only Muslim-majority region.

The move, announced on Wednesday by the federally controlled territory's top electoral officer, is expected to add about 2.5 million more voters on top of the 7.6 million existing voters - a whopping 30 percent increase.

It was only the beginning of a series of laws and government moves that residents say aim to crush a popular movement for either an independent state or a merger with Pakistan. Kashmiris say the scrapping of Article 370 and subsequent legal moves are aimed at changing the region's demography.

In the years since, the Indian government has introduced a controversial domicile law that grants citizenship rights to every Indian living in the region for more than 15 years. New laws making every Indian citizen eligible to buy land in the region were also passed.

Kumar on Wednesday said there is no need for an Indian citizen to have a domicile certificate or to be a permanent resident to get enlisted as a voter in Indian-administered Kashmir.

"Any employee, a student, a labourer, or anyone else ordinarily residing in Jammu and Kashmir can become a voter now," he said.

According to the 2011 census, of the 12.5 million total population in Indian-administered Kashmir, Muslims comprise 68.31 percent and Hindus 28.43

Sierra Leone protests caught police unawares

SIERRA Leone's President Julius Maada Bio says the nature of last week's protests against his government caught the

Uproar in Kashmir for voting rights to non-locals

percent. More than seven million of these residents live in the valley, 97 percent of them Muslims.

Kashmiri politicians and India's opposition parties have condemned the government's new election rules.

Mehbooba Mufti, the former chief minister of Indian-administered Kashmir, described the move as the "last nail in the coffin of electoral democracy" in the region.

"They (government) want to fraudulently bring 2.5 million voters and install some fascist rulers. They want to make demographic changes," Mufti said.

The 63-year-old politician said the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government wanted to implement a "Nazi Germany or Israel policy" in Kashmir.

"Hitler inflicted extreme sufferings on Jews but he could not erase the Jews and the same is with Israel. No matter how much they suppress the Palestinians, they cannot erase them or

their resolve. The BJP's evil designs would not succeed," Mufti said.

Mufti's coalition government with the BJP fell in 2018. Since then, Indian-administered Kashmir is without an elected government and is being ruled directly by New Delhi through a handpicked administrator.

Omar Abdullah, another former chief minister of the region, accused the BJP of importing voters to win seats.

"Is the BJP so insecure about support from genuine voters of (Jammu and Kashmir) that it needs to import temporary voters to win seats? None of these things will help the BJP when the people of J&K are given a chance to exercise their franchise," he tweeted.

Some experts described the government's decision to add outsiders to the voting list in the region as the BJP's "final solution in the Kashmir dispute".

India's defence minister Rajnath Singh had said in July 2019 - days before Article 370 was scrapped - that "the final resolution of Kashmir" was on the cards and "no power on Earth can stop it".



Until August 5, 2019, voting rights in Indian Kashmir were restricted to its permanent residents

Children among dead in France, Austria and Italy

POWERFUL storms have battered areas of central and southern Europe, killing at least 12 people including three children.

The deaths, most from falling trees, were reported in Italy and Austria, and on the French island of Corsica.

Heavy rain and winds wrecked campsites on the island, while in Venice, Italy, masonry was blown off the belltower of St Mark's Basilica.

The storms follow weeks of heatwave and drought across much of the continent.

In Corsica, winds gusting up to 224 km/h (140mph) uprooted trees and damaged mobile homes.

Authorities there said a 13-year-old girl was killed by a falling tree on a campsite.

A 46-year-old man died in a similar incident and a woman in her 70s was killed when her car was hit by the detached

roof of a beach hut.

Two other people, a fisherman, 62, and a female kayaker, 60, died out at sea.

Interior Minister Gérald Darmanin, who arrived in Corsica on Thursday, said 20 people had been injured - four of them seriously.

Almost 13,000 people were evacuated from several campsites on Thursday evening and sheltered in public buildings, ahead of more expected damage. But authorities said on Friday morning that the night had passed without any major incidents.

Extreme storms have become more frequent recently because of climate change.

Witnesses to the storms said they had been completely unexpected and no warning was given.

"We have never seen such huge storms as this, you would think it was a tropical storm," restaurant owner Cedric Boell told Reuters news agency.

On the French mainland,

some southern areas were hit by power cuts and streets were flooded in the country's second city, Marseille.

Heavy rain and mudslides have devastated parts of Carinthia, Austria

In Austria two girls aged four and eight were killed by a falling tree near a lake in Carinthia.

Later, three women were reported to have died in Lower Austria province, also as a result of a falling tree.

Officials said 13 people had been injured, including five children.

Hannes Primus, mayor of the Wolfsberg district where the two girls were killed, said the area has been left looking "like a battlefield".

Meanwhile in Italy, a man and a woman were killed by falling trees in separate incidents in the region of Tuscany.

High winds swept through Venice, blowing café umbrellas across St Mark's Square and dislodging brickwork from the cathedral belltower.

police force by surprise.

The protests resulted in 25 deaths including five police officers.

"We have had challenges

- President

with the police force. But we know the nature of the protests definitely took them by surprise," he said.

"We all knew they wanted to come out, but we did not have an identifiable group or person leading them," he added.

President Bio again blamed the opposition for trying to topple his government, an accusation the opposition All People's Congress party has denied.

He said a forensic and independent investigation was being conducted to unravel the truth.

"It's a forensic investigation. There are footprints, there are people who incited, who called on the people to go out to kill. There were people inciting the military and telling them to come to State House," he said.

President Bio also defended a reshuffle in the military leadership following the protests, and denied threats of a military takeover.

"Heads of security institutions can be removed for different reasons. It's my right when I think its right."



Holidaymakers pack what is left of their destroyed tents, items at the Sagone camping site in Corsica

INTERNATIONAL

China inducing rainfall to combat severe drought

CHINESE authorities are attempting to induce rainfall in parts of central and southwest China amid a severe drought and record-breaking heatwave.

THE Yangtze River - Asia's longest waterway - is now at record low levels. In some stretches, there has been less than half the usual rainfall.

Hydropower reservoirs are currently down by as much as half, officials say.

At the same time, a surge in demand for air conditioning has put power companies under extreme pressure.

The two-month-long heatwave is the longest on record in China, the National Climate Centre said.

Provinces around the drought-stricken Yangtze river have turned to cloud seeding operations to combat the lack of rain, with Hubei and a number of other provinces launching rockets carrying chemicals into the sky, according to local media.

But a lack of cloud cover has stalled efforts in some areas seeking to do the same.

Meanwhile, temperatures across Sichuan and neighbouring provinces have exceeded 40C (104 F).

As a result, government offices in Sichuan were asked to keep air conditioning levels at no lower than 26C (79 F), according to the Sichuan Daily quoted by Reuters news agency. Workers have also been asked to use staircases rather than lifts where possible.

Millions of residents have also been hit with black outs in the province.

In the city of Dazhou, home to some 5.4 million people, blackouts are lasting up to three hours, local media report.

They say factories in the province have been forced to cut production or halt work as part of emergency measures to redirect power supplies to households.

Hydropower reservoirs - of which there are many in the region - are currently down by as much as half, officials added.

Europe is experiencing record temperatures and this extreme heat is going to become more and more common around the world.

Heatwaves have become more frequent, more intense, and last longer because of human-induced climate change.

Without action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, temperatures will continue to rise.

While world governments have made promises to cut emissions and tackle climate change, they are also taking more immediate actions to deal with rising temperatures.

Here are some of the ways places around the world are responding and preparing for extreme heat...



Authorities in Hubei carry out cloud seeding operations in Hubei province on 16 August

Each year, the authorities in Switzerland and the European Alps try to prevent the glaciers on the mountains from melting, by covering the slopes with large blankets that reflect sunlight.

The white UV-resistant blankets have been put in position by locals every year since 2009.

Glaciologists - scientists who study glaciers - say the blankets reduce ice melting by between 50 and 70 per cent.

They are made of a heavy-duty fleece material which insulates the ice and reflects back sunlight.

However, because these huge blankets are made from synthetic material, the practice has been criticised by some people because when they decompose, plastic can pollute waterways and the local environment.

Painting a roof white can reflect sunlight and reduce the temperature inside.

In Ahmedabad City in western

India, where summer temperatures can reach as high as 50C, more than 3,000 rooftops were painted with white lime and a special reflective coating.

A 2019 study from Oxford University looked at heatwaves in the city of Birmingham and found cool roofs across the city could reduce peak temperatures by up to 3C during a heatwave.

Many cities in the US have applied the same science to their pavements by painting them white in an attempt to cool them down.

But some experts have warned painting roofs white could have the opposite effect in winter where a reflective roof might mean the need for more heating.

Cities can often be a lot hotter than the countryside.

There's a reason for this. Built-up urban areas with tall buildings which are close together make more heat which is then trapped to created a

localised warming - an effect named the 'Urban Heat Island'.

One way to deal with this, and tackle climate change, is to plant trees.

Finding a tree to stand under in the heat is a welcome relief but they help cool the environment as well.

Trees, in particular ones with broad, light-reflecting leaves and large canopies, can lower the temperature of buildings and pavements with their shade.

They can also release a water vapour, known as 'evapotranspiration'.

When the sun's rays hit the tree, it causes water to evaporate from the leaves. This cools them down and reduces the amount of energy left to warm the air. Pretty cool!

Instead of a white roof, how about a green one?

Toronto was the first city in North America to pass a green roof law. From 2019, new buildings of a certain size must have roofs covered in plants.

Paris in France recently bought in the same law for commercial buildings.

Paris is also finding other ways to make the city greener. Anyone can apply for a permit to start a garden anywhere at all in the city, so residents can plant on pavements and small areas of public land.

In Singapore, meanwhile, planted balconies, shaded sky gardens and vertical green walls are all used to reduce temperatures and combat pollution.

When it's hot, many of us just want to cool down in a paddling pool, a shower or the sea - any sort of water really.

Well that's the same with cities. Open water can decrease the air temperature by evaporation and absorption of heat.

And water that is moving does this better than water that is standing still.

Places that covered up their rivers, like Paris and Seoul in South Korea, are now planning to uncover them.

And, there are more direct ways water can be used to cool people - in Chongqing, China the city has used

water misters at bus stops.

These spray clouds of water that cool the air as well as waiting passengers!

Parts of China are set to experience searing temperatures over the next ten days as a heatwave takes hold.

In some provinces, authorities are predicting levels to rise to at least 40C and the national government has warned that forest fires could occur.

Mercury levels will start spiking on Saturday - "Big Heat" day in the traditional Chinese calendar.

In Zhejiang, in the south-east, some cities are issuing red alerts, the highest warning.

The province normally experiences temperatures in the high 20s in July but this year local authorities are warning of 40C in the next 24 hours.

To deal with the hot spells many in China turn to air conditioning in their homes, offices and factories however it could cause trouble for the national power grid.

Demand could reach a new high over the summer and the Ministry of Emergency Management has warned that safe operations would face "severe tests".

In July, Shanghai's temperature hit a sweltering 40.9C, equalling its hottest day since records began in 1873, hitting this mark the first time in 2017, Reuters news agency reports.

The city had to issue its third extreme heat warning of the summer.

Heatwaves have become more frequent globally, more intense, and last longer because of human-induced climate change.

The world has already warmed by about 1.1C since the industrial era began and temperatures will keep rising unless governments around the world make steep cuts to emissions.

Source: BBC News

"A 2019 study from Oxford University looked at heatwaves in the city of Birmingham and found cool roofs across the city could reduce peak temperatures by up to 3C during a heatwave. Many cities in the US have applied the same science to their pavements by painting them white in an attempt to cool them down. But some experts have warned painting roofs white could have the opposite effect in winter where a reflective roof might mean the need for more heating. Cities can often be a lot hotter than the countryside."

With **BULUS GAMBO**


Mandy Moore: Unlocking her path



MANDY Moore is ready for new roads. For the famed artist who rose to popularity in the late '90s at 15 years old with the bubblegum hit "Candy," music has long been the key that unlocks the best sides of her life. Moore, who has enjoyed a parallel career in acting throughout her professional days, crescen-doing in her role on the immensely beloved television show *This Is Us*, has benefited from the confluence of her two careers and found ways to appreciate them individually.

Now, though, Moore is set to embark on the newest chapter. With her time taping *This Is Us*

now behind her, she is set to hit the road and tour this summer on the back of her latest LP, *In Real Life*, which dropped on May 13. For someone who has been in the public eye over varying stages in her career, to be on the highway and supported by her family (and accomplished musician husband, Taylor Goldsmith) is the cherry on the sundae of the past few decades.

"I'm ending this really big chapter of my life with *This Is Us*," Moore says of the show which aired its final season this year. "That is very bittersweet, and I don't know what I'm going to do next in terms of acting. In the meantime, I'm going to go on the road, and I get to be with my family, my husband. I'm open and excited."

While her fellow cast members are looking for their next television show or film, Moore wants to find the stage again. It was her first love, and now she will thrive on it, renewed.

Moore didn't grow up in a musical household, but her parents—her airline pilot dad and stay-at-home mom—supported her remarkable drive. As a kid, Moore loved musical theater. She would hunt through newspapers in Orlando, Florida, where she looked for gigs. She'd call a local hotline that listed them, too. She took music and drama classes in high school. She was all in.

"I just felt compelled," she says. "There was no replacing that adrenaline rush and feeling of being on stage and challenging yourself in that way. It was electric."

Back then, Moore had no hang-ups when it came to being in the studio or on stage. She was young and ready. And while she looks back on those days with a bit of embarrassment regarding some song or fashion choices, she knows it was what helped get her foot in the door and embark on a lifelong career. Since then, she says, she's gotten wiser.

"It's strange," says Moore. "It almost feels

Continued on page 26



Nigerian actresses with highest net worth

These talented celebrities have many followers on social media. In addition, some of these Nigerian female actors have increased their net worth through business endeavours and endorsement deals. Here is a list of these actresses' with their net worth.

Genevieve Nnaji - \$10 million

Who is the richest female actress in Nigeria in 2021? Genevieve Nnaji tops the list of the richest actress with a net worth of \$10 million. Nnaji is a talented actress who has starred in many movies. Besides acting, she is also a producer. In 2019, she produced *Lionheart*, the first Netflix original film produced in Nigeria. The talented actress is also the owner of the St Genevieve clothing line. She has sponsorship deals with Etisalat, Amstel, Malta, and Jumia, among others.



Ibinabo Fieresima - \$8 million



Ibinabo Fieresima, one of the wealthiest Nollywood actresses, was born in Port Harcourt on January 13, 1970. Fieresima debuted as an actress in the film *Most Wanted* in 1998. Read also Most beautiful Hausa actresses in Kannywood She was the winner of the Miss Wonderland pageant in 1999 and the first runner-up in the Miss NUGA competition at the University of Calabar. In 2014, the actress

married her college sweetheart, Uche Benjamin Ugbuka. Her net worth is \$8 million as of 2021.

Funke Akindele - \$7.6 million

Funke Akindele is one of the most influential Nollywood stars, having a large fan base on Instagram. Akindele's performance has earned her both national and continental recognition. With a net worth of \$7.6 million, she is one of the top three richest Nigerian celebrities.



Omotola Jalade Ekeinde - \$7.2 million



Omotola Jalade is one of Nigeria's most influential actresses. The majority of her fans refer to her as Omosexy. Since joining Nollywood in 1995, she has starred in over 250 films. In addition to acting, the Nigerian actress is a well-known musician and activist. Time Magazine named her one of the top 100 influential persons in the world in 2013.

Her net worth is estimated to be \$7.2 million.

Rita Dominic - \$6 million

The Nollywood actress was born in Mbaise, Imo State, on July 12, 1975. Rita Dominic has received numerous notable cinema awards, including the Africa Movie Academy Award. In addition, she is a co-founder of The Audrey Silva Company (TASC). Rita's net worth is estimated to be \$6 million.



Continued on page 26

EVE'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Relationship

Starting a new life after divorce

WORRIED about what life will be like after your divorce? After staying awake night after night, thinking, contemplating and sometimes even getting panic attacks, you have finally made the decision to file for a divorce. Still, you can't help but be worried about what your new life after divorce will be like.

However, getting cold feet at the thought of not being able to be with the man or woman you wed, is natural. After all, you committed to a life together and not a relationship with an expiry date. Thinking about a new life after divorce can be terrifying.

Yes, there are reasons you should stay and work on your marriage. But, there are also benefits to pulling the trigger and moving forward with divorce.

Make Yourself a Priority

After having spent time with someone you love and making him or her the center of your world, it is time to change the rules. Start by giving yourself the attention, care and love you deserve, top worrying about what their new life after divorce will be like and start re-examining your life.

Start doing the things you once enjoyed doing but couldn't because of your obligations after marriage.

Also, make it a habit to pamper yourself. Go for retail or beauty therapy, a spa treatment or a long drive, whatever makes you happy. Haven't gone to a movie alone or eaten at a restaurant by yourself? Well, do it now.

It's important to start enjoying your company and start living life your way, with no



conditions. Prioritize yourself.

Learn to Let Go

"The truth is, unless you let go, unless you forgive yourself, unless you forgive the situation, unless you realize that the situation is over, you cannot move forward."

Holding on will only hurt you more. However, it is absolutely fine to give yourself some time to let go.

But, keep reminding yourself that your marriage is over and for a reason.

Therefore, let this process be natural and if you occasionally remember the good memories you had with your ex, don't be hard on yourself, it's normal. Nevertheless, if you feel the need for help letting go getting



in touch with Worsley Centre for Psychotherapy and Counselling that provides high quality

therapeutic and professional psycho-therapeutic services is someone you should reach out to.

Reconnect with Old Friends

It's normal to have friends in common with your spouse.

However, after divorce, like a lot of things, friends get divided too.

They tend to choose one of the two and rarely stay in touch with both partners. So, losing friends in a situation like this is normal, and it has nothing to do with you as a person. It is a choice they make so worrying about it will only lead to pain.

But, what you can do is connect with old friends that you lost touch with.

It might seem like a task but a simple message or a call can reconnect you with your old buddies.

And don't forget, you need to build your social circle so it is worth the effort.

Learn to Manage Your Own

Finances

Understanding finances and investments may not be your responsibility when you were married, but, after the split, it is.

So, start managing your financial life and make a list of your income, expenditure, expenses and assets and liabilities.

This will help you keep tabs on your incoming versus outgoing flow of money and thus plan your monthly budget.

However, if you are not working, then look at going back to your career or find a career that interests you.

This will not only give you financial stability but will also keep you engaged.

Take A Break and Travel

Going through a separation isn't easy and getting used to your new life after divorce can be fairly tough. To come out of this emotional mayhem take a short break and travel.

It could be to a place you always wished to visit but couldn't till now or even a nearby resort.

You can plan a trip with close friends or look at tour groups for single people and book yourself for an adventure.

A trip by yourself or alone with your children might sound scary but it is a great way to gain retrospection your life and realize that you are stronger than you expected.

Always remember you survived a situation you thought you couldn't and are now even considering traveling with a group of strangers or alone.

Give Romance a Second Chance with Online Dating

If you have recently been divorced, then the thought of dating may seem bizarre.

But, it there is no harm in using online dating sites to connect with others and possibly find a new relationship.

However, remember two important things about dating after divorce:

Do compare others to your ex.

Be cautious and don't invest too much time and energy into someone until you know them well.

If you thought your new life after divorce would be tough, then try these 6 easy to do things to kickstart it. And don't forget that it's all about you, so make some rules and break some rules, but give love the second chance it deserves with open arms.

Ann Heathcote.



THE NIGERIA STANDARD, Sunday, August 21, 2022

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

HEVE'S WORLD

Health

Get rid of irritability through natural remedies

"IRRITABILITY." Not quite the towering, world-ending fury of full-on rage, irritability in perimenopause and menopause is still a very real, very important problem.

What causes the feeling of irritation?

Fluctuations in estrogen levels may directly cause irritability. Menopause can cause moodswings because estrogen affects production of serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine, our feel-good hormones, so when estrogen levels decline, so do the happy hormones.

Hormonal changes also indirectly cause irritability by impacting sleep with menopause nightsweats or hot flashes, taking a toll on our sex lives, causing us to have more headaches, and generally setting us up to feel less than our happy, vibrant selves some days.

What can we do to feel less irritated?*

While the source of our irritations may be at least partially out of our control (teens will be teens and hormones will be hormones), we can take steps to manage our reactions to triggers better.

One: Nature provides a lot of herbal remedies for irritation, chamomile, peppermint, hops, St. John's Wort, and lavender all can help us handle stress more calmly. Valerian root, has sedative qualities, so it not



only calms but may help you sleep.

Two: We suggest replacing caffeine, which can make

you jittery and prone to irritation, with matcha tea. It is definitely one of the foods to avoid during menopause.

Three: Adding the essential oil clary sage to your managing-menopause tool kit. It decreases the stress hormone.

Four: Vitamin D is a natural mood-lifter, not least because one good way to get it is to step out into the sunshine. It helps bones and brains, too, so make sure you're getting enough. Vitamin D can be hard to get in winter, so fortified foods, salmon, and sardines are good complements.

Five: Acupuncture relieves feelings of stress for many, and since it can also minimize pain and aid in sleep, it can attack irritability from several directions.

Six: Focusing on breath and body in yoga helps many women gain control of their

irritation. Some poses are said to be particularly powerful for channeling anger out of the body and spirit.

Seven: Sugar in particular can destabilize mood, so cutting waaaaaay back on sweets can be a huge boost to your natural chill. Also, stay hydrated. It's easier to deal with life's little annoyances when we're not constipated and we're free from dehydration headaches.

BONUS: Experience more pleasure, pleasure can be hard to attain when we live in a culture that rewards over-productivity. If you are living a life that is leaving you depleted and burned out, you will certainly be irritated. When a woman is stressed, her body begins to produce the stress hormone cortisol. If a woman has too much cortisol in her bloodstream,

she is guaranteed to experience irritability, depression, and anxiety. Which all leads to inflammation in the body and then to disease."

One answer? Orgasm: "When a woman experiences pleasure through orgasm, it stimulates those 8,000 nerve endings completely dedicated to pleasure and creativity." Orgasms are great, but anything that brings you pleasure will work.

Other pleasurable activities can be sitting by the water, or dancing wildly after a shower to your favorite music. These pleasurable activities flood the body with nitric oxide which boosts endorphins, which in turn will minimize irritability and inflammation.

Source: Medicalnews.com.





Reality Bites

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Interesting facts about lefties you should know

IN the past, most Nigerian cultures saw it as a taboo to be left-handed.

As such left-handed people were beaten and forced to use their right hand to write, eat, or do things. Many left-handed people in the Nigerian society faced a lot of chastisement but today, with a lot of awareness and sensitisation, the story is different and they are allowed to strive and flourish without attributing it to a negative ill.

International Left-Handers Day is celebrated on August 13th every year. Amitabh Bachchan, Bill Gates, Rajnikanth, Sachin Tendulkar, and Ratan Tata are all left-handers. The day was established by Dean R. Campbell in 1976 to bring awareness to the challenges lefties face on a daily basis. Almost 10-12 per cent of the population are left-handers.

August 13 marks a special day for all left-handers as it is a day observed to raise awareness of the struggles left-handed people face when attempting to live in a right-handed world.

Many international celebrities are left handed. Interestingly, celebrated Tennis player Rafael Nadal is actually right-handed but learned to play with the left hand for an advantage in the game! Other great personalities like Angelina Jolie, David Bowie, Mother Theresa, Celine Dion, Julius Ceaser, Annie Lennox, Judy Garland, Spike Lee, Aristotle, Helen Keller, Charlie Chaplin, Julia Roberts, Jimi Hendrix, Bill Gates, Lady Gaga, Keanu Reeves, Prince William, the Queen Mother, Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Charles, Prince George, US former President Barrack Obama, Paul McCartney, Leonardo da Vinci, World great Astronaut Neil Armstrong, actor Morgan Freeman. Nigerian celebrities like.

Desmond Elliot, Funke Akindele-Bello, Segun Arinze, among many others are left-handed.

According to bestlifeonline.com, here are some interesting facts about left-handers you should know:

1. Almost 10-12 per cent of the population consists of left-handers.

2. A study published in the academic book "Cerebral Dominance: The Biological Foundations" revealed that left-handed people had an 11-fold higher risk of allergies than right-handed people.

3. According to a 2007 study - "Effect of Handedness on Intelligence Level of Students," lefties are more likely to have higher IQs than rightists.

4. 23% more men are left-handed than women, according to the 2008 study "Sex differences in left-handedness: a meta-analysis of 144 studies."

5. The Illinois Research Consortium's 2008 data



revealed that left- and right-handed people approach to task and memory performance in

different ways, concluding that left-handers are more likely to be better at multitasking.

6. Tennis players, swimmers,



and boxers are all sports in which lefties excel particularly well (almost 40% of the top tennis players at the moment are lefties).

In essence, lefties are best at individual sports, or sports that are not team-based. This is due to the fact that right-handed players are more accustomed to playing against other right-handed players than left-handed players.

7. Also, did you know, that of the most recent US Presidents, five out of nine were left-handed? Although the list doesn't include the current US President Joe Biden it does have the likes of Barack Obama, Bill Clinton, George H. W. Bush, Ronald Reagan, and Gerald Ford.

8. Speaking about Royalty, the Future monarch of England Princes Charles is also left-handed. His son, The Duke of Cambridge William is also left-handed. King George VI, who was also left-handed, was made to learn how to use his right hand by his father.

The history and significance of left-handers day is attributed to Dean R. Campbell. He established International Left-handers Day in 1976 to raise awareness of the challenges lefties face on a daily basis. He founded the 'Left-Handers International Inc.' and ever since the day is celebrated every year on August 8, including in Nigeria and other parts of the world to create awareness.

FEYE'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Living

Ways to find out who betrayed you

NO matter how much you love being alone, there's always a time when you need to confide in someone. But first, can this someone be trusted?

Maybe you've found someone to talk to already, and then again, maybe you're still looking and keeping your problems to yourself. Either way, talking to someone about these problems is the right thing to do.

But confiding in the wrong person can make your situation even worse than it was before.

If you are talking to people about your problems, you may find that your information is spreading around. Someone you've confided in has told other people about your issues.

It seems you've confided in the wrong person. But who can it be? Maybe you've told a handful of good friends. They were supposed to be your best friends, but someone may not be as true to you as you first thought.

There are ways you can find out.

They talk about others

If you're confiding in someone who talks negatively about others, then there's a good chance that what you've said to them will also become the topic of another conversation. Soon, what you've told them will be shared with someone else.

Remember this simple statement: "If they talk to you about others, they will talk to others about you." This is one of the biggest red flags to let you know you are confiding in the wrong person.

Steals the topic

You could be talking to the wrong person about your problems if they change the topic. What I mean by changing the topic is not that they talk about other things. They try to revert the attention from your hurts to something that happened to them.

While some people don't mean to be rude when they do this, others just aren't good friends.

They're not good listeners

For instance, if you're telling the story about your misfortune, and they say something like, "Yes, that's terrible. It reminds me of this time



something similar happened to me." Then they proceed to talk about themselves. Yeah, confiding in this type of person won't make you feel any better. You certainly won't find a solution here.

They are not loyal

Many things happen to us that we don't wish the whole world to know. So, we must have a friend who's loyal and able to keep our secrets. This is especially true when it comes to relationship problems. We usually don't want the whole town knowing about our breakup or divorce. And we know that we're confiding in the wrong person if they're telling everybody about our heartbreaks. They're just not loyal at all.

Not supportive of how you feel

Good friends support you when you go through hard times. They

also support you when you have good news, but not the news you want spreading around to everyone. If you're confiding in the wrong person, you'll notice that instead of taking your side, they'll want to examine all the reasons you could be wrong. Yes, you could be wrong, it's true. But when you need support, you need someone on your side for a little while, and a true friend and confidant will do this. Beware of those who love to play devil's advocate, they can also be instigators as well.

They aren't empathetic

When you talk to people about something good or bad that's happened, do they even seem interested in what you're saying? If there isn't a smile or laugh for your good news, or sadness in their face for your bad news, then there is no



empathy for you.

You cannot confide in someone who lacks empathy. They're probably toxic people, to begin with, and will eventually cause you emotional harm if you keep talking to them. When you confide in someone who really cares, there will be many emotions shared between the two of you.

Body language doesn't match words

Confiding in the wrong person will teach you something interesting. Their body language will convey the opposite of what they're saying to you. They may be saying positive things in response to your hurt, but they may also be having trouble keeping eye contact with you. They may say they support you, but they cannot sit still in their seat as if they're anxious to leave. You will notice these things more and more as you attempt to talk to them. But beware, don't talk to them too much because they're probably the same person who will not keep your secrets either.

Friends with the enemy

If you find yourself confiding in someone who's either related to or friends with the person who has hurt you, then you're obviously confiding in the wrong person.

First, 90% of the time, relatives will never side with you against their own family, and friends of the enemy will listen to you sometimes just to get information to hurt you even more. Finding real friends.

If you must confide in anyone, it's best to talk with a tried-and-true best friend – maybe this is someone from childhood that you've kept in touch with all these years. Or it could be a friend who's proven their loyalty in other ways showing that they can be trusted.

But always be careful who you tell your troubles to because some people only listen to start drama. I sincerely hope you have a few friends you can trust when times get hard, and even when you have great news, but news that's a bit private. If you have real friends like this, then you have the support you need.



BUSINESS WORLD

Financial inclusion and digital financial services in Nigeria

According to Enhancing Financial Innovation and Access (EFInA), 52.5 percent of Nigeria's adult population was excluded from financial services in 2008. Two years later, financial exclusion further declined to 46.3 percent. On the back of this development and with the ambitious mandate of reducing the financial exclusion rate to 20 percent by 2020, the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) was launched in 2012. TAYO FABUSIWA writes.

FINANCIAL inclusion is not merely a fancy term but a globally recognised catalyst for economic growth and development. The World Bank defines financial inclusion as individuals and businesses having access to useful and affordable financial products and services such as payments, savings, credit and insurance, delivered responsibly and sustainably.

This could equally result in wealth creation, reduction in unemployment and poverty, as well as an improved standard of living. In fact, on the strength of the definition above, the NFIS housed other specific targets – to boost inclusion in payments to 70 percent, savings to 60 percent, credit to 40 percent, insurance to 40 percent and pension to 40 percent, all by 2020.

While financial inclusion has steadily improved over the last decade, the country fell short of the NFIS targets for 2020. That year, only 50.5 percent were formally served, with 35.9 percent still financially excluded (EFInA). On the specific targets, payments hit 45 percent, savings at 32 percent, credit and insurance at a staggering 3 percent and 2 percent, respectively, while pension only went as far as 7 percent.

Though these targets were not met, there is no denying the progress that has been made so far. According to the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Nigeria



Pantami

has gained 64 percent financial inclusion in 2022 and now targets 95 percent in 2024.

Among other factors such as government programmes and policies, the gradual rise in the financial inclusion rate has been significantly impacted by the proliferated deployment of digital financial services (DFS) in the country; though it may also be argued, vice versa, that financial inclusion targets have facilitated the drive for DFS.

Either way, digital platforms

continue to provide innovative subscriber base of 130.3 million avenues for distributing and in Nigeria, MTN and Airtel accessing financial services recently launched their while liberalising traditional respective Payment Service transaction processes. Nigeria is Banks (PSBs), which would home to the majority of the have them offer SIM-based fintech unicorns on the mobile banking services like continent, most of which deposits and withdrawals, operate in the payments transfers, bill payments and system.

It comes as no surprise that 9Mobile are also PSB-licensed by the CBN.

More so, PSBs are required to have a 25 percent rural presence to ensure they focus on the unbanked and financially excluded populations. It is also noteworthy that the various licence categories (switching and processing, mobile money operations, payment solution services, agent banking and so on) available to banks and other financial institutions (OFIs) have also contributed to the penetration of DFS.

Agent banking – which involves the provision of financial services within communities on behalf of banks – alone contributed about 19 percent to the 2020 financial inclusion gains, compared to the 3 percent it contributed in 2018 (EFInA). Contactless payments are growing in popularity as Quick Response (QR) Code usage and Near Field

Communication (NFC) technology continue to be adopted by financial service providers.

The CBN is now looking more closely at enforcing digital financial literacy. In one of its most recent steps at driving financial inclusion, it released the Exposure Draft on the Digital Financial Services Awareness Guidelines (Draft DFS Guidelines) in July 2022. The Draft DFS Guidelines sets minimum consumer knowledge and practice standards that financial services providers are to adopt when providing DFS. Among other things, DFS providers are required to – promote campaigns to underserved populations regarding DFS available to them; ease access to product information to allow consumers make informed financial decisions; provide product information in English and local languages; disseminate educational materials to prospective and existing customers through basic channels like SMS, USSD and at agent locations in addition to web and social media platforms; and provide reliable customer support services. The apex bank intends to implement these standards to the letter as non-compliance attracts sanctions.

From the foregoing, DFS has and will continue to deepen financial inclusion in Nigeria – perhaps even at an exponential rate. However, in light of the country's 2.5 percent annual population growth rate, along with existing inclusion gaps and inequalities particularly regarding gender and geographic location, regulators must find more sustainable ways for low-cost financial services to expand to the unbanked and underbanked.

Also, the crusade to promote financial literacy and consumer protection has to be further intensified, as people will only use systems they veritably understand and can trust. As the government continues to roll out more financial inclusion initiatives, it must ensure it keeps nurturing an enabling environment for digital financial products and services to thrive, though within a regulated ecosystem.

Source: BusinessDay.

"The CBN is now looking more closely at enforcing digital financial literacy. In one of its most recent steps at driving financial inclusion, it released the Exposure Draft on the Digital Financial Services Awareness Guidelines (Draft DFS Guidelines) in July 2022. The Draft DFS Guidelines sets minimum consumer knowledge and practice standards that financial services providers are to adopt when providing DFS. Among other things, DFS providers are required to – promote campaigns to underserved populations regarding DFS available to them; ease access to product information to allow consumers make informed financial decisions; provide product information in English and local languages; disseminate educational materials to prospective and existing customers through basic channels like SMS, USSD and at agent locations in addition to web and social media platforms; and provide reliable customer support services. The apex bank intends to implement these standards to the letter as non-compliance attracts sanctions."

BUSINESS WORLD

Nigerians to use USSD code for eNaira transaction

— Emefiele

THE Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor, Godwin Emefiele has announced that Nigerians will from next week use USSD code for eNaira transactions.

The apex boss revealed the new feature on eNaira at the Grand Finale of the 2022 eNaira Hackathon in Abuja on Thursday, believing that the move would help boost eNaira acceptability among Nigerians.

USSD is a code programmed into your SIM card or cell phone to make it easier to perform certain actions.

Speaking on USSD benefits, Emefiele says, "Nigerians, both banked and unbanked, will be able to open an eNaira wallet and conduct transactions by simply dialing *997 from their phones."

"Shortly after this, both merchants and consumers with bank accounts can use the NIBSS Instant Payment (NIP) to transfer and



Emefiele

receive eNaira to any bank account."

"This will further deepen the integration of the eNaira with the existing national payment infrastructure."

Additionally, he "promise

to increase the level of Financial Inclusion in the country because just like the Naira, the eNaira is expected to be accessible to all Nigerians and would provide more possibilities to bring in the unbanked into the digital economy."

eNaira records 200,000 users, N4bn transactions value

THE Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN)'s digital currency, eNaira, has recorded 200,000 volumes and four billion Naira value of transactions since its inauguration in 2021.

Mr Godwin Emefiele, the CBN Governor said this on Thursday, in Abuja at the grand finale of the "eNaira Hackathon".

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the hackathon is a CBN's collaborative initiative with the African Fintech Foundry (AFF).

It is aimed at bringing together teams of talented entrepreneurs, developers, designers, solution developers, problem-solvers and 'code magicians' from Africa to develop innovative solutions for improved adoption of the eNaira.

The competition was part of efforts by the CBN to drive financial inclusion, facilitate macroeconomic growth and integrate the Nigerian economy into the world-leading economies through innovation and cutting-edge emerging technologies.

NAN also recalls that the eNaira was inaugurated on Oct. 25, 2021 by President Muhammadu Buhari, making Nigeria the first African country to launch a Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC).

Emefiele said since its inauguration, eNaira had reached 840,000 downloads, with about 270,000 active wallets comprising more than 252,000 consumer wallets and 17,000 merchant wallets.

According to him, the digital currency will enhance financial inclusion, support poverty reduction, enable direct welfare disbursement to citizens, support a resilient payments ecosystem and improve availability and usability of central bank money.

"The eNaira will also facilitate diaspora remittances, reduce the cost of processing cash, and also reduce cost and improve

efficiency of cross-border payment," he said.

The apex bank governor, however, said that the eNaira was the same Naira with far more possibilities.

"The eNaira will make a significant positive difference to Nigeria and Nigerians. It was also developed to provide Nigerians with a cheap, safe and trusted means of payment."

"It is unlike the offline payments channels like agent networks, USSD, wearables, cards and near field communication technology."

"The eNaira would give access to financial services to underserved and unbanked segments of the population," he said.

He said that innovative products and services built on the eNaira would enhance Nigerians' participation in the digital economy and promote further development of a burgeoning Fintech ecosystem.

"To achieve these set out objectives, the project adopted a phased approach with the first phase focusing on banked users, while the policy objective of the second phase borders around financial inclusion."

"In addition, the eNaira platform possesses an innovation layer for products and services to be built with the aim of enhancing Nigerians' participation in the digital economy," he said.

According to Emefiele, the second phase of the project has begun and is intended to drive financial inclusion by onboarding unbanked and underserved users leveraging offline channels.

He said that the CBN was now ready to accommodate unbanked Nigerians in the eNaira platform.

"Greater success is envisioned for the project with phase two expected to deliver more gains with a target of about eight million active users based on estimations using the

diffusion of innovation model.

"When we launched the eNaira, we promised to increase the level of financial inclusion in the Country because just like the Naira, the eNaira is expected to be accessible to all Nigerians."

"It will provide more possibilities to bring in the

THE Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) has deployed a high technology scheme as a stop-gap solution called Internet of Thing (IoT) and Virtual Private Network (VPN) to improve the national grid.

Malam Yusuf Bako, Lead, Advocacy Team, Nigerian Power Consumers Forum, in a statement on Thursday, in Abuja said that TCN made this known in a forum with the group.

Bako said that the technology was for real time grid operations and management to National Control Centre (NCC) in Osogbo, Osun State.

According to him, the technology will improve real-time operations of the national grid, pending the deployment of a long-term network automation system.

He quoted the Managing Director of TCN, Mr. Sule Abdulaziz, as describing the feat as a quantum leap.

Abdulaziz said that this was coming at a time when the Minister of Power, M Abubakar Aliyu, has tasked agencies on innovative ways to improve electricity supply to Nigerians.

"Thanks to President Muhammadu Buhari and the Minister of Power that the Nigerian power sector is steadily receiving historic attention with a quantum of investments that would redefine the sector for the best."

unbanked into the digital economy."

"I am pleased to inform you that by next week, Nigerians, both banked and unbanked, will be able to open an eNaira wallet and conduct transactions by simply dialing 1997 from their phones," he said.

'We will put more efforts to achieve mandate'

From Dorcas Pankyes, Abuja

THE Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation Dr. (Sen). Adeleke Olorunnimbe Mamora has said that the Ministry will put in more efforts in reflecting on its recent achievements and adopt emerging trends in the application of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) to achieve the Ministry's set mandates.

He added that more efforts will be made in tackling common challenges encountered in the implementation of STI policies in Nigeria.

Dr. Adeleke made this known at the Ministry's one day MINISTERIAL RETREAT held today in Abuja.

According to the Minister, the repositioning and strengthening the efforts of the Ministry in STI

will no doubt address the problem of innovation as the missing in its statutory responsibility and growth of the national economy.

He further stated that the recent achievements recorded were by thorough and purposeful leadership of the Ministry and immeasurable support by President Buhari.

In his words, "These achievements were made possible without any doubt, as a result of purposeful and quality leadership styles provided by President Muhammadu Buhari. The President demonstrated this through changing the narratives of hitherto



Mamora

TCN to deploy new technology to improve power



Aliyu

"We have gone far with the procurement of new Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA)/Energy Management System (EMS)schemes but we felt as a responsible company that are waiting for the new SCADA, we can deploy a stop-gap technology."

"Which we have understudied in other countries to be very efficient in boosting real-time electricity grid monitoring," he said.

Abdulaziz said that TCN was building two new National Control Centres in Abuja and Osogbo.

He said that he control centres would further improve the robustness of the Nigerian electricity grid.

"We believe that as more of the investments and our transmission expansion projects materialize, Nigerians will experience

more improved electricity supply."

"This preparation is coming at a time when Nigerian power operators are gearing up to take part in electricity export as soon as the Regional Electricity Market (REM) of the West African Power Pool (WAPP) is launched," he said.

Abdulaziz, who is also the Chairman, Executive Board of WAPP, said Nigeria, though TCN, had been exporting electricity to Niger, Benin and Togo under a country-to-country arrangement.

He said that the regional market would further enable GenCos to export power to more West African countries which will be evacuated by TCN transmission infrastructure.

The General Manager, NCC, Balarabe Abdullahi, said that with the stop gap solution, TCN can now access some stations and substations that were not captured in the last SCADA World Bank Project of 2004 on real time.

Mr Micheal Okoh, Convener of the Nigerian Power Consumers Forum (NPCF), said only such critical power transmission grid investments, backed by a matching strength at the DisCos' end can bring succor to power consumers.

Okoh in analyzing the feat, said the stop-gap solution has been existing in some countries like Benin Republic, and that it was better than late for Nigeria.

"This has been long overdue, because if the grid or system operator does not have comprehensive operational data of the entire power grid, it is difficult to manage the fast-growing system."

"The existing inadequate SCADA System cannot provide adequate grid visibility and we know that the SCADA system is not yet ready."

Okoh also called on the DisCos and other actors in the Nigerian Electricity Supply Industry (NESI) to take similar actions that have collective impacts on the national grid.

According to him, what consumers need is adequate power supply and they will pay the right tariff.

"We also call on the DisCos to match this technology, so that faults can easily be cleared and service delivery optimized."

ENTREPRENEUR WATCH

WITH CELESTINE D. ATTSAR

New entrepreneurs and power of social media

The social network, which has the online community as one of its subdivisions, has become a crucial part of our daily lives as technology advances. With the dawn of online networking, people getting in touch with each other has been made easy. You can connect in seconds with a large number of people – friends, families, and strangers – individually or as a group. AYODEJI ADEGBOYEGA writes.



ACCORDING to Forbes, as of January this year, there were 4.02 billion internet users around the globe – that is 53 per cent of the world's total population. Active social media users make up 3.2 billion, or 42 percent of the population. "These numbers alone prove that social media is here to stay, if not to flourish further."

Significantly, in the marketing world, social media cannot be disregarded especially as it gives much penetration.

According to recent research by the Global System of Mobile Communication Association (GSMA), the mobile market is significantly contributing to Nigeria's economic growth. In 2017, it contributed \$21 billion to the GDP, representing 5.5 per cent of the country's total GDP. This has resulted in the creation of nearly 500,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Transacting business online is no longer a new thing to online active Nigerians as some prefer it to other modes of transaction. It is arguably more comfortable, as many of the online vendors have a means of delivering the goods to the buyer at little or no extra cost.

Premium Times interviewed some entrepreneurs breaking borders on the social media.

When Taiwo Hassan graduated from the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife in 2014, he was bent on creating his own job so he enrolled in an event planning class.

The graduate of Political Science

and the brain behind @AHT_events said he had to register with the Corporate Affairs Commission in order to get an edge over others in the business. When he started two years ago, his main challenge as a newbie was customers asking for his previous works. But he said his boss came to his aid at that time.

He said he attracts customers on Instagram by paying a few social media influencers who help him to gain followers who later became his customers. Also, he gives his followers what he calls the "referral package." This package, he explained, attracts a percentage of the profit from a deal to any follower who refers him to the client with whom he makes the deal.

"The main challenge I have right now is how clients price the services that they want to be rendered," Hassan said.

"You have to take cognizance of the fact that you will pay for equipment rentals, so if you are not careful you will end up not getting anything from the work."

Asked why he still rents equipment, he said, "It is not economically wise to keep buying them as new ones keep coming out."

But he is looking into opening an equipment rental outlet of his own to generate additional cash flow.

Hassan said he gets his customers more on Instagram and also through referrals.

"The social media has helped all businesses a great deal. Lately, it has narrowed down some sorts of

extra movement into just pictures and chats," said Kema Abuede of @cakepriest.

A cake maker who has been in the business for 14 years, Kema stressed how the social media has helped make business easy for him in recent times as his clients no longer have to travel from other cities to see his work and what he is capable of doing.

"All they need to do is get your page ID, check your previous works, discuss and make payment and they, in turn, deliver."

This, he said, saves time and helps people to keep their works online for a lifetime as against the archaic tradition of snapping and going about with hard copies.

The Mass Communication graduate of Auchu Polytechnic is also a teacher. He said the social media helps him publicise not just his work but his training, unlike in the past when he had to wait for a gathering, such as an exhibition, to share his fliers to publicise his training. "All you need to do now is post it on Instagram, Facebook or twitter. Your followers see it, broadcast it and it goes viral," he said.

Kema said he registered since 2014 and by 2019, he hopes to be taking his chain of businesses to a different level. "I am taking different studies in movie making, and I have my instruments already. Hopefully soon, I will start by next year."

Asked if he would consider an offer of a white-collar job, and how good he was doing with his

business, he said, "To a great extent, it has been good. You know in the country we are now if you can feed your family and you are okay to a large extent, it is a big deal."

Eighteen years old Precious Adelagun of @preciousbugatti_wears started her clothing business online two years ago because she was just not used to "depending on people for money."

"I just want to be independent," she said.

That was the reason she decided to start selling wears, "mostly ladies' wear." The ND 2 student of The Polytechnic, Ibadan said so far, her customers are more of people she met online and the business has really helped her in paying for her education.

"By next year, I will be launching my eyelash line. Everyone has been paid, the photographer, the model and also my supplier," she replied coyly when this reporter asked her how profitable the business has been.

Aisha Afolabi and Ada Ezech are students of the National Open University in Lagos and run @kaisha_skincare and @adahairline respectively. They said the social media has been a blessing for them as it allows them to operate their respective businesses without demanding much from them.

Aisha said the business is helping her fund her education and also gave birth to a new business of skin care, which she sees as "the

trending business presently."

"My hair business was doing well but later on, a lot of people started selling it, so I had to look for another biz that will move traffic for me."

She explained that the process is not stressful for her as all she needs to get the cream prepared are there in Lagos. She has her customers and she had a medium of delivering to them without stress, so her schooling is not disturbed and she is making enough for herself.

Ada Ezech, who is married, said she started her hair business recently and the worth now is more than triple her startup capital.

She said her only challenge initially was getting authentic followers who were willing to buy.

According to Ada, the first few months of the business was challenging as her goods were just in the house "staring at me." But now, she is making sales and also able to look after her toddler at home.

Mrs Ellah Umeh runs @veronicasdaughter, a fabric page on Instagram. She started selling her fabrics from the trunk of her car until she opened business pages both on Facebook and Instagram. Now she delivers to customers nationwide.

The doctoral student of the University of Port Harcourt said "I sell more online, all I need to do is snap a very good picture of the fabric and advertise on my business pages. Customers call and ask for price and for delivery too."

Source: PremiumTimes.

Mandy Moore: Unlocking her path

Continued from page 18



like it happened to a different person."

Moore, who began her freshman year of high school only to leave on Christmas break to record her debut album and later tour with NSYNC and the Backstreet Boys, has worked hard to grow out of the teeny-bopper label. And she's become a force. She released her album *Silver Landings* in 2020. It was her first since the late 2000s. But, of course, it dropped some days before the world shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the time since, she has continued to write—often with her husband, Taylor Goldsmith of the accomplished band Dawes—and those early songs have become her latest LP. But while she excels—especially on the tracks "In Real Life" and "Heartlands"—there was some trepidation about releasing more music.

"Fear of failure," she says. "Fear of do I really love this as much as I used to? Am I any good at this? Do I know what I'm doing? Do people care? It was a million things wrapped up in one."

But it was her role on *This Is Us* that sparked her reentry. Her character, Rebecca Pearson, sings throughout the show and that got her back in the studio. That, combined with her supportive husband, lit the flame. She's thrilled to share the connection with Goldsmith, calling it "such a gift." In fact, he and several of his bandmates are set to hit the road with the 38-year-old Moore on her summer tour. She hasn't hit the road for some 15 years, and she's excited to get her feet wet and remember what it's like going from venue to venue.

"For me," she says, "the whole idea of making this record and the last record was the opportunity to go on the road with it. To perform live. That's the part I love, that's the part in my other day job that I don't get to experience so much."

As an actor, Moore is rarely "herself" in the work—instead, she played a character on a show that has hundreds of people working to bring it to life. But on stage, she is herself in full. She gets to be Mandy

completely, she says. And her foray on the road will help her process the very emotional ending of the impactful show. For Moore, who came of professional age amidst big pop stars like Britney Spears, Jessica Simpson, and Christina Aguilera—people, she says, she never knew all that well—her career has shaped up much differently than theirs. Thanks to that different journey, she's been able to maintain her path. And that's made all the difference.

"I love that music unlocks and gives you permission," Moore says. "To give you unfettered access into every color and every emotion and every experience and every memory. It's the key to everything."



Nigerian actresses with highest net worth

Continued from page 18

Chioma Chukwuka - \$5.7 million



Chioma Chukwuka is another actress who enjoys portraying an "innocent" lady in romance films. She was born in Lagos, Nigeria, on March 12, 1980. On *My Wedding Day*, *Wives on Strike*, *Heart of Gold*, and *The Rain of Hope* are a few of the films she has played a role in. Chukwuka has a net worth of \$5.7 million.

Mercy Johnson - \$5 million

Mercy Johnson has worked in the Nigerian film industry for almost a decade. She has established herself as one of the most admired stars in the industry as a result of her talent and hard work. Hollandia Evap Milk and Pennek Nigeria Limited are among the brands she has endorsed. Her net worth is \$5 million, making her the one of richest female star in Nollywood.



Uche Jombo - \$4 million



Uche Jombo is an actress, screenwriter, film producer, and director who has had a lot of success. Her first film, *Visa to Hell*, was released in 1999, and it was her first foray into the film industry. Uche has written and co-authored several Nollywood films, including *Girls in the Hood*, *Games Men Play*, and *The Celebrity*. She has also been

nominated and won several awards like Female Viewers Choice during the 2015 Golden Icons Academy Movie Awards. Jombo's net worth is around \$4 million.

Ini Edo - \$3.9 million

Ini Edo was born in the city of Uyo in the state of Akwa Ibom. She began her acting career in 2000 and has since appeared in over 200 films. Read also How much is Chinedu Ikedieze's net worth in 2019? Ini Edo is also a brand ambassador for Beauty Secrets of April, a skincare line. She has also won awards such as the Nafca Award and Golden



Icons Academy Movie. With a net worth of almost \$3.9 million, Ini is one of Nigeria's most well-paid and sought-after actresses.

Oge Okoye - \$3 million



Ini Edo was born in the city of Uyo in the state of Akwa Ibom. She began her acting career in 2000 and has since appeared in over 200 films. Read also How much is Chinedu Ikedieze's net worth in 2019? Ini Edo is also a brand ambassador for Beauty Secrets of April, a skincare line. She has also won awards such as the Nafca Award and Golden

Icons Academy Movie. With a net worth of almost \$3.9 million, Ini is one of Nigeria's most well-paid and sought-after actresses.

Source: Legit

NEWS

Taraba NMA elects new EXCO

From VICTOR GAI,
Jalingo

THE Nigerian Medical Association, Taraba State Chapter, has elected, Dr Bako Ali Istifanus as the State Chairman at the 2022 Annual General Meeting and Scientific Conference held in Jalingo.

The newly elected chairman who is the Medical Director of the Taraba State University Medical Clinic, promised to ensure the provision of efficient and qualitative health care delivery to the people of the State.

While applauding the outgoing exco for their stewardship and ability to end their tenure successfully and very strong, he appreciated members for the vote of confidence placed on him and the new SOC to pilot the affairs of the association.

He promised to ensure that the dream for Universal Health coverage for Tarabans saw the light of the day.

"It is attainable through Public-Private Partnership (PPP), advocacy and by advising the state government to functionally and actively domesticate the Taraba State Contributory Health Insurance Agency (TSCCHIA) tenets in the State.

"The collaborations and partnerships with NGO's and various Health organizations (UNICEF, WHO, TACA etc) are giant strides which will be guarded and sustained, with the aim of improving the health indices of the people of Taraba State, Istifanus stated.

He promised a five-year strategic plan with the aim consolidating on its external collaboration, promoting the profession and upgrading the financial base of the association.

"Getting a befitting NMA Clinic and/or NMA Guest House in our plans is attainable through contributions, good will donations and assistance from friends of NMA who also have the desire that our state should get the best in health care delivery.

"Let's get it done! This is the time to deliver! This is the place to commit. And yes, there are still many obstacles. But it is up to us to overcome them. And it is doable. Together we can," he added.

Earlier in his remarks, the outgoing Chairman, Dr. Uwemedimo Edet Nkantah, called on the state government to improve funding of the health sector for better service delivery.

According to him, the healthcare indices in the state were not good, adding that for the people of Taraba State to get access to quality healthcare services,



Darius

healthcare funding must improve.

"The healthcare indices are not good at all and government needs to act fast for the good of the citizens. Again, the Taraba State Contributory Health Insurance Agency (TSCCHIA) must be functional to help citizens.

"The recent National Health Insurance Authority, (NHIA) Act should be studied and domesticated by the Taraba state government. The importance of Universal Health Coverage, (UHC) and the development of the private health sector cannot be overemphasized.

"There is a need to institutionalize our home-grown 12-Pillar Clinical

Governance in all our health institutions to guarantee quality health administration and quality service delivery.

"Efforts should be made to commence the training of interns especially house officers in the Taraba State Specialist Hospital, Jalingo among others," he said.

Others elected alongside Dr Bako were; Dr. Kara, Adamu Hamidu – Vice Chairman, Dr. Dou Baren Sambo-Secretary, Dr. Uba Gabriel Ahmed-Assistant Secretary, Dr. Hunuato Isaiah-Treasurer, Dr. Edeh Michael-Financial Secretary, Dr. Godlove Mary-Public Relations Officer and Dr. Atizwen Daniel Bitrus as Auditors.

Bauchi security frees 69 bandits' abductees

From ABBAS GUNGURA,
Bauchi

SECURITY agents in Bauchi State have rescued 69 persons abducted by bandits in four local government areas of the state.

The State Commissioner of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Alhaji Abdulrazaq Nuhu Zaki, made this known to journalists in Bauchi, where he said the abductees were

rescued in combined operations by security agencies and local vigilantes who stormed bandits' dens in the forests.

The commissioner, expressed state government's readiness to intensify patrol on bandits routes of Toro, Alkaleri, Tafawa Balewa, and Ningi as local government areas infiltrated by the bandits.

He disclosed that the state Governor, Senator Bala



Bala

NEC sets sub-committee on NNPC

From JIDAUNA YANUNG,
Abuja

THE National Economic Council (NEC) has set up a Sub-committee to consider governments concerns over the ownership of the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation Limited, (NNPC Ltd).

The council, chaired by the Vice President, Yemi Osinbajo, at a virtual meeting at the presidential Villa Abuja, also endorsed the financial performance of the Nigeria's Sovereign investment Authority (NSIA) for year 2021.

In a statement by Osinbajo's spokesman, Laolu Akande, the

By DUMAH RANDONG

Plateau State Deputy Governor, Professor Sonni Tyoden has urged Civil Servants in the state to always prepare for their retirement while in active service.

Tyoden gave the charge at the farewell ceremony in honor of the outgoing Permanent Secretary Office of the Deputy Governor, Mr Emmanuel Gogwim Kayi and the Director of Finance and Supply, Dr Mathew Dabut Nanjwan Friday at the Government, House, Rayfield, Jos.

Retirement according to the Deputy Governor should be seen as a transition to another face in life after years of service noting that it was only those who did not plan for it that have cause to fear.

Tyoden further reminded them that there was time for every thing, the day they joined the civil service, they knew that one day they will leave and advised them to start thinking of something to do no matter how small it was.

He said working with the two principal officers was quite remarkable as enjoyed working with them and urged them to see their successful exit as a great privilege as some who started the same day were no more wished them the best of retirement from the civil service.

Chief of Staff office of the Deputy Governor, Silas Vem and Senior Special Assistant office of the Deputy Governor, Mr Nuhu Dagan commended the outgoing Permanent Secretary and the Director of Finance and Supply for their hardwork.

They both advised them not be idle but keep themselves busy noting that the occasion was a moment to appreciate the services rendered to the

Tyoden urges civil servants on retirement preparation

office and to also thank God for a successful end of their career.

While describing the working relationship as cordial, they advised them to sustain it noting that their exit should not be the end of everything.

In their separate remarks, the Director of Administration and Acting Permanent Secretariat office of the Deputy Governor, Mrs Julie Yama and the Staff Officer, Ishaku Nyam said the event was to appreciate the two Principal Officers for the services rendered to the office of the Deputy Governor and the state civil service in particular.

They called on government to always give priority to the welfare of civil servants in the state to enable them prepare for their retirement.

Responding separately, the outgoing Permanent Secretary, office of the Deputy Governor, Emmanuel Kayi Gogwim who

was overwhelmed for the show of love, said for the past seven years of his service, it has been worthwhile.

He considered it a privilege working with the Deputy Governor as his teacher in the University 30 years ago and used occasion to thanked him and the family for their support as well as the Deputy Chief of Staff, Silas Vem and other Directors he has worked with and pleaded for forgiveness in case he stepped on somebody's toes in the course of performing his work.

On his part, the Director of Finance and Supply, Dr Mathew Dabut Nanjwan expressed gratitude to the Deputy Governor and staff for the support given them to succeed.

He described their service as on to God and humanity pleading for mercy if they have offended anyone in the course of doing their work.



Tyoden

Wapmuk tasks schools on proper grants utilization

By PALANG KASMI

Plateau State Commissioner for Secondary Education Mrs. Elizabeth Wapmuk has disclosed that government

has disbursed the World Bank School Improvement Grant, and Conditional Cash Transfer to adolescent girls of between 10 and 20 years in both junior and secondary schools in 9 Local Government.

She said "Under the Schools Improvement Grant, various public secondary schools across the State will get between 3 to 6 million naira to carry out critical interventions that address the challenges of the girl child in order to enable them stay and complete their studies".

Wapmuk appealed to the beneficiaries to use this opportunity to make their families proud, register Plateau in the map of successful states in the utilization of the intervention, and also put Nigeria on the map of very serious and committed nations so that others can enjoy similar gestures in the future.

Giving the project overview, State Project Coordinator Mr. Saje Joseph Adeh said, over N828 million will be given to 309 Junior and Senior Secondary Schools for the Schools Improvement Grants while over N183 million will be accessed by 18,036 students in 618 schools across the entire state for the Conditional Cash Transfer.

He explained that the selection of benefitting Local Governments and schools

was carried out with a strong focus on areas with low secondary transition rates for girls from the poorest households.

"The project is part of FG's long term education agenda to curtail high rate of our of school girls, early marriage, adolescent pregnancy and other challenges to school education and the aim is to improve rate of completion of secondary school and encourage girl child education, and the project area is across the 17 Local government areas", said the Coordinator.

Consultant of Agile Project, Engr Aliyu Hamman in his remarks said his team had gone round the 3 senatorial zones of the state on assessment tour.

He said the state would benefit immensely from the project and commended the government for being proactive and the next benefitting state after Katsina to kick-off the project.

Responding on behalf of the benefitting schools, All Nigeria Confederation of Principals of Secondary Schools (ANCOPSS) Chairman Plateau State, Mr. James Dimlong said the steps taken by Governor Lalong to pursue this funding will revolutionise education in the state by addressing many pressing challenges that have to do with infrastructure and capacity building.

NEWS

NLC debunks reports that NASG owes salaries

From MOHANNED ABDULLAHI, Keffi

THE Nasarawa State chapter of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has stated that the state government does not owe the state civil servants any salary contrary to reports that the government owes workers six months salaries. The State Chairman of the NLC, Comrade Yusuf Iya made the clarifications during a news conference with reporters in Lafia, the State capital saying that Governor Abdullahi Sule's administration is up to date in the payment of workers as no worker is owed any kobo as far as salaries are concerned. He stated that their attention has been drawn to a report credited to one organization called Budg IT that Nasarawa State is among the eight states in the country that are



Sule

in arrears of its worker's salaries between six months and above. "We the leadership of the NLC in Nasarawa State who are the representatives of the workers, hereby debunk, condemn and describe the report as false, malicious, concocted and baseless," the

NLC further stated.

He stated that since the assumption of Engineer Abdullahi Sule led administration in the state, the State government and Local Government workers as well as the retirees are all up to date in the payment of their monthly entitlements.

EXECUTIVE Chairman of Karu Local Government Council Hon James Thomas, has earlier today visited PANDAGRIC NOVUM LTD, in Panda Development Area of Karu Local Government, and sought partnership collaboration to train youth on agricultural production.

He said "we appreciated your investment in our domain, which as a result many youths were employed on this note we request for your technical support to train our teeming youth on agricultural production to be self-reliant".

Chief Executive Officer of the Company, Mr. Bruce Spam while acknowledging the presence and visit of the Executive Chairman appreciated him as the first Executive Chairman to personally come to their company on a courtesy visit. He promised to work with the local government to achieve success.

Spam promised to support the Government through tree

Karu chairman partners agric company to train youth

From DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja

planting and all other support for people to feel their impact in the area.

PANDAGRIC NOVUM LTD is

an Integrated Agriculture and Agric Processing Company, specializing in the Production and Distribution of High Quality, High Performance Poultry Feeds.



Thomas

... Imposes curfew

From MOHAMMED ABDULLAHI, Keffi

FOLLOWING a security threat in some parts of Karu Local Government area, the authority of the council have imposed a curfew from 10: pm to 6:00 am every day.

Chairman of the council, James Bawa Thomas, made the pronouncement during the expanded peace and security meeting held at the council Secretariat on Monday.

Presiding over the expanded Peace and security meeting which involved the representatives of the Nigerian Army, the Police, DSS, Civil Defence Corp, Road safety, the Nigeria

Correctional Service, Religious and Traditional Rulers among others, the Chairman explains that the security meeting became imperative considering the security threat in some parts of Karu and its environs.

He further stated that the curfew will take effect on Thursday this week from 10: pm to 6: am.

James Thomas disclosed that even though Karu is enjoying relative peace but they cannot fold their hands without taking proactive measures to take a holistic approach to the situation to avert any peace and security breach.

Education commissioner bags integrity stewardship award

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE Kogi State Commissioner for Education, Science and Technology, Hon. Wemi Jones, FCIB, has been honoured with 'Certificate of Integrity Stewardship Award with title "Service Ambassador" by the Centre for Save and Serve Humanity Organisation (CSSHO).

Presenting the award to the Commissioner on Wednesday in Lokoja, the Executive Director of CSSHO, Mrs Anthonia Aihinoria, eulogised the commissioner for thinking right, acting ethics and serving as advocate of good governance.

Aninoria said that the Commissioner had distinguished himself among his colleagues as a silent and great achiever, whose track of indelible achievements had made them proud as an organization.

She explained that from their independent assessment exercise

conducted on State MDAs in North Central Nigeria, Kogi State Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, under the stewardship of Wemi Jones, came out very outstanding after the exercise.

"We also gathered with great delight in terms of your performance such as: display of ethical leadership, and developmental policy performance, public accessibility, servicom compliance, commitment to State transformational agenda, attitude against corruption, and obedient to the rule of law.

"You are hereby declared "an outstanding leader in service" Aihinoria said.

She however said that the award was expected to spur the Commissioner to do more for his people, and add his voice to the ongoing clarion call to reform Nigeria

in the years ahead.

In his response, the Commissioner appreciated the organisation for considering him and the Ministry worthy of the award, saying it was a call for more dedication and hard work.

The Commissioner thanked His Excellency, Governor Yahaya Bello, for giving him the privilege to serve his people at the state, and for making education sector his topmost priority.

Jones stressed that the recorded achievements in education sector would not have been possible without the full support of the Governor, as well as the commitment and dedication of the staff and management of the ministry.

He emphasised that the Governor had made education his number one focus thereby increasing the annual budgetary allocation to 30% beyond the 26% UNESCO bench mark for education, hence the tremendous achievements being recorded in the sector.

Jones stressed that the State Government was focusing more attention on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) through the establishment of GYB Model Science Secondary Schools across the three senatorial districts of the state, as well as establishment of Confluence University of Science and Technology (CUSTECH), Osara.

The commissioner said that Kogi State Government under the leadership of Governor Yahaya Bello had enacted Kogi State Education Law, which the previous Administrations were not able to achieve.

He added that all the tertiary

institutions in the state have had all their programmes accredited by their various regulatory bodies, under the table leadership of Gov. Yahaya Bello.

The Commissioner further said that the process of recruiting competent professional teachers for secondary schools in the state were ongoing with due process followed, to ensure that qualified teachers were engaged.

He assured that greater achievements would be recorded in the state education sector, saying the Governor was determined and committed to making Kogi the best in education in the Northern States.

Commissioner for information kidnapped in Nasarawa

From MOHAMMED ABDULLAHI, Keffi

UNKNOWN gunmen have stormed Nasarawa Eggon and kidnapped the Nasarawa State Commissioner for Information Yakubu Lawal.

The bandits were said to have stormed the house of the commissioner in the wee hours of the night forced him out of his house and took him away to their hide out.

The kidnappers were said to have announced their arrival to house of the commissioner in Nasarawa Eggon by firing several shots to disperse the people around him and all other people that were willing to bring help.

Meanwhile, the state's police command were confirmed the incidence and re-stated it's determinations to ensure



Alkali

that it rescues him unhurt.

The State's Police Public Relation Officer Mr. Rahman Nansel stated that on hearing that, the Police Command immediately mobilized its forces to track down the kidnappers and rescue the commissioner.

He therefore appealed to all the residents of Nasarawa Eggon to support the Police and all other security agencies to support them with all the relevant information to enable them succeed in providing adequate security to the people.



Bello

NEWS

FG launches MICS-NICS, promises financial support

From DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja

THE Vice-President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo has officially launched Nigeria's 2021 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey and National Immunization Coverage Survey report, aimed at providing reliable and internationally comparable data to monitor the situation of children and women in Nigeria.

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey is a household survey developed by UNICEF to assist countries in filling data gaps for monitoring human development indicators in general and the situation of children and women, in particular. It has evolved over the years to respond to changing data needs, expanding from 28 indicators in the first round in 1999 to 200 in its current sixth. This was made known to press recently in Abuja.

The Vice president who was represented by the Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Dr. Zainab Shamsuna Ahmed assured MICS-NICS of government support financially, and the implementation of the Survey report in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Finance Minister Recommended the good work carried out by the National Bureau of Statistics, (NBS) implemented MICS which provides data on child mortality, health, nutrition, education, child and social protection, women's health care and empowerment, water, sanitation and hygiene. While NICS assesses vaccination coverage provided through the health systems.

Also speaking in an address, the Statistician-General of the Federation and Chief Executive Officer, National Bureau of Statistics, Prince Adeyemi Adeniran stated that the survey which has over 200 indicators, recorded the highest response rate in the MICS series, with an impressive response rate of 99 per cent.

The 2021 Nigeria MICS-NICS report provides evidence-based data for all key stakeholders to prioritise quality services for children and women with higher efficiency and effectiveness," said Statistician-General of the Federation/CEO National Bureau of Statistics Prince Adeyemi Adeniran. The information collated will inform policies aimed at social inclusion of the most vulnerable population, help identify disparities, and allow for international comparability.

It also had some notable improvement to the survey, making it the most comprehensive MICS Survey ever to be conducted in Nigeria. This is the first round to be conducted since the advent of covid-19 in Nigeria. With the severe effect of the pandemic on the health status of the citizens, the results of the survey will shed more light on how the pandemic has



Osinbajo

affected households.

Prince Adeniran added that these improvements were in the form of an addition of an entirely new questionnaire to the survey, as well as the inclusion of the new modules to existing questionnaires. A completely new questionnaire which focuses on Children aged 5 to 17 was introduced under this round.

He added that questionnaire deals with issues such as foundational learning, Child functioning, and parental involvement. However, these New modules include; Energy use, Social Transfers, and Food Security, which were added to the Household Questionnaire. "The picture is a mixed one. While there has been some good progress, and we should celebrate that - we still have a long way to go to towards ensuring the well-being of children in Nigeria," adding that the findings of this survey will help guide the federal and state governments as they plan their budgets - providing evidence for where more support and funds need to be wisely allocated and utilized."

Statistician-General of the Federation said, they build back better from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the MICS-NICS survey provides evidence to shape interventions and focus resources in a way that helps children and their families reach their full potential," While New modules on Victimization and Financial Inclusion were added to the Men and Women Questionnaires. Looking critical at the nature of these New additions, It is evident that these are topical issues and areas in which more information is required by Government and policymakers, to enable them to monitor relevant policies and programmes, and intervene where necessary. He said.

Therefore, using the data to monitor progress towards our collective commitments to children and families, and inform future action is critical if we must leave no one behind.

Peter Hawkins, UNICEF Representative in Nigeria, who

represented UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator a.i in Nigeria Mr. Matthias Schmale said, Data is critical for effective budgeting and decision making - and the data from these surveys together paint a picture of the situation for children and families in Nigeria.

Hawkins, stressed that the indicators produced for the first time include social transfer, household energy use, child functioning and foundational learning skills. The survey measures the government's progress towards national commitments and the Sustainable Development Goals.

He said, the MICS results reveal that Nigeria has made progress in some sectors. Child mortality decreased from 1 in 8 children dying before their fifth birthday (MICS 2016) to 1 in 10 children (MICS 2021). There has also been significant progress in exclusive breastfeeding and birth registration rates - the exclusive breastfeeding rate increased from 24 per cent to 34 per cent, while nearly 60 per cent of Nigerian children are now registered at birth with civil authorities, compared to 47 per cent in 2016. cent to 30 per cent since 2016.

From DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja

MINISTER of Science, Technology and Innovation, Dr. Adeleke Olorunnimbe Mamora has called on Nigerians to embrace and support deployment of Clean Energy Innovations as a solution to climate change mitigation and adaptation in the country.

Dr. Adeleke made the call during the inauguration of the Project Steering Committee of the Nigeria, UNIDO /GEF on promoting Clean Energy Technologies for sustainable Start-UPS and Small and Medium Scale Enterprises Development in Nigeria in his office, recently in Abuja.

The Minister said that Clean Energy Technology is a project that will provide the national platform for partnership with the Global Cleantech Innovation Programme (GCIP) being piloted by United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) as well as Co-Creation Hub for providing niche technical services within the project.

According to the Minister, the Ministry is currently conducting technology needs assessment for climate in key sectors of the country's economy in line with the global transition of the world technology towards the use of clean energy.

To this end, Dr. Adeleke emphasized that production and value addition to the country's immense natural resources is critical to fast tracking the socio-economic development of the country.

He pointed out that the Steering Committee members are selected from the pool of experts in the Public and Private Sectors of the economy and enjoined them

Minister charges Nigerians on clean energy innovations



Mamora

to make meaningful contributions to the development of the nation through this laudable project.

The Minister enumerated the membership of the steering committee to include Federal Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Federal Ministry of Environment, Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) Bank of Industry, Rural Electrification Agency, amongst others.

Earlier, the Managing Director/CEO Rural Electrification Agency (REA).

Eng. Ahmad Salihijo said that their mandates are to support, promote and provide electricity to the rural areas in Africa.

In his acceptance speech, the Chairman of the steering committee Dr. Peter Ekweozor commended the efforts of the Ministry and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) partner. Added that despite all obstacles the inauguration of the committee members has become a reality.

He assured the Federal Government that the committee will work assiduously to achieve the full implementation of the policy.

IBB urges Nigerians to be patient over insecurity

From MATHEW JWANTU, Minna

FORMER Nigerian Military President General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida has called on Nigerians to be patient over challenges facing the country, saying insecurity will soon be history.

Speaking with members of the Correspondent Chapel at his Uphill Mansion, IBB who said tough time don't last, assured that the insecurity will soon go.

"But I appealed to those perpetrating the dastardly act of insecurity to stop"

He emphasized that the bullet was not made with any particular tribe or region on it be it Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani etc

I will never forget what my father told me when I was growing up that no matter what happens to you if you are able to be patient it will come it will happen and it will past

He called on Nigerians to be hopeful, determined, faithful

and prayerful for the end of the current insecurity challenges facing the nation. adding that those behind it will realize the consequences and impact of their actions in no distant time.

IBB who commended journalists for their role of reportage said, if they continue the good work they will be able to change the psyche of many Nigerians, and the whole narrative of the nation.

Gyang leads Senate, Reps to Paris, Turkey

From DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja

has 5 countries within its

area of responsibility.

The team was briefed in



Gyang

SENATOR I. D. Gyang, Deputy Chairman Senate Committee on Defence has led a joint team of the Senate and House of Representatives on a one-week oversight of Defence Missions in Paris, France and Ankara, Turkey

The quest for Nigeria to find lasting solution to the challenges of insecurity requires engagement with countries that are strategic to the security of the nation, thus necessitating Defence Missions

The Paris Defence Section covers 11 countries in Europe while that of Ankara,

both Paris and Ankara by the Defence Attaches on activities of the missions and efforts at expanding mutually benefitting opportunities between Nigeria and the host countries which have, to a large extent, attained self-sufficiency in their defense needs and capabilities and Nigeria can leverage on same to win the war against terrorism.

The team was also received on courtesy call by Nigerian Ambassadors to France and Turkey, their Excellencies Kayode Laro and Ismail Yusuf Abba respectively.

NEWS

Bankers donate surgical equipment for VVF repairs

From ANENE AIKE,
Sokoto

FIRST Bank of Nigeria (FBN) workers under the aegis of Employee Giving and Volunteering Scheme has donated surgical equipment for free Vesico Vaginal Fistula (VVF) repairs in Sokoto State.

The support was part of the Start Performing Acts of Random Kindness (SPARK) initiative by the workers.

Adamu Gambo, Group Head, Northwest II Group of FBN said the 2022 SPARK amplification event targeted Fistula patients at Maryam Abacha Women and Children Hospital, Sokoto.

Gambo said that the initiative involved staff donating money and creating time to execute noble engagements in the society.

"The initiative focuses on creating and reinforcing attitudes which goes beyond meeting people's material needs to show compassion, civility and charity," he added.

He explained that First Bank places premium on corporate responsibility and sustainability as it remains committed to impacting positively on its host communities.

"We are proud of being woven into the fabric of the society.

"This is a wholesome approach that involves meeting the needs of our stakeholders both presently and in the future.

"Our corporate responsibility approach structurally delivers value along the core pillars of



A cross section of the bankers

education, health and welfare," he said.

Gambo said his team identified Maryam Abacha Women and Children Hospital due to its consistency in rendering VVF services to victims.

"We admire your strength, tenacity, resilience and infectious disposition to improve the quality of individuals' lives.

"We urge the hospital's management to view the equipment as a token of love and kindness while we hope to render more assistance in the future," he stated.

The Chief Medical Director of the hospital, Dr Bello Lawal commended the staff for the donation pledging that the equipment would be judiciously utilised.

"The victims of VVF are classified among the most vulnerable in the society as they suffer stigmatisation and

ostracisation by their families and communities," he said.

The CMD however noted that VVF was preventable and curable while its victims are re-integrated into the society after adequate treatment and psychological care.

FUL VC warns against land encroachment

From AMEDU JOSEPH
Lokoja

THE Management of Federal University, Lokoja, FUL, has issued a stern warning to those encroaching into the land of the University at the Permanent Site, Felele to desist forthwith or be made to face the consequences of their actions.

The warning followed an on-the-spot assessment of the institution's Permanent Site land at Felele where the management and security agents discovered various unwholesome activities of land grabbers in the area. Reacting during the

inspection visit, the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Olayemi Akinwumi decried the level at which some unpatriotic citizens have devalued education by attempting to sell portions of land meant for the Institution to individuals.

He said that the university would no longer fold its hands and watch them succeed in their nefarious ventures.

The Vice-Chancellor pointed out that the team, during the tour discovered that some new buildings were already at different levels of completion while other parcels of land were allocated to unidentified individuals who are yet to commence work.

The VC, therefore, warned "owners" of such projects not to make any further efforts at completing them, saying all legal actions would be enforced to reclaim the landed property belonging to the Institution.

In his words: "It has come to the notice of the Management of the Federal University Lokoja that some unscrupulous elements were making merchandise of the University's landed property at the Felele Campus. "The University Management and some security agencies were conducting an oversight function around the University landed property at the Permanent Site in Felele and came to a shocking discovery that some individuals have been selling off portions of the land to their cronies. During the inspection, we saw beacons with names and phone numbers, some roofed uncompleted

Two kidnappers killed, others escaped with bullet wounds



Bello

State was guaranteed safe and secured.

In his reaction, the State Security Adviser, Commodore

Jerry Omodara stressed the need for continued vigilance by citizens, particularly those within the rural communities.

NUJ PPC pays courtesy call on State Council

By HOSEA NYAMLONG

CHAIRMAN of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Plateau State Council, Mr. Paul Jatau has assured collaboration with the newly elected EXCO of the Plateau Publishing Corporation (PPC), NUJ Chapel for positive development.

Jatau disclosed this during a courtesy visit of the EXCO, NUJ PPC Chapel at the state Council Secretariat recently. He said the visit was timely.

The state chairman commended the EXCO for being the first to pay such visit to the council's secretariat and urged them to put in their best so as to pilot the affairs of the union by initiating new ideas and programmes that would move the union forward.

He said that his doors are always open for new innovations, ideas and criticisms that would



Lar

better the union.

Jatau prayed for God's guidance and wished the EXCO a successful tenure of office.

Speaking earlier, the chairman of the NUJ PPC Chapel, Mr. Israel Nanjul Lar, appreciated the council's chairman for the audience given to them and pledged the union's loyal support to the leadership of the state council and the National body of the Union.

He said that it is the desire of the new EXCO to work in synergy with the state council to strengthen further areas of partnerships that would enhance the success of the union and the welfare of its members.

Lar stressed that under his leadership, they would ensure that the needful was done to uphold the tenets of the profession for progress.



Prof. Akinwumi

SUNDAY MAGAZINE



Alarming backlog of workers' salaries

Continued from page 10

revenue collection, what magic can such a state perform to pay salaries and also meet up with other commitments of governance?

"Mind you, no bank is going to take the risk of giving any fresh loan at this time, knowing fully well that most of these Governors are finishing their terms in office this year or next. Secondly, most of these funds have already been expended on political projects such as primary elections, conventions and of course preparations towards the 2023 generalelections.

"So, as it has always been during all election circles so shall it be with this one. Unless the Governors can leverage on the fact that the APC led Federal Government in its quest to get the votes of workers in the various states might go for a bail out as in order to remedy the situation at hand in those salary owing states." Timkur further noted.

However, the precarious situation in some states at the moment suggest that civil servants may just have to wait a little longer while trying to find answers to addressing the issue of bag log of arrears and subsequent monthly payments which by all indications is not

likely to happen any time soon.

Concerned with the development, Mr. Tobi Best, a provision store owner in Jos frowned at the Government for not paying the state workers their dues. Noting, "this is more or less a civil service environment where if workers are not paid as at when due, the spiral effect gets to us as business people. We suffer the pain too because we don't even see customers to buy our goods."

As at today, there are still some states that are paying half salary. States like Nassarawa and Kogi had adopted payment on percentage methods while some are still in the habit of engaging casual staff in order to cut down expenses on their recurrent expenditures.

Although some of the state Governors inherited an over bloated civil service with a heavy debt burden including that of salary arrears, they tried to avoid public back lash and the trap of going for the retrenchment option by maintaining the status quo.

For example, Abia state which is ranked among states with many months of arrears, owes its state tertiary institution workers not less than six months salary, while Ebonyi has not paid its

pensioners in the last six months. In Taraba, state secretariat staff complained of irregular payments for up to six months.

While in Ondo state, lecturers at the state tertiary institutions and midwives in the state-owned

**“
Nigerian civil servants are unfortunately no strangers to delays and gaps in monthly salary payments despite belonging to the executive implementing arm of government, they have been left without payments in many instances guilty of this nonpayment where civil servants are always at wits end at the end of the month.
”**

hospital have not been paid in the past four months. Quoting BudgIT sources. In Abia, the state Government has not paid salaries in the last ten months which was last paid in 2021 with only the basic salary while other allowances were excluded.

Speaking about the current realities of affected workers, Iniobong Usen, BudgIT Head of research and Policy Advisory, noted that civil servants' remuneration whether at the state or federal level- as at when due is a necessary part of the employer/ employee relationship. "This affects the smooth working of the government and this is not only because the survival and livelihood of civil servants depend on timely salary payment, but also because the Governments' refusal to pay smacks of the disregard for the legal obligation to pay.

"Nigerian civil servants are unfortunately no strangers to delays and gaps in monthly salary payments despite belonging to the executive implementing arm of government, they have been left without payments in many instances with many states guilty of this nonpayment where civil servants are always at wits end at the end of the month."

Analysts have described the

ugly trend as one caused by lack of adequate planning and financial discipline which has resulted in faulty policy implementation by the leadership across board which has caused the delay in payment of civil servants in Nigeria, a syndrome that has remained a recurring decimal for many years now. BudgIT observed that, the situation is made worse as these days the delays are evident at the national and sub- national levels which has been confirmed to constitute a breach of the basic contractual provisions that exist between an employer and the employee rights at all levels. And despite the hue and cry from pressure groups, there are indications that several states are still struggling with the salary issue right from the implementation of the minimum wage which moved from N18,000 to N30,000 which some states are said to be left behind in its implementation.

And as the Nigerian Labour Congress [NLC] submits its request to the federal Government for a 50 percent upward salary review, it remains to be seen how those states currently owing salaries would brace up with the challenges of the present with that of the future.

METRO-FOCUS

'International standard is my dream'

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

It has become quite interesting these days that we now have young people with practical skills. Most of them are becoming interested in putting their talents into constructive uses. This surge is adding their numbers to the manufacturing industry, the earlier ignored industrial space that should have kept our youth out of the streets. Many are now prepared to learn one skill or the other because of the current realities that white collar jobs are very scarce and this has rendered our productive population helpless.

Over the years, this has not in small measure affected our productive space and would have complemented our theoretical academic pursuit that we so much hang unto with no employment opportunities for our youth. But, today, you see most of them attending classes in the morning and later retire to learning one skill or the other after school hours.

Interestingly, the Federal Government under the leadership of President Muhammad Buhari, saw the need for the diversification of our economy through the introduction of skills acquisition programmes in schools and other organisations. And this is truly yielding positive fruits in most communities across the country.

Those most commonly seen rushing to respective skills acquisition centres are those within the age bracket of twelve and seventeen. Most of them are learning shoes making, tailoring, carpentry, smart phone repairs, mechanic work and other so that they will be able to fall back on it while waiting for admission or if unable to get any available white collar jobs.

However, for Mr. Gabriel Wapanida Manaseh, an indigent of Adamawa State resident in Jos, the Plateau State capital and a graduate of Methodist Theology, it was a dream come true for him having been a trainer and an employer of labour in his capacity for the past 8 years through shoes making.

He said, "I have heard on several occasions that skills acquisition is another complementary factor to formal education and that, learning skills is an added advantage. So, I started learning shoes making in 2009 to 2010 from a friend of mine, Mr. Peter Cletus. In fact, I have learned different aspects of it (both males and females shoes).

"Today, I am the Chief Executive Officer of Kharis Footwears in Jos, Nigeria and I make sales of 20 to 30 shoes in a week with N15,000 to N30,000 always realized. I have students who go to school but still retire to the workshop to learn shoes making. Among the 14 students, three are through with their secondary school and are awaiting University admission, but the rest are still in secondary schools.

"The level of patronage is high. In fact, we sometimes are not able to meet up with people's demand because everybody wears shoes. You know, the high and mighty, the middle and the lower classes wear shoes. It is just that we do not have the necessary machines to upgrade our productions. Had it been we had these machines to move faster, we would have gone far by now", Manaseh highlighted.



These are shoes made by Mr. Gabriel Wapanida Manaseh



Some of the challenges he listed, include finances and government policies because shoes making these days has been very expensive because of the rise in exchange rate of a dollar in the world market, making the prices of materials to always be on the increase. "the rising and falling of dollars affect shoes making because most of the materials we use are not manufactured here in Nigeria, but imported.

"So, any time the dollar rises, the prices of materials rise too and we have found it very difficult to convince our customers about the new prices of materials and that we need to upgrade in the prices of shoes. Of recent, we had to do some adjustments in our prices because of the change in dollar. We used to sell the least shoes for N1,800 and N1,900 but right now, we sell one for N3,500 and the patronage is still high", he disclosed.

The Kharis CEO, called on government and spirited individuals to support them by giving them a level playing ground

to compete with other countries of the world. Because the same shoes produced by these countries lack new designs we have in Nigeria, hence the need for government to stop these brands coming from outside for them to boost the economy of the country.

"Access to funding is another challenge. I know sometime government announced that there was loan scheme through micro finance banks, but when we applied for it, there was nothing to show at the end of the day. So, if government can make these loans accessible to us, we can invest in the business and the payment will not be a problem because some of us have existing businesses.

"Like in my case, I have been into this business for over eight years now. So, if I have this loan, it will boost this business by buying machines that can cut, sew and flatten the shoes and it will go very far placing Nigeria in the international shoes market. I will also employ more hands which will



get our youths out of streets.

It really shows that it is high time we took this seriously as a nation and provide soft loans for those with exceptional talents. This will not in small measure sell our products and will not only be sold here in the country but internationally because you need

to see what these gifted young people are doing. A little encouragement morally and financially will go a long way. Judge for yourself some of the products made by Mr. Gabriel Wapanida Manaseh. You can reach him through this phone line: (08061391858)

SUNDAY PEOPLE

LALONG ATTENDS VALEDICTORY OF LATE JUSTICE LADI MADAKI

Plateau State Governor, Rt Hon Simon Bako Lalong, represented by the SGS, Prof. Danladi Abok Atu during the week attended the valedictory Court session in honour of late Justice Ladi Agyer Madaki at the High Court Jos



Governor Lalong, through Prof. Danladi Abok Atu, SGS delivering his condolence message



Justice David Mann, Chief Judge (right) flanked by other Justices presiding over the valedictory Court session.



A cross section of family members of late Justice Ladi Agyer Madaki at the event



A cross section of members of the law profession listening to procession



A cross section of Justices and members of Bar during the event



Barr. Jonathan Mawiyau, Adviser to Governor Lalong on Legal Matters speaking at the valedictory session



Barr. Rautha Dakok delivering her condolences to the deceased family



High Court Justices at the valedictory session in honour late Justice Ladi Agyer Madaki



Road Runner

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SAFER TOGETHER

On child safety

PERSONS below the age of 18 years are categorized as children according to United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Child safety

Drivers and cyclists are urged to be careful in built-up areas such as schools, churches, mosques, markets, snack shops, ice cream stalls, parks or fruit trees because children are usually found in such places. When driving, if you see a ball rolling across the road, expect a child to come chasing after it; slow down and be ready to stop.

Safe way to travel with children in vehicle:

Provide a safety seat (child restraints) fitted into a car for the child's use

Ensure that the child is correctly placed in the seat. This reduces the likelihood of injury or death in the event of a crash

Children sitting in a vehicle:

Children less than 12 years or persons less than 4 to 5 feet should not sit in the front seat. This guarantees their safety.

Children less than 12 months old must ride in a rear facing car seat fixed at the back seat of the vehicle.

Children from ages 1 to 7 should sit facing the front of the car in a child's seat strapped properly to the back seat.

Avoid carrying a child in your lap as it may be crushed between your body and dashboard in the event of a crash.

Do not allow children to play with the handle of the doors or locks. Use child lock where available.

Do not leave children to sit in the luggage area of hatchback station wagons or vans.

Do not leave the hatchback open when a child is sitting at the back seat.

Do not allow children to stick any part of their body out of the vehicle.

Do not transport children under 16 at

the back of a pick-up van.

Do not carry a child on your lap while driving.

Do not kill the child; kill the speed. # Use a car seat

What to do when walking with A Child:

Walk on the walkway/extreme left facing oncoming vehicles

Hold the child on the left while positioning yourself in between the child and the traffic

REMEMBER: Pedestrians have right of way immediately they step on zebra crossing

Guides for Children of School Age Using the Road:

When crossing the road, use pedestrian bridge or zebra crossing where available

Walk facing oncoming traffic

Use the walkway where provided

Do not play on the road

While riding bicycle, use the bicycle paths where available or ride towards the kerb facing oncoming traffic where there is no bicycle path

Wear bright-coloured clothing when walking at night.

Did you know?

Did you know that it is not safe to lap a child in a vehicle?

Did you know that it is unsafe for children under 17 years to sit on the front passenger seat?

Did you know that the safest way to carry a child is to use a child seat that is suitable for its weight and size?

Did you know that at a speed of about 48.3 km/h, an unrestrained child would be thrown forward with a force 30 to 60 times its body weight?

Did you know that such a child would be thrown about in the vehicle injuring themselves and others?

Did you know that such a child could be ejected from the car through one of the windows?



NEWS

NASS to honor staff

FORUM of Independent Media Practitioners of Nigeria (FIMN) has concluded arrangements to honour Mr. Austine Nyama a staff of the National Assembly, Abuja.

A statement signed by the National Coordinator of the Forum, Mr. Abraham Ogwaje said the awards is to celebrate the impact of Mr. Nyama on the lives of so many people across the country.

FROM JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja

Nyama, who is the secretary of Plateau Indigenes Forum in the National Assembly (PIFNASS) contributed a lot to the development of the forum and has impacted on the National Assembly in general.

Ogwaje in the statement made available to newsmen in Abuja described the secretary of Plateau

Indigene Forum in the National Assembly as a quintessential leader whose contributions would remain indelible in the sand of time.

The statement further leads "Mr. Austine Nyama is a bastion of knowledge, who has impacted positively on the lives of Nigerians. This award is also to encourage him into more actions" he emphasized.

Science ministry to collaborate with AMSU on set mandate

THE Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation Dr. (Sen). Adeleke Olorunnimbe Mamora has said that the ministry will put in more efforts in reflecting on its recent achievements and adopt emerging trends in the application of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) to achieve the Ministry's set mandates.

He added that more efforts will be made in tackling common challenges encountered in the implementation of STI policies in Nigeria.

Dr. Adeleke made this known at the Ministry's one day ministerial retreat held today in Abuja.

According to the Minister, the repositioning and strengthening efforts of the Ministry in STI will no doubt address the problem of innovation in its statutory responsibility and growth of national economy.

He further stated that recent achievements recorded were by the thorough and purposeful leadership of them ministry

From DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja

and immeasurable support by President Buhari.

In his words, "These achievements were made possible without any doubt, as a result of purposeful and quality leadership style provided by President Muhammadu Buhari. The President demonstrated this through changing the narratives of hitherto inadequate funding of the ministry to improved budgetary provisions which has resulted in improved Research and Development (R&D) outputs across the ministry and its agencies of recent times."

Speaking at event, the Minister of State for Science, Technology and Innovation, Chief Henry Ikechukwu Ikoh said that the nation's leadership cannot fail the citizens anymore adding that the country expects more positive impact from the ministry in view of its dwindling revenue generation and increasing importation which is weakening the value

of Naira.

Chief Ikoh further stated that the country was endowed with human and material resources and if properly harnessed would boost socio-economic wellbeing of the people and Nigeria in general.

In her goodwill address at the retreat, the Senate Committee Chairman on Science, Technology and Innovation, Sen. Lillian Uche Ekwunife said that her committee had contributed their quota towards the development of STI through passage of bills that will boost and sustain the cause of STI in Nigeria.

The Chairman, House Committee on Science Research Institute, Hon. Olaide Akinremi, called on relevant stakeholders in the STI ecosystem to ensure R&D outputs are commercialized for the benefit of the nation.

The Chairman, House Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation Hon. Beni Lar said that more legislative efforts would be made to enhance development of STI in Nigeria.

NAWOJ raises concern on violence against women

THE Nigeria Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ) has noted with concern, the alarming spikes in the cases of physical and domestic violence against women by their spouses.

It is particularly worrisome to note that in the month of August 2022 alone, there were three documented cases of wife battery that inflicted serious physical injuries, mental torture, dehumanised sanctity and dignity of victims by their husbands in the country.

These cases include that of a Local Government Transition Committee chairman of Nnewi North of Anambra State, who is being accused of committing violence against his wife that led to her untimely death. Thankfully, the culprit has been suspended from office by the Anambra State Governor and apprehended by the police.

Also of serious concern is an alleged case of a man along with his side female lover who macheted his wife in Rivers State but, now cooling off in Police net at Elele in Rivers State and the most recent being the case of a female

From DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja

journalist, a mothers of three working with the Adamawa Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Yola, Nafessah Vandi, who was beaten to a point of stupor by her estranged husband, who inflicted various degree of injuries including dislocation of one of her hands.

The painful irony reveals that the wife beater, one Ibrahim Aliyu, a dismissed staff of PHCN has not been living up to his responsibility of fending for his family as he totally abdicated such to his wife that turned his victim.

This dehumanising development must not be condoned and tolerated by any sane and civilised society.

It is disheartening to note that in spite of the ongoing sensitization campaign on sexual and gender based violence aside the domestication of the VAPP laws in many states of Nigeria, some brute men are still in the habit of beating their wives and threatening them as slaves and partners by inflicting injuries on them.

These cases shall not be

allowed to slide away. It is against this backdrop that the Nigeria Association of Women Journalists, called on the Inspector General of Police (IGP) and the Commissioner of Police in Adamawa State, to fish out the perpetrator of this heinous and barbaric act against a female Journalist, Nafessa and bring him to book.

"According to the association Ibrahim Aliyu must be made to face the full wrath of the law to serve as deterrent to his like minds from ever contemplating such an unacceptable and criminal act.

The fundamental rights and dignity of women must be upheld and respected by all at all times.

No spouse deserves to be brutalised and dehumanised in the guise of provocation of any form or reason.

NAWOJ equally calls on Faith based organisations, human rights activists as well as relevant Non-Governmental Organisations, (NGOs) to rise to the occasion and speak out against such societal ills in the country.

It should be noted that an injury to one is injury to all.

There can never be justification for violence against a spouse or any human being".

NEWS

COCIN LCC Nassarawa Gwong loses former elder

By HOSEA NYAMLONG

Associate Pastor, Church of Christ in Nations, (COCIN) LCC Church Nassarawa Gwong, Jos Rev. Musa Hassan has urged believers in Christ to live a transparent lifestyles, here on earth.

Hassan stated this during the funeral service of Late Elder Bulus Dalyop at the Church auditorium on Friday, adding that it has become unfortunate that believers are carried away by their sinful life, forgetting that there is death.

In his sermon, titled "Death is Certain, Be Prepared", he took his Bible reading from the book of Hebrew chapter 9 verses 27 through 28.

Hassan admonished believers to live a life that would bring glory to God Almighty, if they want to meet with God on the last day saying, "Believers must always be ready, for death would not announced its coming.

According to him, "the only way to live a transparent life in this world is by accepting Christ as one's personal Lord and Saviour and be committed to the things of Christ."

Hassan maintained that transparent life is better than false life and advised



Late Dalyop

believers to stay off sinful life, ethnicity, nepotism and tribalism etc, which would hinder them from life that depicts Christ likeness.

Late Dalyop, until his demised, was a staff of University of Jos, Head of Department of Medical Instructional Technology Unit, (MITU).

Left to mourn him are his aged parents, Da Catechiest and Ngo Dalyop, Wife Mrs. Mary Bulus Dalyop, 5 children, many brothers, sisters and relatives.

His final interment was held at the family compound, chairman quarters, opposite B/Ladi Club Barkin Ladi Local Government Area.

EXECUTIVE Chairman of Bokkos Local Government Council, Hon. Joseph Guluwa joined millions of well wishers to welcome Chief Joshua Dariye home, on his release from the Kuje Correctional Center, Abuja. The Chairman to appreciated the efforts of all those that facilitated Chief Dariye's Presidential pardon which was approved and ratified by the Council of State headed by President Muhammadu Buhari. Hon. Guluwa specifically commended the Executive Governor of Plateau State and Chairman, Northern Governors Forum, Rt. Hon. Barrister Simon Bako Lalong for his efforts and all Traditional and Religious leaders in the state who stood in the gap praying

Guluwa expresses joy over Dariye release



Guluwa

and making consultations to see that Chief Dariye regained his freedom. "As His Excellency, Senator, Chief Joshua Dariye reunites with his family and well wishers, it is our earnest desire that he will not be tired dipping from

his fountain of knowledge and experience to add to the development of Bokkos LGA, Plateau State and Nigeria at Large.

"Only to those who have been in prison does freedom have such great meaning"

Hassan commences engagement with citizens on Jos Main Market project

MEMBER Representing Jos North North in the Plateau State House of Assembly Ibrahim Baba Hassan has commenced engagement with key stakeholders in Jos North Local Government Area to fashion out ways for understanding the economic benefits of rebuilding the Jos Main Market to be financed by Jaiz Bank.

Baba Hassan explained that, though Jaiz Bank is owned by an Islamic body, the bank has no religious or sentiment embedded whatsoever in its operation.

He explained that among the financial institutions approached, Jaiz Bank provided the best option with no interest on its funding of over Nine Billion as against over Eighteen Billion Naira quoted by other institutions.

The engagement was, a continuation of the directives fto all members of the House of Assembly to engage and enlighten relevant stakeholders in their respective local government areas, which was held at Jos North council Chairman's office.

Governor Simon Lalong had during an enlarged Town Hall meeting with stakeholders in the state advised all members of the State House of Assembly to engage their various



Shehu

constituents on the economic benefits of rebuilding the Jos Main Market in collaboration with Jaiz Bank.

Member Representing Jos North North in the Plateau State House of Assembly, Ibrahim Baba Hassan invited key representatives of various groups which included some Community leaders, Development Associations, the Youths, as well as representatives of each tribe in the Area.

He noted that the meeting shall continue with different groups to enable citizens understand the content of the

planned Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Jaiz Bank.

The Jos North representative noted that the market when built will be allocated to interested groups through the 17 Local Governments

Hon Baba Hassan, who acknowledged the outcry of citizens said that the planned Memorandum Of Understanding will be clear and explicit in it's terms and conditions, stating that Governor Simon Lalong meant well for Plateau and has no plans to mortgage the future of the state as it is being speculated in some quarters.

Contributing, Chairman of Jos North Local Government Shehu Bala Usman called on Stakeholders to step down the engagement to the grassroots and promised to give a listening ear to all stakeholders who would contribute their quota towards the rebuilding of the market.

In their separate contributions, stakeholders appreciated the steps taken by the government towards rebuilding the Jos Main Market but queried lack of earlier engagements that would have prevented negative responses to the good initiative.

They promised to take the messages down to their people.

Lawmaker engages constituents on plans to rebuild Jos Main Market

MEMBER representing Jos North - West Constituency in the Plateau State House of Assembly, Hon. Esther Simi Dusu has met with some organizations and Community Development associations over the state Government's plan to rebuild the Jos Main Market in collaboration with Jaiz Bank.

Towards has this end, the lawmaker parleyed with the leadership of the Christian Association of Nigeria, Jama'atul Nasril Islam JNI, Plateau Youth Council, Jos North Chapter, Berom Educational and Cultural Organization, BECO, Jos North, Afizere Youth Movement, Civil Society and Development Associations to aggregate the opinion of her constituents on government's intention to resuscitate the project.

While addressing

stakeholders in company of the Executive Chairman of Jos North Local Government Council, Shehu Bala Usman, Dusu noted that as people's representative, it is incumbent to intimate her constituents by giving them the Rescue Administration's position on the terms and conditions as enshrined in the Memorandum of Understanding yet to be signed between the state government and Jaiz Bank.

She appealed to stakeholders to freely ventilate their thoughts on the matter which she said will in turn be presented to the House of Assembly for onward submission to Governor Simon Lalong.

The Executive Chairman of Jos North Local Government Council Shehu Bala Usman in his submission, explained the economic benefits of the contract.

Usman noted that Jaiz Bank provided the best terms among financial institutions that bided for the project.

He noted that the market if rebuilt, will be overseen by the Jos Main Market Authority stressing the Bank will only recoup her money through the authority of the market.

On the issue of Forty years duration for the bank to get back its funds, the Chairman took time to explain that the duration was a deliberate plan to give the common man in the rural area an opportunity to own and control a shop where the rent will be spread and paid without stress.

The Jos North Council boss appealed to citizens to understand the position of government which was aimed at reviving the economic fortunes of the state thereby boosting its revenue base.

Stakeholders at the meeting welcomed the initiative of government to rebuild the Jos Main Market but where quick to observe that it must embark on thorough consultations with citizens for their buy in.

Jos North union joyful over DPM as national treasurer

TRIPARTITE Union of Jos North Local Government Council has expressed gratitude to the Association of Heads of Local Government Administration of Nigeria for the choice of the Director of the Personnel Management of the Jos North, Samuel Laksing as its National Treasurer.

While congratulating Samuel Laksing for emerging victorious at the National Convention of the Association of Heads of Local Governments of Nigeria, the Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees NULGE Chairman Jos North Local Government Council Comrade Kish Kida noted that With the emergence of Laksing as National Treasurer of the body, it will give hope to the third tier of government workers in the country.

The Chairman Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees Jos

North Chapter and that of the Medical and health Union Peter Pam Davou were proud of the DPM Jos North Samuel Laksing for bringing glory to the Local Government in their tenure."

They assured him of their unflinching support and cooperation to enable him succeed in his quest of rebranding the Local Government Administration in Nigeria.

Other stakeholders who spoke described Mr Samuel Laksing as a seasoned administrator with sterling leadership prowess whose position as National Treasurer of the Parent body of Head of Local Government Administration of Nigeria would help in reviving the Local government system in the country.

Reacting over the development, the Director of Personnel Management Mr Samuel Laksing

appreciated the stakeholders of Jos North Local Government for their love, loyalty and trust in identifying with him after he returned from the National convention and emerged as National Treasurer of the body.

He pledged to contribute his quota especially in the area of having one scheme of service for local government workers in the country.

The DPM maintained that as National Treasurer, he will rally round his colleagues to galvanize the local government system in the country to make more effective and viable.

He noted that his administration will prioritize welfare and well-being of Jos North Local Government Council as panacea to boost staff moral to be more productive in the discharge of their civic responsibilities.

He praised the gallantry and resilience of staff and promise them better days ahead.



Dusu

TRIBUTE

Elder Dalyop: Our hearts are broken

Last week was not a pleasant one for some of us. It was undeniably not delightful one at all after it became obvious that one of our respected Elders and great worker in the vineyard of our Lord Jesus Christ, Elder Bulus Dalyop Vou of the Church of Christ in Nations, (COCIN) LCC Nassarawa Gwong, Jos transited to glory to be with our creator. BULUS GAMBO writes.

THOUGH I left COCIN LCC Nassarawa Gwong Jos, in Jos North Local Government Area for Bassa, another council area of Plateau State for over two years now, this former church of mine christened "Victory Sanctuary", will forever be a part of me. Firstly, apart from the fact that the church indeed rejuvenated my faith in Christ, I still have many bosom friends and spiritual mentors back there who have continued to encourage me to confront issues of life with tremendous dignity and respect. I cannot also forget to mention my in-law and one time Elder of the church, Mrs. Jennifer Yarima and one of the Associate Pastors of the church and Divisional Police Officer of Nassarawa Gwong Jos, Rev. SP. Musa Hassan who with me as the three musketeers have been desirously working out our salvation as we anticipate the coming of our Lord in no distant time.

While Christ tarries however, the three of us have continued to work together more closely navigating the corruptible paths of life and its evident discouraging system for greatness and victory in all and every circumstances. However, while yours sincerely has been on the side of the congregation and not until later before I left the church was ordained a Patron of the Boys' Brigade, both Mrs. Yarima and Rev. Hassan had the rare privilege of working with the deceased more closely. With all pleasure however, we were both Patrons with the deceased and also worked during the 40th and 50th anniversary celebrations of COCIN Nassarawa Gwong with all pleasure. For Yarima who worked more closely with the deceased Elder Dalyop in the church council for about six years as his assistant secretary, the pains were outrageously incomprehensible to absorb.

All this while, I never knew that Elder Bulus Dalyop was battling with ailment and was off and on with his physical being. A couple of days back, Mrs. Yarima called me and informed me that we have lost a great man in the church. Understandably, after she disclosed this; I immediately awaited for the worse news I had not heard for a while. After a deep breath, she found the courage to confirm to me that, Elder Dalyop was no more on planet earth.

So jerked, I asked many other questions, almost forgetting that our God does His things at His appointed time but for a reason, questions such as, "How comes? Was he sick? What happened occurred?"

"Our Elder has been facing some health challenges in most recent times which never overwhelmed him until recently but I know that he will greatly be missed by all in the church and even beyond," Was all she would utter. Not wanting to physiologically torture her any further considering their closeness, I sorted to comforting her and praying



Late Elder Dalyop

to God for the soul of the departed to find eternal rest with the Lord.

Ask anyone in the church and the response would be that the Late Elder Bulus Dalyop lived a Christ like life to the end. At first, though we were some distances apart, I never knew that the deceased knew me by name not until a stunt after he called me by my full names the first time we opened a fruitful chapter of an interesting discourse. After my first encounter, we continued to have cherished moments together before I eventually left the church for my present place of abode.

In her tribute, Mrs. Jennifer Yarima who regarded the deceased as one of her mentors notes with great sadness and pain that though the exit of her mentor was so shocking, the man really positively lived a good life, helped many

to stand firm in Christ and never to lose hope in Him. Elder Dalyop was a sincere personality and always ready to listen to any issue anyone wanted him to address and for advice. He was a very humble leader who never placed himself above others. Yarima learnt a lot from him in the council in terms of church administration and leadership quality. He was a man cherished by all and called 'My Oga' by Yarima herself.

Speaking during a sermon, Rev Musa Hassan advised Christians to always be prepared for death which can come at any point in time. He noted that this perilous times are not moments for Christians to continue to toy with their Christian life but move closer to God so as to receive his blessings and make heaven their home.

Speaking while conducting the funeral

rites, leading Pastor of the church, Rev. Cletus Gwam spoke of the gentility of the deceased noting that he was a man of peace and a leader who was willing to listen to all. He prayed God to comfort the entire family and the congregation and his work place considering his contribution to better the lives of many in our society.

Elder Bulus Dalyop, born on the 6th of April 1958 at Ku-bwin (Fass) in Gassa, Ropp District of Barkin Ladi Local Government Area into the humble family of Catchiest Da Dalyop Vou(Retired) and Ngo Kombo Dalyop Vou of Gassa, attained LSB Primary School Gassa now Model Primary School Gassa between 1967-1972 where he obtained his First Leaving Certificate. He was thereafter admitted into Gyel Commercial College Bukuru now Zang Commercial School, Bukuru between 1973- 1977 after which he obtained his General Certificate of Education, (GCE).

The late Dalyop then proceeded to the University of Maiduguri, Borno State to study Medical Science Laboratory Technology from 1971-1981. The deceased also attended other short term courses including Tele-medicine at Indrasprastha Apollo Hospital India in 2013 and had his COCIN Theological Education by Extension (TEE) respectively.

The late Elder who was until his demise the Head of Medical Instruction Technology Unit, (MITU) dedicated his life to Christ and was baptized by Rev. David Tyos at COCIN LCC Nassarawa Gwong on the 19th December 1998 and was a devoted communicant member who served the Lord in various capacities in the church.

The church service was attended by many individuals including former President of COCIN, Rev Prof. Dachollom Datiri, Chairman of RCC/PCC, Jos, Rev. Gyang Bot, COCIN Headquarters Leading Pastor, Rev Sylvester Dachomo, Rev Michael Ogabari, Rev Moses Chagumi, Rev Bitrus Bagos, Rev. Mangai, Rev. Domnan Nanfa, and Rev. Pwajok Bok as most of the ministers served in the church when he was the council's secretary.

All this while, I never knew that Elder Bulus Dalyop was battling with ailment and was off and on with his physical being. A couple of days back, Mrs. Yarima called me and informed me that we have lost a great man in the church. Understandably, after she disclosed this; I immediately awaited for the worse news I had not heard for a while. After a deep breath, she found the courage to confirm to me that, Elder Dalyop was no more on planet earth. So jerked, I asked many other questions, almost forgetting that our God does His things at His appointed time but for a reason, questions such as, "How comes? Was he sick? What happened occurred? "Our Elder has been facing some health challenges in most recent times which never overwhelmed him until recently but I know that he will greatly be missed by all in the church and even beyond," Was all she would utter. Not wanting to physiologically torture her any further considering their closeness, I sorted to comforting her and praying to God for the soul of the departed to find eternal rest with the Lord.

SUNDAY SPORTS

Why is menstruation still a taboo subject?

EVEN more so within the context of sport. As a professional athlete, performing is our number one task. But what if our own bodies are working against us on that particular day?

Dina Asher-Smith talked about it after pulling out of the European Championships 100m with cramps on Tuesday, and I know first-hand how much periods can affect performance.

Before Oslo earlier this season, I'd only ever dropped out of two competitions. The dreaded DNF. And on both occasions, periods were the perpetrator.

The only way to describe it is that my legs feel like they have been replaced with concrete blocks. And that a screwdriver is carving out the Taj Mahal around my ovaries.

Some months, it's manageable. Other months, it's unbearable. There's no telling which Eilish you're going to get on the day. To try and run, or at least perform to the best of my ability, is an almost impossible task.

And after a bad result, I get eaten alive on social media by armchair critics, giving their theories as to why I'm the failure...

'I felt like Shamu the whale'

As a youngster, I used to suffer excruciating cramps every month to the point where my body would go into a fever and start vomiting.

Flashing from hot-to-cold, I would have a full day in bed feeling like death, before waking up the following morning as if nothing had happened.

I went to the doctors and they prescribed the pill. It made me feel rotten. I was crying almost every day and snapping at the smallest of arguments.

Considering I was rarely emotional, it felt like a large swing in personality and I didn't like the way I felt, or the person the hormones were manipulating me to be. I quickly stopped the medication.

For the next decade, I got on with it as best I could. As I got older, the vomiting stopped and my symptoms eased. Life was manageable but as I transitioned into elite athletics, the struggle became more evident as it translated into performances.

In 2019, while at a meet in California, I posted on Instagram about how my periods had caused me to DNF. I couldn't believe the overwhelmingly positive response from other women. Many felt they were alone with this issue. And as it wasn't something Olympic athletes spoke about, most assumed it didn't affect us.

I remember the race so vividly because I had paid a lot of money to attend - international flights, accommodation and a race entry. It all added up to a pretty sum. But it would all be



Considering almost half the population menstruate every month, it seems odd to me that it's still such a taboo subject in 2022.

worth it to get a shot at qualifying for the upcoming World Championships.

My period was a little delayed because of the long-haul travel (another factor female athletes need to consider). So of course, it decided to announce its timely arrival while I was warming up for the race.

I took a load of Ibuprofen to settle my stomach cramps and shuffled over to the start line. I felt like Shamu the whale and dropped out after just five laps of a 25-lap race. I remember thinking, 'what a waste of money' and really beating myself up.

These qualifying races in the United States are notoriously late in the evening. Too late for any restaurants to be open. But we trekked a couple of miles to the nearest drive-through McDonalds. We literally said a prayer as we arrived but reality came knocking when they wouldn't serve us without a car.

I sat in the car park, at stupid o'clock in the morning, and cried. Cried because we didn't have a car, and because they wouldn't serve us a Big Mac.

Luckily, on our way home we found a 24-hr grocery store. I

bought a family-size cake and it was worth every cent of the \$8.99 it cost me.

'Should I just call the Olympics and ask them to reschedule?'

It still fascinates me that a large majority of women struggle with their menstrual cycles every month, and yet no one seems to have the answers. Even now, the research in regards to sport, especially, is sparse.

I presume it would be addressed in far more detail if it affected men - especially our top male athletes. Can you imagine how many Premier League footballers would be left on the bench? Curled up into a wee ball, just waiting for the full-time whistle to be blown so they can go home and sleep.

Periods can also be an added injury risk. Muscle and tendon injuries are far greater and it's the reason why many of women's teams in sports such as hockey and football are now accommodating their athletes' cycles within their training programmes.

I know some sprinters, such as Dina, completely avoid gym work because of it. In an event where power is king, I imagine

it's hugely frustrating having to adapt your schedule. Every. Single. Month. But that's the reality.

A few years ago, I made the mistake of training too hard during a certain phase of my cycle and ended up tearing my hamstring. It was a lesson I learned the hard way, but I hope the younger generation can learn from it.

In 2019, when I brought up how frustrating it is for periods to coincide with a major competition, a man replied on Twitter. His solution was to not bother competing when it's my time of the month and to just schedule another race.

As if I could simply call up the Olympic Games and ask them to move my event to the following week to fit my cycle. The mind boggles sometimes... but it also just shows me the complete lack of awareness that some people have.

This shouldn't be an embarrassing topic. Coaches, physiotherapists, teachers, parents, partners and friends - they all play a role in making this an open dialogue. We need to feel comfortable having this discussion.

A few professional athletes I've spoken to have stopped taking the hormonal pill after several years. They want to feel more in control of their bodies and to track their natural cycle.

If an individual is over-training or under-fuelling, the menstrual cycle is often the first thing to disappear. At least by taking a period, as much as I hate it, it gives some reassurance that the body is healthy and in a good energy balance.

That is one of the most important messages I want to get across to younger athletes.

One of the best things I ever did was open up the conversation - not only between other professional athletes but also online, to a larger community of women. Sharing experiences, listening to others and taking advice.

There is still a lot of trial and error in finding what works for each individual, but I personally feel much more educated on the subject than ever before.

I still don't have all the answers I need, but I'll continue to keep that conversation open for the next generation of young female athletes, in the hope that one day we do.

SUNDAY SPORTS

Super Eagles star out for rest of season

CARDIFF City have confirmed that Super Eagles defender Jamilu Collins has suffered an injury that will keep him out of action for the rest of the season.

Newsnow said that, it is a devastating blow for Collins, who has been excellent for Cardiff since moving to Wales in the summer.

The fullback quit German 2.Bundesliga side Paderborn to join Cardiff City on a free transfer and had been brilliant in his first three Championship appearances.

Collins picked up the man-of-the-match award on his debut in the 1-0 home win over Norwich City on July 30.

The 28-year-old was equally impressive in Cardiff's 2-1 defeat at Reading and the subsequent 1-0 triumph over Birmingham City.

The Nigerian forward scored a historic first on his full Premier League debut and on The Reds' return to the top flight after more than two decades. It took Nottingham Forest 23 years to get back to the top flight and their promotion had an element of fate to it. Despite being in the lower rungs of the Championship table in...

However, Collins only lasted nine minutes in the matchday four clash at West Bromwich Albion on Wednesday night.

The left-back injured his knee while attempting to dismiss Darnell Furlong and had to be helped out of the pitch.

And Cardiff City boss Steve Morison has confirmed that Collins is out until next year.

The English manager revealed that the Nigeria international ruptured his ACL and will require surgery.

"We won't see him again until next season," Morison said of the Nigeria international. "It's gutting for the lad. Really gutting. We are all here for him. We are going to make the next year the best it can possibly be for him."

"It's the worst-case scenario. We will try and get him back for pre-season next year. One thing we do know is we will have one hell of a left-back next season."

Morison has been impressed with Collins' performances and attitudes on and off the pitch since he switched from Germany.

The tactician even described the former Rijeka ace as the best left-back in the Championship.

And the Cardiff City coach does not doubt that Collins will receive the necessary support to get him back on his feet.

Morison said, "On a plus-point for him, his family has just moved over and he has his family with him now. The lads will get behind him; he will be around. I'm sure you'll see his smiling face around the place. We have something else to fight for now."

"He is a great kid; he comes in with a smile on his face every day. He loved working



every day with us and we loved working with him. He is someone you want around. He is infectious. As soon as he has his operation and he's a bit more mobile, he will be around the lads."

With Collins out, Morison is already considering his options at left-back with over 40 league games left to play in the 2022-2023 Championship campaign.

The manager confessed that it would be hard to replace Collins.

But he is banking on Republic of Ireland Under-21 defender Joel Bagan to step up

and deliver, starting with the Severnside derby clash with Bristol City on Sunday afternoon.

"There is a big possibility that Joel might fill in at left-back!" Morison said. "JC [Collins] has been outstanding. He has to be ready and step up in a huge game on Sunday."

"I think it's wrong for us to sit here and say we were going to rely on Joel for the whole season. JC was an unknown quantity in the Championship, but we knew it would be good to see them go toe to toe with each other."

2022 Judiciary Games: CJN unveils trophy in Kogi

THE acting Chief Justice of the Federation (CJN), Olukayode Ariwoola, has unveiled the trophy for the 28th Judiciary Staffers Games scheduled for

Lokoja.

NAN reports that, the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the National Sports Association for Judiciary (NASAJ) would hold from Aug. 17 to 27 in



R-L: MrEmekaNdili, National President of NASAJ and the Kogi State Chief Judge, Justice Josiah Majebi, unveiling the trophy

EAGLES B Head Coach, Salisu Yusuf has stated unequivocally that the mission of the team is not to avenge the defeat of Nigeria by Ghana on the road to the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. The coach who took the Eagles B to a silver finish in 2018 in Morocco, said his current team is more concerned about qualifying for Algeria 2023 rather than aim for a 'revenge.'

"I won't say we are seeking to get revenge against Ghana because of what happened with the last game on the road to the Qatar World Cup. We want to win and qualify for the final stage of the competition in Algeria next year. That is basically what we are pursuing."

"However, if we beat them to the ticket, which we definitely hope to achieve, then whatever description anyone gives it should be a matter of choice," the coach said after a session at the training pitch of the MKO Abiola National

Nigeria, Ghana CHAN clash has nothing to do with revenge

— Yusuf

Stadium in Abuja.

Newsnow said that, the Eagles B have intensified their workouts at the venue on a daily basis. The team played two friendly games against youth teams on Thursday as part of their build-up for the matches billed for 28th August in Cape Coast and 3rd

September in Abuja.

Remo Stars goalkeeper Kayode Bankole joined the team late on Tuesday to keep the number of players still in camp at 34. Bankole was called in as a substitute for injured Victor Sochima of Rivers United.



Yusuf

Players Union threatens to scuttle elections over Statute

ALTHOUGH members of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) General Assembly, on Thursday in Lagos, agreed to hold the Federation's elective congress in Benin City on September 30, 2022, there are indications that the polls may not hold over what some describe as the insincere posture of the NFF's current

board.

Newsnow revealed that, one of the issues the players are kicking against is the programme for the elections, which has not addressed their demand for a change in the order of the polls.

The Guardian recalls that some stakeholders agreed to withdraw a suit they filed at a Bayelsa High Court to pave way for new elections on the understanding that some 'anomalies' in the Statute would be addressed before the polls.

Harrison Jalla, who is the head of a task force set up by the Professional Footballers Association of Nigeria (PFAN) to articulate its position on the elections, accused the conveners of the general assembly of tactically disallowing players representatives "from participating in the meeting and so, were not a part of the decisions taking."

He affirmed that players are an integral part of the current five constituent members of the congress, adding that 'they are waiting and watching patiently, like vultures' as events unfold.

Jalla added: "They can return to the trenches if the issue of not holding new Local Government Football Council and State Football Association

elections before the general elections is not dealt with first, to produce a brand-new electorate that will elect a brand-new leadership."

Meanwhile, Chairman of the NFF Electoral Committee 2022, Aikhunegbe Anthony Malik, has declared that his team is ready to accomplish the task at hand with utmost integrity and credibility, saying transparency and diligence will be their watchwords.

Speaking yesterday, a day after the Congress constituted his committee and the NFF Election Appeals Committee, Malik assured that the business of giving Nigeria a new NFF Executive Committee would be done without fear or favour, and within the 42-day time span.

At its 77th yearly General Assembly on Thursday, the NFF Congress set aside the provisions of the NFF Statutes 2010 and the NFF Electoral Code 2009 that provide for a certain duration between the time of the constitution of the Electoral Committee and the conduct of elections.

This enabled Congress to set up both the Electoral Committee and the Election Appeals Committee with a mandate for the conduct of elections on September 30, 2022, in Benin City.



Ndili expressed gratitude to the good people of the state for their hospitality and the Governor for accepting to host the games within a few years interval.

On his part, the state's Commissioner for Sports, Idris Musa, appreciated NASAJ for considering the state for hosting the games in 2016 and 2022.

He assured participants of good hospitality from the good people of Kogi, adding that the state was safe.

Lalong assures support for sports development

By DUMAH RANDONG

GOVERNOR Simon Lalong of Plateau State says his administration will continue to support sporting activities which plays a critical role in the unity and national development.

The governor stated this when the President, Nigeria Tennis Federation, Efedayo Akindoju paid a visit at Government House, Rayfield, Jos, Wednesday.

Lalong who spoke through his Deputy, Professor Sonni Tyoden, appreciated the organizers of the tennis tournament and for the choice of the state to host the event.

While commending the Nigeria Tennis Federation for their efforts, governor Lalong pointed out that this will not only identify talents, but take them off the streets.

He said as a sports friendly government, his administration has done its best to provide the enabling environment for sporting activities to thrive in state.

On the request by the NTF, Lalong promised to assist actualise it's dream.

Earlier, President, Nigeria Tennis Federation, Efedayo Akindoju had explained that the tennis



Lalong

tournament was aimed at identifying talents with over 120 participants.

According to Akindoju who was represented by the National Coach, Rotimi Akinloye said event was organised for the North Central states comprising Plateau, Nasarawa, Benue, Kogi, Kwara and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

The tournament provided

both the coaches and players the opportunity to maximize their potentials and appealed to the Plateau state government to assist with a piece of land for the building of Tennis Academy in the state.

Akindoju who described tennis as a multi billionnaira business said if properly harness, the state would play a leading role in the country.

D'TIGERS camp opened yesterday in Abidjan as the team starts preparation for window four of the 2023 FIBA World Cup qualifiers.

A statement Signed NBBF Media Department Thursday in Abuja said the team's head coach, Mike Brown, disclosed this became necessary to address the slow starts in the first two windows when the team lost to Cape Verde.

Disclosing this to the Nigeria Basketball Federation media department on Wednesday, Brown said knowing the task ahead in its quest to qualify for the world cup, the team needs to get more training under their belt before they face host- Cote d'Ivoire on Friday, 26 at the 3,500 capacity Palais des Sports Treichville.

D'Tigers open camp ahead of qualifiers

From DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja

"We are trying to get there earlier to see whether we can have a few more practices to see whether we can get ready to perform at a little higher level in game one. In the last window, things were put together at the last second and we went there right before the first game".

He is optimistic that early preparation will make a difference when his players step on the court for their first game.

"Hopefully, with us getting there a little earlier, getting

three or four practices under our belt, it will show a little bit of difference when it comes to playing the games", Brown said.

Currently fourth on the table, D'Tigers will play its opener against host- Cote d'Ivoire on Friday, 26 before facing Guinea a day after. On Sunday, 28 August, the team will square up against Angola. The 2023 world cup takes place from 25 August to 10 September in Japan, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

'Why Nigerian sports women are leaving men behind'

NIGERIA won 12 gold medals at the Commonwealth Games in 2022.

Women won every single one of them.

The World Athletics Championships yielded two medals, one gold, and one bronze.

Female athletes won both. Two Nations Cup tournaments and two World Cup qualifiers have taken place this year.



While Tobi Amusan is Nigeria's first-ever world champion and record holder, all 12 gold medals at the Commonwealth Games were also won by women.

The men did not advance to the semi-finals and thus did not get a World Cup ticket; the women advanced to the semi-finals and with it, a World Cup ticket.

It was once said that it is a man's world, but in Nigerian sports, it is a woman's world.

Why are women outperforming their male counterparts so dramatically? A woman is the first Nigerian world champion and world

record holder.

Shouldn't the goal be a female president in 2023? That's just a side note!

In 2022, four major international senior sports tournaments have taken place. The CAF Nations Cup in January, the Women's Nations Cup in July, the World Athletics Championships in July, and the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, which concluded on Monday, August 8.

Discovering young players key for sports

By ANDRE D. BISYIT

CATCHING players young is very important in every game as they will grow and be better in it.

This was the assertion of Mr Nuhu Ayuba, the Chairman, Plateau State Tennis Association, during the opening ceremony of the Tennis championship, organized by the Nigerian Tennis Federation, North Central zone, for the ages of 12, 14, 16 and under, held at the Plateau Club Tennis Court recently.

The championship which has six states out of seven in participation and with over eighty players.

Ayuba further disclosed that such championship is expected to hold in all the six geopolitical zone of the country, with the aims of discovering talents especially at the grassroots.

"The aims and objective of this tournament is to step down to the grassroots in order to fish out talents that

will one day represent the country and also to stimulate the interest of the game in our children".

"In our last meeting we decided that we must step down to the various zones and this is the first one and other zones will come later and if possible to the states and local governments levels", he said.

The chairman maintained that the motive behind the championship is to correct the notion of concentrating on the older players.

"What motivated us to step down is as a result of over using the aged players and in Tennis if you didn't start in the early age you can't break through to International arena. So we must groom them to understand the rudiments of the game", he ended.

Earlier, Simon Moven, Director of Sports, Plateau State Sports Council, commended the association for organizing the championship which he said

that will be beneficial to the players in the future.

He urged the participants to use the advantage of the event to brightened their future.

"The participants should not take this opportunity for granted as it will brightened your future. With good coaches the federation have you will one day make the

- Ayuba

country proud", he concluded.

Also, Rotimi Akinloye, who is the Director Technical of the Federation emphasized that they are doing well in the continent, but more need to be done to complete with other continents.

2023 World Athletics: Amusan, others get wild card entry

TOBILOBAAMUSAN'S amazing performance in Oregon continues to bring her good tidings as she has been awarded a wild card entry for the 2023 World Athletics in Budapest, Hungary, BSNsports.com.ng report

The US-based athlete was the cynosure of all eyes in Oregon as she broke the World record in the final of Women 100 meters hurdles.

According to the statements from the World Athletics, Amusa alongside

another World champion will have a wild card entry to participate in 2023, Winner of Diamond Leagues and Road Race will also get free entry.

"Defending world champions will be offered a wild card entry, as will the winners of the 2022 Diamond League, World Race Walking Tour and World Combined Events Tour, plus the leading hammer performers on the Continental Tour; all subject to selection by the athlete's national federation.

Area champions in selected disciplines and subject to certain conditions, top-five finishers at Platinum Label marathons during the qualification period and winners of Gold Label marathons held in 2023 shall also be considered as having achieved the entry standard," the statements read.

The Hungarian capital, which hosted the World Indoor Championships in 1989 and 2004, will now welcome athletes for the World Athletics Championships taking place between 19-27 August 2023.



Some Tennis players during the championship



Amusan



We're ready for the task at hand

- Chairman, NFF Electoral Committee



Dare

The Chairman of the NFF Electoral Committee 2022, Senior Advocate of Nigeria Aikhunegbe Anthony Malik has declared that himself and his team are ready to accomplish the task at hand with utmost integrity and credibility, saying transparency and diligence will be their watchwords.

Speaking on Friday (a day after the Congress of Nigeria Football constituted the NFF Electoral Committee and NFF Election Appeals Committee at its Annual General Assembly in Lagos), the Senior Advocate assured that the business of giving Nigeria a new NFF Executive Committee will be done without fear or favour, and within the 42-day time-span.

A native of Edo State, Senior Advocate Malik was born and brought up in Ibadan, where he had his primary and secondary education, and attended the University of Ibadan and the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. He has a master's degree in law and certificates in international criminal justice and administration as well as public prosecution.

A former special assistant to the Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Malik was the best graduating student in library, archival and information studies at the University of Ibadan in 1993.

At its 77th Annual General Assembly on Thursday, the NFF Congress set aside the provisions of the NFF Statutes 2010 and the NFF Electoral Code 2009 that provide for a

certain duration between the time of constitution of the Electoral Committee and the conduct of elections. This enabled the Congress to set up both the Electoral Committee and the Election Appeals Committee with a mandate for the conduct of elections on 30th September 2022 in Benin City.

Meanwhile, former Gombe United FC Chairman, Alhaji Shuaibu Gara Gombe has disclosed why he is yet to declare interest to contest for the Nigeria Football Federation, NFF Presidential election. Bestchoicesports.com.ng can report.

The election into the NFF Executive Committee Board as well as President of the federation will hold on September 30, 2022.

And while several other individuals including ex Internationals have declared their intentions to contest for the position of president, the former Senior Special Adviser to Kano State Governor said he is buying his time and will take the right and appropriate decision when the situation is ripe.

Speaking in a 4.12 minutes voice note he shared on social media on Friday, Alhaji Gara Gombe who is the consultant to Avadas Football Club and Academy in Morocco, noted that he would study the electoral situation and thanked stakeholders who have continued to mount pressure on him to declare for the position.

"Distinguished stakeholders in Nigeria football affairs. I would like to transmit this

short audio in response to stories and news from different sources and different stakeholders regarding whether or not I will be contesting the upcoming

elections into the Executive Committee of Nigeria Football Association (Federation) particularly the office the president.

"I feel highly honoured and privileged for the calls, responses, messages both privately and openly including from people that I don't even know, encouraging me to come into the race to contest the elections. No doubt, our football administration needs a total overhaul." However, currently I am weighing the options, even though I do not want to go into a competition where the rules are not known to me. As you are all aware, the guidelines for the elections are not yet out, so I don't see the rush in declaring interest now.

"Though, there are stakeholders who hold the school of thought that there is nothing wrong in declaring while waiting for the rules. In as much as I agree with that school of thought, at the same time, I will like to appeal and thank all for the sustained interest in urging me to contest. I will make my position known shortly. And I will make it very clear in a short while.

"In the meantime, I thank you so much for all the messages. I was really overwhelmed. I never expected it. I didn't know that people have been following all that I have been saying and

doing.

"But I don't want to believe that I am the only one that can solve the problems. We need all of us to unite and appreciate all others who have shown interest to contest. They personally called and informed me. By the time I am ready, I will do the same. Thank you and God bless Nigeria football.

The Nigeria Football Federation on Thursday set up Electoral and Appeals Committees for the election slated to hold in Benin City, Edo State on September 30, 2022.

In another development, the Federal Government has set up a 12-man Committee to work towards the successful Production and Second Launch of the Sports Book of Record, with a view to documenting athletes' achievements for posterity.

The Honourable Minister of Youth and Sports Development, Mr Sunday Dare while inaugurating the Committee today in his office in Abuja, called on them to work assiduously towards ensuring the production and launch of a one-stop shop document for the country's sportsmen and women as well as their achievements, both past and present.

This he said, is to ensure that the sacrifices and patriotic zeal of the athletes are written in gold and documented accordingly.

Represented by the Ministry's Permanent

Secretary, Alhaji Ismaila Abubakar, Dare charged the Committee to be proactive and approach the assignment with utmost responsibility and patriotism, also urging them to bring their wealth of experience to bear in ensuring a successful production and launching of the Record Book.

According to him, the Sports Book of Record is a Compendium chronicling the achievements of Nigeria's sportsmen and women over the years. "It is expected to serve as a reference research material for the athletes and younger generation", he said.

Dare highlighted the Committee's terms of reference among others to include, putting in place all necessary logistics for a successful launching; identifying prominent Nigerian sports stakeholders and organisations that will sponsor the Book and suggesting names of sportsmen and women to receive meritorious awards at the launch.

Responding, the Chairman of the Committee and Director, Planning, Research and Statistics, (PRS) of the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development, Ms Victoria Agbo, thanked the leadership of the Ministry for the opportunity granted to them to serve in this capacity and pledged the Committee's commitment to the successful production and launching of the Record Book.

FIFA Women's World Cup: Randy Waldrum faces sack

The Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) may replace Super Falcons coach, Randy Waldrum following the team not-too-good performance at the just-concluded African Women Nations Cup in Morocco. The United States tactician led the nine-time African champions to a fourth finish at the 2022 African Women Nations Cup.

The coach will only escape being axed if the NFF Technical and Development Sub-Committee after evaluation are convinced that his technical abilities can take Nigeria far at the FIFA Women World Cup next year.

In a communique released after NFF 77th Annual General Assembly in Lagos on Thursday and made available to BSN Sports which reads; "Following a detailed presentation by the Head



Waldrum

of Delegation of Nigeria team to the 12th Women Africa Cup of Nations in Morocco, Ms. Aisha Falode, the Executive Committee directed its Technical and Development Sub-Committee to hold a

meeting and make recommendations on the way forward for the Senior Women National Team, Super Falcons, including but not limited to a thorough evaluation of the capability of the coaching crew to lead the team to a

credible performance at the FIFA World Cup finals in Australia and New Zealand next year.

The Falcons finished fourth at the last WAFCON tournament in Morocco and lost three matches in six games.