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Students call for PPP to fund universities, recount losses

SOME students have appealed to the Federal Government and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) to resolve their differences, as they suggest Public-Private Partnership (PPP) to fund the university system.

The students, who recounted losses caused by the six months strike by ASUU, continued to express serious concern about the situation, saying

the long stay at home had inflicted permanent injury on them and damage to the education system.

They made the appeal in separate interviews with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Abuja on Monday.

Ms Philemon Kojo, a

clinical student in the University of Abuja (UNIABUJA), said that ASUU strike has become a regular occurrence for many years for public universities with prolonged academic years as the obvious effect.

Kojo suggested that for the issue to be resolved, ASUU and the education ministry should engage global monetary agencies to access funding or better still, the education sector should be privatised for

Cont'd on Page 2

Fake news fueling insecurity
-Lai Mohammed

The Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed has said that fake news and misinformation have exacerbated insecurity and created apprehension among citizens.

The Minister said this yesterday at the Citizens Summit for National Integration, Peace and Security, organised by the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations.

He said terrorists and bandits are not spirits, but human beings who reside in communities. He added that they must all be exposed and crushed for peace to reign.

He said, "this crisis of
Cont'd on Page 2

Page 2 **Soyinka calls for convocation of national universities conference**

"60 electoral offenders convicted since 2015"

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Osinbajo launches Energy Transition Plan

The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) will on today, August 24, 2022, launch its Energy Transition Plan (NETP) tailored to guide the country towards the twin objectives of achieving universal access to energy by 2030 and a carbon-neutral

energy system by 2060.

According to a statement signed by the Director of Communications, Sustainable Energy for All (SEforAll), Sherry Kennedy, Vice President, Yemi Osinbajo, SAN, will lead other stakeholders to launch the

energy transition plan in Abuja.

The Energy Transition Plan will also map out strategies for Nigeria to provide enough energy to the power industry and other productive uses.

The Energy Transition Plan is supported by Sustainable

Energy for All, The Rockefeller Foundation and the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet.

The launch will also feature remarks from prominent officials from Nigeria, Rwanda, Egypt and Senegal as well as international

community leaders from the United Nations, Sustainable Energy for All, The World Bank, African Development Bank, IRENA, The Rockefeller Foundation and the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet.

News

PENCOM clamps down on workers over pension benefits

THE National Pension Commission has vowed to take action against relatives, workers and retirees who fake deaths of contributors to the Contributory Pension Scheme in order to get the benefits entitled to deceased persons.

To ensure that a worker is truly dead apart from other means of verification, PenCom has also asked the banks to close the accounts of reported dead persons so that they would not be able to operate bank accounts again in the country.

The pension industry's regulator decided on this move due to growing incidences of fake deaths being organised to get out the balances in the Retirement Savings Accounts of reported dead workers.

The Head, Benefits & Insurance Department, PenCom, Obiora Ibeziako, disclosed this while speaking on administration of retirement benefits and efforts to safeguard the pensions of workers.

He said, "Nigerians have been dying and resurrecting. If you send us a notification that you are dead, we will make sure that your bank blocks your account also."

"We have seen people fake their own deaths; we have seen spouses fake the deaths of their partners when the PFAs start the due process."

"In fact, in a particular case, they were processing a man's death benefit and he walked in and everybody picked up. The wife had actually procured obituary announcement, everything that required to be done without the man knowing."

He added that, "There was a particular case, we called the man and he said yes, he arranged his death that he needed the money."

"So, the PFAs shall seek the commission's approval to get the legal beneficiaries and the available balance in the deceased RSA account. For any deceased RSA account, the PFA must send the request to the commission for approval."

PenCom had earlier said in circular that, "The commission has received series of complaints from retirees, who alleged that their PFAs have wrongfully paid their benefits to their next of kins or legal beneficiaries, while they are still alive and in active service without their consent."

"Following these complaints and reports by the PFAs, it has become imperative to issue additional measures to curb these complaints and strengthen the processes and



Oni

practices of processing and payment of death benefits."

PenCom ordered the PFAs to contact the employer of the deceased for verification and confirmation of death of employees.

The pension regulator ordered the PFAs to ensure

due diligence and conduct search at the probate registry of the issuing authority to confirm the genuineness of the documents as well as the verification of the information of the named administrator and sureties.

Illicit drugs: NDLEA arrests 63 yr- old

OPERATIVES of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has apprehended a 63-year-old grandfather, Afolabi Abideen Kolawole, for allegedly shipping illicit substances to his daughter in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

NDLEA spokesman, Femi Babafemi, in a statement on Sunday said Afolabi was behind an intercepted drug exhibit going to Dubai.

Afolabi's consignment had earlier been intercepted on the 4th of August, he was however, arrested in Ibadan, Oyo state on Thursday 18th August after more than four sets of arrests eventually unraveled him.

The 63-year-old confessed that he was responsible for the packaging of cannabis inside the black native soap used as a mode of concealment.

According to Babafemi, while Abibu was still being interviewed in custody, a 37.1kg consignment of Loud intercepted on July 7, 2022, was also traced to him.

Meanwhile, over 2.3million tablets of illicit pharmaceutical opioids and other psychoactive substances meant for distribution in seven Northern states of Borno, Kano, Kaduna, Sokoto, Zamfara, Gombe and Nasarawa have been intercepted by operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA in series of interdiction operations in the past week.

In all, a total of Two Million Three Hundred and Twenty Five Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty Three (2, 325, 553.00) tablets and capsules of Tramadol, Pregabalin, Hypnox, Diazepam and Exol-5 including 7, 353 bottles of a

new psychoactive substance locally called Akuskura meant for the seven states were seized from locations across Kaduna, Kogi, Sokoto, and the FCT.

In Kaduna, a drug dealer Umar Sanusi, was arrested on Friday 12th August during a follow up operation in Kano and brought back to Kaduna where his consignment of 50 cartons of pregabalin 300mg, containing 750,000 capsules, weighing 375kgs earlier seized along Abuja-Kaduna expressway was counted and weighed in his presence.

Same day, operatives also intercepted along Abuja-Kaduna express road 7,068 bottles of a new dangerous substance of abuse called Akuskura meant for Kaduna, Zamfara, Gombe, Kano and Borno.

The recipients in Kaduna and Zamfara have been arrested during follow up operations. The following day, Saturday 13th August, 285 bottles of the NPS were recovered from a dealer, Abubakar Ahmad, along the same highway.

In Kogi, no fewer than 696,000 tablets of Tramadol and Exol-5 among others loaded into a truck at Onitsha, Anambra state and heading to Maiduguri, Borno state, were seized along Okene-Abuja expressway on Friday 19th Aug, while NDLEA operatives also recovered 300,000 tablets of Diazepam from a suspect, Faruku Bello, 30, in Sokoto State on Wednesday 17th Aug.

Anti-narcotic officers of the Agency in Abuja FCT equally at the weekend intercepted a bus loaded with 323, 200 tablets of Tramadol 225mg and others at Onitsha, Anambra state heading to Nasarawa state. Driver of the

THE attention of the Comptroller General of Immigration Isah Jere Idris has been drawn to some reports announcing a recruitment exercise into the Service. In some of the reports, unsuspecting job seekers are required to visit a certain portal to apply and later be directed to a link where they would be expected to make some payments.

These reports including the portal are NOT only false but are also calculated ploys to deceive and defraud unsuspecting job seekers into parting away with their hard-earned resources. The Service is currently NOT conducting any recruitment exercise and therefore members of the public are by this notice, enjoined to ignore such publications to avoid falling into the antics of job scammers.

The Comptroller General hereby restates that the Service has always used all the conventional as well as its verified social media platforms including the website to announce any recruitment exercise and

We aren't recruiting Immigration Service raises alarm



Idris

that in such exercises, members of the public are NEVER required to make any payments whatsoever. 4. He therefore, wishes to use this medium to call on the public to completely ignore such spurious publications of recruitment exercise into the Service to

avoid being defrauded by unscrupulous and deceitful elements out there. He assures that deliberate efforts are being made to get at those behind such fraudulent recruitment activities with a view to bringing them before the law.

exhibits were concealed inside some gallons of palm oil and honey, which were packed among food items and hair attachment.

An Italy-bound passenger, Oziengbe Ehigalua Andrew, 55, was on Friday 19th Aug arrested with 600grams of Tramadol 200mg while attempting to board Royal Air Maroc flight to Italy, via Casablanca.

In the same vein, seven cartons of khat leaf with a total weight of 295kg have been seized at the NAHCO import shed of the Lagos airport. The consignment came into Nigeria from Tanzania through Cairo on Egypt Air.

Operatives of the Directorate of Operation and General Investigation, DOGI, in NDLEA attached to courier firms have intercepted 11.36kg heroin and cannabis packaged for UAE, Netherlands and Omar. The drugs were concealed in dictionary, fancy light and body cream

In Niger state, 139 bags and 176 compressed blocks

of cannabis loaded in Ogere, Ogun state and heading to Zaria, Kaduna state were seized by NDLEA operatives along Abuja-Kaduna road, Suleja from a company vehicle while the driver, Sani Mohammed, 44, and his assistant, Abubakar Abubakar, 30, were arrested.

Raids carried out in Akala, Mushin area of Lagos also led to the arrest of Pelumi Goodness and Ola Funke while over 1,171.75kg cannabis and 29 litres of codeine syrup were recovered.

Chairman/Chief Executive of NDLEA, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (Retd) commended the officers and men of the MMIA, Kaduna, Kogi, Sokoto, and FCT Commands as well as DOGI for the arrests and seizures. He urged them and their compatriots across the country to intensify their drug supply reduction and drug demand reduction efforts.

Why I stoned my two kids to death – Father

A 25-year-old man known as Elisha Tari, has disclosed why he stoned his two children to death in his home.

Recall that the Adamawa State Police Command arrested Elisha for stoning two of his children, aged 3 and 5 years old, to death.

While being paraded on Monday, the suspect confessed that he has a psychological problem and was once tied in chains some time ago.

"I smoke Indian hemp, drink alcohol, and inhale snuff. I don't take tramadol or any other hard drugs," he

said. Tari explained that an attempt to bring his wife and the mother of the deceased children, who left her matrimonial home for two months, proved abortive.

On that fateful day, he said the deceased children approached him while he was cooking and he asked them "When is our mother returning back home?"

He said that he also asked them to say "God" but instead, they said "fire, and kept saying fire, fire, instead of God."

According to him, this

infuriated him and led him to pick stones to hit the children.

"I became irritated and provoked by their action as a result which I picked up stones and hit them on their heads to death," Tari added.

CHANGE OF NAME

HARUNA

I, formerly known as **MUSA AROMA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **HARUNA YERIMA**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.



As CBN, NNPC tango over Nigeria's dollars

As the Muhammadu Buhari-led Federal Government enters the last lap of its tenure, Nigeria's public sector space is getting saturated with issues ranging from the absurd to the ridiculous. The raging controversy between the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPC) over who (among the two) was responsible for the continuing paucity of US dollars and hence, the plummeting of the exchange rate of the naira, is one of such noisome features of government. MARCEL OKEKE writes.

INDEED, as the fiscal profile of the country gets drearier in the twilight of the administration, almost all key actors on the fiscal and monetary authorities' seats have literally come to their wits end and now easily resort to weird experimentations in the name of policy initiatives. Call it panic measures, and you will not be wrong!

For so long, key Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of the Government seemed to be working at cross-purposes or in 'silos,' such that outcomes of policy initiatives of some MDAs act as counterpoise to those of others. So, recently, as the value of the naira vis-à-vis the dollar was crashing almost irreversibly, the apex bank issued a statement, putting the blame squarely on the NNPC's "refusal to remit dollar inflows to the CBN."

Specifically, the CBN said NNPC and its subsidiaries had not been remitting dollars to Nigeria's foreign reserves, and this has caused shortage of foreign exchange in the domestic market. In a statement titled "The forex question in Nigeria: Fact sheet," the CBN revealed that the NNPC's remittance from crude oil accounts for over 80 percent of Nigeria's foreign exchange (forex) earnings; so, failure to remit as usual was direct invitation to crises.

The apex bank said further that it could not solely manage the Naira collapse with its monetary policies (since it doesn't print foreign currencies) and so, the non-remittance of forex by the NNPC and its subsidiaries "significantly limit the availability of forex in the nation's foreign reserves." But no sooner this claim was made than the NNPC issued a comprehensive rebuttal—detailing its remittances to the appropriate coffers of the Federal Government during the period under reference.

Indeed, NNPC's rebuttal data showed that it remitted US\$2.7 billion into its accounts with the CBN from January to June 2022. A breakdown of the remittances show that US\$645 million was for dividend paid by the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas Company Limited, while US\$1.786 billion was from the NNPC's operational activities." The national oil company went further to give a month-by-month breakdown of the remittances.

Howbeit, rather than assuage or stem the slide of the Naira exchange rate against the dollar and other foreign currencies, the claims and counterclaims by the CBN and the NNPC exposed the lack of team spirit among the Federal institutions. It vividly reveals the lack of common agenda and absence of an overarching economic development roadmap—from which all functionaries ought to derive their goals.

Over the years, even before the multifarious local and global headwinds that are blowing against the Nigerian economy, the CBN had



Emefiele

blamed a multitude of actors and issues for the weakening Naira. For instance, in 2018, the apex bank's boss blamed the biting foreign exchange crisis at that time on the importation of items he said should have been manufactured in Nigeria, leading to the ban on forex allocation for 41 items.

Last year, the CBN Governor shifted the blame for Naira slide to Bureaux De Change (BDC) operators, who he accused of illegal forex trading. He had specifically pointed fingers at 'Aboki FX', saying its activities were responsible for the Naira's depreciation, thereby cutting allocation to BDCs. And ever since then, official forex allocations to BDCs had ceased. Earlier this year, the CBN blamed the lingering forex crisis on money laundering and activities of those allegedly funding terrorism, as well as politicians who do everything to 'dollarize' the Nigerian economy. And just a few days ago, August 3, 2022, the apex bank blamed the entire organised private sector (OPS) for the crashing local currency.

The Head, Banking Services of the CBN, Egboagwu Ezulu, said the OPS have "a problem repatriating the foreign currencies, as they prefer to keep them abroad after transactions."

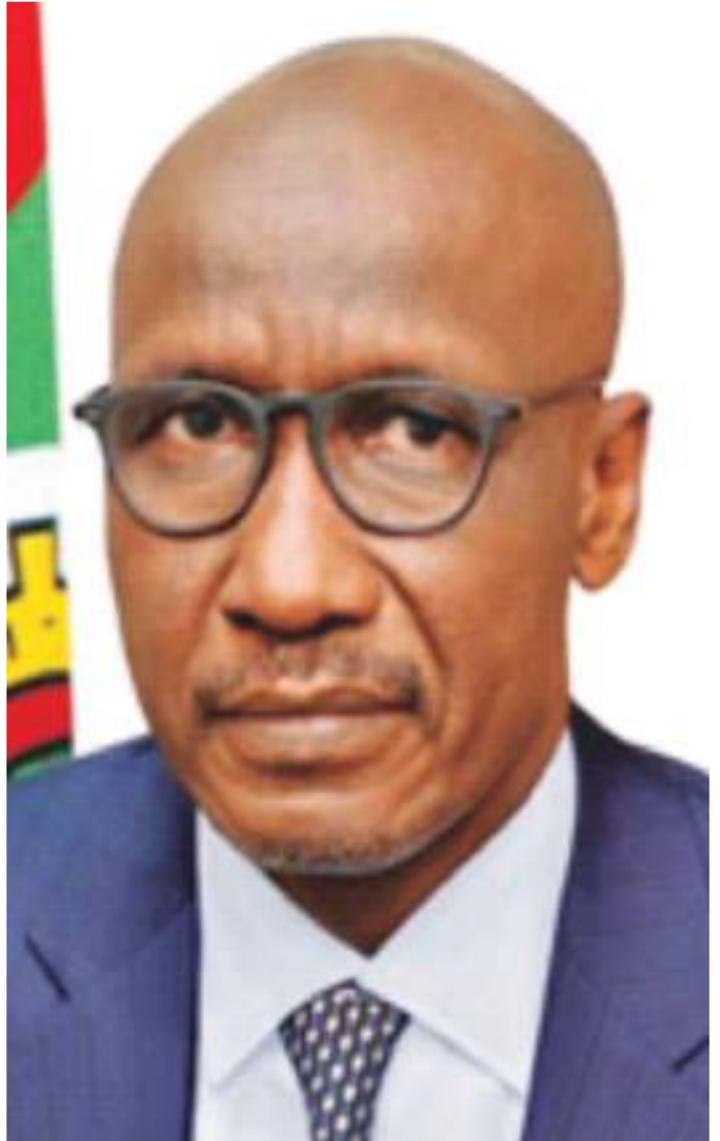
Ezulu, who spoke at a confab by the Association of Corporate Affairs Managers of Banks (ACAMB), blamed the non-repatriation of forex by the

OPS for the scarcity of dollars and fast depleting external reserves.

Again, in the face of these blame games, it must be pointed out that the CBN-NNPC brouhaha over collapsing Naira is really a new height of the desperation over fast-depleting dollar reserves. In point of fact, huge sums belonging to many multinational organizations/companies that are meant for repatriation have been trapped in Nigeria due to paucity of forex. A few of such multinationals in the past couple of years have had to convert their accumulated dividends to more equity stakes in their (Nigerian) local units.

Just last week, Middle East mega carrier, Emirates Airlines, announced the suspension of all flights to Nigeria from September 1, 2022 due to its failure to repatriate its revenue earned from ticket sales in Nigeria, now amounting to USD\$85 million.

The airline had earlier planned to cut down its flights in a letter it wrote to the Nigerian Minister of Aviation, dated July 22, 2020. The letter explained that as of July 2022, Emirates had US\$85 million of funds awaiting repatriation "due to non-availability of dollars in Nigeria and this figure has been rising by more than US\$10 million every month, as the ongoing operational costs of the airline's eleven weekly flights to Lagos and five to Abuja continue to accumulate."



Kyari

The airline said: "We simply cannot continue to operate at the current level in the face of mounting losses, especially in the challenging post-COVID-19 climate. Emirates did try to stem the losses by proposing to pay for fuel in Nigeria in naira, which would have at least reduced one element of our on-going costs, however this request was denied by the supplier. This means that not only are Emirates' revenues accumulating, we also have to send hard currency into Nigeria to sustain our own operations. Meanwhile, our revenues are out of reach and not even earning credit interest."

Emirates Airline said it also sought solution to the forex debacle at the apex bank: "Indeed, we have made every effort to work with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to find a solution to this issue. Our Senior Vice-President met with the Deputy Governor of the CBN in May and followed up on the meeting by letter to the Governor himself the following months, however, no positive response was received. Meetings were also held with Emirates' own bank in Nigeria and in collaboration with IATA (the International Air Transport Association) to discuss improving FX allocation, but with limited success."

In June, IATA had disclosed that Nigeria owed foreign airlines US\$450 million, representing 25 per cent of the total amount of international carriers'

funds held back by central banks of many countries put at US\$1.6 billion by end of April 2022. Current estimate puts airlines' trapped funds in Nigeria at over US\$500 million, as CBN is yet to allow the airlines to repatriate their funds.

While some of the airlines and other businesses are cutting down their operations in Nigeria due to the biting forex scarcity, at personal level, many Nigerians are finding it increasingly difficult to access the US dollar at the CBN's official rate for eligible transactions. Nigerians who need to travel abroad now experience unusual delays in accessing Business Travel Allowance (BTA), Personal Travel Allowance (PTA) and monies to pay for medicals and others. Some banks are already resorting to extending the request period for PTA/BTA from two weeks to eight weeks—a reality that compels many individuals and corporate bodies to resort to the 'parallel market'—the bureau de change (BDCs). And as the CBN's 'thick skin' indicates, the end to the acute scarcity of forex is not in sight, owing to numerous encumbrances and bottlenecks to improved foreign exchange inflow to Nigeria.

Source: The will.



Business & Economy

FG is ready to resolve tariff shortfalls

-Osinbajo

THE Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo has assured Nigerians that the inauguration of a board for the Nigeria Electricity Liability Management Company (NELMCO) would enhance ongoing efforts to resolve liabilities relating to tariff shortfalls for distribution companies, among other challenges plaguing the nation's power sector.

The company has been running without a duly constituted board since the first one was inaugurated in 2013 and dissolved shortly after.

Speaking at the weekend, at the virtual inauguration of a new 10-man board for NELMCO in Abuja, Osinbajo stressed that the inauguration marked an important milestone in the bid to resolve the liabilities relating to tariff shortfalls in the power sector (specifically for Distribution Companies), and to provide a veritable mechanism for managing the very dynamic nature of the liquidity challenges of the power sector in Nigeria.

According to him, "this ceremony formally brings on board the invaluable skills and experience of notable and highly respected personalities as members of the Board of NELMCO."

On what was expected from the new board, the vice president told members that, "as a board, you are expected to make conscious and deliberate efforts to develop appropriate strategies to facilitate the successful conclusion of the outstanding pre-privatisation issues of the defunct PHCN, and ensure an effective implementation of NELMCO's additional mandate to resolve the tariff shortfall problems of the Electricity Distribution Companies."

"In view of the challenges ahead, you are expected to draw extensively on our experience over the years, to continue to give credence to the Federal Government of Nigeria's economic development programme in a transparent, sustainable, credible and acceptable manner."

"The Board is required to take appropriate steps to also ensure that the interests of the various segments of our society, particularly the



Osinbajo

ordinary citizens, are protected in the implementation of NELMCO's mandate."

Commenting on the board's mandate, Osinbajo charged members to diligently carry out the responsibilities assigned to the board in accordance with the provisions of the Memorandum and Articles of Association (MEMART) of the Company.

Some of the provisions of the MEMART of the company include: To assume and administer the stranded debts of the defunct Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) Plc pursuant to the provisions of Electric Power Sector Reform Act 2005.

To manage post-privatisation liabilities in the power sector as may be directed by the National Council on Privatisation or any authorised agency of the federal government from time to time in line with the power sector reform act 2005.

Responding on behalf of the members, the Board Chairperson and Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Zainab Ahmed, assured the vice president of the board's preparedness to ensure quick resolution of tariff shortfalls and related issues in the power sector in the most efficient manner.

Other members of the board include the Minister of Power, Abubakar Aliyu; Director General of Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPE), Mr. Alex Okoh; Director General of Debt Management Office (DMO), Ms. Patience Oniha; Managing Director of NELMCO, Mr.

Bayo Fagbemi and Mr. Muhammad Aliyu Jumma'a.

It also included Mr. Olufunso Olutola Olukoga; Dr. Chinedum Orisakwe; Mojoyinoluwa Dekalu-Thomas and Dr. Nurain Hassan Ibrahim.

In a related development, the BPE Director General, Mr. Alex Okoh, has said the take-over of four electricity Distribution Companies (DISCOs) namely that of Kaduna, Kano, Ibadan and Port Harcourt has been concluded successfully.

Okoh, who disclosed this in a presentation made at a virtual meeting of the National Council on Privatisation (NCP), added that the challenge in the takeover of the Benin Disco was being addressed.

The NCP is chaired by the vice president who was represented at the meeting by Ahmed, who also doubles as the Vice Chairperson of the Council.

In his report to the Council, the BPE DG also made a presentation on the concession of the Zungeru Hydroelectric Power Plant, inviting NCP to note steps taken by the Bureau to fast track the process.

Okoh thereafter presented for approval a proposal to amend the Procedures Manual of the BPE, especially in the areas of legal framework; reform activities; pre-transaction activities; project advisory and delivery team; receipt of technical and financial transaction strategies, and opening and evaluation of technical proposals, among others.

THE House of Representatives' Committee on Public Accounts has commenced investigation of the Nigeria Investment Promotion Commission for spending N1.19bn in the 2018 and 2019 financial years without appropriation by the National Assembly.

The probe is based on an audit query issued in the report the Office of the Auditor General for the Federation, while alleging that the NIPC had an approved budget of N194m in 2018 and N180.6m in 2019 but spent N700m and N871m in those years, respectively.

The query partly read, "N180.6 million was budgeted for overhead cost in the year 2019, but NIPC ended up spending N871

Reps probe NIPC over N1.19bn unapproved spending

million, excluding depreciation, without the approval of the National Assembly. There was extra-budgetary spending on overhead in the year 2018 without supplementary approval from the National Assembly: N194 million appropriated but NIPC spent over N700 million."

The committee consequently ordered the management of the NIPC, which is an agency under the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, to explain the expenditure the expenditure.

Chairman of the committee, Oluwale Oke, directed the NIPC to provide the National Assembly's approval to spend N690m.

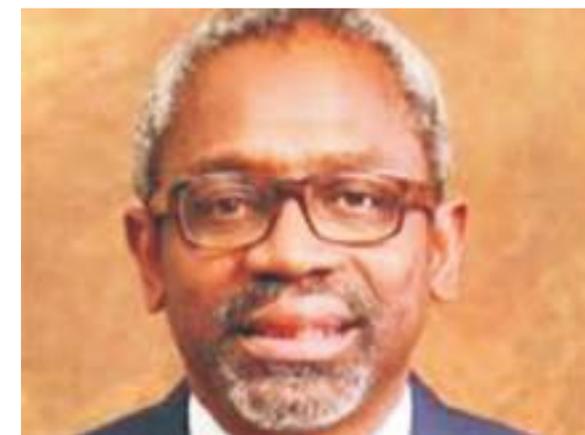
The committee is also

investigating the Commission for re-awarding a contract for the supply and installation of 50 units of computer sets at the cost of N28.9m when an upward review of the same contract demanded by the original contractor was N27.6m.

The query alleged that the contract was awarded to Digital Communication Konsult at the cost of N22.5m in 2020, but repudiated the contract as that the contractor requested for upward review to N27.6m due to unstable exchange rates. However, the contract was later re-awarded to Dotmac Technologies Limited at the cost of N28.9m.

The query asked the Executive Secretary of the NIPC to explain why the Commission was not implementing the provisions of the Pensions Reform Act, which stipulated 18 per cent contribution, wondering why but the agency was implementing 15 per cent.

A 223-page document presented by NIPC to the committee showed that as of December 31, 2019, that there was a personnel cost budget of N500m and actual of N349,750,700.50; overhead budget of N966m and actual of N749,811,184.32; and a capital budget of N149 million and actual of N91,123,865.07.



Gbajiamila

NEPC tasks Nigerians on non-oil export

THE Nigerian Export promotion Council (NEPC) has advised Nigerians to focus more on non-oil export for the country's economic survival.

Dr Ezra Yakusak, the Executive Director of NEPC, gave the charge in an interview with News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) while on a visit to the council's regional office in Jos.

Yakusak, who had cited the need to restore the country's dwindling economy called on the public to pay more attention to non-oil export as a means to restore it.

"Early this year, NEPC launched a campaign called export for survival and the campaign is a clarion call to all

Nigerians.

"To invest massively in non-oil export as a means to survive.

"If you want Nigeria to change if you want Nigeria to survive. If you want to see this country economically viable.

"We have to embark on non-oil export. That's the only way we can get our foreign exchange.

"That's the only way we can generate employment. That's the only way we can develop our industries.

"That's the only way we can make Nigeria economically great again. Export for survival" he said.

While reiterating on the importance of value chain development in Plateau State regarding its "One state, one product" initiative, Yakusak sympathised with potato farmers over the recent potato blight disease which had ravaged farms and left farmers with immense losses.

He urged them to adopt good agricultural practices which when applied will prevent future

occurrences of the disease's outbreak.

"You know most of these cases experienced are because of the lack of good agricultural practices.

"We call it GAP and our regional office here has been doing good agricultural practices.

"There are basic forms of agriculture practices that we need to practice, which when done most of these cases will be completely eliminated.

"So, we go on capacity building for these farmers, and that's what we are doing" he said.

He called on all stakeholders in the potato business within the state to join hands with NEPC for the necessary support and trainings they will require.

NAN reports that the "One state, One product" initiative is part of the federal government's efforts to boost export and diversify the economy.

NAN also reports that the Irish Potato is Plateau's "One state, one product." (NAN).

We've spent over N500m to improve electricity -AEDC

THE Abuja Electricity Distribution Company (AEDC) says it has spent over N500 million to improve electricity supply from about five hours to over 15 hours per day in Minna, Niger.

Mr Mahamud Keni, Regional Manager, AEDC, Niger region, disclosed this on Tuesday to News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Minna.

"The financial implication of the equipment we used to improve power supply in Minna is over N500 million," he said.

Keni said that the AEDC had highlighted a lot of challenges facing electricity supply in the state and perfected strategies on how to tackle them.

"We came up with a lot of strategies and one of them was replacement of damaged equipments responsible for the epileptic power supply experienced by consumers in the state," he said.

He explained that the AEDC replaced 11 damaged panels which controlled the electricity feeders in Minna and its environs.

The area manager added that the damaged panels had been in operation for long, making the company to combine two or three feeders to one panel.

"As a result of this immediately the feeders get hot the power supply will trip off, thereby causing interruption of electricity supply.

"Before now, we could not supply electricity for more than five hours at a stretch due to the damaged panels," he said.

He said the move had resulted in the improvement of power supply witnessed by consumers in Minna and its environment in the past two month.

Keni noted that other boost to the electricity supply was commitment and team work by staff and also improvement in power generation.

He said another of such efforts was replacement of seven damaged distribution transformers of 133KV and 11KV by the company.

The area manager said that the current achievement had spurred the electricity consumers to pay their bills.

"In the last one month we have witnessed an increase in the payment of electricity bills. I think the people are happy," he said.

He said that the company had set up a committee to monitor and tackle any emergency trip-off of electricity in Minna area.

Keni advised electricity consumers in the state to always put off any electric gadget not in use in order to conserve energy.

He urged the electricity consumers to also change to the improved energy bulbs towards conserving energy and improving electricity supply.

He enjoined the consumers to shun meter bye-pass as there

would be serious consequences awaiting defaulters under the law.

He appealed to electricity consumers to always pay their bills as the company is committed to serving them better and surpass the current achievement.

Keni therefore appealed to consumers in other part of the state to be patient with the company as they are working towards extending same improved power supply to them.

A customer, Fatima Mohammed, said the improvement in power supply had made her to resume her business where she lives in Tunga area of Minna.

Also, Mr Desmond Okechukwu, a resident of Minna, said that the regular power supply had impacted positively on his tailoring job. (NAN) (www.nannnews.ng)



Adebayo



Business & Economy

The missing link to increasing solar energy

Although the past half-decade has seen a spike in awareness and purchases of off-grid solar products to solve the lack of energy access for the estimated 77 million Nigerians that are unserved or underserved by the grid – ownership of these products has remained elusive for many due to their inability to afford high quality products. CHIBUIKEM AGBAEGBU writes.



AFFORDABILITY is not solely about providing financing for end users. Often, product prices remain high because of import duties and Value-Added Tax (VAT) levered on these goods. In Nigeria, VAT and import duties ranging from 15 percent to 40 percent for stand-alone solar (SAS) products, are passed on to customers in the final retail cost of SAS products, and inevitably hamper the ability of low-income households who are most affected by energy poverty to be able to afford them.

While the off-grid sector and many governments across Africa recognise the need for tax exemptions for SAS products to improve their affordability and hence reach more end users, in Nigeria, it was difficult to make a compelling case due to the lack of contextual evidence to support this.

The Africa Clean Energy Technical Assistance Facility (ACE TAF) programme, a four-year programme funded by the United Kingdom Department for International Development

(DFID) and implemented by Tetra Tech International Development aimed at increasing adoption of SAS products evaluated the tax policy in Nigeria by conducting an impact assessment on VAT and duty levied on SAS product.

The result of the analysis demonstrated the beneficial impact of tax exemptions on achieving energy access objectives, while limiting the longer-term impact on national revenue generation from taxes collected from the SAS sector.

This assessment also provided qualitative and quantitative evidence for the government to evaluate the incentives and their impact on revenue as well as the impact on Nigeria's energy access objectives. These incentives improve the affordability, and thereby stimulate the off-grid solar market to achieve greater uptake of SAS.

In addition, ACE TAF developed an Importation Guide to provide clarity on the importation process for solar energy technologies and to increase transparency of the importation process for all stakeholders.

Specifically, it addresses the challenges faced by solar

companies in terms of the opacity of the importation process. This became critical as the lack of clarity caused solar companies to pay varying import duties making it difficult for them to accurately predict how to plan for these duties.

Finally, in collaboration with the Rural Electrification Fund (REF) under the Rural Electrification Agency (REA), the ACE TAF programme developed the Nigeria Stand-Alone Solar Investment Map. The map describes the public and private sector SAS investment landscape in Nigeria for stand-alone solar products and, the market opportunity, financing deficit, impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and guidance for foreign and local financiers/investors.

This information has played a key role in increasing the flow of financing into the SAS sector in Nigeria, which stood at around \$227 million from a wide range of investors as of February 2021. It has enabled SAS companies to gain increased access to innovative financing, enabling them to create business models that make their products more



Aliyu

affordable to potential customers. markets. The effect of these ACE Nigeria has set a goal of 100 TAF activities will help percent national electrification by customers who are energy-2040 with at least 5 percent of strapped and in dire need of energy access coming from SAS such products to be able afford products. The expected them, and hence increasing contribution from SAS products energy access for all speaks to the commercial communities and the country, attractiveness of Nigeria's SAS **Source: Businessday.**

Politics

'Dariye: Epitome of humility, bridge builder'

By PAULINE DALLONG

SPEAKER, Plateau State House of Assembly (PLHA) Rt. Hon. Yakubu Yackson Sanda has described the former governor of the state, Senator Joshua Chibi Dariye as a bridge builder and epitome of humility.

He stated this recently, when he led members of the state assembly on a solidarity visit to the Maitama, Abuja residence of Dariye as a mark of respect, honour and appreciation to God for his release.

Sanda noted that as representatives of Plateau people, their visit was to express the joy and prayers of their constituents over the release of the elder statesman, who has contributed immensely to the unity, peace and development of the state.

Dariye who was visibly emotional, expressed delight over the visit by members of the Plateau State legislature, adding that the visit had further strengthened him, especially seeing the unity and brotherly love existing among them.

While admonishing them to keep aside their political differences and work for the peace, unity and development of the state, he stated that his stay in prison has given him an insight to the other side of life.

He also used the opportunity to express his gratitude and appreciation to the good people of



Dariye

Plateau and other well meaning Nigerians for their support and prayers, which he said led to his release while promising to offer his advise and wealth of experience whenever he was called upon.

Meanwhile, the speaker and his entourage were also at the Wuse 11 residence of the Minister of Women Affairs, Dame Pauline Tallen to condole and commiserate with her over her ill health and demise of her elder brother.

The minister who was in company of the Senator representing Plateau South Senatorial District, Dame Nora Dadu'ut thanked the delegation for the kind gesture saying that she was indeed honoured and humbled.

The round of visits also took

the PLHA members to the Maitama residence of the Deputy Speaker House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Ahmed Idris Wase to commiserate with him over the demise of his sister, Sanda prayed God to grant the departed soul peace, while urging the family to accept the death as the will of God.

Responding, the deputy speaker who was full of gratitude for the visit described it as reassuring and comforting, and encouraged the lawmakers to work as a team for the benefit of their constituents and development of Plateau, noting that no individual or group interest should be greater than that of the state.

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE All Progressive Congress Grassroots Mobilizers for Dr Nentawe in Jiblik Federal Ward of Pankshin-South Constituency of Plateau State, have unanimously endorsed the APC candidate, Dr Nentawe Yilwatda, as the credible candidate for the 2023 governorship election.

The endorsement took place at the Miskom Manna hall in Abwor Dyis of Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State, where the youths came out in large numbers during a town hall meeting to throw their weight behind the candidate.

The convener of the meeting, Mr Bizuum Yadok said, all the groups have unanimously endorsed the governorship candidate of the APC due to his blueprint for the youth in the state and appealed to the governorship candidate to give the needed attention to the lingering challenges of the youths which include unemployment and lack of skills if elected governor of the state.

Other stakeholders who graced the occasion included; the APC State Assistant Financial Secretary, Hon. Danladi Dagor, APC Federal Ward Chairman, Jiblik Hon. Patrobas Bangs and Women Leader, Mrs Nantok Joel Dakok.

They all in their separate remarks, assured Dr Nentawe of APC winning the polls come 2023 and pledged to mobilize their supporters towards the success of the APC in the 2023 general elections. "We cannot abandon the Party at this level having produced credible candidates that will bring

Mupun youths endorse Nentawe ahead of 2023



Yilwatda

development to the State, he said".

Responding, the Governorship candidate Dr Nentawe Yilwatda Goshwe, assured them of his resolve to give his best to uphold the Plateau agenda through various initiatives that are beyond tribal or religious agenda, "I have in my blueprint the setting aside of 10% of public funds for youth, women and Persons Living With Disability to access loans through the bank with zero interest.

"These funds will help our teaming youths to go into productive ventures like animal husbandry, crop farming, trading and other SMEs that will grow the economy of our state. This is the best way to engage our teaming unemployed youths into a profitable venture", he assured.

According to the gubernatorial candidate, "the drive for this entrepreneurship is because, if I say I am going to employ

every unemployed youth in the state, I must be lying because the white collar employment opportunities cannot take all the number of unemployed youths. I will appoint commissioners that will be in their 20s, 30s, 35s and a few of 50s.

Earlier, while at the Royal Father's Palace to receive royal blessings, the Miskom Abwor Dyis, Da Thomas Dawam, applauded the landmark activities of the House of Representatives member, Yusuf Gagdi, who accompanied the governorship candidate and assured them of the support of his subjects in the coming general elections.

However, the APC gubernatorial candidate, Dr Nentawe Yilwatda Goshwe, before proceeding to Pankshin-South Constituency, had earlier commissioned a campaign office in Mangu (Polu-Polu) also known as Door to Door amidst a mammoth crowd of party faithfuls.

and perhaps their sponsors, it added.

Mr Danfulani said: "It is also untrue that the state lawmakers are currently investigating the expenditures of all the Ministries, Agencies and Parastatals of the state government.

"I, therefore, wish to state categorically that the entire report is maliciously concocted to misinform the general public and should be disregarded in its entirety.

"Meanwhile, the origin of the purported report will be thoroughly investigated with the view to bringing the perpetrators and their sponsors to book to serve as a deterrent to others.

"Let it however be noted that the relationship between the legislature and Executive is cordial and it is expected not only to remain so but be improved upon, the statement said.

Unfair for North to have party presidential candidate, chairman'

WALID Jibrin, Chairman of the Board of Trustees (BoT) of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), says it's unfair for the party's presidential candidate and national chairman to hail from the same region.

Jibrin said this on Sunday when he featured on Sunday Politics, a programme on Channels Television.

Atiku Abubakar, presidential candidate of the PDP, Iyorchia Ayu, the party's national chairman, and Jibrin, the BoT chairman, are all from the north.

Jibrin said the national caucus, BoT and the National

Executive Committee(NEC) of the party are yet to schedule their meetings because they are awaiting the recommendation of the committees set up to reconcile the aggrieved members.

"To tell the truth, it will not be fair for the president of Nigeria to be from the north, the chairman of the party from the north and the BoT chairman from the north," he said.

"By next week we will get the report. And when we find out that somebody is wrong in what has happened we will come up openly to tell the

party that it is wrong. Whatever we can do, we will do it in the interest of the party to make the party remain as PDP.

Jibrin said if necessary, he will give up his position as the BoT chairman for peace to reign in the party.

The opposition party has been embroiled in crisis since the conclusion of its presidential primary election in May.

Wike had contested the presidential ticket but he lost to the former vice-president.

The cracks widened after Atiku Abubakar named Ifeanyi Okowa, governor of Delta, as his running mate for the 2023 presidential election.

Following the announcement, some party stakeholders expressed concerns that Abubakar overlooked Wike — who was said to have been recommended by a panel set up at Abubakar's instance.

The division in the party worsened after Abubakar granted an interview to Arise TV, during which he explained his rationale for overlooking Wike.

Days after the interview, Wike fired back, accusing the party's presidential candidate

of telling "many lies".

Abubakar has been making efforts to reconcile with Wike but there has been little progress thus far. Last week, a three-member delegation he constituted met with Wike's team in Rivers.

Kaduna Assembly denies plan to impeach el-Rufai

THE Speaker of Kaduna State House of Assembly, Yusuf Zailani, on Sunday, denied a rumour making the rounds that the state's lawmakers are planning to impeach the governor of the state, Nasir El-Rufai.

Mr Zailani's media aide, Ibrahim Danfulani, in a statement, said the rumour was "fictitious and handiwork of the opposition".

The statement referenced an unnamed media outlet, which reported that the state's lawmakers are making moves to impeach the governor over alleged corruption.

"The attention of the Speaker of Kaduna State House of Assembly has been drawn to the report of purported impeachment move against Governor Nasir El-Rufai over corruption allegations circulating on

social media platforms.

"This is simply the handiwork of opposition and enemies of progress of the relationship between the legislative arm of government and the executive under the able leadership of Malam Nasir El-Rufai, apparently creating crises between the legislative and the executive and into the good people of Kaduna State the dividends of democracy they are benefitting courtesy of the good working relationship between the executive and the legislative, the statement said.

"The report also said the relationship between the governor and the Speaker of the Kaduna State House of Assembly, Rt. Honourable Yusuf Zailani has been frosty for quite some time now and is also nothing but the figment of the imagination of the writer



Jibrin

Politics

Legislator unveils Next Generation Legend campaign

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

MEMBER representing Jos-South/Jos-East Constituency in the National Assembly, Hon. Musa Bagos, has unveiled his Next Generation Legend campaign to enlighten the youth ahead of the 2023 general elections.

The event took place at the Sarau Events Centre in Jos, the Plateau State capital recently.

Unveiling the slogan, the convener of the occasion, Hon. Musa Bagos said the event was an opportunity for the youth to launch themselves as the next generation legends with integrity and ensure that their votes count against bad governance that has denied them their rights.

He said, they should say no to ASUU strike and no to the hike in the prices of food items and also should not be intimidated by anybody with money during the elections, hence the need for them to articulate, calibrate and galvanize themselves.

On his part, the Chairman of the occasion, Rt. Hon. Istifanus Mwanasat, commended Hon. Bagos for the initiative and for the bold step taken by him to challenge the wrong calculation of the present administration to lease out the Jos Main Market to Jaiz bank.

The Plateau State Chairman of PDP, Hon. Chris Hassan, represented by the PDP Plateau North Chairman, Hon. Davou Mang, described the youth as the oxygen of the party and urged them to ensure PDP comes back to power calling on the youth to vote PDP from top to the last level.

The North-Central National Chairman of PDP, Hon.



Bagos

Theophilous Dakashan, said God loves Nigeria and only PDP could save Nigeria from its present predicaments and commended Hon. Bagos for saving Plateau State from being enslaved for 40 years by Jaiz bank and called on the youth to not allow any action that would make them hungry again.

The Plateau State PDP gubernatorial Candidate, Hon. Caleb Mutfwang, represented by his running mate, Hon. Josephine Piyo, described the PDP youth as the engine room of the party and that, without them the journey would not be smooth and urged them to be wise during the general elections.

In a remark, the National Youth Leader of PDP, Hon. Muhammad T. Suleiman, described Plateau State as the centre of Nigeria's politics and that, if one was looking for political ideology and strategy,

he or she should come to the state because primary elections of former Presidents Shehu Shagari, MKO Abiola and Olusegun Obasanjo were all conducted in Plateau State.

He commended Hon. Musa Bagos for the various projects carried out in his constituency and prays he continues with the good work.

The youth leader however observed that ethnicity and religious sentiments were the stumbling blocks that have hindered national cohesion and development.

THE crisis rocking the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), over the face-off between its Presidential candidate Atiku Abubakar and Rivers State Governor Nyesom Wike, has continued to raise anxiety in the party, especially as parties prepare

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), has dispelled news reports in some national dailies on the procedure of result management during elections that, the commission has jettisoned the electronic transmission of results and reverted to the manual process.

This was contained in a press statement signed by the INEC National Commissioner and Chairman, Information and Voter Education Committee, Festus Okoye Esq, and made available to **THE NIGERIA STANDARD** in Jos, the Plateau State capital Sunday.

The statement stated that, "the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)'s attention has been drawn to a misunderstanding arising from a recent short interview granted to a national newspaper on the procedure for result management during elections.

Adding that, "Some have interpreted the explanation on result management procedure to mean that the Commission has jettisoned the electronic transmission of result and reverted to the manual process. This is not correct. For clarity, the procedure for result transmission remains the same as in recent Governorship elections in Ekiti and Osun States.

"There will be no change in all future elections, including the 2023 General Elections.

Electronic transmission of results has come to stay - INEC



Mahmood

We wish to reassure Nigerians that the electronic transmission of results has come to stay. It adds to the credibility and transparency of the process when citizens follow polling unit level results on the INEC Result Viewing (IREV) portal on real-time on Election Day", it explained.

Okoye, explained further that the entire gamut of result management was provided for in Sections 60, 62 and 64 of the Electoral Act 2022 and it is in line with the provision of the

law, the Commission in April this year, released a detailed clarification of the procedure for transmission, collation and declaration of results which was shared with all stakeholders and uploaded to our website.

INEC, therefore, appealed to all Nigerians to avail themselves of the provisions of the Electoral Act and the Commission's detailed explanation of the procedure and not reach a conclusion on the basis of media headlines.

The Atiku, Wike face-off

for next month's flag-off of political campaigns by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

It was gathered in Abuja on Monday that the face-off between the two gladiators has continued to take a toll on the party's preparations, as the party is yet to form the Presidential campaign Council that will drive Atiku's Presidential campaign.

The face-off has deeply divided members of the National Working Committee (NWC), following insistence by Governor Wike on the removal of the party's National Chairman, Iyorchia Ayu, as a panacea for peace.

Wike's position seems to be gaining acceptance, especially as some of the stakeholders are insisting that the party invokes Article 7 (2) (c) of the PDP Constitution, which deals with the Federal Character Principle and zoning policy of the party.

The party's Board of Trustees Chairman, Walid Jibrin had insisted on restructuring the National Executive Committee (NEC) to reflect the federal character principle, as contained in Article 7 (2) (c), of the party.

The Principles of Zoning and Article 7 (2) (c) of the Peoples Democratic Party Constitution 2006 as Amended, provides that: "In pursuance of the principle of equity, Justice and fairness, the party shall adhere to the policy of rotation and zoning of the party and public elective offices and it shall be enforced by the appropriate executive

committee at all levels".

Jibrin while speaking at a Channel television program weekend, had stated that it is unfair for the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to have both its presidential candidate and the post of the party's National Chairman, from the northern region of the country,

Jibrin, like the Wike camp, believes that since Atiku Abubakar, emerged as the party's Presidential candidate, it is unfair for Iyorchia Ayu, to remain as the party's National Chairman

"To tell the truth, it will not be fair for the president of Nigeria to be from the north, the chairman of the party from the north, and the BoT chairman from the north,"

He assured that the party will take a firm decision on the issue when it receives the reports of the reconciliation committee this week.

"By next week, we will get the report. And when we find out that somebody is wrong in what has happened we will come up openly to tell the party that it is wrong. Whatever we can do, we will do it in the interest of the party to make the party remain as PDP."

The Wike team is led by former Governors Segun Mimiko of Ondo State, Donald Duke of Cross Rivers, and Ibrahim Dankwambo of Gombe; a former Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Mohammed Adoke; and a former member of the House

of Representatives, Nnena Ukeje.

This is just as Atiku's team has former Senate President, David Mark; Adamawa State Governor Umaru Fintiri, a former Cross River Governor, Liyel Imoke; a former PDP governorship candidate in Ondo State, Eytayo Jegede; and former Senator Ben Obi.

A member of the reconciliation team on Monday insisted that the party needs a change in leadership to reflect the provisions in its constitution

According to him, "When two Elephants fight, the grass bears the brunt. That position seemed to have now found fulfillment in the current political debacle facing our party, ahead of its preparations for the 2023 presidential campaign

"We are worried because no one knows how it may end. But the truth is that there is a general consensus that the party need new leadership, now that the primaries are over"

He disclosed that, "Wike's position has not changed. He is insisting that Ayu must go for the purposes of fairness and natural Justice"

It will however be recalled that Ayu had recently insisted that he will not resign adding that he has a tenure of four years.

Ayu's Media aide, Simon Imobo-Tswam, in a tweet, stated that "The PDP National Chairman, Dr. Iyiochia Ayu, has not resigned and has no plan of resigning. "For clarity and emphasis, he was elected for a tenure of four years."

NBA conference: Shettima, Obi, Atiku speak

BOLA Tinubu, the All Progressives Congress (APC) presidential candidate, did not attend the 62nd annual conference of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) on Monday.

Other contenders, Atiku Abubakar of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the Labour Party flag bearer, Peter Obi were all present at the event which took place in Lagos.

However, Tinubu's running mate, Kashim Shettima was at the event.

Atiku, while delivering his speech, restated the need to restructure the country.

"I am a product of developed powers and I know what the regional governments did with those powers. That's why I'm advocating for restructuring," he said.

In a message via his verified Twitter handle, Atiku said the acronyms; Unity-SEED represents Unity, Security, Economy, Education and Devolution of power to states and local governments.

Atiku noted that it would be the basis of his policy framework if he is elected the next Nigerian president.

Atiku revealed that the five-

fold programme is germane to the rebirth of Nigeria which the populace has been clamouring for.

He tweeted, "I used the opportunity of the first plenary session of the 62nd NBA conference to give Nigerian lawyers an insight into my bold policy framework that embodies Unity, Security, Economy, Education and Devolution of power to states and local governments, known by the acronym of Unity-SEED.

"I stressed how interconnected these five policy prescriptions are. I assured them that a new Nigeria of our dreams is possible in the hands of a bold man of experience." Atiku tweeted.

Speaking on behalf of Tinubu at the event, Shettima said if his team clinches the presidential position benefits being reaped in Lagos currently will be reaped in all of Nigeria.

"So, we are going to replicate our achievements in Lagos, in Borno and some of the frontline states so that our nation will be a better place," Shettima said.

Before the statement, the

APC representative had said Nigerians are no longer sold on old political rhetorics. He also pointed out that leadership is one of the underlying problems of the country.

"Nigerians have the capability to see through the worn-out rhetoric and sophistry of pretentious politicians," he said.

"Nigerians should follow the man wey know the road. From day one, we will hit the ground running. We'll promptly address the issue of the economy, ecology, and security.

"And we have the antecedents. I built some of the best schools in Nigeria. Go to Borno and see wonders; you will never believe that it is a state in a state of war."

In his speech, Obi said Nigerians have moved away from a tribalistic or religious-centric mindset and they will vote for a competent person in 2023.

"The election we are going to have next year will not be about tribe nor religion, nor connection, nor entitlement," Obi said. "But it will be about character, competence, capacity, and commitment to deliver."

IMAGES

LALONG AT LORETTA AND OMOJO WEDDING RECEPTION

Plateau State Governor and Chairman, Northern Governors' Forum, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong on Saturday witnessed the wedding reception of Loretta, daughter to Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Lawrence Anebi Onoja and her husband, Mr. Omojo at the International Conference Centre Abuja



Governor Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State (standing) delivering his goodwill remarks, flanked by Dr. Emmanuel Akabe, Nasarawa State Deputy Governor



Prof. Joseph Golwa, former Chief Press Secretary to Gen. Onoja when he was the Military Governor of Plateau State, Governor Lalong, Sen. Okorocho and Maj. Gen. Lawrence Onoja



Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (left) congratulating the father of the bride, Maj. Gen. Lawrence Anebi Onoja, fmr. Military Governor of Plateau State, middle is the former Imo State Governor, Sen. Rochas Okorocho



Governor Lalong (left) Sen. Rochas Okorocho who chaired the occasion with General and Mrs. Onoja



Mr. Omojo and his wife, Mrs. Loretta in a photograph



Prince Mark Elayo and wife at the wedding reception



Representative of AANI President (right) presenting gift to Mr. and Mrs. Omojo, flanked by their parents



Governor Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State putting heads together with the Deputy Speaker, PLHA, Rt. Hon. Saleh Shehu Yipmong and other members at the ceremony

Photos: DANLADI DUK

Politics

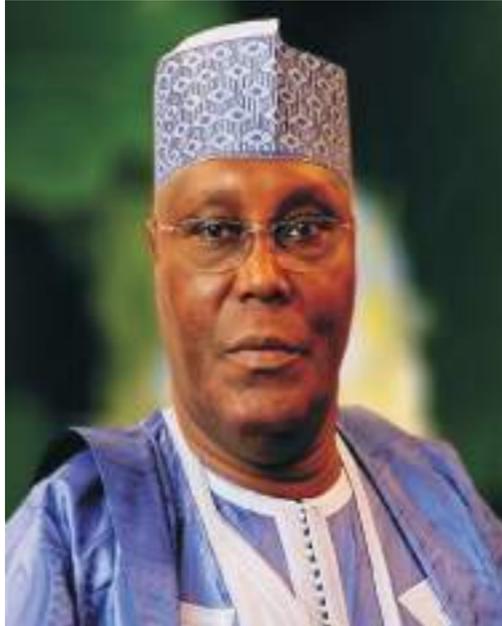
Nigeria, political choices and consequences

To those who have been asking for my views on the last Osun governorship election, let me confess that the keenly contested election is a story worth telling. Deservingly so, yours sincerely will give a bird's-eye view at an appropriate time, soon, surely, writes ABIODUN KOMOLAFE.

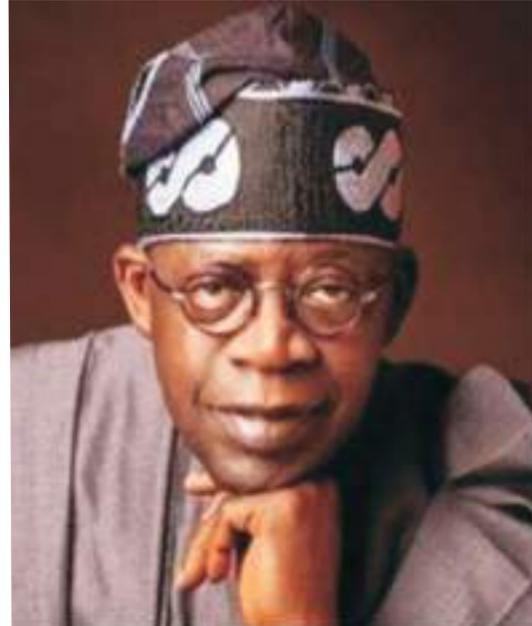
THAT said, there is something about political orientation in Nigeria, which is also affected by the level of civilization. Inside that civilization are the levels of literacy and standard practice of the people's norms and values. Whenever we mention politics, what is in the mind of an average Nigerian is an abstract phenomenon, yet, critical to public administration; it sure means different things to different people. To some, politics is just about how to grab state resources in a legitimate manner. So, people seek politics for the sake of power, and the only way to go about it is to play politics; that is, being involved in the structure of politics. To some people, anything goes in politics; even, rules and standards, by not obeying them, is politics. So, apart from its standardized definitions, politics is what the player or the political gladiator calls it, as long as it is soothing and convenient to his or her interest.

Again, politics already domesticated carries other attributes and these attributes can only be located within the context of the culture of where they are domesticated. For instance, if politics is defined by the ancient fathers as 'who gets what, when, how' (Harold Laswell, 1936); and the 'authoritative allocation of value' (David Easton, 1965), still, it has its own attributes. After all, politics enables one to get certain things done subject to certain intrigues. It also helps one to bend the rules, especially, if one plays it right. In that context, people make peculiar choices and induced policies are also churned out. The summation of all these things is exactly what is now happening in Nigeria.

In like manner, governance is administration, and administration itself is hinged on leadership. Impliedly, the type of leadership we get is the kind of government we have. The kind of government we get is the kind of administration that will be given to us. Obviously, it boils down to leadership. In the Nigerian context, the way leadership emerges is in itself problematic. It may appear seemingly democratic but, if it is stripped of its niceties, it will be discovered that leadership emergence in our clime has very undemocratic principles. Take for instance, for anybody to emerge as a presidential flag-bearer of a political party in Nigeria, he must fulfil some conditions. To put it mildly, these conditions have already disenfranchised millions of other Nigerians. In other words, what is



Atiku



Tinubu



Obi



Kwankwoso

required, when one looks at it, is not a level-playing field at all.

According to Amartya Sen, poverty becomes prevalent where there is 'unfreedom' on the part of the individual citizen to make a free choice of economic or political activities, which is independent of the State's influence. In Nigeria, political choices are seldom free. Oftentimes, choices are made by the mass of citizens from the system-restricted options. A

system-structured political party produces a restricted option of candidates, making the probability of outcomes purposively known and predictable! Invariably, the outcomes of the people's choices are fairly and predictably known because the people are given guided options. While the systemic control makes the idea of an 'independent candidate' alien to Nigeria, the systemic restriction in Nigeria makes it impossible for certain classes of citizens to attain the privileged status of being voted

for in the general elections.

As things stand, Nigeria's political space is populated more by accidental democrats and opportunistic contractors, and they have been shown the way to riches. The powerful people have structured political emergence in such a way that it will perpetually fit their profile and those projected to become leaders! For example, it is they who organise the delegates and it is they who feed them. Since it is they who 'settle' them financially, they also direct the delegates with regard to the direction of their (the delegates') votes. As we can also see, ability to understand and process issues will always be central to the choices that are made. For God's sake, how many people can afford N100m just to pick a presidential form and how many people can service the delegates in terms of reality?

Yes, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) provisions stipulate a certain amount of money to be paid to each delegate as honorarium. Even at that, how many people can boast of it in a domestic economy with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) currently standing at \$440.78B? How can an individual

pay that kind of money to, say, 1000 delegates? To be more attractive, and to edge out other competitors, the demands of delegates have even become enhanced, and ostensibly dollarized. Just think about it: can yours sincerely afford such a luxury. Who dash monkey banana? Yours sincerely who, despite his life struggles and commitment to nation-building, still has no roof of his own over his own head? Anyway, that's a discussion for another day.

Undeniably, these stumbling blocks have not only rendered the process undemocratic but also inexplicably maniacal. At the end of the day, what it means is that the societal system has already selectively determined those whose 'birthright' it is to lead this fractured microcosm. That's why 'papa' leaves office and puts his 'pikin', because it is only the son who has grown all the features that can make him an heir to the throne. Of course, that is why democracy in Nigeria is graphically defined as 'government of the rich to favour the rich while perpetually keeping the poor in hopeless unfreedom'.

Going by the last party primaries in Nigeria, when one takes a cursory look at the number of people who wanted to rule Nigeria, one then begins to wonder where the country is truly headed. No thanks to the subtle political elimination culture which, more often than not, disqualifies qualified persons from standing for elections due to the State's inbuilt inhibitions! The system would have so incapacitated them that their voices cannot be heard. Even if such people have noble ideas, the only place they can gestate will be in the 'other room'. The tragedy of it all is that it's a system which gives Nigerians limited options. So, it's either one queues behind 'Emi lokan', or get 'Atiku lated', or simply become 'obi-dient.'

When trust between the late Obafemi Awolowo and Ladoke Akintola came under severe strain, until it got to a climax during the First Republic, Awolowo's position that he was after development was clear to everybody. But what was Akintola's excuse? Well, it was more of a battle for survival and prominence. In other words, politics was reduced to the level of 'who's the superordinate' and 'who's the subordinate'? If it were to be that SLA wanted a certain development plan implemented and Awo was opposed to it, the story would have been different.

The question now is: even after most of the political gladiators of the First Republic have died, has Nigeria been able to climb out of the morass into which she was sunk? Till tomorrow, some things have remained central; and they are the sin, sinfulness and the insatiable smartness of the political class. Sad that what we now have on our hands are appropriate errors of empty spirituality wrapped in the exhibition of ecstasy.

May the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, grant us peace in Nigeria!

"In Nigeria, political choices are seldom free. Oftentimes, choices are made by the mass of citizens from the system-restricted options. A system-structured political party produces a restricted option of candidates, making the probability of outcomes purposively known and predictable! Invariably, the outcomes of the people's choices are fairly and predictably known because the people are given guided options. While the systemic control makes the idea of an 'independent candidate' alien to Nigeria, the systemic restriction in Nigeria makes it impossible for certain classes of citizens to attain the privileged status of being voted for in the general elections."

News

Endsars: Kogi PDCRC submits report makes recommendations

From **AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja**

KOGI State Office of the Public Defender and Citizens' Rights Commission (PDCRC), recently submitted its report of enquiry on the ENDSARS protests that triggered across the country in 2020, to the State Governor, Alh. Yahaya Bello.

Director General of PDCRC, Barr. Abdullahi Zakari, said that the committee which was inaugurated on October 15, 2020 was established to deal with matters arising from the ENDSARS protests in 2020.

"Today, we are submitting the Kogi State report of its findings and making appropriate recommendations to government on what to do.

"We identified the immediate and remote causes of the protests and also made recommendations for the purposes of implementation.

"In all, the recommendations would go a long way into resolving some of the issues that undermined the ENDSARS protests that swept across the country," Zakari said.

In his response, the Governor commended the committee for a job well done, assuring that the state government would look into the recommendations for implementation.

The Governor, who was represented by the Secretary to the State Government, (SSG) Dr Folashade Ayoade, promised to continue to give necessary support to ensure that Kogi PDCRC is well positioned to deliver on its objectives.

He commended the commission for several civil and criminal cases and interventions it had handled



Bello

and resolved across the state since it was established.

"I want to assure you that every recommendation therein will be well noted and carried out because of my strong believe in promotion, protection and enforcement of human rights," he said.

Bello reaffirmed his commitment to ensuring that the residents and citizens of the state especially the indigents and vulnerable have access to justice free of charge.

The governor further restated his determination to ensure protection, promotion and enforcement of human rights across the state.

Earlier, the Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Ibrahim Mohammed SAN, said Kogi PDCRC was a product of

justice sector reforms established through the instrumentality of law.

He commended the commission for a job well done in putting up the ENDSARS report, assuring them of the State government's continuous support without any interference in delivering their mandates.

Also speaking, Kogi State Acting Chief Judge, Hon. Justice Josiah Majebi, appreciated the Governor for his proactive-ness in ensuring that human rights are promoted, protected and enforced in the state without interference.

He assured the commission of the total support of the judiciary in its bid to deliver justice for the vulnerable indigent residents and citizens of the state.

From **DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja**

LG boss pledges support for health sector

EXECUTIVE Chairman of Karu Local Government Council Hon James Thomas, vowed to continue to put more resources at his disposal to ensure health is given more adequate attention.

He made the proclamation when he met with the council stakeholders, traditional/religious leaders, security agents, and Primary Healthcare Committee for the awareness and mobilization of the distribution of ROTA VIRUS VACCINE led by Hajiya Fatima Asiba (Deputy Health Secretary, Karu LGA).

ROTA Virus Vaccines is a newly introduce Vaccine to treat diarrhea for infants between zero to fourteen weeks of child birth.

The Oral Drugs is to be



Thomas

given to all the 19 Northern States from 22nd of August

this year in all the Public Clinics and Healthcare Centres, free of charge.

WMA President tasks doctors on participation in politics

From **AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja**

THE President, World Medical Association (WMA), Dr. Osahon Enabulele at the weekend, urged medical doctors to take up the challenge of leadership by participating actively in politics in advancing the medical profession.

Enabulele made the call at the 2022 Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Scientific Conference of the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), Kogi State chapter in Lokoja, with the theme: "Politics: Advancing The Medical Profession".

infrastructure development in the health sector.

Enabulele, the Keynote Speaker, who spoke on the event's theme, said politics could advance medical profession through the Executive and Legislative positions, Public policy making, Political party membership, and other appointive positions.

He urged the medical doctors to think beyond the Consulting room, develop self-confidence, take risk, strategise, as well as a mass political education, and resource mobilisation.

He stressed that physicians were better positioned more than any other group to utilise their God given potentials and attributes of medicine and politics as veritable tools for national building and sustainable advancement of the medical profession.

According to him, when credible doctors with good conscience step into the political rings, politics in Nigeria will regain its noble status and the medical profession will be advanced.

"I urge you to take up courage and rise up to the challenge of leadership and actively participate in politics, especially having been sensitized by this modest presentation on the harmony that exists between medicine and politics," he said.

In his remarks, Kogi State Governor, Alh. Yahaya Bello, encouraged the medical practitioners to be sacrificial and dedicated to their profession as well as being active in politics.

Represented by his Deputy, Chief Edward Onoja, the governor said that his administration had achieved tremendous

He assured that the state Government would do her best to ensure that the best brain in terms of manpower is retained to manage those infrastructure to avoid brain drain.

On his part, the Chairman NMA Kogi, Dr. Abubakar Alhassan, thanked the Governor for the implementation of the revised CONMESS 2014, as well as the unprecedented infrastructure development in the state health sector.

He, however called on both State and Federal Governments to initiate policies and programmes that would minimize the mass exodus of doctors out of the country.

The chairman noted that the outgoing NMA EXCO had made tremendous achievements in fulfilling some of its campaign promises.

According to him, they have improved the welfare of members; making NMA Kogi more visible and vibrant, brought maturity into its affairs and workings, engendering financial transparency, and strengthening all its affiliates.

Also speaking, the Chairman Local Organising Committee (LOC), Dr Adeyemi William, said the event was organised annually to educate members on the job and the emerging threats in the professor.

The Director of Publicity NMA Kogi, Dr Emmanuel Bola Kelvin Jonah, stressed the need for government at all levels to create the enabling environment for medical practitioners to operate to avoid brain drain.

CP charges decorated of police on combating crimes

From **AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja**

THE Commissioner of Police, Kogi State Command, CP Edward C. Egbuka has charged twenty six newly decorated Police Officers to redouble their efforts at combating crimes and criminalities in the state.

The twenty six officers were newly promoted to the rank of Superintendent of Police. The Commissioner of Police gave the charge at the weekend, during the decoration ceremony held at the M.M. Katsina Conference Hall,

State Police Headquarters, Lokoja. In a statement signed by the Command's Public Relations Officer, SP William Aya and made available to newsmen in Lokoja, noted that the ceremony was consequent on the promotion of 1, 939 Deputy Superintendents of Police to the rank of Superintendents of Police. The ceremony was attended by former Commissioner of Police,

Kogi State, Dr Emmanuel Ojukwu (rtd). He congratulated the newly promoted Officers and charged them to see the promotion as a call for improved services to the nation. He advised the officers to make more friends and minimize enemies while carrying out their duties. The Commissioner of Police, Kogi State Command, CP Egbuka while congratulating the Officers for their well-deserved promotion, charged them to leave a life of discipline, professionalism and integrity. He added that any officer that desires to go high on the job must cultivate the attitude of discipline, noting that their attitudes would be a reflection of what Police is all about. He further stated that even the least Police officer ought to know that discipline is the bedrock on which the Force is built, which is key to a successful career in the force. He thanked the Inspector General of Police, IGP Alkali Usman Baba for recommending officers of the Command to be part of the beneficiaries. He also congratulated the newly promoted officers and wished them well in their new task. Also at the ceremony was the ALGON Chairman Hon Taofiq Isa who congratulated the newly promoted officers and urged them to double their efforts in the ongoing onslaught against criminality in the State. He stated that he was at the occasion to celebrate his

Divisional Police Officers of Aiyetoro and Iyara Divisions. The newly promoted officers includes: SP Obafemi Ojo, Commander Quick Response Unit, SP Yusuf Isa O/C Confidential, Esinulo Cletus DPO Gegu, Sani Yahaya DPO Ibaji, Sule Musa DPO Ajaokuta, Alozie Chukwuemeka DPO Ayetoro, Orimolade Akinwumi DPO Iyara, Ovanja Yakubu DPO Okehi and Felix Adjarho DPO I t a k p e others includes Eneka Ugwuoke DCO Adogo, Emmanuel Odai Unit Commander 37 PMF, Akinwumi Adeniran Unit Commander 37 PMF, Ibe Chidebere Nwadoika Unit Commander 37 PMF, Yakubu Abu O/C Anti-Cultism, Aye Enejo DCO 'C' Division, Salisu Ahmed ACO Koton-karfe, Samade Ladi Medical, Diribe Victor DCO Ife-Olukotun, Agbo Emmanuel Obajana, Layi Labija Ayetoro, Yakubu Bitrus Idah Area Command, Samuel Oye-Medical and Yamang Swanta Idah. Speaking on behalf of the promoted officers, SP Enemka Ugwuoke thanked the Inspector General of Police Usman Baba, and the Force Management team for finding them worthy of the elevation to the new rank. He further appreciated the Commissioner of Police, Kogi State Police Command, CP Edward Egbuka and the management team for finding time out of their tight schedules to decorate them. He promised that this would make use of the promotion to discharge their duties professionally to make Kogi and Nigeria safe from unwarranted elements.



Alkali

News

Bello to be honoured by Nigerian Post

From
AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

AS the Nigerianpost Newspapers holds its Annual Lecture and Impact Series/Awards on August 25, 2022, Gov. Yahaya Bello of Kogi State, has been nominated to be honoured with the Nigerianpost's 'Man of the Year' award. A statement by Mr Michael Abu, Publisher/Editor-In-Chief, Nigerianpost Newspapers, on Monday in Lokoja, said the event would hold on August 25, 2022, at the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Press Centre, Lokoja. According to Abu, the event is part of activities to mark the anniversary of the creation of Kogi State, and would be chaired by the former Minister of State, Labour and Productivity, Prof. Chief Stephen Ocheni. He said that Gov. Yahaya Bello would be the Special Guest of Honour, and would be honoured with 'Man of the Year' award, while the Maigari of Lokoja, Alh. Mohammed Maikafi 111, would be the Royal Father of the day. He explained that the Nigerianpost lecture series, with the theme: "Governance, Leadership Redefined; This House Must Not Fall", would be delivered by academics Joel T o p e . Headed that the Chief of Staff



Bello

to Kogi State Government, Pharm. Abdulkareem Asuku, would deliver the keynote address on "Kogi @ 31: This House Must Not Fall", which would look at politics, national security and Nigeria's stability. He disclosed that the Kogi Commissioner for Information and Communication, Kingsley Fanwo; and NUJ Chairman, Comr. Adeiza Momoh Jimoh, would be the Chief Hosts at the event.

He said the choice of the topic was informed by the need to contribute to the country's political development, engender peace and national cohesion. Abu also said that the event is dedicated to finding workable solutions to the challenges

associated with elections, national security, peace and stability of the country. "The event is also organised to honour key political actors, players in the private sector, individuals and heads of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) among others, who have proven their worth in specific areas of governance and human endeavours," he said. Others to receive awards at the event include: Prof. Stephen Ocheni as an 'Outstanding Public Servant of the Year'; Pharm. Abdulkareem Asuku as 'Outstanding Administrator'; Kogi Commissioner for Education, Science and Technology, Hon. Wemi Jones, for his positive impacts in the state education sector alongside others who will also be honoured.

Bauchi Gov't recruits 310 teachers

From
ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

IN compliance with the Federal Teachers Scheme (FTS) and the Federal Female Teachers Scheme (FTTS), Bauchi State Government has employed 310 new teachers across the state.

Dr Aliyu Usman Tilde, Bauchi State Commissioner of Education while presenting the appointment letters to the employed teachers on Monday, at TSC complex in Bauchi, confirmed that Bauchi State is one of the few states in the federation to immediately comply with the conditions of the teacher's scheme.

Dr Tilde unfolded that the teachers were recruited based on merit, and therefore warned that any of them found wanting in the discharge of their responsibilities would be dealt with in line with public service rules and regulations. "I congratulate you for passing through the very rigorous selection processes and for being employed among many other qualified applicants who also applied for some job."

"Our message to you is that as you are aware, Bauchi State under His Excellency, Governor Bala Mohammed is committed to the recruitment of qualified teachers and we are going to monitor the conduct of all of you as our new teachers for us to achieve our aims and desire of providing qualitative education to our children."

He informed that, the present administration in the state has done a lot to advance education, noting that staff welfare in particular took prominence last year with half of its workforce being promoted based on performance. Earlier in his address, the Chaiman, Teacher's Service Commission in the state, Musa Wadata implored the employed teachers to always put the interest of the state

first in the discharge of their duties and see themselves as indispensable partners in the task of repositioning Bauchi State education sector.

Musa Wadata noted that, the current approval for the recruitment of 310 teachers to schools in Bauchi State is the highest ever in more than 2 decades, as no such employment was made in the state.

"This presentation of appointment letters is a clear testimony of the state government's commitment towards uplifting the quality of teaching and learning and to address teachers' shortage in the state. This is indeed, a milestone achievement in the history of Bauchi State Teachers' Service Commission and by extension, the State Ministry of Education.

"I would like to felicitate with our amiable, industrious, quintessential, digital Commissioner, and Teacher General, Dr. Aliyu Usman Tilde for showing dynamism, focus, efficiency and candour in the way he is piloting the affairs of the Bauchi State education sector. His purposeful leadership, steadfastness, ingenuity and genuine commitment to re-engineer Bauchi State education sector have made the state a model and a reference point in the country."



Bala



Seeking redemption

THE social media space has been inadvertently taken over by unscrupulous elements who use it to bring to disrepute the hard-earned reputation of some honest and hardworking fellows who might not themselves be social media savvy. In this space, some appear to think that it is only they that are entitled to an opinion. If you hold an opinion contrary to their own, you are taken to the cleaners and dealt with in such a manner that if you are lilly-livered you will not dare make use of the space again.

Least I will be misunderstood, there are lots of progressive and positive people who used the space for good. In fact, social media can be a mine of information which when positively deployed can change the lot of people and add value to what they do. Lots of the writings being done these days eventually find their ways to the social media space and when constructively engaged serves to better humanity. And because a lot of people are in a hurry and scarcely have time, their mobile devices have come to be their greatest companions which are always handy when they are on the move. Making it possible to access a lot of information while on the go.

Nevertheless some persons hide under the anonymity provided by the social media to perpetrate all manner of bullying. You accept their opinions or nothing else. These are the kinds of people who have made the space unattractive to the discerning and serious minded. They resort to foul language in trying to put forward their arguments. That is not all they write very bad and unreadable English all, because no one can put a face to the writer except those who know them. If you want to experience what I am talking about just read the comments section of Facebook posts. You would wish you had not ventured doing so.

And those engaged in the use of these tools are mostly young people. It is no wonder then that our schools are churning out quarter baked graduates who can not write basic English. Which has in turn taken its toll on our society. The resort to cyber bullying has as much not helped the course of the society. Why for instance, must you run down someone who shares a different opinion from your own? Why not engage and convince the person to see things from your point of view instead of trying to bully him into accepting your position?

The most annoying of all these are even people who one would have thought are educated enough to allow for the interrogation of ideas to see if they would stand. They unfortunately seem to believe that their ideas are the gospel truth and can not be questioned. If you dare to resist such thoughtlessness you are blocked and not allowed to continue the discussion. Their type, I daresay, are the educated illistrates who fear interrogating their ideas might expose their shallow thoughts and make them look stupid. They are, to be kind to them, the set who

“ And those engaged in the use of these tools are mostly young people. It is no wonder then that our schools are churning out quarter baked graduates who can not write basic English. Which has in turn taken its toll on our society. The resort to cyber bullying has as much not helped the course of the society. Why for instance, must you run down someone who shares a different opinion from your own? Why not engage and convince the person to see things from your point of view instead of trying to bully him into accepting your position? ”

can not add value by using the conversations of others to enrich our society. They are academic dwarfs who never grow or see beyond their small world.

To be candid our political class has contributed in no small measure to creating this unfortunate class of people. Several lowly educated social media assistants are employed to occupy the social media space with a lot of rubbish being churned in the name of promoting and protecting their principal. At the end of the day, they end up doing more damage to the less than illustrious image of that politician. Some of the politicians are comfortable with these lots because they do not have the capacity to question them and can only do whatever they are told.

Because they lack capacity, they are often asked to insult political opponents without thinking of the repercussions. These errors are often discarded at will and without any consideration. Thankfully, technology has begun to evolve and those who hide behind anonymity would now be exposed. There are fact-checking softwares that are helping put faces behind every post one makes. It tells anyone who wants to know the author and when it was first posted. We must, therefore, be careful what we write and post out there. The era when people were abused and nothing is done about it is long gone. We must be circumspective whenever we make a post.

We should thus deploy social media for social good. Let it be said someday that our generation deployed this space positively and impacted the lives of others in a manner that led to the growth and development of our society. It is only then that we would have redeemed and purged ourselves of the negativity that has come to be associated with the social media.

News

'Illegal mining cause of Nigeria's insecurity'

By PALANG KASMI

PLATEAU State Governor Simon Bako Lalong says urgent steps need to be taken to tackle illegal mining which has continued to cause economic and security challenges to the nation especially in the North.

He described the situation as worrisome saying it can be compared to the challenge that oil bunkering is causing to the country.

Governor Lalong stated this during his speech on "Addressing the intervention on getting Nigeria's administration out of oil" at the ongoing 2022 Annual National Conference of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) holding in Lagos.

Lalong said the losses resulting from illegal mining include carting away of precious solid minerals which constitute a huge loss to governments at all levels.

He however observed that due to the focus on crude oil, not much attention is devoted to solid minerals theft thereby leaving illegal miners from within and outside the country to have a field day in ripping off the country and devastating local communities.

"That is why I have remained an advocate of the inclusion of solid minerals in both the exclusive and concurrent list in order to enable states properly assert control over mining activities which in many cases result into criminality and provide funding for bandits, terrorists and their collaborators" he said.

On the issue of enhancing security of lives and properties, Lalong said adopting state police was germane and crucial but needs to be guaranteed by factors including the capacity



Lalong

to train, deploy, monitor, and regularly pay the personnel in order to avoid a situation where people with arms are owed salaries or turn out to constitute another security problem.

He stressed that the unity and progress of Nigeria is paramount adding that, "There must be a deliberate effort to address the manipulation of religion and ethnicity" which according to him has been exploited to the detriment of the diversity and variety they represent.

The Governor also disclosed that under his leadership, Plateau State has made progress in diversifying from dependence on oil proceeds with the empowering of citizens to engage in commercial agriculture, value addition, extension services and leveraging on crops of comparative advantage such as exotic fruits, potatoes,

flowers among others which are unique to Plateau State.

He told the forum that his Government has acquired the Inland Container Terminal and also received approval for the upgrade of the Yakubu Gowon Airport Heipang into an International Cargo Airport for export of agricultural and other commodities.

Lalong further disclosed that so much has been done to restore peace in Plateau State which has brought back tourism and investors as well as enhanced the creative industry and sports which are synonymous with Jos and contributing significantly to the economy.

He spoke about the training of thousands of youths in various entrepreneurial skills in his state which has made Plateau State a household name at the national MSME competition organised by the office of the Vice President among others.

BAUCHI State commissioner for Agriculture, Barr. Jidauna Mbami Tula said the state was delighted with the World Bank and the Federal Government for coming up with the capacity building training workshop for Fadama CARES beneficiaries aimed at supporting the vulnerable households and the poorest to regain their means of livelihood.

Barrister Jidauna Mbami Tula while declaring open the capacity building workshop for (FARMERS), facilitators and desk officers in Bauchi Thursday, explained that the workshop in the state became possible with the release of preparatory funds approved by Governor Bala Mohammed.

Tula attributed the conduct of the workshop to the state government's commitment towards boosting agricultural production in the state, as well as the provision of grant by the World Bank to alleviate the hardships caused people as a result of the noble corona virus pandemic.

"In addition, the government has brought Agro Liquid Fertilizer and distributed to 2,000 farmers as grant and subsidized the price for farmers to find it affordable. Also, knapsack sprayers were distributed to farmers across the twenty local government areas in order to cushion the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic", he said.

Barrister Jidauna Tula however recalled with concern that the outbreak of corona virus has devastated the world economy and the agricultural sector in particular, hence the idea of the programme came to be in the country and particularly the state to cushion its effects.

Fadama: BASG happy with World Bank

From ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

The commissioner also described the training programme as another empowerment process where farmers will be trained on how to prepare Community Action Recovery Plans (CARPS) across the 20 LGAs, targeting rural farmers and the most vulnerable in the society.

He told the participants, "It will interest you to know that, agricultural inputs and other productive assets will be provided to this category of people as grant by the state government to support them regain their means of livelihood lost as a result of Covid-19 pandemic".

Barrister Tula further explained that the programme also intends to upgrade the

existing wet markets across the twenty local government areas through the provision of VIP latrines, solar boreholes and many other social amenities.

Tula also disclosed that the state government has procured desktop computers and generators for the 20 desk officers across the local governments in the effort to ensure that farmers find it easy to document the CARP processes and implementation accordingly.

The Commissioner therefore implored upon the workshop participants to be focused, transparent and ensure accountability in the discharge of their representative responsibilities, while calling on them to ensure the safety of the facilities at their respective local government areas.



Bala

Annual lecture, impact series holds tomorrow

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE 2021 Nigerianpost Newspapers' Annual Lecture and Impact Series/Awards will hold Thursday, August 25, 2022 at the Nigeria Union of Journalists, Press Centre, Lokoja.

According to a statement signed by Abu Michael, Publisher/Editor in Chief, the event which is part of activities to mark the anniversary of the

creation of Kogi State, would be chaired by Prof. Chief Stephen Ocheni, former Minister of State, Labour and Productivity. The Kogi State Governor, Alh. Yahaya Bello would serve as the Special Guest of Honour, with His Royal Highness, the Maigari of Lokoja, Alhaji Mohammed Kabiru Maikafi 111, as the Royal father of the day.

The Nigerianpost lecture series, with the theme "Governance, Leadership Redefined; this House Must Not Fall", would be delivered by an academics, Joel Tope. According to the statement, the Chief of Staff to the Kogi State Government, Pharm Abdulkareem Jamiu Asuku is expected to deliver the keynote address at the event.

The statement also said Pharm Asuku would speak on "Kogi @ 31: This House Must Not Fall" a presentation that would look at Politics, National Security and Nigeria's Stability.

The statement said the choice of the topic was informed by the need to contribute to the country's political development, engender peace and national cohesion.

Mr. Abu also said the event is dedicated to finding workable solutions to the challenges associated with elections, national security, peace and stability of the country.

The Publisher said the event is also organised to honour key political actors, players in the private sector, individuals and heads of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) among others, who have

proven their worth in specific areas of governance and human endeavours."

The Kogi State Commissioner for Information and Communication, Hon Kingsley Fanwo and the Chairman of NUJ, Comr. Adeiza Momohjimoh would be the Chief Host of the Nigerianpost lecture and award series.

Some of those listed for the awards at the event are Governor Yahaya Bello of Kogi state who is nominated as Nigerianpost Man of the Year.

Pharm. Abdulkareem Jamiu Asuku would be honoured with the Outstanding Administrator award, whose giant strides as the engine room of government administration in the state remains remarkable.

The Kogi State Commissioner for Education, Science and Technology, Hon. Wemi Jones would be honored for his positive impacts in the Education Sector of the State, while the Rector of Kogi State Polytechnic and Provost, College of Education Ankpa, Dr. Salisu Usman Ogbo and Dr. Mohammed Kabiru would for there outstanding performances in quality learning and infrastructure development would equally be bestowed with awards.

Also listed for Nigerian post best Council Chairmen of the Year awards are Hon. Abdulraheem Ohiere (Security) and Hon. Yakubu Aboh of Okehi and Omala LGA, (Grassroots development) Comr. Onuh Edoaka, Kogi State NLC Chairman is billed to receive the Nigerian post Outstanding Labour Chairman Award in the State's history. Among many others.

Plateau girl regains freedom from Boko Haram

By DUMAH RANDONG

THE abducted Plateau girl and social worker, Mwanret Daspan has regained her freedom after spending 20 months in the hands of Boko Haram terrorists.

Daspan a Mwangavul from

Mangu Local Government Area of the state, was abducted in Maiduguri, the Borno State sometime in December, 2020 by the

insurgents and later moved to Chad Republic by the terrorists group before regaining her freedom about two weeks ago.

Governor Simon Lalong who received the abducted girl at Government House, Rayfield, Jos, Monday, described her release as an act of God having gone through terrible experiences in the hands of evil people for the past 20 months.

Lalong who spoke through his Deputy, Professor Somni Tyoden, said her disappearance was traumatic for the family and the entire state.

The issue of security in the country requires the prayer and contribution of citizens according to the governor. He stated that government will provide funds to cater for her health needs in order to rehabilitate and integrate her into the society.

Commissioner of Women Affairs, Rebecca Adar Sambo while formally

presenting the abductee to the Governor, appreciated God and the intervention of government and security operatives for ensuring her release.

Relieving her experience, the abductee, Mwanret Daspan who worked as a social worker in Maiduguri the Borno State capital said she was abducted in December, 2020 by the Boko Haram terrorists and appreciated all those who have been praying and working for her safe release from captivity.

Speaking on behalf of the family, Monday Daspan said their daughter was kept in captivity around Chad Republic by the insurgents but found her way out to communicate with her family after spending almost two years in captivity.

He expressed gratitude to the government and the security operatives for working to ensure she regain her freedom.



Alkali

Foreign Commentary

Kenya 2022: Why Odinga's election challenge matters

For the third time in a row, Raila Odinga has challenged the result of Kenya's presidential elections. The 77-year-old long-time opposition leader has been ridiculed by some as a bad loser, but analysts say his petitions have been crucial in shaping and strengthening the conduct of elections in Kenya. So whatever the Supreme Court decides, this case will help improve subsequent polls. DICKENS OLEWE writes.

AFTER polls closed on 9 August, many Kenyans marvelled at how quickly results started populating an online portal run by the electoral commission - a process that had often been beset by controversy and suspect delays in previous polls. By the following morning, 80% of returns from more than 46,000 polling stations across the country had been posted.

It was a remarkable achievement for an agency that had gone into the election with credibility concerns - even if the verification process did not match the speed of the transmission of results, leading to intense public frustration and anxiety, and the current legal challenge.

Glowing in the praise streaming in from Kenya and beyond, the head of the electoral body Wafula Chebukati mocked the local media - whose tallies of the results were running behind - for struggling and not being "prepared" to keep up with the speed at which the agency was posting the results.

Keen to demonstrate transparency, the electoral body had decided to encourage the media and the public to tally the results themselves, instead of giving its own updates on the close presidential race.

The speed and transparency of the publication of the initial results left some in other African countries in awe.

Noting that there was no internet shutdown, arrest of opposition leaders, and no hint that the incumbent was planning to cling on to power, they compared what they perceived as deficiencies in their country's electoral systems to what they saw happening in Kenya.

"Genuinely, we need to pick a whole tree from the Kenya electoral process because what we have in Uganda doesn't qualify to be called an election," Dr Sarah Bireete was quoted as saying in Uganda's NBS TV station.

"Thank you Kenya for teaching the East African Community what transparent election is. Hopefully Tanzania will borrow a leaf for the next election," a Tanzanian tweeted.

"Kenyans have shown us how elections can be conducted with dignity. Over to you Independent National Electoral Commission of Nigeria," another user tweeted.

Kenyan public law scholar Prof Migai Akech told the BBC the commission did "an excellent job of transmitting results in record time".

"The process was much more transparent. Even if there are disputes, you just tally the polling stations outcomes."

Poll officials had to compare whether results sent using electronic gadgets from more than 46,000 polling stations matched physical copies.

The efficiency in the results transmission was not a fluke but a consequence of a case brought by Mr Odinga after he lost the last election alleging massive fraud, including the failure of the electoral commission to transmit all results electronically as required by law, to reduce the risk of them being tampered with.

In a majority ruling, the Supreme Court judges found that "illegalities" and "irregularities" had taken place and therefore annulled the 2017 election and ordered a rerun.

"Essentially the Supreme Court was saying that there was no election. Counting and tallying were not faulty



Supporters of President-elect William Ruto are adamant that he is the rightful winner

- the problem had to do with the transmission and verification of results. Because of this it constituted a violation of the law," said Prof Akech.

According to lawyer Omwanza Ombati, who successfully argued to overturn an MP's election win in 2008 - the first since the reintroduction of multiparty in the early 1990s - although Mr Odinga has a mixed record in terms of his election challenges, he has made "a large contribution to how electoral law is applied in presidential contests".

And yet Mr Odinga, who has now lost five presidential elections, has been widely mocked online.

"I can't believe he started rejecting election results before I was born," one Tweeter said, referring to the 1997 election when Mr Odinga was among opposition leaders to reject then President Daniel Moi's win.

"He would have rejected his own victory if he had won," said another.

But Mr Ombati says the various challenges brought by Mr Odinga and others have improved Kenyan democracy in numerous ways, including the procurement of election materials, hiring of electoral staff, and that results at polling stations should be final.

After his 2013 challenge to President Uhuru Kenyatta's victory was dismissed, Mr Odinga explained why he had no regrets about going to court.

"My decision to file a petition at the Supreme Court to challenge the validity of the election was a statement of my faith in the independence of the judiciary. We did so for the sake of our democracy and for the sake of all Kenyans who wanted to exercise their constitutional right to elect their leaders through free and fair elections."

He was speaking just five years after the country had imploded after claims that election rigging had cheated him of victory. The inter-ethnic violence killed more than

1,200 people and forced 600,000 others from their homes.

Mr Odinga was also one of the key advocates for a new constitution, which was passed in 2010.

Under the previous constitution, it sometimes took five years - a full political term - to hear a case challenging an election, Mr Ombati said.

While Mr Moi was in power, from 1978-2002, the opposition could not serve him court papers challenging his victories because they were required to do so physically. "That constitution gave special status to the election winner," Mr Ombati said.

Judges also showed loyalty to Mr Moi - "the law was used as an instrument to serve Moi's totalitarianism," he added.

The 2010 constitution created the Supreme Court and an open and expedited process that provides a path for election losers to argue their case.

Mr Odinga's latest petition against the declaration of William Ruto as president-elect is being seen as yet another opportunity to help address some of the grey areas that have emerged during the conduct of the recent election, Mr Waikwa says.

Seven Supreme Court judges will listen to the petition.

Although the election was widely praised as being transparent and credible by other electoral agencies, four out of the seven members of the electoral commission have alleged that the latter stages of the results verification process was "opaque", and accused Mr Chebukati of acting unilaterally to declare results the team had not agreed on.

The dissenting commissioners accused Mr Chebukati of announcing results that were a "mathematical absurdity that defies logic".

They said that if you added the percentages each candidate received as announced by the chairperson of the commission the

sum came to 100.01%.

But Mr Chebukati said this was down to a rounding error and was not suspicious.

The electoral commission chief in turn accused his colleagues of betraying their oath of office and wanting him to "moderate" the results to force a re-run.

After Mr Odinga's previous case led to an improvement in the transmission process, now the judges must make a ruling to improve the verification stage, which has led to the current dispute, lawyers say.

These are the questions that Mr Waikwa wants the Supreme Court to answer:

What should the electoral commission do if its verification process finds substantial discrepancies?

Should the electoral team take a vote on how to resolve these discrepancies and would their action disenfranchise voters?

Are there distinctive duties for the chairperson of the electoral commission and the commissioners and if so what are they? For example, is declaring presidential results the job of the commission or the chairperson?

In a very closely contested election, what factors will the Supreme Court take into account in deciding whether to order a fresh election?

In the next 14 days, Kenyans will be treated to the spectacle of the country's best and brightest lawyers engaging in legal jousting at the Supreme Court, which might rekindle the intense passions felt during the closely fought presidential campaigns.

But it will also be a time to celebrate the culture that has now taken root - challenging elections results in court and not on the streets which has often sparked deadly violence in the past.

"The capacity of Kenya institutions has now outpaced the political culture," remarked Murithi Mutiga, Africa Director of Crisis Group.

Win or lose, Mr Odinga, who has been imprisoned and tortured for his fight for a better Kenya, is likely, for the third time in a row, to inspire a ruling that will help make elections more credible and transparent - and that is a monumental contribution to the country's democracy.

Source: BBC NEWS



Supporters of President-elect William Ruto are adamant that he is the rightful winner

Foreign News

Malaysia's ex-PM starts jail term

MALAYSIA former Prime Minister Najib Razak has been sent to jail to begin serving a 12-year sentence, after the top court rejected his appeal.

The 69-year-old's charges relate to a corruption scandal involving state-owned wealth fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

He was convicted in July 2020, but had been out on bail during the appeal.

The court also denied Najib's request to delay his sentence. He has continued to deny any wrongdoing.

In 2020, a court had found him guilty on seven counts - centred on a total of 42m ringgit (\$9.4m; £8m) which was transferred from SRC International - a former unit of 1MDB - into his private accounts.

He was sentenced to 12 years' jail and a fine of 210m ringgit (\$46.8m; £39.7m).

The defence team had argued Najib was led to believe the funds in his accounts were donated by the Saudi royal family rather than misappropriated from the state fund.

They also claimed he was misled by financial advisers, particularly fugitive financier Jho Low - who has been charged in both the US and Malaysia but also maintains



his innocence.

In his final push for freedom on Tuesday, Najib's lawyer requested the removal of Chief Justice Tengku Maimun Tuan Mat from the panel presiding over the case - in what was seen as a bid to forestall a final verdict.

They claimed she could be biased as her husband had made a Facebook post in 2018 which was critical of Najib.

However, the chief justice declined the request as she said the post was before the charges were brought against Najib.

In her verdict, the chief justice said the five-judge panel unanimously found that

the conviction of Najib on all seven counts was safe and the appeal "devoid of any merits".

"The defence is so inherently inconsistent and incredible that it has not raised reasonable doubt on the case," she said.

The charges addressed on Tuesday make up only the first of five trials relating to 1MDB.

Najib's wife, Rosmah Mansor, faces separate money-laundering and tax evasion charges related to a solar hybrid project - to which she has pleaded not guilty. The High Court is scheduled to deliver her verdict on 1 September.

THREE people were killed in a series of attacks on Donetsk, which has been under the control of Russian-backed separatists since 2014, the Russian-installed mayor of Donetsk said in a post on his Telegram channel.

Ukrainian forces have also shelled a building housing the local administration headquarters in the centre of separatist-controlled Donetsk with Western-supplied weapons citing Russian-installed officials.

A separatist official said at least one of the shells used in the attack was fired from a US-made HIMARS artillery system, Russian state news agencies reported.

The UN human rights office has expressed concern about plans by Russian-backed authorities to try Ukrainian prisoners of war (POWs) in the port city of Mariupol, saying such a process could itself amount to a war crime.

The Russian-backed authorities appear to be installing metal cages in a hall in Mariupol as part of plans to establish what they were calling an "international tribunal", Ravina Shamdasani, spokeswoman for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), told a briefing.

Willfully depriving a prisoner of war of the right to a fair trial would amount to a war crime by Russia, she said, adding that Ukrainian POWs were entitled

UN concerned about Ukrainian POW trials



An elderly woman sits on a bench in a yard of destroyed residential buildings in Mariupol.

to protection under the Geneva Conventions.

For most people, they are going to have to be very careful, Bo said. The mayor of Kyiv has asked people to stay at home and public gatherings around the capital have been banned.

Curfews have also been enforced in cities like Kharkiv, where fighting is still ongoing. Hundreds gathered for the Moscow funeral of Darya Dugina, the daughter of a prominent ultranationalist intellectual who was killed in a car bombing that Russia blames on Ukraine.

Alexander Dugin, a vocal supporter of the Kremlin's military campaign who has claimed to be close to President Vladimir Putin may have been the intended target of the attack that killed his 29-year-old daughter.

Ukraine denies any involvement.

Mourners many carrying flowers paid their respects to Dugina at a hall in Moscow's Ostankino TV centre where her black-and-white portrait was displayed over an open casket.

Dugin and his wife, both dressed in black, sat next to

their daughter's coffin.

"She died for the people, for Russia, at the front. The front - it is here," Dugin said at the start of the ceremony.

Dugina was killed on Saturday when a bomb placed in her car went off as she drove on a highway outside Moscow.

Russia says Ukrainian intelligence was behind the attack - a claim dismissed by Kyiv.

The success achieved in integrating refugees from the war in Ukraine should serve as an example for the future, the German government's commissioner for integration told the Deutsche Presse-Agentur (dpa) news agency.

Immediate access to the labour market and integration courses, coupled with assistance from Germany's government employment offices, meant that the arrivals had gone well, Reem Alabali-Radovan said.

"This should be a blueprint for our migration and integration policies, so that we become an immigration and integration country in line with the times," she said.

Stop FBI's reviews of document

LAWYERS for Donald Trump have asked a federal judge to prevent the FBI from continuing to review documents recovered earlier this month from the former United States president's Florida home, until a neutral "special master" is appointed to inspect the records.

The request was included in a court filing on Monday, the first by Trump's legal team since the search at Mar-a-Lago on August 8, that takes broad aim at the FBI investigation into the discovery of classified records from the estate.

The motion, filed in federal court in West Palm Beach, Florida, also asked investigators to return any items outside the scope of the search warrant.

"Politics cannot be allowed to impact the administration of justice," the filing stated, adding: "Law enforcement is a shield that protects Americans. It cannot be used as a weapon for political

purposes."

The filing specifically requests the appointment of a special master not connected to the case who would be tasked with inspecting the records recovered from Mar-a-Lago and setting aside those that are covered by executive privilege - a principle that permits presidents to withhold certain communications from public disclosure.

In other cases, the role of special master has sometimes been filled by a retired judge.

"This matter has captured the attention of the American public. Merely 'adequate' safeguards are not acceptable when the matter at hand involves not only the constitutional rights of President Trump, but also the presumption of executive privilege," Trump's lawyers wrote.

Trump's request on Monday was assigned to US District Judge Aileen M. Cannon

whom the former president appointed to the bench.

A Justice Department spokesman said prosecutors will file their response in court. "The August 8 search warrant at Mar-a-Lago was authorised by a federal court upon the required finding of probable cause," spokesman

-Trump

Anthony Coley said.

The search of Mar-a-Lago marked a significant escalation in one of the many federal and state investigations Trump is facing from his time in office and in private business.

The economy takes centre stage ahead of Angola's elections

Angola will vote for a new president and parliament on Wednesday, in what looks set to be the closest election in Africa's second-biggest oil producer since the country won independence from Portugal in 1975.

President João Lourenço of the governing MPLA, who has made corruption reforms in the southern African country his priority since taking office in 2017, faces Adalberto Costa Júnior of the rebel-turned-opposition group, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

A May Afrobarometer poll gave the ruling MPLA, which has governed Angola since independence, a lead of 7 percent over UNITA. Analysts expect it to win despite growing support for the opposition.

Angola is one of Africa's largest economies. It is the continent's second-largest oil producer after Nigeria, according to OPEC, while Kimberley Process data ranks it as the world's seventh-biggest producer of rough diamonds.

Long dominated by state-owned companies, a legacy of its socialist past, Angola has embarked on ambitious privatisation programmes but progress has been slow.

Authorities expect the restructuring of state oil company Sonangol and diamond miner Endiama ahead of partial IPOs to take a further 12 to 18 months.

Lourenço has also opened anti-corruption probes against the previous MPLA administration.

After five years of recession, Angola's GDP increased 0.7 percent in 2021, according to the World Bank, and the finance ministry expects growth of 2.7 percent for this year. Inflation is falling but remains above 20 percent.

A return to growth linked to higher oil prices has, as usual, not benefitted most Angolans, about half of whom live in poverty, according to the Angola Multidimensional Poverty Index. Such desperation could easily spill over into violence during the elections, said Risk Advisory Group's Laura SearaCabeça.

Investors in the country's \$9bn of outstanding Eurobonds are pricing in a win and a majority of the 220 parliamentary seats for the MPLA, which would mean the continuation of Lourenço's market-friendly policies.

Angola's Eurobonds currently yield above 10 percent, Tradeweb data show, the level at which a country is often

considered to be locked out from issuing new debt.

The country's debt burden soared to a record high of 131 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020 then fell to 75 percent last year, helped by higher oil prices.

A JPMorgan index of Angola's bonds is down 9.3 percent in the last six months, compared with a 12.5 percent fall for the continent as a whole.

Both Lourenço and Costa Júnior have presented similar proposals aimed at diversifying the economy and tax base away from oil and encouraging investment in sectors such as renewable energy, fisheries and tourism, according to Fernandes Wanda, an economist at University Agostinho Neto in Luanda.

But Jon Schubert, a political anthropologist at the University of Basel, says he thinks the ruling MPLA has yet to demonstrate the political will to end Angola's continued heavy dependency on oil.

Lourenço told a campaign rally on Saturday that the MPLA had lifted the "taboo" against privatisation in a country long dominated by socialist thinking on the economy. He also praised a \$3.7bn deal it reached with the IMF in 2018.

"Above all, we gained the

international credibility we needed in international markets," he said.

UNITA has promised to end the "concentration of the economy in a single political and social group" - a reference to Angola being one of the world's most stratified societies, whose elite comprises only those with ruling party connections.

But the opposition has not criticised the government's broader macroeconomic reforms because it would most likely pursue the same policies, said South Africa-based independent analyst Marisa Lourenço, not a relative of the president.

UNITA presidential candidate Costa Junior told Reuters on Sunday he would continue to push for the implementation of an agreement between his party, the MPLA and others to maintain economic stability regardless of which party took power.

"I have pushed for a stability pact and I will continue to do so indefinitely," he said.

Whoever wins will still face volatility in the price of oil, which accounts for more than half of Angola's government revenues and 94% of exports, according to the International Monetary Fund, which said any fall in crude prices could quickly trigger debt problems in the country.



Trump

Feature

Understanding leadership: A discourse

Leadership is a critical function in development. The rise and fall of nations start and end with leadership. When an organisation collapses, check its leadership quotient; when it blossoms give credit to leadership. A bad system can be reversed and transformed into a great one with good and credible leadership. However, a great and formidable enterprise is sure to crumble in time when there is bad leadership. This means that leadership is a catalyst for holistic development. AYUBA YILGAK'HA writes.

THE historical evidence of the role or absence of leadership can be sourced from history itself. The glaring disintegration of political system like socialism which reigned in the days of Fredrick Hegel and Lenin can be attributed to the rise and fall of these leaders. Today, socialism is such an unpopular Ideological system after the end of the cold war and the expansion of capitalism across the world.

The process of sustaining the capitalist system is dependent on the sincerity of the global managers and leaders of the system. A system that is supported by functional policy trusts and legal frameworks which are largely dependent on the world view of its proponents is, likely to default in responding to emerging contradictions requiring prompt attention.

In every generation, the birth of new challenges bring compelling need for elites to brace up and develop a strong leadership response to stabilise and make the system work, even if not perfectly, as there are no perfect systems in a falling world. By the way, what is leadership? and what makes a credible leader in any social ecosystem?

The desire for organised social systems make the desire for leadership germane. Leadership means status of being a leader. The leader is first amongst equals who has the capacity to make others follow willingly. In 1990, Croft Pentz wrote that, a good leader does not only know where he is going but can influence people to come along; he does not place himself above others except in carrying out responsibilities. In other words, leaders are supposed to be responsible, influential with a clear vision of the distant horizon he craves the people to practically reach.

Leadership is a platform for showcasing relative and superior capability humans to create, manage, organised and reorganised their ecosystem for sustainable growth and development. Because human societies evolve, their leadership models are dictated by rational thinking. That is, humans can think and, therefore, they are at liberty to order and reorder their ecosystem through the instrumentality of public policies, laws and even cultural changes. In other words, human beings and their leaders have the leverage to reorder their civilisation either materially (structurally) or non- materially (rules, policies and mores).

Unlike humans, the ecosystem of plants and other animals (other living things) is shaped by the dictates of nature and the inherent activities of man. For example, animals cannot reorder the ecosystem, say forest, by way of afforestation or deforestation. Therefore, their kingdoms are static except otherwise invaded by the activities of man.

A man can invade and reorder the use of land so that where used to be forest can be made into a housing estate, road and other infrastructures. It then follows that while animal's leadership emerges through natural selection, human leadership comes through certain processes and consideration and can be shaped by the instrumentality of formal or informal education and even experience. This discourse, therefore, hypothesises that leadership capabilities are acquired not inherited as insinuated in some quarters.

If this hypothesis is anything to go by, then, it is imperative to understand the fundamentals of credible and quality leadership. A leader must be Consistent, Competent and Courageous (CCC) to fix problems in a system. He must also operate based on shared Vision, Virtues and Values (VVV) to enjoy massive followership amongst people. In addition, a leader has to cultivate Empathy, Empowerment and Emancipation (EEE) of the people as prime



Buhari

drive or passion before he becomes a celebrated legend. Anything to the contrary in respect of these shared strands of leadership features is a misnomer and, so, constitute a breach of performance quotient in functional (transformational and transgenerational) leadership.

Consistency is the conscious ability to believe in something and stand by it, especially, when such stand point has been publicly communicated to the public either in words or actions. It is important to note that when a consistent person gains new information which requires a change in previously held and shared stand point(s), the honourable thing to do is to be humble enough to publicly apologise to publics that might have been communicated such positions. The humility and integrity to do this qualifies one to be seen as honourably consistent. A leader who makes responsible adjustment is not inconsistent but pragmatic.

Competence is the cognitive and practical ability to be successful in solving challenging problems in a system. It involves possessing practical and applicable knowledge and skills to create a functional system or fix a broken one; sustain and make the system work even better. Competence is a practical concept not a theoretical one. It is determined after an activity has been delivered successfully and the feedback duly reported. This means that success or failure in one function, does not automatically guarantee success or failure respectively, in other functions. Even if the activities are the same, times, geographies and situations (internal and external) might have significantly changed. Therefore, new competencies are required for geographic and time changing activities. For instance, successful leaders in analogue democracies might not make successful leaders in digital ones because of changes and variations in technology. A slow and analogue leader who cannot be prompt and responsive to the speedily changing dynamics of the present time is sure to fail no matter how intelligent he or she has been.

Courage is the virtue of being bold and pushy in a fearful and challenging situation. It is a strategic ability to stay on and pursue solutions in a seemingly or practically difficult condition. Courage is the attribute of not being a coward but showing of

bravery in any given circumstance. Stoicists believe that courage is 'the virtue that can champion the course of right.' Therefore, a leader should have a full dose of it encourage his subjects, especially, when things get tough.

The vision of a leader matters a lot, especially, when it is a shared one. Vision can be described as the capacity to see ahead to enable the visioner plans ahead so that the future cannot take him unawares. It is not a snappy glance but a product of constructive venturing into future possibilities which can be attained through shared discipline and dedication. A leader got to have vision for his followers and to ensure that the actualisation of it translates into the overall well-being of the led. The beauty of a leader's vision lies in sharing it with the people it is meant to transform, going forward. There's no leadership when there is no shared vision initiated by a leader to guide the subjects. It was shared vision which drive the process of transforming Singapore from a Third World to a First World country under Lee Kuan Yu.

Value is perceived as the worth of something. It is important that leaders create something worthy to advance the lives of the citizenry. The value a leader attaches to his followers determines the amount of commitment he will cultivate in serving them. A leader who places low premium on his people will serve them carelessly but when high premium is placed on the well-being and progress of the people, adequate and extra attention is placed on their welfare. It is value attachment which sustains or changes the direction of civilisation of a people: Way of life, methods of production and the nature of social relations, whether, at individual, family and community levels. Values can be created, added or placed on something: Value creation is about being innovative; value addition is also about innovativeness or transformed packaging while value placement is about price naming after due assessment.

Virtue has to do with the act or status of maintaining high moral or maternal standard. It is about integrity and the attribute of being resourceful, useful and excellent in all dealings with self and the environment around someone. A leader must strive to cultivate and manifest cherished attributes of integrity, hardwork,

cordial relationships, sympathy, etc. in his daily life with the people. A leader is supposed to serve as a status symbol and his visible character manifestations should serve as a huge source of inspiration to his subjects. The behaviour of a leader is supposed to alter the behaviour of his subjects in positive ways which results in optimal productivity and enhanced social welfare. There is no virtue in fear, excessive anger, waywardness, laziness greed, etc.

Empathy is a very critical element in leadership. Empathy is described as the strategic sense of feeling what others feel. For instance, it is empathy when a leader mentally and emotionally feels the hunger his subjects are feeling; feels the physical pain others are feeling; feels the sense of loss others are feeling; feels the sense of loss or lost others are feeling; feels the fear others are entertaining. Empathy is also about celebrating when others are celebrating; rejoicing with those that are rejoicing. Great leaders are not sadists but personalities who gauged the mood of others and intervened to provide succour as much as they can. They are not insensitive and their peace is unsettled when the peace of others is at stake. It is not myth: A story was told of President of a small Island country who cultivates the habit of going to bed without food when his subjects are found to have slept without food. He denies himself luxury because his subjects were peasant who cannot afford luxurious life. There can be no credible leadership without empathy. A leader that empathises, sympathises; he who sympathises is empathic as well because the two are two sides of the same coin!

Empowerment is another mandate of leaders. Empowerment is the process of increasing the capacity of people to produce (create or add value) and be highly self-independent. It can be effected through the provision of cognitive knowledge, skills and vocational capabilities to produce. Empowerment could also mean material support like finances and other factors of production to encourage economic or social agents to participate and contribute to wealth creation. It discourages free riding and expels laziness in the society. The aim of empowerment is always to promote freedom from lack and undue control by others. An intellectually powerless person or someone who is bereft of ideas and economic power is a perpetual slave and is in dire need of emancipation.

Emancipation is the process of being free from want and undue control. The Maslow Hierarchy of need outlined the stages of need of man from cradle to the zenith where wants becomes drives. The scholar postulated that at the lowest level, man's needs are, basically, those of food, clothing and shelter; the second stage is that of self recognition and love; the next is pursuit of power and self actualisation. Nobody wants to be controlled but to be in charge. That is the sense of freedom people crave. Even though there is no absolute freedom, it is the responsibility and desire of credible leaders to ensure their people are free: Free from lack and free from tyranny. In democracy and capitalism which are the drivers of contemporary global system (globalisation), citizens are entitled to free choice of enterprise, association and their leadership, provided those engagements are done within the confine of law. Emancipation does not mean trampling on the freedom of others but promoting it. It is work done zero when a people are emancipated at the expense of the freedom of others. There has to be a balance to ensure mutual benefit for the total population.

EYE'S WORLD

With *Henrietta Gonzuk*

Health

Red signal to reduce your sugar intake

If too much sugar is present in your diet, you may experience many adverse effects including weight gain, poor skin health and even high blood pressure. Here are other signs you are consuming too much sugar.

Excess sugar consumption can make you feel hungry all the time. Sugar is a compulsory element of everyone's daily diet. But have you ever measured the amount of sugar you consume on a daily basis? Dessert might be your favourite part of the meal but it increases your sugar intake tremendously. All the delicacies like cakes, cookies, chocolates, brownies, donuts and many more are all loaded with sugar. You might have heard the bad effects of consuming too much sugar. It puts you at an increased risk of diabetes, heart diseases and other chronic illnesses. There are some clear signs that your body gives when you are consuming too much sugar. These warning signs can be a red signal for you to reduce your sugar intake. Read on to know such signs which indicate that you are consuming too much sugar.

Eating too much sugar can harm your health in various ways

Signs you are consuming too much sugar

Poor skin health

Sugar can be the actual reason behind the skin conditions you are experiencing. Acne is the most common skin condition you might experience if you are consuming too much sugar. High sugar intake triggers secretion of androgen which results in acne. It also contributes to excess oil production and inflammation. So, do not blame your skin care routine and keep a check on your

sugar consumption for healthy skin.

You are tired all the time

If you feel that you do not have enough energy to complete your day-to-day tasks then you can blame your sugar intake. An increased level of sugar in your diet can drop your energy levels. When you consume foods high in sugar your energy level goes up suddenly which is followed by a sudden drop of energy. Since most foods high in sugar are nutrition deficit, the energy level does not last for longer. You can experience difficulty in completing your workout session and other daily chores.

Constant high blood pressure

Not just salt, sugar can spike your blood pressure as well. Various studies have highlighted the effect of sugar on blood pressure. You must control your sugar intake to avoid hypertension. Hypertension is also a leading cause of cardiovascular diseases.

Weight gain

This is the most common side effect of consuming too much sugar. Your high sugar intake can make it difficult for you to fit into your jeans. A lot of people completely avoid sugar to lose weight. So check the amount of sugar you are consuming to avoid those extra pounds around your belly.

You are hungry all the time

Due to the lack of nutrients in sugary items, you may feel hungry all the time. Lack of fibre and other nutrients will make you eat more to satisfy your stomach. This also contributes to weight gain. You will also feel the need to consume more sugar at times.



How to reduce sugar consumption?

Not just in sweet treats, sugar is hidden in many other non-sugary items. Hence, you must try to control your direct sugar intake. Some ways to control sugar cravings may include:

- You should eat small meals at regular intervals to keep yourself full
- Add food rich in fibre to your diet
- Be careful about the different sources of sugar
- Swap unhealthy sugary items with healthier options
- Avoid processed food as they are loaded with sugar
- Drink plenty of water throughout the day



EVER'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Relationship

Issues that cause stress in marriage

WHILE marriage can be a wonderful and fulfilling experience, no lifelong commitment is likely to run smoothly at all times.

Life can be full of ups and downs which can sometimes challenge the strength of your marriage.

What are some of the common causes of stress in a marriage?

1. Finances

Finances can very easily become a source of stress and worry within your marriage. In difficult economic circumstances couples can have worries about issues such as employment, mortgages, bills, childrearing, healthcare and child minding. The resulting stress and strain can impact on both individuals and as a result the relationship can be under pressure.

It is important to be able to discuss financial matters with one another in a supportive and constructive manner in order to be able to manage them in the best possible way.

Children

Having children can be one of the most wonderful experiences in life however parenthood can also put a strain on a marriage.

The birth and rearing of children can also stress you out at times. Parenthood brings with it a change in lifestyle. In addition to the joys of having a baby, parenthood can involve sleepless nights, concerns about feeding and managing a baby which can all be a shock to the system for couples.

Work Commitments

Whether you're very career-focused working full or part-time your job can demand a lot of you. Work can take up time that you would like to spend with your partner and children. Pressures at work can impact on you and you can find yourself irritable or upset by the time you arrive home.

Difficult Behaviours

It is likely that you and your partner may go through a difficult period at some stage in your lives together. Whether it's the impact of relationship issues, work related issues, family difficulties or personal trauma, these stressful circumstances can sometimes lead to individuals being difficult to get along with.

Husbands and wives who have been relatively easy to get along with can become withdrawn, depressed, aggressive, defensive, argumentative, or secretive when under pressure and this will inevitably impact on their relationship.

It is preferable that couples identify and talk about any behaviours that are becoming problematic and support one another to work to resolve them.

Changes

Think about the person you were when you were a teenager or young adult, which may be completely different to the person you are



today. Imagine how you will be when you're twenty years older than you are today. Although you may hold the same core values, you will have grown and changed as a person in other ways due to the aging process and your life experiences. This will also be the case for your partner.

Both of you are likely to change in some ways over the course of your marriage. You are both growing into the persons you were born to be, so you can't expect anyone to remain the same forever.

Be open to the changes in yourself and your partner. Many of them will be positive as generally people mellow and become wiser as they mature with age and experience.

How can stress and pressure be managed?

Communicating

Communication (talking and listening) is key to healthy relationships and marriages. Open, honest and respectful communication will help you to deal with the trials and tribulations you experience in the course of your lives together. Without a positive pattern of communication, husbands and wives may become unaware of and oblivious to their partner's thoughts, needs and feelings. Lack of communication can result in couples lacking understanding of each other, being inconsiderate towards one another and becoming distant from one another.

Ensure you make time to talk with your partner every day. The more you listen and talk to one another,

the closer you can become. The closer you are, the easier it is to discuss, share and work to solve problems that arise.

Being Attentive

Pay attention to one another. Notice things about one another. Has your husband /wife been quiet, withdrawn, preoccupied or less talkative lately? Do they seem stressed or under pressure? Are they spending a lot of time at work, or are they feeling emotional a lot of the time?

If you think that your husband or wife is stressed or worried, make time talk to them and reassure them that you are there to listen and support them. This will help them to appreciate that you are willing to help in any way you can.

Spending Time Together

Spending time together is an essential ingredient for maintaining and nurturing your marriage. It can help you to appreciate one another, enjoy one another's company, have fun,

deepen your understanding of one another, communicate more, connect with one another and relieve stress. The amount of time you give to someone is an indication of the value you have on them.

By spending as much time as you can together, you can remain connected emotionally, physically, cognitively and spiritually and this connection can deepen as time goes on.

Source: verywellmind.com



Editorial

Paris Club refund debacle

THE back and forth that has characterized the Paris Club refund issue between the Nigeria Governors Forum, the Minister of Justice and the consultants has stretched to its limits the glue of relationship. This has blurred to an extent the arguments being propounded and Nigerians do not know who to believe anymore.

ON the one side, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation, the chief law officer of the federation, is vociferous in pushing forward the position of the consultants for reasons only him can say. On the other hand, the NGF has said it did not enter into any agreement with these consultants and vowed to resist any deduction being made on their resources on behalf of the consultants.

IT is sad and unfortunate that a matter such as this would generate so much bad blood. One would have thought that since the matter had been taken to court, the reasonable thing to do would have been allowing the process to run its course. Embarking on media trial, to say the least is unnecessary and should not have been contemplated at all.

INDEED, for the chief law officer of the federation to engage in the brickbats is itself sad and uncalled for. He should have been the one calling both parties to order, knowing that issues that are still in court should not be discussed in the media until they are vacated. Trying to enforce a judgement that has been appealed is tantamount to truncating a process that is still ongoing and the Attorney General should know that.

UNTIL and unless the process runs its course, there is no reason for the media war and the unnecessary salvos being thrown at each other. What Nigerians expect at the moment is for the various tiers of government to work together in synergy and smoothen out whatever grey areas they have without rocking the boat and creating further confusion in an already tense economic atmosphere.

THAT Nigeria has suffered untold hardships from the activities of political actors and scavengers in the recent past is evident in the rot that has come to characterize our society. No one needs to keep punishing innocent Nigerians because of their ego. Making Nigerians suffer unduly for no fault of theirs is unacceptable and must not be allowed to continue.

THE NGF, Attorney General and the consultants must work out ways to reach an agreement that would not distract Nigerians from focusing on pursuing their daily living. Besides, fleecing the coffers of the government in whatever guise should be discouraged at all cost. A situation where government money is seen as free money is long past. The consultants must therefore provide empirical evidence that they did anything at all to warrant them being given the humongous sums they are claiming.

SO long as the Attorney General does not demonstrate neutrality, he is bound to be suspected of conniving to benefit from the heist that the consultants are laying claim to. He, as the Chief Law officer should be the chief defender of the government not the other way round.

I wish to crave the indulgence of the management and or editorial staff of this newspaper to advise our politicians to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner so as to be role models in our society. Basically, our political heads have a better platform towards impacting positive change in our societal behavior.

Unfortunately, over the years, the behaviours of some of these politicians have left much to be desired. Indeed more worrisome are the unguided statements provocatively uttered even when they know it has the tendency of causing significant damage on the polity. A few days back, I listened with keen interest, the unguided statements offered by a Nigerian politician which for me was uncalled for.

In the aftermath of his submission, I was left to wonder if our politicians really know and are aware of the implications of their utterances in public space or gathering. If I would be allowed to suggest, I think relevant government authorities should begin to monitor with keen interest activities of both political office holders and political actors in Nigeria. I equally think that it's high time



Politicians should be role models in our society

that sanctions are effected against any politician who is found wanting in the area of becoming a role model to our future generations. But again, these politicians themselves must learn from their past lessons and repent from any negative activity which can drag this nation into crisis.

As we get closer to the 2023 general elections, it is hopeful that our politicians will begin to exhibit good conduct and character that would unite the

citizens of this nation. This is because, Nigeria cannot afford to experience any breakdown of law and order which would be devastating to the entire West African sub-region. As we continue to pray for a peaceful, fair and free elections come 2023, we must also avoid any behavior which can puncture the peaceful coexistence of the nation.

Danjuma Wakili, Anguwan Rukuba, Jos.

Of elections and right to choose

IT is a fact that democracy is simply defined as government for the people by the people and of the people. This is no doubt a system that gives citizens rights to participate fully in politics when it comes to election time for the people to elect leaders that would represent them at different levels or offices.

It was in view of this system of government that the people of Osun State in the South West of Nigeria on July 16, 2022 came out to exercise their civic rights by electing a democratic leader that would govern the state for the next four years as a governor as provided by the Nigerian Constitution.

The peaceful conduct of this election that has come and gone, indeed confirmed that the electorate have begun to think inside not outside the box, particularly when it comes to issues that are capable of sparking up violence either before, during or after election.

The Osun polls should as a matter of fact serve as an eye opener for Nigerian electorate now that the 2023 general elections is fast approaching for people to go out and make choices of the leaders that are going to represent them through

the ballot papers.

Certainly, the peaceful conduct of the Osun election did not witness any voter apathy because the people were ready or out to massively vote the candidate of their choice. As reported, despite some cases of the so called vote buying by some candidates, the people were said to have received money from the candidates who insisted on vote buying and perhaps voted against such politicians.

With this kind of pace set from Osun recently conducted gubernatorial election, it therefore, behooves on all and sundry in the country to shun politicians who belief in money bag syndrome in politics

It may interest you to know that the people of Osun have really spoken through their votes by voting out the incumbent governor who is from the ruling party, APC and electing the candidate of the PDP. Senator Adeleke was the People's choice to unseat the incumbent.

It is equally believed that the new

governor elect was elected based on credibility not because of candidate's platform or party. Nigerian electorate should from now henceforth see election beyond financial inducement and party so that credible leaders will always be elected into various offices.

In fact, the success story of the just concluded Osun election cannot be complete without saying a job well done to the INEC for conducting a free and fair polls.

Nigerians should commend INEC for making election very interesting, particularly with the improved technology through the use of BVAS, election would no longer be rigged. This is because any vote cast is transmitted directly into INEC server. Therefore, if it is maintained, the era of rigging is now gone.

Our security agencies should also be applauded for playing significant roles before, during and after the election, especially for maintaining law and order. This was achieved with the support and cooperation of the Osun people.

By JIDAUNA DARING.

Standard Cartoon

FED. GOVT. PLAN TO INCREASE SALARY



Opinion

Dark consequences of climate change in Nigeria

By AMARA NWUNELI

CLIMATE Change is not a foreign word in the English dictionary and in the ears of our people. Although there is no actual term for it in the major Nigerian languages of Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa, we have still heard of the impact of climate change through the common mottled phrases: "my house is flooding," "the car is stuck in the road's swimming pool," "it has been raining for the past three days," "we have not had a successful crop yield this year," "I do not know what I am going to eat today." The list spreads longer than any line of traffic seen in this nation. Its effects are also visible in headlines – "The Crashing Naira" and "The Rising Death rates linked to the Farmer/Herder Conflict." Yet, we still fail to associate our devastating problems with one of the fundamental causes – our worsening climate.

According to the United Nations, "Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns." While some of the noticeable environmental shifts have been natural, human actions like the burning of fossil fuels, excessive use of coal,

deforestation, pollution, and unstructured urban development have accelerated the pace at which the earth is warming, fostering devastating effects on our lives.

With the turn of the 21st Century and the technology age, there is a heightened awareness of the devastation destined for humankind. While there is increased global momentum to generate awareness, effect changes, and propel action in our communities, and is more present in our daily conversations – Nigeria is relatively silent. Countless coastal communities have gotten fully submerged by water, yet, the government has no reliable report on the lives and infrastructure lost. It does not adequately cater to the needs of those most affected.

The pertinent questions have not been asked, and we have failed to create a foolproof plan that ensures a hopeful and just future for the citizens of our country. How will we all migrate and relocate 200 million people who call Nigeria home? At this rate, even the rich will not make it out.

Lagos, home to 20 million people, is severely affected by

climate change. With all our communities built around and near the coastline, the daily pushing of water closer to our land sadly means disaster for us – no matter how much we want to deny it.

Despite the alarming trends of rising temperatures and sea levels, unpredictable weather, and mass, we are still investing a large amount of money in infrastructure, including hotels, resorts, malls, and recreational centers, which are bound to disappear unless urgent action is taken. We all have critical roles to play in averting a looming disaster.

As a government, Nigeria must develop and implement a comprehensive plan for climate action at the Federal, State, and local levels. The government must constructively invest time and money into urban renewal projects, including developing greener environments, urban and rural resilience and sustainability interventions to address flooding, droughts, and erosion.

Private companies and institutions should uphold ethical climate forward values and ensure a limited carbon footprint. They also partner

with nonprofit organizations to implement sustainability initiatives.

Our educational and nonprofit institutions must teach the younger generation about the impact of climate change and our role as climate champions. They must also hold the public and private sectors accountable to ensure that they meet and even exceed their commitments.

As citizens, we must change our lifestyles by educating ourselves about our contributions to climate change through our actions and inactions. We must develop the habit of recycling and using energy sparingly. Every little step counts. For example, if you go to the supermarket and buy an item that does not require a plastic bag, politely decline the packaging, or better yet, bring your cloth shopping bag!

Turn off the water heater after your shower and bring your container to mama put. We must also plant trees and invest in greening our public spaces. A movement could be spurred if we all start incorporating climate action into our daily lifestyle.

I remain optimistic that if we work together, change our mindset on this topic and take swift and constructive action – we can turn around the fate of climate change in Nigeria. Nigerians have the grit, determination, and the power to accomplish anything. It is not up for discussion whether or not we need change. We are doing it for us, for our country, and for the future. Nkiruka!

Amara Nwuneli is a 15-year-old social innovator driven to make an impact. She manages a social media movement called FightGlobalWarmingNg.

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Vacuum of transparency accountability in CSO's space

By IBRAHIM TANKO SALISU

"He Who Comes Into Equity Must Come With Clean Hands."

This old maxim is the basis of the clean hands doctrine and constitutes the meat of this treatise that seeks to thrust a beamlight on the activities of NGO's and CSO's in the democratic realm of Nigeria. The core thrust of mainstream civil society organizations (CSO's) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) is to promote human rights, democracy, good governance, and the protection of civil liberties in ecosystems where they operate.

Indeed, many of Nigeria's civil society startups exist precisely because the barrier for entry is so low. Unlike under military rule, today's newly formed NGOs are relatively free to operate, build relationships, and seek support with international donors. They are also now able to leverage transformative outreach and fundraising tools on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp amongst others. Since 2015, legislators have twice introduced bills to strictly regulate NGOs,

even though they are already subject to corporate laws such as the Companies and Allied Matters (CAMA) Act. It claims that some NGOs "solicit funds for selfish motives" and "fund the activities of insurgents," based on submission(s) of Nigeria's military agencies much earlier. The House deputy majority leader introduced the first such bill in 2016, but it failed to pass before the legislative session ended in 2019.

The Speaker, Federal House of Representatives, Right Honourable Femi Gbajabamila championed a similar bill in 2019, declaring that NGOs needed stricter regulation because some were aiding the Boko Haram insurgency. This second bill aimed to create a civil society regulatory agency with just four civil society representatives on its nineteen-seat board. Two of those four would be nominated by the National Youth Council of Nigeria.

In early 2020, the bill stalled amid sharp criticism from civil society and some legislators, one of who reminded his colleagues how, under military rule, pro-democracy NGOs gave their "blood, sweat and resources to win democracy for the

country." Nevertheless, legislators amended the Companies and Allied Matters Act (CAMA) in 2020 to increase state influence over civil society groups, empowering the government to remove trustees from the board of an NGO when, for instance, it deems that doing so is in the "public interests."

Mainstream NGOs of all sizes and construct need funds to operate, organize events, conduct training and research, pay staff, and rent office space. Most legitimate NGOs are supported either directly by grants or task-specific contracts from international development agencies and charitable foundations, or indirectly via partnerships with larger NGOs. Many disclose their funding pipeline on their web portal, at their events, or in their annual reports. Most international donors likewise publish details of the projects and organizations they fund.

It has been expressed in some quarters that some NGO's represent a meaningful threat to Nigeria's democratic development, social cohesion, and long-term stability. Professor of International Studies and professor of Anthropology at Brown University, Daniel Jordan Smith noted much earlier, that a large proportion of Nigeria's NGOs of were created in response to the growing availability of donor monies, contributing to the average citizen's belief that NGOs were somehow linked to a world of "fraud, deceit, and corruption."

Nigeria's mainstream Civil Societies sector are the primary conduit for international assistance focused on democracy, good governance, and human rights promotion in Africa's most populous nation. It's strongly advised that the Nigerian government via the

levers of legislation of the National Assembly to enforce existing corporate laws, ensuring that all NGOs register with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), identify a board of trustees populated by individuals with unblemished records, and submit annual financial reports to the commission – These lacunae are drawbacks that are not strictly adhered to by a large number of NGO's and CSO's in the civil society ecosystem. Some of the grants and the description of the grants does not match the beneficiary NGO/CSO's scope, from 2008-2021 Socio-Economic Right and Accountability Project (SERAP) have been awarded \$3,142,167 from one donor, Connected Development Initiative (CODE) was awarded \$350,000 by the same donor to Monitor the funds in Kaduna State's Universal Basic Education Commission, and also International Centre for Investigative Reporting got \$1,537,255 from 2016-2021 from the same donor. Enough Is Enough (EIE) was given \$100,000 to disburse as Covid19 Palliative Support with no evidence of disbursement.

Nigeria's tax enforcement and anti-corruption agencies should also investigate mainstream NGOs particularly with respect to their sources of funding, tax compliance, and relationships with politically exposed persons. It's highly imperative for diplomats, donors and development partners, as well as legitimate domestic and international NGOs, also could do more to call out pro-government groups toxic tendencies and exert requisite pressure on their high-level sponsors. Time would tell, if these recommendations are implemented by the parties that operate in these ecosystem.

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News

PENCOM clamps down on workers over pension benefits

THE National Pension Commission has vowed to take action against relatives, workers and retirees who fake deaths of contributors to the Contributory Pension Scheme in order to get the benefits entitled to deceased persons.

To ensure that a worker is truly dead apart from other means of verification, PenCom has also asked the banks to close the accounts of reported dead persons so that they would not be able to operate bank accounts again in the country.

The pension industry's regulator decided on this move due to growing incidences of fake deaths being organised to get out the balances in the Retirement Savings Accounts of reported dead workers.

The Head, Benefits & Insurance Department, PenCom, Obiora Ibeziako, disclosed this while speaking on administration of retirement benefits and efforts to safeguard the pensions of workers.

He said, "Nigerians have been dying and resurrecting. If you send us a notification that you are dead, we will make sure that your bank blocks your account also."

"We have seen people fake their own deaths; we have seen spouses fake the deaths of their partners when the PFAs start the due process."

"In fact, in a particular case, they were processing a man's death benefit and he walked in and everybody picked up. The wife had actually procured obituary announcement, everything that required to be done without the man knowing."

He added that, "There was a particular case, we called the man and he said yes, he arranged his death that he needed the money."

"So, the PFAs shall seek the commission's approval to get the legal beneficiaries and the available balance in the deceased RSA account. For any deceased RSA account, the PFA must send the request to the commission for approval."

PenCom had earlier said in circular that, "The commission has received series of complaints from retirees, who alleged that their PFAs have wrongfully paid their benefits to their next of kins or legal beneficiaries, while they are still alive and in active service without their consent."

"Following these complaints and reports by the PFAs, it has become imperative to issue additional measures to curb these complaints and strengthen the processes and



Oni

practices of processing and payment of death benefits."

PenCom ordered the PFAs to contact the employer of the deceased for verification and confirmation of death of employees.

The pension regulator ordered the PFAs to ensure

due diligence and conduct search at the probate registry of the issuing authority to confirm the genuineness of the documents as well as the verification of the information of the named administrator and sureties.

Illicit drugs: NDLEA arrests 63 yr- old

OPERATIVES of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has apprehended a 63-year-old grandfather, Afolabi Abideen Kolawole, for allegedly shipping illicit substances to his daughter in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

NDLEA spokesman, Femi Babafemi, in a statement on Sunday said Afolabi was behind an intercepted drug exhibit going to Dubai.

Afolabi's consignment had earlier been intercepted on the 4th of August, he was however, arrested in Ibadan, Oyo state on Thursday 18th August after more than four sets of arrests eventually unraveled him.

The 63-year-old confessed that he was responsible for the packaging of cannabis inside the black native soap used as mode of concealment.

According to Babafemi, while Abibu was still being interviewed in custody, a 37.1kg consignment of Loud intercepted on July 7, 2022, was also traced to him.

Meanwhile, over 2.3million tablets of illicit pharmaceutical opioids and other psychoactive substances meant for distribution in seven Northern states of Borno, Kano, Kaduna, Sokoto, Zamfara, Gombe and Nasarawa have been intercepted by operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA in series of interdiction operations in the past week.

In all, a total of Two Million Three Hundred and Twenty Five Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty Three (2, 325, 553.00) tablets and capsules of Tramadol, Pregabalin, Hypnox, Diazepam and Exol-5 including 7, 353 bottles of a

new psychoactive substance locally called Akuskura meant for the seven states were seized from locations across Kaduna, Kogi, Sokoto, and the FCT.

In Kaduna, a drug dealer Umar Sanusi, was arrested on Friday 12th August during a follow up operation in Kano and brought back to Kaduna where his consignment of 50 cartons of pregabalin 300mg, containing 750,000 capsules, weighing 375kgs earlier seized along Abuja-Kaduna expressway was counted and weighed in his presence.

Same day, operatives also intercepted along Abuja-Kaduna express road 7,068 bottles of a new dangerous substance of abuse called Akuskura meant for Kaduna, Zamfara, Gombe, Kano and Borno.

The recipients in Kaduna and Zamfara have been arrested during follow up operations. The following day, Saturday 13th August, 285 bottles of the NPS were recovered from a dealer, Abubakar Ahmad, along the same highway.

In Kogi, no fewer than 696,000 tablets of Tramadol and Exol-5 among others loaded into a truck at Onitsha, Anambra state and heading to Maiduguri, Borno state, were seized along Okene-Abuja expressway on Friday 19th Aug, while NDLEA operatives also recovered 300,000 tablets of Diazepam from a suspect, Faruku Bello, 30, in Sokoto State on Wednesday 17th Aug.

Anti-narcotic officers of the Agency in Abuja FCT equally at the weekend intercepted a bus loaded with 323, 200 tablets of Tramadol 225mg and others at Onitsha, Anambra state heading to Nasarawa state. Driver of the

THE attention of the Comptroller General of Immigration Isah Jere Idris has been drawn to some reports announcing a recruitment exercise into the Service. In some of the reports, unsuspecting job seekers are required to visit a certain portal to apply and later be directed to a link where they would be expected to make some payments.

These reports including the portal are NOT only false but are also calculated ploys to deceive and defraud unsuspecting job seekers into parting away with their hard-earned resources. The Service is currently NOT conducting any recruitment exercise and therefore members of the public are by this notice, enjoined to ignore such publications to avoid falling into the antics of job scammers.

The Comptroller General hereby restates that the Service has always used all the conventional as well as its verified social media platforms including the website to announce any recruitment exercise and

We aren't recruiting Immigration Service raises alarm



Idris

that in such exercises, members of the public are NEVER required to make any payments whatsoever. He therefore, wishes to use this medium to call on the public to completely ignore such spurious publications of recruitment exercise into the Service to

avoid being defrauded by unscrupulous and deceitful elements out there. He assures that deliberate efforts are being made to get at those behind such fraudulent recruitment activities with a view to bringing them before the law.

exhibits were concealed inside some gallons of palm oil and honey, which were packed among food items and hair attachment.

An Italy-bound passenger, Oziengbe Ehigialua Andrew, 55, was on Friday 19th Aug arrested with 600grams of Tramadol 200mg while attempting to board Royal Air Maroc flight to Italy, via Casablanca.

In the same vein, seven cartons of khat leaf with a total weight of 295kg have been seized at the NAHCO import shed of the Lagos airport. The consignment came into Nigeria from Tanzania through Cairo on Egypt Air.

Operatives of the Directorate of Operation and General Investigation, DOGI, in NDLEA attached to courier firms have intercepted 11.36kg heroin and cannabis packaged for UAE, Netherlands and Omar. The drugs were concealed in dictionary, fancy light and body cream

In Niger state, 139 bags and 176 compressed blocks

of cannabis loaded in Ogere, Ogun state and heading to Zaria, Kaduna state were seized by NDLEA operatives along Abuja-Kaduna road, Suleja from a company vehicle while the driver, Sani Mohammed, 44, and his assistant, Abubakar Abubakar, 30, were arrested.

Raids carried out in Akala, Mushin area of Lagos also led to the arrest of Pelumi Goodness and Ola Funke while over 1,171.75kg cannabis and 29 litres of codeine syrup were recovered.

Chairman/Chief Executive of NDLEA, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (Retd) commended the officers and men of the MMIA, Kaduna, Kogi, Sokoto, and FCT Commands as well as DOGI for the arrests and seizures. He urged them and their compatriots across the country to intensify their drug supply reduction and drug demand reduction efforts.

Why I stoned my two kids to death – Father

A 25-year-old man known as Elisha Tari, has disclosed why he stoned his two children to death in his home.

Recall that the Adamawa State Police Command arrested Elisha for stoning two of his children, aged 3 and 5 years old, to death.

While being paraded on Monday, the suspect confessed that he has a psychological problem and was once tied in chains some time ago.

"I smoke Indian hemp, drink alcohol, and inhale snuff. I don't take tramadol or any other hard drugs," he

said.

Tari explained that an attempt to bring his wife and the mother of the deceased children, who left her matrimonial home for two months, proved abortive.

On that fateful day, he said the deceased children approached him while he was cooking and he asked them "When is our mother returning back home?"

He said that he also asked them to say "God" but instead, they said "fire, and kept saying fire, fire, instead of God."

According to him, this

infuriated him and led him to pick stones to hit the children.

"I became irritated and provoked by their action as a result which I picked up stones and hit them on their heads to death," Tari added.

CHANGE OF NAME

HARUNA

I, formerly known as **MUSA AROMA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **HARUNA YERIMA**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

News

Bauchi police debunk insinuations

From **ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi**



Dogara

BAUCHI State Commissioner of Police, Umar Mamman Sanda has debunked insinuations credited to the immediate past Speaker of the House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Yakubu Dogara of alleged dereliction of responsibility by men and officers of the Bauchi Police Command, especially concealing information on the alleged plan by one of his constituents, said to have mooted an idea of killing him.

Describing Dogara's statement as false, without any aorta of truth, the police commissioner said his Command lacks established fact in the alleged plan to kill the former Speaker, saying it is only a thorough investigation that could determine and conclusively put to rest the orchestrated plan by the suspects.

"What initially happened was we have got an intelligence report that one of our officers is trying to sell guns which were said to have already been in his car. So we went out looking for him. When we got him with a car and asked who own it, he answered that it belongs to him, whereas upon search guns were found inside".

The commissioner while fielding journalists' questions on the matter in Bauchi further narrated about the happening. "The suspect was asked who gave him the guns, and answered that he picked it from the Command's armoury to sell. Are you selling Command's guns? And he answered in the affirmative, so we arrested him."

Sanda explained that in the course of investigations, the suspect mentioned his brother with whom they were living together in the same compound who was also subsequently arrested. "Upon interrogation, the first suspect admitted he had contact with someone in Tafawa Balewa who wanted to buy gun, based upon which he picked the guns from the Command's armoury. We also went and arrested the prospective buyer of the guns.

"The prospective guns' buyer when questioned about the need for the guns' purchase, said he was disturbed with the incident of December 2021 of late Baba Gonto book launch during which event his house was burnt. He alleged that the incident was masterminded by some people including Dogara and mentioned the names of the other persons, and that was the reason he was looking for gun to kill them".

In the course of investigations, we also discovered after auditing the armoury that apart from the two guns we earlier seized from the suspects, some weapons in our armoury were also missing. As I'm talking to you now, one of our armoury staff who retired three years ago has also been arrested."

CP Umar Sanda further explained that it was in the course of thorough

investigations by the Command when suddenly the former Speaker wrote to the IGP Alkali Baba Usman about the threat to his life, accusing the Bauchi Police Command of not informing him about what has been transpiring right from the onset.

Dogara said that he has been authoritatively informed that "One Barau Joel Amos has confessed that the reason he sought to buy the rifles is to kill me and three of my constituents, vis: Bar Istifanus Bala Gambar, Rev Markus Musa (CAN Chairman, T/Balewa) and Emmanuel (Chairman NL, T/Balewa)".

"I find it worrisome that there has been no official advice from the police relating to this credible threat to our lives to enable us beef up security around us or just to be careful about our movements. More

so, there is a spike in cases of kidnappings and killings by unknown gunmen especially in Lere District of T/Balewa. A case in point was the recent attack at Boto town where some relations of a former Governor of the state were killed while some were abducted", Dogara said.

Commissioner of Police, Umar Sanda said however in the Sunday's press interview that apart from the allegation of the lone suspect, there wasn't any collaborative statement from any other person or the guns purportedly sold to conclude that Dogara's life is under any threat.

"So it is wrong insinuations credited to former speaker Dogara against the Bauchi Police Command that its operatives were not up and doing, particularly on this case of threat to his life.

Member's assault: NAWOJ demands ex-husband's arrest, prosecution

By **EZEKIEL DONTINNA**

THE Nigeria Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ) has raised an alarm over the insensitive and brutal treatment given to one of its members, demanding the immediate arrest and prosecution of her ex-husband in Adamawa State recently.

This was contained in a press statement signed by NAWOJ's President, Ladi Bala, and made available to **THE NIGERIA STANDARD** in Jos,

the Plateau State capital yesterday following report of physical and domestic violence against women by their spouses.

The statement stated that, "the Nigeria Union of Women Journalists (NAWOJ) has noted with concern, the alarming spikes in the cases of physical and domestic violence against women by their spouses. The ugly development is becoming worrisome, reprehensible,



Bala

dastardly thus, totally unacceptable.

"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. One of the sad cases, is confirmed dead from the alleged unfortunate violence.

"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", it stated.

The President also observed with serious concern the alleged case of a man along with his side female lover who macheted his wife in River State but, now cooling off in police net at Elele in Rivers State,

"The most recent being the case of a female journalist, a mother of three working with the Adamawa Broadcasting

CJ to implement committee's recommendation on staff employment

Following recommendations arising from discoveries by Kogi High Court's Council of Judges' subcommittee on Repositioning and Supervising the Directorate of Personnel Management of the Court, the Acting Chief Judge of Kogi State, Hon. Justice Josiah Joe Majebi, has pledged to implement the recommendations of the committee without delay.

The committee has recommended the termination of the employment of staff employed into the system through a process it described as an "abnormality".

Members of the committee who were received by the Acting Chief Judge in his office at the High Court of Justice headquarters in Lokoja stated in their report that names of persons on the pay roll of the High Court were not found on the court's nominal roll (register).

The committee stated that the numbers of employed staff within the period of January 2021 to June 2022, falls within the period of its terms of reference.

"After a careful check of the names of newly employed staff from January 2021 to June 2022, the staff disposition list and payroll, it was discovered that some of the names on the payroll could not be found on the staff disposition list of the courts and other departments.

"Therefore, it is an indication that though their names are on the pay roll but they do not have duty stations and do not work anywhere in the Inspectorate offices" stated the committee in its interim report.

The four man committee which also comprised a Deputy Director in the Directorate, Mr.

Paul B. Egwu, as member also has the Acting DPM/DCR of the High Court, Ezema A. Beatrice Esq., as its Secretary.

According to the Chairman of the committee, Hon. Justice Umar, who had earlier appreciated the Chief Judge for deploying his experience in carving out a vision that will strengthen and restore the integrity of the judiciary, he said as supervisors of the Directorate of Personnel Management, the committee ensured that they aligned with the CJ's vision and in doing that a lot of things were unraveled.

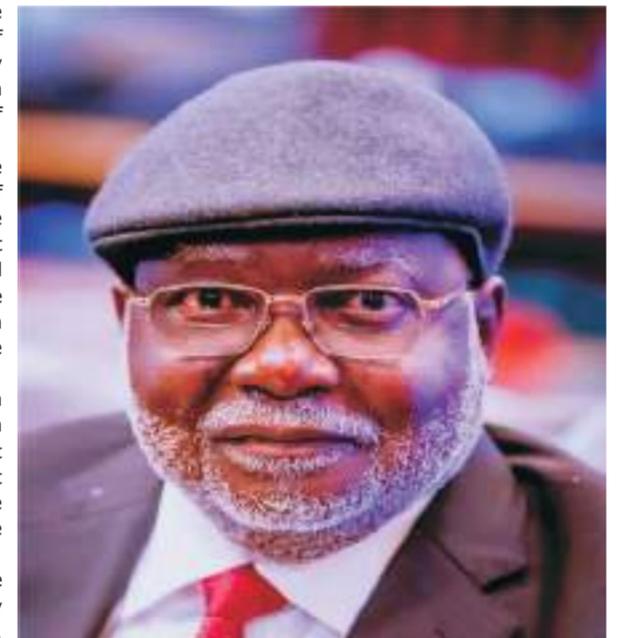
He said since their focus was from January 2021 to June 2022, they relied upon the report of the Committee on Staff Verification of the High Court of Justice submitted in December, 2020 to appraise the entire workforce of the High Court shortly after the unfortunate demise of the late

Chief Judge, Hon. Justice Nasiru Ajanah, which "changed everything in the system".

He said subsequent administrations, not minding the finances of the judiciary, threw the organization into what led to agitations for implementation of promotions and minimum wage by judiciary workers.

He said the committee realized that the agitations were not unconnected with the "astronomical rise" in the High Court workforce within this period and decided to be rightly guided.

"If doing the right thing has any negative effect on some individuals such action cannot be faulted so long as the decision and action is beneficial to the system and it is sustainable for both the staff of the organization and the overall administration of justice itself.



Ariwoola

Corporation (ABC) Yola, Nafessah Vandi.

"She 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.

"Painfully but, curiously, is the fact that he resolved to brutalise the wife few minutes after issuing her with a divorce letter as a parting gift. This dehumanising development must not be condoned and tolerated by any sane and civilised society," she narrated.

Bala, described as disheartening 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 were still in the habit of beating their wives and treating them as slaves and not partners by inflicting injuries on them.

She stressed that these

cases shall not be allowed to slide away and 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.

"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", the President warned.

Meanwhile, NAWOJ has equally called 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. She 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

Foundation empowers indigent pregnant women

THE Hina-Gana Foundation, a Humanitarian based Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) has assisted 100 indigent pregnant women from four area councils in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) with birth kits.

Its Founder, Hajiya Hadiza Gana Mohammed, distributed the items to the beneficiaries on Monday, during the launch of the Foundation's maiden edition of "Birth a Child Programme" which held at Atlas Hotel, Gwagwalada, Abuja.

According to her, the "Birth a Child Programme" was conceived to prevent deaths of innocent babies during delivery, saying that some women cannot afford basic kits and sometimes endanger the babies and themselves.

"We noticed that most of this women doesn't have the basic necessities to give birth to a child so this is a show of love to the innocent child.

"We take care of street children and try to ensure they are enrolled into school to get some education but during one of my outreaches in Kaida village, Gwagwalada, I witnessed a pregnant woman who died in my presence while trying to birth a child.

"During the delivery there was nothing like hand gloves or pads not a single delivery kit and it was from that day I decided that I was going to involve pregnant women because no woman deserves to die while giving birth," she explained.

The birth a child Programme will be an annual project and we will do our best to help those really in need. For this particular



Farouk

maiden edition, we selected women from Kwali, Gwagwalada, Zuba, area councils.

In his remarks, the Founder of Soulbrax Women and Youth Empowerment Initiative, Honorable Suleiman Ibrahim Barde Kutunku, lauded the Programme calling on everyone to have Humanitarian attitude to make our country a better place.

"If there is genuine love we won't have crises in the country. "Most times women have high blood pressure because they don't have delivery items and they know they will be harassed but Hina Foundation has settled that problem in her own capacity and it's very commendable and deserves all the support to

cater for needs of more poor pregnant women," he said.

One of the beneficiaries Alonge Esther, a residence of Dukpa village Gwagwalada, said most pregnant women in rural areas can't afford delivery kits so they end up giving birth at home, adding that the items will go a long way in reducing delivery cost for her and other pregnant women.

A 22-year old Student, Umar Farouk, was on Tuesday sentenced to six months imprisonment at a Kado Grade 1 Area Court Abuja, for stealing two laptops worth N325,000.

Farouk of Jahi Abuja, who pleaded guilty to the charges of criminal trespass and theft, however, prayed the court to temper justice with mercy and be lenient with him.

"Yes I committed the offence, the economy has been really difficult especially with the ongoing strike and I regret my actions; I ask that the court have mercy on me," the convict said.

Delivering judgment, the Area Court Judge, Mohammed Wakili Justice, convicted and sentenced him following his admission of the offence.

Justice said the court found the defendant guilty of the offence, in line with his plea for mercy.

"Farouk is hereby sentenced to six months imprisonment with an option to pay N10,000 fine," Wakili pronounced.

He ruled that the sentence would serve as a deterrent to those with similar intentions, adding that cases of theft were becoming rampant in the society.

The Area Court Judge advised the convict to be of good behaviour by using his talent as an IT student to take care of himself and avoid committing crime in future.

Earlier, the prosecution counsel, Mr Edwin Ochayi, said Mr Sadiq Aroke of Lugbe Abuja, also the Manager of Prized Photos Jabi Shoprite,

Student jailed 6 months for stealing laptops

reported the matter at Life Camp Police station on July 27.

Ochayi told the court that the convict had committed the offences at 8:50 p.m. on April 5, at Prized Photos Jabi Shoprite, Abuja.

According to him, the convict entered into the photo shop at Jabi shoprite and complained that the ATM machine in the mall swallowed his ATM card.

He said while at the shop, Farouk tactically picked the

office keys, which gave him access into the photo studio where he stole two HP laptops, one valued at N225,000 and the other N100,000.

The counsel further said the convict ran to an unknown destination, not knowing the CCTV camera captured him, saying during police investigation on July 27, Farouk was arrested.

The offence, Ochayi said, contravened the provisions of the Penal Code Law.



Alkali

ASUU sets date to call off strike

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) will on Sunday meet in order to decide whether to call off the ongoing strike or continue with the industrial action.

Sources among the union's National Executive Council (NEC) members told Journalists on Monday that the

meeting will hold at the union's national headquarters at the University of Abuja.

It was gathered that the council will take a decision on the industrial action based on reports from the various state congresses.

"The NEC meeting will hold on August 28. The four weeks

ultimatum that we gave is expiring that same day. We will be making our decisions based on the results of the state congresses.

"The NEC has to depend on the result of the congresses. The zones have held their own congresses; the branch chairmen will also talk to their members and they will get feedback which will be transmitted to the NEC," one

of the sources said.

When asked if the union will consider calling off the strike, the source asked, "Does it look like the government wants to end the strike?"

Confirming the date of the NEC meeting, the chairperson, ASUU, Federal University of Technology, Minna, Dr Gbolahan Bolarin, simply said, "Yes, Sunday."

CSO tackles youth group over Niger Delta romance

Northern Socio-Economic Recovery Team (NSERT), a civil society organisation, has berated the Amalgamated Arewa Youth Groups for accusing the Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Lucky Irabor of romancing with Niger Delta militants.

NSERT Convener, Yusuf

Gidado and its Secretary, Danladi Goni, stated on Tuesday in Abuja that the youth group was also wrong to have accused Irabor of militarising other zones, but the Niger Delta region.

The Arewa Youth Groups

made the allegations against Irabor during a protest to NNPC Ltd.

The protest was to demand the termination of a pipeline protection contract awarded by the Federal Government to former militant leader, Mr Government Ekpemupolo (Tompolo).

NSERT described the youth group as misguided and ungrateful.

It stated that they were likely being backed by those engaging in illegal bunkering or those benefitting from the security challenges in the northern part of Nigeria.

"As stakeholders who are monitoring developments in our region, we are appalled by those wild and unsubstantiated allegations against the military and the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS).

"They should tell Nigerians the linkage between pipeline protection

contract awarded by the Ministry of Petroleum and the Armed Forces of Nigeria.

"The CDS since his appointment has visited the Niger Delta several times and intensified the fight against illegal oil bunkering which has saved the country hundreds of billions of naira," NSERT stated.

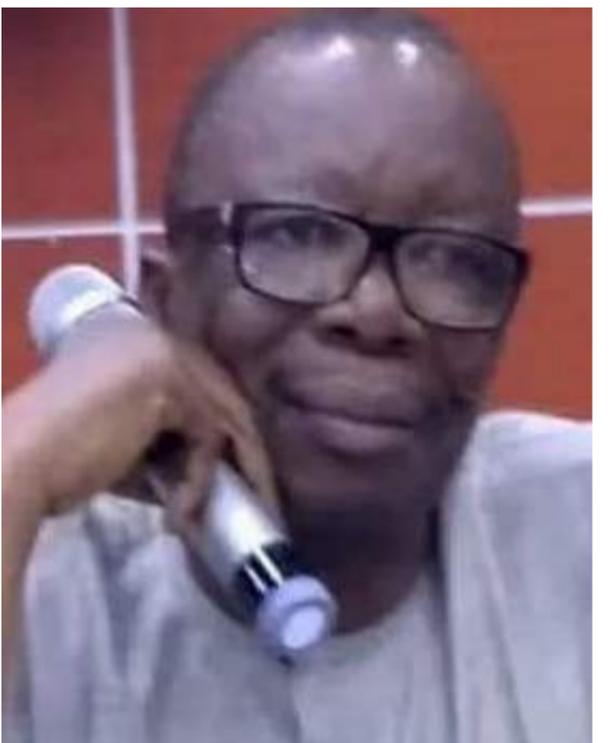
It noted that the synergy being promoted by the defence chief had ensured that bandits and terrorist groups in the northern region were constantly under fire leading to mass surrender.

It urged the youth group that protested to NNPC to realise that it would take Nigeria decades to recover from banditry and insurgency that had plagued the region.

"We are beginning to think they are being sponsored by those who are angry with on-going successful military operations in the northern region," NSERT stressed.



Irabor



Osodeke

On bandits threat to Buhari, El-Rufai



BY FRANCISCA ADIDI

It is no longer news that Nigeria has been battling with bandits' operations in the country. At the same time, it is not surprising to many Nigerians that terrorists have extended abduction threats to President Buhari and El Rufai. This is because; many banditry activities going on in the country have not been tackled by the federal government.

That was why barely 24 hours after terrorists threatened to abduct President Muhammadu Buhari and Kaduna Governor Nasir el'Rufai in a viral video, troops of Guards Brigade were ambushed by armed bandits in Abuja resulting to three soldiers wounded. The situation has thrown residents of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) into a panic.

The intelligence reports have disclosed that the terrorists have

laid siege on the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) with the intention to attack the Law School in Bwari and other government facilities. This has exposed the level of negligence of the authorities in curbing the situation in the country.

The same group of terrorists that abducted passengers of Kaduna train on March 28 also threatened to kill some of the passengers and sell off others as slaves. This is a serious threat that Mr President and Nigerians should not take lightly. Yet the statement by the President's Senior Assistant on Media and Publicity, Garba Shehu said the President had done the needful for the Armed Forces.

The question many Nigerians are asking is, when will the Armed Forces do the needful? Is it when Buhari and El Rufai are abducted before the needful will be done and Nigerians will be delivered?

Yet amid the outcry over the latest viral video by the terrorists, the Presidency still reassured Nigerians that the military was on the red alert.

The happenings within Bwari area of Abuja shows that the terrorists are actually within the location and possibly to carry out their plans of attacking the Law School in Bwari as was allegedly reported.

Report had it that the Assistant Director Army Public Relations, Guards Brigade, Captain Godfrey Abakpa, confirmed that soldiers were attacked by suspected terrorists but were repelled successfully. Is that enough efforts?

The video which showed the terrorists who hijacked the Abuja/Kaduna passenger train

flogging the male captives while the women and children amongst them wept, elicited outbursts, especially by some relatives of the victims. The angry and worried relatives vowed to occupy public properties in Abuja over what they described as government's tardiness in freeing their loved ones.

The terrorists had on the day of the attack killed nine passengers and whisked away about 63 others. About 20 of the hostages were released at different times after payment of ransom, leaving 43 others in captivity.

The Presidency said "security forces are not relenting" in their efforts to defeat criminal elements yet terrorists activities are on the increase and most Nigerians do not sleep with their eyes closed nor would like to travel like they used to for fear of the unknown.

The Nigeria situation today is a pointer that "terrorist activity using propaganda and the use of violence to force governments to accept or submit to political demands are not new all over the world.

It also dismisses the calls for carpet bombing of the hideouts of bandits as a solution that it will not help arrest the situation. Knowing also that it could lead to the death of their victims.

If the President has done all, and even more than what is expected of him as Commander-in-Chief and Governor El-Rufai has done his best by way of morale, material and equipment support to the military, we would have expected nothing short of good results in the immediate, the threats to their lives



would not have arisen and the activities of bandits in the country would have been a thing of a past. At least the country's security and defence forces are not clueless or helpless. If they have their plans and ways of doing things; they should execute it immediately.

It suffices to say that the security forces are not relenting. They are acutely aware of their duties, responsibilities and what the nation expects of them. Therefore, should they allow the President and El-Rufai be abducted. It will be a huge slap and shameful to the country known as the giant of Africa, thereby Nigeria will turn into an abattoir.

Should we say except for the laxity of the Federal Government in dealing with the insecurity of the country that the terrorists have the guts to threaten the President and El-Rufai who they have singled out to send words to them. Is this however a signal to where the problem is coming from?

Many Nigerians are worried, they can no longer cope with the silence of the government and security agencies on the need to arrest the terrorists in the country, as they are tired of paying ransoms.

At this point therefore, it seems Nigerians are tired and helpless. They need to be assured of immediate action to be carried out on

these terrorists in our midsts. The delay is longer than how Nigerians envisaged and it is affecting other aspects of lives'.

No wonder, the coalition of Northern Groups (CNG) recently faulted the Federal Government over the country's grave security situation, lamenting glaring failure on the part of government to address the growing national threats.

The open threats to abduct the President and sitting governor in the video proves the extent to which the country has lost out to these bandits. Having come this far, Nigerians are no longer in doubt that the only option to dealing with this problem is the hard way. No people would want to continue to live under such conditions while being led by a government that appears to run from these glaring threats.

What is happening today in Nigeria is a huge embarrassment not only to this government but entire Nigerians at home and in diaspora.

Because one may be tempted to ask why the Nigerian government could watch her citizens suffer and deliberately refuse to protect their lives particularly in the current situation in Nigeria.

Nigerians living by God's mercy



By PETER H. TITLE

ONE had talked, preached and exhibited his displeasure in this medium on the activities of terrorists, robbery, banditry, kidnappings, and ritualists in our society times without number. They had described Nigeria as Jagajaga, baboon and a failed nation because our leaders have shown less interest in the provision of social welfare to the citizens and their ineptitude posture in tackling security challenges that had bedevilled the nation over the years. Still, nothing or less is seen to be done by Nigerian government despite the outcry by all and sundry.

Instead, their activities has swelled up, snowball, gained more weight and support from only God knows where. Their modus operandi is overwhelming now using sophisticated weapons to unleashed terror,

hardship, maimed and even killed innocent people all over the nooks and crannies of the country.

It's therefore obvious, our country is in dire need of help. Apart from the killings and abductions, to say the citizens are suffering is an understatement. They are at the mercy of God and the men of underworld. The masses always meet their gruesome death either in the farms, on the roads, at homes and everywhere because nowhere is safe in our country.

One used to believed that travelling by air and rail was the safest, and it was indeed so, not until the security situation of the nation continued to degenerate to the extend that the bad elements took over the spaces, right from the air down the earth. There is no doubt, the dare devils have held the country to ransom to an extent that if one leaves his or her comfort zone and returned unharmed, then one have to celebrate and gives thanks to our maker (God) for His protection.

To break the camels back was the recent most unfortunate attacked on the Abuja-Kaduna transit passenger train where scores were killed, abducted and wounded. And this occurred as a result of ineptitude on the side of the government. Within 24 hours after that attached, more attacks took place within the Kaduna axis and that is a clear evident that

the bandits have a very strong hold there and can unleash harm to the people any moment they so wish.

This unwarranted attacked is worrisome not only to the families and relations of those involved, but it also send shivers down the spine of any sane person who have the country and the welfare of the society at heart. Things have going the wrong path, that is why, Vice President, Yemi Osinbajo said when he visited Kaduna after the attacked "We must, for our nation and their memories fight on and defeat cowards who unleash terror on those not armed. They would not break our spirits and our resolves. We will prevail and our land will be secure".

The incident had left tongues wagging on government taking sides. It would make statement condemning an attack only when a certain class of people are involved, but the same government would always remained mute when a similar incident befell the commoners. The incessant attacks being perpetrated by Fulani herdsmen in Southern part of Kaduna and Miango area in Plateau State, where the young, aged and vulnerable are killed is a testament to the whole world.

Unfortunate as the case may be, while the minister of transportation, Chief Rotimi Amaechi, has accepted responsibility and blamed government for not putting things

in place most especially security devices to monitor the railway transportation system in order to curtail or avert such unwarranted incidences, his counterpart at the Information and National Orientation Ministry, Lai Mohammed in his usual self blamed the past government under Goodluck Jonathan over the attacks and the insecurity bedevilling the the country. As for Lai, Nigerians are tired of him and have no single confidence in him.

Me think the blamed game that have taken over our polity should have been a thing of the past by now. They should stopped playing politics with people's lives and the people should as well shine there eyes and comes to terms and as well fight the common enemy. There are some government officials feeding fat over the insecurity bedevilling the nation, if not so they would have put their axes together to crush these bad elements.

The government that has pledged and is under oath, of protecting lives and property of all irrespective of their political and religion affiliations should centre it's priority on protecting people's lives and not turned its eyes on the peoples well-being.

The President of the nation, Muhammed Buhari after the incident, met with security chiefs and declared a full scale war on bandits yet nothing is seen to be done. Instead the attacks by the bandits on the armed less is waxing stronger by the day. The

bandits no longer fear our military might as they are always ready to engage them headlong and they (bandits) always winning the war as well.

Nigerians have noticed over years that it is only when people that are well to do in the society are touched that the President would summon the security chiefs and will give marching orders to engaged the perpetrators in a full scale war yet the outcome is always balderdash. His orders is never respected or taken serious.

As yours sincerely and Nigerians commiserate with the victims of the passenger train that were recently attacked, the Miango people of Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State that has become a slaughter slap of humans, Zamfara, Kaduna, Niger people that are facing similar challenges and everywhere in the country because nowhere is spared, to put their trust in God as no challenge(s) last last forever.

The government should as well provide maximum security for the farmer that always in the bush, the travellers on the road, rail, air, the communities and the society in general to safeguard any eventuality.

Proactive measures should be the watchword if the government want to gain the confidence of society because now the citizens have loss confidence in its security architecture as they are living at God's mercy.

By JENNIFER YARIMA

"DEATH is a necessary end, will come when it will come." This is a popular expression by William Shakespeare to buttress the certainty of death. The demise of a loved one demoralizes and creates a great vacuum that only time can heal the wounds. It becomes more devastating on the part of the women and children when the bread winner who is the husband no more.

To a large extent, when a woman is overwhelmed by circumstances, silence is the loudest cry. If she is speechless, then her heart is too tired for words. Women and children are worst stricken by dehumanizing treatments that forcefully ejects them from their homes or surrender to fate. It is condemnable and unlawful for a widow to be treated in an inhuman way that diminishes her person and strips her of her dignity.

In Nigeria for instance, there are ugly stories of how widows are maltreated. Some are ugly and terrifying. Most of them are deprived of their husband's properties, including those they acquired together as couples. This is what most relations and cultures pay little attention to such considerations. This situation is worst for those who were not fortunate to have children or are not blessed with male children which our traditions give premium to.

Besides the issue of inheritance, some traditions prescribe other dehumanizing practices which widows go through. Some of the stories from the women are quite pathetic and pitiable. However, respite is coming to most places with educated traditional rulers coupled with the efforts of churches and nongovernmental organizations, to stop some of these obnoxious traditions.

It is not yet uhuru for some unfortunate women who lost their husbands as some places still insist on the old ways of doing things. The victims hardly have the guts to narrate what they passed through for fear of intimidation by those who are behind this evil practice.

To unearth the odious rot and the maltreatment of widows in Ibo land, some are simply inhuman so to spoke. They range from deprivation, denial of certain rights to subjecting them to observe some inhuman and archaic customs and traditions. It is quite pain if they cast their minds back to what they went through.

It is heart breaking to know that their fellow women are not left out of the ill treatment of widows. In some communities, women are quarantined, barred from bathing for days or weeks and restrained from receiving male visitors. You can imagine if such a woman is menstruating or breast feeding which need proper personal hygiene. The wearing of mourning dress is a must and the widow must not stay outside the family home by sunset.

It's worrisome that as widows eradicate these harmful practices battle and ponder on how the next face of life would be, they are forced to content with accusations that they killed their husbands, to therefore prove their innocence of any allegation, they are forced to drink the bath water from their dead husbands' corpses. What a horrific experience.

The question most people don't give due consideration to is whether widowers face similar challenges the way widows do. They go through psychological

eradicate these harmful practices meted on widows. Keying into the essential awareness to end such unpleasant disposition, the Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN) Local Church Council Nassarawa Gwong, Jos last week observed widows' and orphan's week to basically highlight the plight this vulnerable group faces so as to attract the attention of Christians to what true religion entails so as to give them necessary support. Speaking at the occasion, the



Dehumanised widows: Before respite comes



torture for the fact that they would be left alone after the lost of a companion and for the fact that they wouldn't want to express themselves openly for possible help. Theirs is possibly milder because they are heads of household who control power and resources.

The society sympathizes more with them by seeking for softer landing in the aspect of advising widowers to get married as soon as possible to fill the vacuum. No widow dares that even within a year, accusing fingers would be pointed at her alleging that she either killed her husband or she has had affairs with the man she intends to marry.

It is high time our religious outfits, traditional institutions, government and all relevant stakeholders picked up this matter with every sense of seriousness it deserves to totally

leading Pastor of the church, Rev Cletus Doka Gwam who doubles as Regional Church Council, (RCC) Jos Vice chairman spoke passionately on the difficulties widows and orphans face when death occurs.

In his sermon tagged "suffering strikes after death" it brought to bear the demoralizing effects of death which exposes one to immediate suffering. He said, one's nomenclature changes to widow, widower or an orphan, forcing one to look for help irrespective of your status because the help the other rendered is no longer there.

Taking his scriptural passage from 2kings 4:1-7, Gwam expressed concern on the difficulty the prophet's wife encountered which threatened her two sons to be whisked away by the creditors of her late husband as life became difficult

and unbearable for her when she lost all. The cleric enumerated that life will never be the same when death strikes. Part of it is because responsibilities are automatically shifted to one person who becomes overburdened.

Lacking the means to meet the family's need was what moved the widow to seek for help from the prophet who miraculously intervened and urged her to sell the available oil and pay the creditors. Additionally, he lamented that doors of wickedness open when death occurs as relations go to claim what they knew nothing about thereby exposing the family to dehumanizing treatments.

Rev Cletus Gwam opined that all should accept the fact that death is real and admonished believers to live peacefully and in harmony with each other. Believers were

challenged to obey God's given instructions; it is in harkening to such that God's promises and interventions are possible.

Such a day usually is a day of reflection for those who have had the bitter experiences and those who never had any. The bottom line is for each one to be prepared as no one knows the time nor the hour the unexpected will occur. Believers must endeavor to give helping hands to those in need; doing so will put smiles on the faces of many and change hopeless situations.

With the frequency at which deaths occur now, it calls for fervent prayers for God's mercy and grace to help us number our days. Let's keep doing the good works of supporting and never give up because he who sees in secret will reward each one accordingly.

IMAGES

LALONG ADDRESSES 62ND NBA CONFERENCE

Plateau State Governor and Chairman, Northern Governors' Forum, Barr. Simon Bako Lalong on Monday addressed the 62nd session of the Annual General Conference of the Nigerian Bar Association holding in Lagos, Lagos State



Governor Lalong addressing the Nigerian Bar Association during the 2022 Conference



Chief Judge of Plateau State, Justice David Mann (middle) flanked by other NBA Conference participants listening to speeches



A cross section some participants at the opening NBA Ceremony



Barr. Simon Bako Lalong, DG, APC Presidential Campaign Council (left) discussing with Prof. Pat Utomi, DG, Labour Party Presidential Campaign Council



Alhaji Atiku Abubakar of the PDP (middle) flanked by other guests at the 62nd NBA opening ceremony



Chief Joe Gadzama SAN (left) with Peter Obi of the Labour Party (right) and others at the conference



Barr. Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State (left) with the APC Vice Presidential Candidate, Sen. Kashim Shettima



Governor Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State (4th from right) in a group photograph with NBA EXCO and invited dignitaries after the opening ceremony

Odd World

Deserted town where fire burns over 60 years

A subterranean fire in a once thriving American mining town has been dangerously raging on since 1962 and forced most of its inhabitants out - but five residents still remain

An underground fire that has continually been burning for decades in an American town has forced most of its inhabitants to move out.

Centralia in Pennsylvania on the east coast of the USA was once a busy mining town until the events of May, 1962 altered its future forever.

A fire began in a landfill and spread to the labyrinth of coal mines thousands of feet below the surface. It is still raging away today, 61 years later.

Many attempts to extinguish the subterranean blaze have failed and noxious gasses such as carbon monoxide continue to seep out of the cracks in the crumbling ground, making it a dangerous place to live.

His cousin rescued him from the 150-foot dropped but it highlighted the dangers to those above posed by the

ongoing fire below.

There are even signs posted around the town warning visitors to not go near certain areas that are especially dangerous.

Since the fire started the vast majority of its residents have moved away after being relocated by the state in 1983 and their homes flattened.

At the town's peak in 1890, just over 2,700 lived in Centralia - as of 2020, there are just five. One resident said in 2017 they were frustrated by tourists who damage residents' properties and walk around on lawns thinking everywhere is abandoned.

A section of the disused Route 61 that led into the town was made into something of a tourist attraction after it became covered in graffiti by visitors.

However, in April, 2020 the town's residents attempted to deter tourists by covering up the road with soil after it was reported that the spraying had spread to local cemeteries.

Source: The Mirror



I wish Buhari can handover a value-added Nigeria

Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari a few days ago again instructed the top bosses of the hierarchy of security establishments in the country to intensify their sweats by decisively dealing with all terrorist groups currently subduing and triggering mayhem and pandemonium in almost all parts of this nation. This most recent prescription is coming on the heels of a failed hostage swap between his government and one of the terrorists of the Abuja/Kaduna train passengers kidnap.

Unconfirmed reports revealed that while the Federal Government honored its part of the negotiations, by freeing the wife and twins of one of the terrorist after a successful medical treatment asserting the family's health status, the terrorists have failed to release the rest of these passengers on agreed terms. This sad turnout of events has continued to traumatize the relations of the victims of the train hijack considering the number of days their relations have remained in captivity against their wish and or making.

Our president who recently visited the Shehu of Borno also intimated the traditional ruler that the recapitulating tenure of his administration would focus on both the rehabilitation of victims of Boko Haram onslaught and for the army to be gingered enough towards sustaining its territorial gains and superior power in the fight against these evil and devilish individuals who have continued to cause great havoc on the polity.

No doubt, the past couple of years have been not only unpalatable but horrid and unimaginable particularly for the victims of these atrocities and the entire citizens of this country. As it is, our beloved nation Nigeria has today bled to the extent that the polarization of this nation along several irrelevant lines of thoughts is sending absolute hardheaded wrong signals to our children presently perceived as our leaders of tomorrow. Accordingly, many of them do not believe in a united and trustworthy nation worth dying for. Obviously, the elderly generation would not blame them over this self-inflicted destructive ideology knowing too well that our political leaders have failed in nourishing the legacies of our founding fathers. Neither did they create better opportunities for them to integrate into the system efficiently.

Since the advent of the present democratic journey in 1999, some of the problems which have continued to bedevil this nation have been ugly experiences of high level insecurity ever imagined in the annals of this country's history. Corruption, failed promises, deceptive and fallacious blueprints necessitated by administrative ingenuity and greed on the side of our leaders. Some of these administrative blunders have given birth to the menace of insurgency, kidnaping, rebellion and other sophisticated acts of criminality ongoing with impunity in this country.

After President Buhari came to power in 2015, many Nigerians heaved a sigh of relief thinking that the man had all it takes to bring this nation out of the woods. For those who were fortunate to have witnessed his administrative antecedents while in power in 1983, they were quickly convinced that the former military despot had all it takes to revive the nation for better prospects.

Indeed, Buhari who lost his presidential bid numerous times eventually got the opportunity to rewrite his name in gold as a

leader who fundamentally could better the lives of the citizens of this country but squandered it. Sad though, before Buhari was elected into office, he made some promises of not only becoming a father to nobody but a father to everybody and pursue practicable socio-economic and political policies aimed at fast-forwarding the prospects of our nation in the larger interest of all which were not implemented.

Significantly, while on campaign, Buhari was aware of the emerging threat to security by some of these criminal elements, many citizens of this nation had hoped that as a General in the Nigeria Army and one who fought during the civil war of 1966, he had all it takes to tackle headlong, some of these unpleasant narratives confronting us as a developing nation.

Unfortunately, for Mr. President and us, this is where we have found ourselves today. We have found ourselves in a situation we never prayed for, anticipated and or wished in the first place. We have found ourselves in a country where almost nothing is working perfectly even as we struggle to come to terms with this unending fiasco.

Most painful is the dwindling level of our educational status in the comity of nations even as both the Federal Government and striking academic staff are yet to amicably resolve their lingering dispute. Consequently, the ongoing avoidable strike action has deprived our children the opportunity to transit into industrious aspects of their lives in nation building. They have also left a dent on the reputation and integrity of our educational sector in global affairs. Coupled with this sad reality is this unending menace of divisive tendencies presently overwhelming our political landscape. Today, many of our leaders have allowed ethnic and regional sentiments to becloud their sense of reasoning which if care is not taken would aggravate our disposition as a developing nation struggling to move out of the woods.

With all sense of responsibility, the past seven years of President Buhari's administration has left much to be desired. As it is, a greater number of Nigerians cannot afford three square meals a day and or pay their children's school fees without stress. For the fact that innocent citizens are kidnaped here and there and ransom negotiated like prices of chickens or groundnuts bargained in open markets tells one that our nation is going down the cliff to only God knows where.

But again, while we are passing through these difficulties, it seems our president has not been told of the realities on ground. It seems that all that his lieutenants are after is that which they desire to accumulate selfishly and leave behind for their concubines, mistresses and or families. In more definite terms, many innocent Nigerians are dying before their time only because of the fact that our administrators have basically abandoned us in the middle of the Red Sea while scavenging for mundane things of this world.

Yet, in the midst of these calamities, yours sincerely still hopes that there is a better future for this nation. I still believe that Nigeria will come out of these problems though bruised but not beyond repairs. I therefore, only wish that Buhari will hand-over a value-added nation to the next leadership of this nation in the aftermath of the 2023 general elections.

View Point

Usmangate: Where JASAWA got it wrong

By BULUS GAMBO

AGITATIONS of any sort within the confines of the law is fundamentally permissible in any democratic setting in the world. Going by the tenets of democratic principles which rotate around the contemporary adage describing this system of governance to be that of the people, by the people and for the people, any such agitations should be accommodated and in the real sense of it, workable submissions addressed in the best interest of the entire citizens for the collective betterment of our society.

Sometimes however, cynics and others who do not comprehend the basic principles of democracy tend to trespass beyond the red lines without any remorse of its severe implications in the polity and its citizens. When such unfriendly and or undemocratic submissions are offered with elements of threats; it always have rippling effects on the society and if care is not taken can do the society great harm than good.

Just recently, a press release was allegedly circulated on the platform of the social media by the JASAWA in the aftermath of the alleged acts of misappropriation leveled against the Chairman of Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State, Hon. Shehu Bala Usman. Fundamentally, in a democratic setting which Nigeria, our loved nation has continued to provide which basically is inherent in our constitution, one should not think of joining issues with the JASAWA group over the Usmangate saga but for the fact that we are all in the same wagon together. Therefore, for the sake of history which would judge us and our antecedents right and or wrongly, when such issues are brought up in public domain, it remains our onus to attempt to more logically present an analogical aspect of such submission for posterity to judge us with no basic sentiments attached.

In the said press release, the JASAWA, described itself as "an amalgamation of JASAWA youth groups in core Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State and are of JASAWA origin." In my humble submission, the body is that of youths of Hausa ethnic group who are citizens residing in the area and decided to comment in the aftermath of the series of political imbroglio enveloping Jos North Local Government Area and the council Chairman, Hon Shehu Bala Usman.

In its rejoinder captioned RE: PLANS TO SACRIFICE HON AMB. SHEHU BALA USMAN FOR POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY: ENOUGH IS ENOUGH, the JASAWA made some statements in defense of their kinsman noting that, "The association has been watching with keen interest recent political happenings in the state especially in Jos North as it affects the elected Executive Chairman of the Local Government Council, Hon. Amb.



Usman

Shehu Bala Usman. After carefully watching events unfolding and doing the necessary undercover investigations and research, we are compelled to issue this short and direct unequivocal statement to warn trouble rousers from tempering with our hard-earned mandate."

In the statement signed by its Chairman, one Hon. Yahaya Mohammed Yantifa and its Secretary, Alhaji Aminu Sani Rikkos further submitted in excerpts that "From our investigation and research, we note that the Legislative Arm of the Jos North Local Government Council made up of 20 councilors have issued the chairman via courier service, some questions to which they are demanding for answers. We also note that the issues raised which are supposed to be the internal concern of Jos North Local Government Council to which the Honorable Councilors belong, were made public via various social media avenues. As if that is not enough, the councilors whose chambers and offices are only a stone throw away to the office of the Executive Chairman decided to use courier service to dispatch their query for reasons which we will disclose here soon.

After stating other reasons for their letter, they went further in their stand declaring that "Upon reviewing the aforesaid and many other facts we reserved for now, we firmly and unequivocally state our stand as follows. We stress that the stool of the chairmanship of Jos North is not for Hon. Shehu Bala Usman but for the entire JASAWA community. The chairman is only fortunate to be the flag bearer when our peace-loving Governor Barrister Simon Bako Lalong decided to break the jinx of unjustly denying us the opportunity to lead the local

government council which we have equally stake on just like any other inhabitants of Jos. As such, we see beyond Hon. Shehu Bala Usman as far as this seat is concern. All JASAWA that sacrificed our lives to reach this stage own the seat and we will protect it with our lives until the end of our constitutional tenure."

Firstly and as acknowledged by this group, the Governor of Plateau State, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong must be commended over his untiring efforts towards creating a level playing ground for all communities on the Plateau to have a sense of belonging in the state. The truth is; Governor Lalong has gone beyond limits in his usual leadership character to please the JASAWA community resident in Jos North Local Government Area.

Yours sincerely is also aware of the obvious fact though some of the policies implemented by the Governor in some cases has put him in collusion course with the natives, however his resilience for sustainable peace in the state prompted him take such action in the first instance. Indeed, in all his dealings, the Governor has continued to create a space for the group to reap its own dividends of democracy.

As also confirmed by the JASAWA the Chairman of Jos North Local Government Area was served with a notice which they claimed "we note that the Legislative Arm of the Jos North Local Government Council made up of 20 councilors have issued the chairman via courier service, some questions to which they are demanding for answers. We also note that the issues raised which are supposed to be the internal concern of Jos North Local Government Council to which the Honorable Councilors belong, were made public via various social media avenues," evidently

confirming that a letter was indeed served on the executive chairman for his response. Their grudge however that is that the councilors should have rather than courier such document should have delivered same to him in his office.

To the best of my understanding, there was nothing wrong in sending such a letter through the services of a courier company most especially if and when it would get to him. I am equally aware of several of such letters as a journalist send through courier services to several personalities without any problem. But again, during my investigations after which I reported on the issue in one of my articles earlier published on The Nigeria Standard some weeks back, sources close to the chairman disclosed to me that he never got such a letter. So, if the JASAWA can confirmed that the executive chairman indeed got that letter, then there is definitely more to it than meet the eye. Significantly, while the JASAWA are frowning at the reality of the fact that it was unimaginable for the councilors to have posted such a document on social media, they also forgot that their rejoinder was also posted on the same social media. In this regard, are they really coming to equity with clean hands on this matter?

Secondly, the association claimed that "We stress that the stool of the chairmanship of Jos North is not for Hon. Shehu Bala Usman but for the entire JASAWA community. The chairman is only fortunate to be the flag bearer when our peace-loving Governor Barrister Simon Bako Lalong decided to break the jinx of unjustly denying us the opportunity to lead the local government council which we have equal stake on just like any other inhabitants of Jos. As such, we see beyond Hon. Shehu Bala Usman as far as this seat is concern. All JASAWA that sacrificed our lives to reach this stage own the seat and we will protect it with our lives until the end of our constitutional tenure." Going by this submission, it is outrageous for JASAWA to mention that "We stress that the stool of the chairmanship of Jos North is not for Hon. Shehu Bala Usman but for the entire JASAWA community." In the first place, they should be clearly educated to understand and be aware of the fact that Hon. Usman won the elections not with only votes confined to JASAWA alone but the entirety of the APC members and its well-wishers which cuts across all the ethnic nationalities residing in the council area. What this means is that both the JASAWA including other citizens of the area are stakeholders in this project.

However, going by our popular African adage which says success has many relations, one is not surprised that the association is making such claims. The danger inherent in their claims however is that confining the seat to

themselves alone is not only selfishly motivated but intended to polarize the entire good people of the area. It is therefore a dangerous recipe for the association to declare ownership of a seat which almost and if not all individuals outside their enclave worked for to integrate the citizenry.

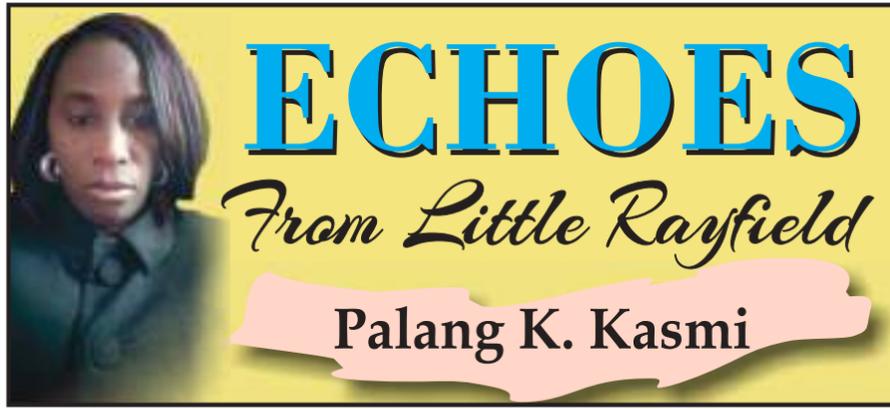
But again looking more closely at the tail end of the paragraph of their submission, the association also threatened that "As such, we see beyond Hon. Shehu Bala Usman as far as this seat is concern. All JASAWA that sacrificed our lives to reach this stage own the seat and we will protect it with our lives until the end of our constitutional tenure." It is really out of place for the association to go to the extent of issuing a threat on the peace-loving people of the area who also generously supported the executive chairman emerged victorious. It is therefore uncharitable for the group to threaten fire and brimstone on an issue which constitutionally is the prerogative of the council chair and his legislators.

In this regard, JASAWA must be fair and educated enough to knowing the sleepless nights and efforts put into use by the Executive Governor of Plateau State towards ensuring that the citizenry are enjoying fragile peace at the moment. Rather than threatening the peace of the area, they must as leaders consider more concrete options towards enhancing the peaceful resolution of this matter.

In any case, let them equally know that every society in its right to self preservation has inherent monopoly of violence. it is also obvious to say that the fear of God has changed our negative narratives for the betterment of all. Holistically, no fraction should be tempted to take its luck too far particularly when the association is dogmatized by historical ideological fallacy and or living in a complete fiasco.

For us to handover a better society to our children, our present leaders of thought ought to guide their utterances, statement, public engagements and remain role models to our children as anything thing short of this could drag us into an unnecessary euphoria of destruction, chaos and anarchy. As leaders, the JASAWA Executive members should be aware of this basic components of human existence which is a yardstick for sustainable peace and heterogenous harmonious existence.

As we call for a transparent atmosphere where the legislators should hold the chairman to account in his expected obligations, we must also educate ourselves in understanding the obvious fact that Jos North Local Government Area is not a lawless society where any erring public officer found wanting should be let off the hook based on ethnic and or other parochial sentiments.



ECHOES

From Little Rayfield

Palang K. Kasmi

Project AGILE launched



August 19, 2022 was a historic day for Plateau with about 300 public schools across the state having cause to smile. The schools carted away over N1 Billion Naira educational grants and support from the Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment (AGILE), a World Bank Assisted Project. Governor Lalong flagged off the distribution of the grants to the schools and the Conditional Cash Transfer to facilitate the education of girls from poor backgrounds, at the New Government House Rayfield Jos. The Governor in his remarks at the flag off ceremony said his administration is

committed to the project, inaugurated in April 2022 in the state, because it protects girls, children and womanhood on securing education and getting a brighter future.

He said the WB in conjunction with the state and FG desire to ensure students enjoy education scholarships and was glad that his state Plateau is among the seven pioneer states earmarked to benefit.

"The project is part of FG's long term education agenda to curtail high rate of out of school girls, early marriage, adolescent pregnancy and other challenges to girl-child and school education".

"The aim is to improve the rate of completion of secondary school and encourage girl child education and the project area is across the 17 Local government areas".

"The first phase to 300 schools and the selection of the schools from the different Local Governments from the three senatorial Zones was done with consideration for Local Governments with low education profile" Lalong said and encouraged the benefitting schools and girls to take advantage of the project to make a difference in the future of the state.

Excited that there will be great intervention in the education sector, with Plateau state benefiting from \$3,972,000 Dollars in scholarship and infrastructural development, the Governor told the students and stakeholders gathered for the epoch making event that his interest in protecting the girl-child is paramount and a driving force.

"I want the girl-child to be



educated and not to be rushed into marriage. With education, we want her to have an option and to be able to stand her ground and know her rights". He said a woman who is educated can contest for politics and will not be held back by cultural beliefs, or be taken for a ride by anyone if they are aware that she is educated. "With education and the existence of laws like the Child Rights Laws, VAPP and GEO Laws, no one can force a girl into marriage or deny her a right to education". The first category for the disbursement flag off was School improvement Grant (Small grants) of 8,000 dollars, second 12,000 dollars, and third 16,000 dollars. Among a long list of schools that benefitted from the project are Government Secondary School (GSS) Maijuju, Jos East LGA, GSS Langwan in Pankshin, GSS Turmyang Kwaanpan LGA, GSS Garga in Kanam Local Government, Government Junior Secondary School Jipal, Government Girls Secondary School Shendam, GSS Ogbene, Bassa LGA. The governor shook hands with the students who were accompanied by their Principals and teachers. He also took group photographs and presented suggestion boxes and registers to the schools across all the three Senatorial Zones.

News

200 Nigerians depart for EU scholarship programme - Envoy

THE European Union (EU) Ambassador to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Ms Samuela Isopi, says over 200 young Nigerians are to depart for Europe for the Erasmus+ Mundus Postgraduate Scholarship.

The Ambassador made this known at a news conference yesterday at the EU's Headquarters in Abuja, to announce the study package.

The envoy added that the students were selected, based on merit, by the 20 universities in the EU countries with no interference with the bloc.

She said the EU offered postgraduate scholarship to the over 200 young Nigerians in top European universities, under its flagship educational programme, Erasmus+.

Isopi said the programme was for two years, and it would avail the students, opportunity to study in 20 EU countries, adding that, each student would study in three countries out of the 20.

According to her, out of the three countries the students would be studying, two would be in EU countries.

"Each scholarship awardee will, on successful completion of the programme, receive a master's degree, to be jointly awarded by a consortium of universities, in the framework of the Erasmus Mundus Joint masters programme.

"A key component of the Erasmus+, is that masters programme are of high-level and integrated study programmes at master level, delivered by an international

partnership of higher education institutions.

"The studies will run for 12-24 months, and will see each beneficiary studying in universities in at least three different universities in as many countries during the duration of the programme.

"At least two of the countries where each student will study are EU Member States. Many of the scholarship awardees have already departed for Europe to commence their studies.

"The figure represents a steep increase from the number of Nigerians that benefited from the initiative last year.

"It also places Nigeria second, among countries with the highest number of students selected for the prestigious programme in 2022, coming only after Pakistan," she said.

She added that education, youths and women remained a key area of partnership between the EU and Nigeria, adding that, the bloc would increase the potential by increasing more Nigerians.

She said to celebrate the achievement, there would be a special event for the awardees where they would be intimated about the countries they would be visiting.

"The beneficiaries were selected through a rigorous, highly competitive process, and from various academic disciplines. Over 730 Nigerians have benefitted from the master programme since 2004.

"The number of Nigerians

selected for the scholarship has quadrupled in the last four years, rising from 44 awardees in 2019; 93 in 2020; 133 in 2021 to the record number of over 200 awardees in 2022.

"From ninth position in 2020 and sixth in 2021, the country now has the second highest number of beneficiaries globally, leaving behind countries like Bangladesh, Brazil, India and Mexico in the top bracket of countries with most awardees.

"The Erasmus+ programme is an example of the great cooperation we have with Nigeria, and reflects the EU's commitment to widening the space and increasing opportunities for young Nigerians to actualise their dreams and play their role in contributing to the development

of their country," she said.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the flagship programme represents one of the Europe's most tangible achievements: uniting people and creating a European sense of belonging and solidarity through life-changing learning experiences.

With the launch of a new Erasmus+ programme for the period 2021-2027, there is a further increase in the opportunities provided for mobility and cooperation with partner countries beyond Europe.

Findings showed that the new Erasmus+ programme has an estimated budget of 26.2 billion euros, and this is nearly double the funding, compared to its predecessor programme (2014-2020).

70 per cent of the budget will support mobility opportunities for students and staff of higher education institutions. (NAN)

Pilgrims boss bags Key Stone Bank award

By Shehu Danjuma, Katsina

ALHAJI Suleiman Kuki, the Executive Director, Katsina State Pilgrims Welfare Agency has bagged Excellence Performance Award from the management of Keystone Bank for the successful completion of the 2022 Hajj Exercise.

The award of Certificate of Excellent Performance for 2022 Hajj Exercise' was presented to the Awardee by the Katsina branch manager, Alhaji Saidu Malabu at a brief ceremony held at the Pilgrims Welfare Agency headquarters in Katsina on Tuesday.

Speaking at the presentation ceremony of the award to the recipient, Alhaji Saidu Malabu said that the bank management decided to give the Agency Boss as a result of his performance as confirmed by the pilgrims before, during and after the Hajj operations in this year.

He explained that, despite the inability of his presence in Saudi Arabia to monitor the exercise, clips of news reportage by media organizations gave credence to the performances of the board's activities.

The Manager commended the State Governor Rt. Hon. Aminu Masari for the numerous contributions, endurance and cooperation given to ensure the success of the exercise.

Alhaji Suleiman Nuhu Kuki, the Executive Director of the Pilgrims Agency and recipient of the award, while responding, thanked the bank for identifying with the Agency for the success recorded during the exercise.

"The award is a unique one in the sense that, this is my first operations and the award is the first of its kind".

"This award is not only for Katsina State PWA alone, it is by extension an award of excellence to the government under the leadership of Governor Masari who has been assisting the Agency morally and financially at every turn of events", he maintained.

Kuki also thanked other stakeholders for their contributions and support, "we enjoyed good synergy and assistance of the Amirul Hajj team, the Katsina State House of Assembly monitoring team, other agencies, traditional rulers and staff of the Board who work tirelessly to achieve this feat".



Isopi

Sports

Edwards: UFC fighter's rise, escapes 'darkest years'

IT happened about four years after Leon Edwards moved to England.

He, his mum and little brother had said their goodbyes in Jamaica and come to Birmingham to start a new life.

They'd left their old home behind - a one-room wooden shack with a zinc roof in a poor part of Kingston where "hearing gunshots was normal".

Edwards had his own room now. That's where he was when the phone rang one night at 2am in October 2004, aged 13.

The boys' father had been the first to come over to England from Kingston. He'd sent for them to follow, but they didn't live together.

Edwards' mum picked up the phone. He could soon hear her crying.

"I knew what he was involved in, so I knew eventually something would happen to my dad," Edwards says.

"When it's a late phone call you know it's something bad. It was a traumatic situation. It wasn't like he died in his sleep - he got murdered.

"It was like a spiral effect; it definitely made me more angry and more willing to partake in that life. It pushed me into a life of crime."

Edwards, now aged 30, still does not know the full story behind his father's death, just that he was shot and killed at a nightclub, over "something to do with money". He'd been involved in gang crime back in Kingston and, growing up, Edwards often found himself exposed to its dangers.

Over the next few years - the "darkest" of his life - Edwards too was increasingly drawn into the world of gang violence in Birmingham.

But he would get out, forging a path in MMA against the odds which has culminated in him winning the sport's biggest prize - a UFC world title.

Edwards was born and grew up in a small neighbourhood in Kingston, Jamaica with his mum, dad and younger brother, Fabian.

He would play football with his friends, build and fly kites in the Caribbean breeze and climb trees to pick mangoes.

But there was also a dangerous side to life - one Edwards says he could not imagine his own children having to experience.



Edwards says he wants to inspire others to transform their lives

Edwards' father was the leader of a local gang. He was known as The General. Edwards was so often exposed to gun violence in his neighbourhood that he became desensitised to it.

"There were shootouts around me," he says.

"You had to run and hide. It's weird because you kind of get used to it, living in this mad warzone, you know? I've got a son now who's nine and I couldn't imagine him in that environment.

"But at the time you hear gunshots. You're like 'OK, no-one got hit and no-one died', so you're back out playing again. It just becomes normal."

By this point, when Edwards was nine, his parents had separated and his father was already living in London while still helping to take financial care of the family from abroad.

His father's decision to move the rest of the family over to the UK - to Aston in Birmingham - was supposed to represent a new beginning. Edwards found it difficult from the start.

"You don't want to move because all your friends are in Jamaica. You don't want to leave them, and at the time I was upset," he says.

"You're also an immigrant coming to a new country, but it's still better than worrying about getting shot by a stray bullet or whatever."

Edwards recalls getting into fights with the other kids at school, who would pick on him because of his Jamaican accent.

His willingness to fight is where his nickname 'Rocky' comes from - a reference to the boxer from the movie that still endures.

Soon things would take an even more troubling turn.

"There was a big gang thing at the time in Birmingham, the Johnsons and the Burger Bars," Edwards says.

"They were rivals and violence constantly broke out between both sides.

"I got involved from school. Obviously you're in the same neighbourhood and you go to the same school [as the gang members].

"The older guys, the

younger brothers, all at the same school, and you get used to hanging around with them and it just trickles into that."

Edwards was 13 when he learned of the death of his father. He says it was a tipping point that pushed him further into that life.

"I had a shorter temper, I was more angry and I ended up in more fights," he says.

"There were a few things I did during this time that I truly regret. It's hard to believe it was me who did it. I don't like talking about it.

"I've been in situations where, I wouldn't say I feared for my life, but life-threatening situations. We did what all gangs do. Sell drugs, there were robberies, shootings and stabbings.

"I was arrested a few times, for fights and having a knife. My mum had to come to the police station many times to get me out.

"I knew what I was doing was breaking her heart, but I just kept doing it because your friends are doing it and as a teenager you're just involved.

"At the time your brain is so diluted and so focused you think this is life, and this is your world. You can't see outside of it."

One day, at the age of 17, when Edwards was walking to the bus stop with his mother, she spotted a gym above a DVD rental store offering training in mixed martial arts.

Edwards joined. He hadn't even heard of MMA before. His perception of fighting was so skewed by gang culture that the idea of a fair fight, played out in a competitive, sporting context, felt alien to him.

"It was odd because at the time I used to think that fighting was, not weird, but I'd never straight nose [have

a fair fight with] somebody, you know?" he says.

"[Gangs] are more likely to stab you. That was the mentality."

After attending a few classes, Edwards' coaches told him he had a natural talent.

He soon started winning awards, and the positive reaction he got from his mother pushed him to achieve even more.

"I could see my mum was proud of me, when I was bringing home trophies and that, and that's what kept me at it," Edwards says.

"If you did something negative [in gangs], everyone supports you, then if you do something good I realised you get the same praise, so I was thinking 'well I might as well do good then'.

"I was thinking I should enjoy my life and not have to look behind my back at people trying to stab me, see the world - and that's what I did. I put all my energy into training at 17 and just never looked back."

At the age of 18 Edwards made his amateur debut, which he won by submission, with a victorious professional bow coming just over a year

later.

By the age of 23 he'd signed with the UFC, where he has 12 wins from 15 fights.

He hasn't suffered defeat since losing against current pound-for-pound number one Kamaru Usman seven years ago - the same opponent he beat for the welterweight title at UFC 278 in Salt Lake City, Utah on Saturday.

In doing so he became Britain's first champion since Michael Bisping in 2016, and only the second in UFC history.

Edwards has always been reserved when talking about his story. Unlike a selection of other fighters, he has never embraced the 'gangster' narrative.

Instead he recognises the power behind his remarkable transition - and wants to help others who are looking for change. He credits sport with potentially saving his life.

"I didn't want to glorify it, I didn't want to come across as this gangster," he says.

"I wanted to be a better person than my story was. The more my profile grows, the more I succeed, the more I want to help other people. I want to show people now it's not where you start, it's where you finish.

"In the UK, knife crime is such a big thing, I've lost friends to it, been involved with it, so if I can go back and help someone and show them a different path, I'm willing to do that.

"One of my friends, he went to prison, got stabbed and died. Some of them have made good and work and stuff, but most of them are still doing what they're doing.

"So yeah, I take it from that - [without MMA] I'd either be in prison, dead or working a 9-5.

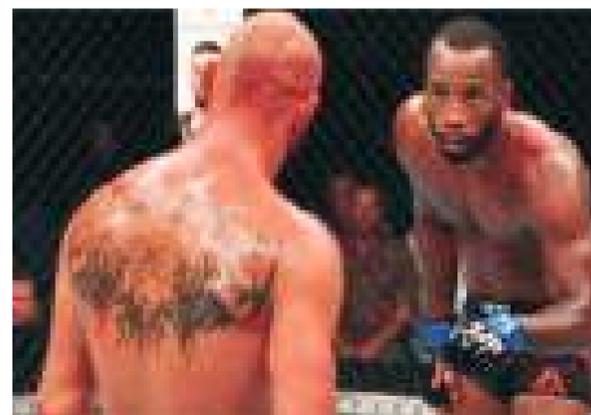
"I'm 100% relieved. Not just me but my family too, you know. It would be sad for my mum to have a husband that got killed and then a son that got killed.

"I always had a feeling I could be better and there was more to life, but I didn't know how to get it. There was nobody around me with a blueprint to success so I didn't know how to achieve it.

"That's what I'm saying: if I do it - if I become champion - it shows everyone else what's possible, too."



Usman, 35, and Edwards at a press conference before their 20 August fight



Edwards has won 12 of his 15 UFC bouts

Sports

Edwards stuns Usman to win UFC welterweight title

Briton Leon Edwards pulled off a fifth-round head-kick knockout out of nowhere to dethrone Nigeria's Kamaru Usman and win the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) welterweight title at UFC 278.

The win for Edwards at the Vivint Arena in Salt Lake City, U. S. on Saturday was one of the greatest comebacks in mixed martial arts history.

The 30-year-old Jamaican-born British fighter looked to be headed for a defeat on the judges' scorecards.

But then faked a jab with his left hand and then landed a left-foot kick to the head that sparked the 35-year-old Nigerian to claim the belt.

"They all doubted me, they all said I couldn't do it - look at me now!" Edwards roared in his post-fight interview in the cage.

Edwards is only the second British fighter to hold a UFC title, following in the footsteps of Michael Bisping, who won the middleweight title in 2016.

On a streak of 15 wins in the UFC coming into the bout, Usman struggled in the first



Edwards' kick knocks Usman out

round. Edwards, whom he beat in their only previous meeting in 2015, shocked him by taking him down to the mat for the first time in his UFC career.

Edwards threatened to finish the fight with a rear naked choke but Usman, who was making his sixth title defence, survived.

He came roaring back in the second round as Edwards appeared to stumble early on.

The 35-year-old Usman then returned to the kind of suffocating wrestling that has

been the bedrock of his fighting style since he turned pro in 2012.

He backed his opponent up to the fence and took him down at will.

He dominated Edwards and looked like he would retain the belt again until the challenger starched him with that kick with just 56 seconds left in the fight.

"I'm from the trenches, I'm built like this, I battle until the battle is done. I've been down my whole life, and look at me now!" an elated Edwards said.

A "historic" heavyweight unification fight between Tyson Fury and Oleksandr Usyk "will be made", says the Briton's promoter Frank Warren.

Ukrainian Usyk retained his WBA, WBO and IBF titles with a split-decision win over Anthony Joshua on Saturday.

This month WBC champion Fury said he would stay retired. After Usyk's win he said he "would annihilate them - get your cheque book out".

"He and Usyk would be a really good fight," Warren told BBC Radio 5 Live.

"It's a fight that I think will be made because both teams would like to see that happen."

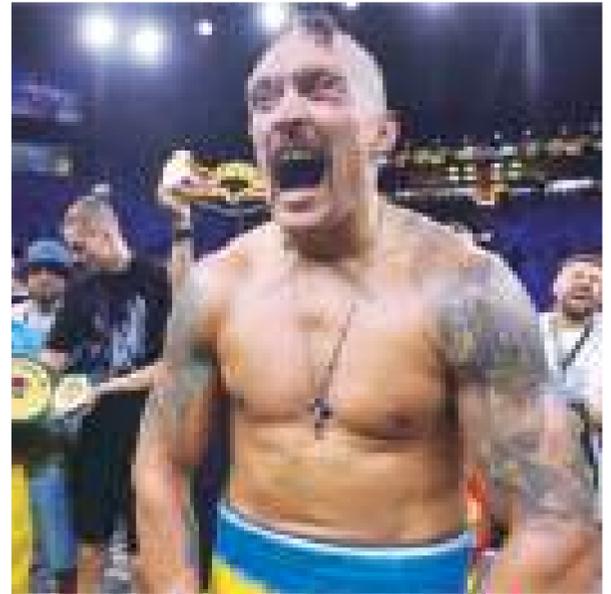
Britain's Lennox Lewis was the last undisputed heavyweight champion after beating Evander Holyfield in 1999.

Since 2007 the undisputed heavyweight championship has included the WBO title, and there has never been a fight where all four belts were on the line.

Fury remains unbeaten after 33 fights. After extending his unbeaten record to 20-0, Usyk said: "If I'm not fighting Tyson Fury, I'm not fighting at all."

Warren said: "Usyk said after

Fury v Usyk unification fight 'will be made' - Frank Warren



Usyk

the fight that it's the only fight he's interested in, and it's certainly the same case with Tyson.

"It's just a matter of where it will generate the most income because it's a unique fight, a historic fight.

"It's the first time for God knows how long that the four belts are on the line. Both fighters are undefeated. The whole world of boxing will be captivated by this fight."

In failing to reclaim the titles he lost to Usyk in September

2021, Briton Joshua suffered a third defeat in his past five fights.

Although Joshua has now lost his belts, Warren said an all-British clash between Fury and Joshua could still happen "down the road maybe".

He said: "If AJ manages to get a couple of wins under his belt - and I believe Tyson will beat Usyk - that may be a fight to be made.

"But AJ's got to re-establish himself before you can even think about fights like that."

Weightlifting President lauds Dare's pragmatic sports development

ON August 21, 2019, Chief Sunday Akin Dare was assigned constitutional portfolio of the ministry of Youth and Sports Development to oversee.

As the Sports Minister marks his three years in office today, August 21, 2022, the President, Nigeria Weightlifting Federation, NWF, Dr Abdul Ibrahim has joined millions of Nigeria sports fraternity to celebrate a man that has great passion for his works

In a statement issued in Abuja and personally signed by the Weightlifting boss, Dr Abdul lauded the many giant strides sports have recorded under the minister for the past three years noting that he has demonstrated leadership credibility and sanguine personality in overseeing the affairs of sports in the country which have fetched her laurels globally.

"The Sports Minister, Chief

Sunday Akin Dare, is one of the best ministers in the history of sports in this country. You can see from the outcome of the Commonwealth Games, in collaboration with the Nigeria Olympic Committee, NOC, that we have not achieved such feat as we recorded in Birmingham for a very long time.

"When he came into office, he was able to get things done. There are people who have grace and this minister has grace. He does not only believe in God, he also puts team work and every apparatus in place to achieve what he wants.

"The last three years have been historic in our sports. He has demonstrated pragmatic leadership in turning around our fortunes in sports. His leadership credibility and capacities are endearing.

"However, there are teething problems here and there but that is expected in a large family as we have in sports. He has been able to find solutions to lingering issues and

repositioned Nigeria sports on the path for greater glory.

"He has a dream of what he wants to accomplish and he is gradually getting towards the end of it; he has done very well."

Chief Sunday Akin Dare's achievements and successes in Nigeria sports in the last three years are legendary.

After assuming office on 21st August, 2019, Chief Dare's first major assignment was participation in that years Africa Games in Morocco where Team Nigeria came second in the overall table with 127 medals.

Despite the global coronavirus pandemic that disrupted socio-economic activities occasioned by months of national lockdown in the year 2020, the Minister rose above the wind to galvanise support for Nigeria sports. He ensured the hosting of the 2020 National Sports Festival, NSF in Edo which held in 2021 after

several postponements due to COVID-19 as well as the National Youth Games in Illorin.

Will Novak Djokovic be able to play in US?

Finishing with the most men's Grand Slam singles titles is Novak Djokovic's ultimate career goal.

The Serb won his 21st major title with victory at Wimbledon in July, leaving him one behind Rafael Nadal's all-time men's record.

But Djokovic's decision not to be vaccinated against Covid-19 has meant he has missed opportunities this year to add to his haul.

The nine-time Australian Open champion was unable to play in Melbourne and could also be missing at the US Open, although the 35-year-old recently said he had his "fingers crossed" he will be in the draw when the Grand Slam starts on 29 August.

Djokovic, who was still on the US Open entry list on Monday, has not been vaccinated against Covid-19 and since October 2021 the United States has not allowed non-vaccinated visitors to enter the country.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which is the nation's health protection agency, demands a non-US citizen must "show proof of being fully vaccinated against Covid-19" before travelling by air from a foreign country.

The ruling stopped Djokovic from playing ATP Masters 1000 events at Indian Wells and Miami in March and April, along with last week's Cincinnati Open.

He was also not allowed to play at the Rogers Cup in Montreal - another Masters event that took place this month - because of Canada's ban on unvaccinated visitors.

Watch: Novak Djokovic gave an exclusive interview to the BBC's Amol Rajan in February

In February, Djokovic told the BBC "the principles of decision making on my body are more important than any title or anything else", but added he was keeping an open mind about being vaccinated in the future.

When asked by a reporter at Wimbledon in June whether he had dismissed the option of getting a jab in order to compete in the United States, he replied: "Yes."



Djokovic is a three-time US Open champion, but lost in last year's final to Russia's Daniil Medvedev

The CDC relaxed some of its Covid-19 restrictions on 11 August, including bringing some rules for unvaccinated US citizens into line with those who are vaccinated.

When announcing the changes, the CDC said it would also "work to align stand-alone guidance where the details of vaccination proof for visitors are outlined - says it is "reviewing this page to align with updated guidance".

These factors have raised the hopes of Djokovic fans - and perhaps the player - that travel restrictions for unvaccinated visitors will be eased before the US Open begins.

Many people have questioned the scientific rationale behind not letting Djokovic enter the US, particularly since the CDC's rules - which allow unvaccinated Americans to travel overseas - were updated.

But with a week to go until the Grand Slam tournament begins, there has been no further movement and time is running out for Djokovic.

Almost 50,000 people have signed a petition asking for Djokovic to be allowed to play, with the world number six thanking fans for their support shortly after its creation.

"I am preparing as if I will be allowed to compete, while I await

to hear if there is any room for me to travel to the US. Fingers crossed," he added in a social media post on 30 July.

Djokovic has long admitted he did not want to be vaccinated and told the BBC in February he was willing to sacrifice playing in the biggest tournaments to stick to his principles.

That came a few weeks after he was deported from Australia following a dramatic and high-profile court case about the validity of his visa to enter the country.

Asked why he did not want to be vaccinated, Djokovic said he was trying to be "in tune" with his body as much as he could be.

Djokovic said he had "always been a great student of wellness, wellbeing, health and nutrition" and his decision had been partly influenced by the positive impact factors such as changing his diet and his sleeping patterns had had on his abilities as an athlete.

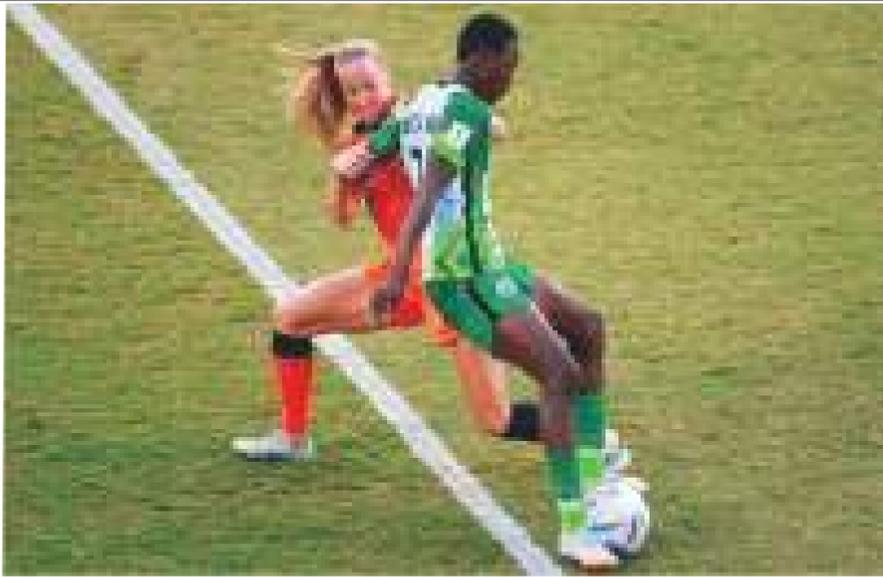
But he insisted he was "never against vaccination".

Not being vaccinated did not prevent Djokovic playing at the French Open or Wimbledon and, with most countries which host ATP events having now relaxed rules, the US Open could be one of the last events where this is an issue for the former world number one.



Sports Minister with three Nigerian weightlifters who won medals at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, England

Sports



**Flourish Sabastine stopped inside the box but referee waved it aside
NFF blames Falconets elimination on poor officiating, finishing**

THE Nigeria Football Federation, NFF has blamed the exit of Nigeria's female U-20 football team, the Falconets from the ongoing 2022 FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup in Costa Rica on "litany of factors" including bad refereeing and poor finishing, Bestchoicesports.com.ng can report.

The Falconets who were optimistic of a semi-final berth succumbed to a two first-half goals by the Europeans and got their already flourishing campaign punctured.

In a release after the match signed by its head of communication, Ademola Olajire, the federation noted that poor finishing, hard luck as well as unfavorable decisions by the Costa Rican official Marianela Araya saw the Nigeria U-20 bow out of the tournament

"A litany of factors, including poor finishing, hard luck and dodgy officiating by Costa Rican official Marianela Araya saw the Nigeria U20 girls bow out of the FIFA U20 Women's World Cup with a two-goal defeat by The Netherlands in their quarter-final match in Alajuela," NFF said.

"Flourish Sabastine, who scored Nigeria's three-point winner against France in the opening match of Group C, was cynically stopped in the Dutch's box in the 7th minute, but just as she did all night, Araya looked away unimpressed," the NFF said.

Four minutes later, the Dutch were ahead, when Zera Hulswit rammed a perfect dipping shot beyond Omini Oyono as the conquerors of USA pulled away on the counter-attack.

In the 15th minute, Sabastine again pulled away and let fly, but the ball was tipped away by impressive goal-tender Claire Dinkla

On the half-hour, Nigeria nearly got the leveller that their endeavour deserved when Deborah Abiodun seized the ball as the Dutch defence fell into confusion, but her own dipping shot from 25 metres rocked the crossbar and was then tipped

away from the head of Chiamaka Okwuchukwu.

Only three minutes later, the deficit doubled against Nigeria, when the Dutch broke through the right once more, and with captain Oluwatosin Demehin and Omowumi Oshobukola in a fumble, Ziva Henry bundled the ball past Oyono.

Substitute Joy Jerry came close to pulling one back when her head met the ball from Rofiat Imuran's cross in the 62nd minute, but the ball floated away.

Sabastine, forever unstoppable, was hacked

severally in the Dutch penalty area as she darted in whenever she had the ball, but Araya saw no reason to award a penalty kick to Nigeria.

The federation further noted that "In the second minute of added time, a Dutch defender handled the ball in the box as Nigeria poured forward. But after consulting the Video Assistant Referee, Araya overturned her own decision to award a penalty kick."

The "defeat meant elimination for a team that had won all three group phase matches, scoring five goals and conceding only one."

2023 CHAN Qualifier: Super Eagles Will Conquer Ghana- Odoh

NIGERIA'S Super Eagles B forward Valentine Odoh has insisted that they are primed to conquer the Black Galaxies of Ghana in the upcoming games, BSNSports.com.ng understands.

The Nigerian side under coach Salisu Yusuf has been in camp ahead of the all-important 2023 Championship of African Nations qualifiers.

The Abia Warrior striker said they are working hard with the help of the coaching to secure a good result against the Ghanaians.

"The preparations have been top-notch and we have been pushing so hard and the coaching crew also have been doing their best.

"Nigerians should expect the best from us because we are going to Ghana to defeat them.

"We don't have fears as you can see, we believe we are going there to knock them out and they will come here and still receive the same treatment, we are going to conquer them," he said.23

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Osimhen explains his anger after being substituted

VICTOR Osimhen has provided the reason behind his unpleasant disposition after he was replaced in the

closing stages of Napoli's Serie A clash with newly promoted Monza on Sunday evening.

Osimhen scored for the second game in a row as Napoli handed a 4-0 thrashing to the Serie A new



The Nigeria international enjoyed a memorable evening at the Stadio Diego Maradona but nearly marred it with his attitude at the end

NFF elections: Sale of forms commences today

To set the stage for new board, the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) inaugurated the Electoral and Appeal Committees during the 77th Annual General Assembly in Lagos ahead of September 30 elections in Benin City, Edo State

Candidates who will be on the ballot will be known in the next few days as forms will be picked by interested aspirants.



Dare

September friendly: Super Eagles to face dethroned African champions

Nigeria and Algeria are set to meet in a friendly encounter at the New Stadium in Iran, Algeria, on September 27.

The two African giants were at the last Africa Cup of Nations in Cameroon, where the Desert Foxes relinquished the trophy they won at the 2019 edition.

The Super Eagles also ended the tournament in disappointment, exiting at the first knockout stage despite winning all their three group matches.

Coach Jose Peseiro's men will next do battle against an Algerian team that has won four of five games since that Afcon debacle, beating



Two of Africa's most successful football teams are looking to stay competitive after missing football's biggest fiesta later in the year

Uganda, Tanzania, and Iran. The only defeat they

suffered to Cameroon, though, cost them a ticket to the FIFA World Cup to be held in Qatar in November.

"Best striker we have!" - Nottingham Forest fans ask Taiwo Awoniyi for 20 goals

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...

boys. With barely six minutes left on the clock, Napoli manager Luciano Spalletti substituted Osimhen, sending Adam Ounas in his stead.

But the Super Eagles striker did not appear pleased with the decision.

However, after the encounter, Osimhen explained to the press that he was not angry at being replaced.

"Best striker we have!" - Nottingham Forest fans ask Taiwo Awoniyi for 20 goals

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Quest



writer



FRAGMENT

As we grow our root deeply in Christ, our life endeavors will also be positively impacted. A deeply rooted Christian will advance greatly in his/her career, ministry, relationships and in marriage. He/she will survive the harsh economy situations bedeviling the world. Considering the trio of Joseph, David and Daniel will encourage us that having deep roots in God is the way to go. They all paid the price of tedious and tiring rooting processes and they eventual produced fruits that were conspicuously viable even in foreign lands. Even in old age, Caleb was still determined to take over his portion of inheritance; all because, he had got his roots firmly established in God's promises.

Dr. Oladele Frank Anjorin

DR. OLADELE FRANK ANJORIN

When students are rooted in God's word

I felicitate with the parents and guardians of our esteemed graduands. I am honoured to be a part of the 13th Graduation/Launch of 13th Annual Magazine, Speech and Prize giving day. Many of you have strived to do your best under the well-guided instructions of your teachers in order to be a part of this ceremony. I very much believe that you are the current products of St Luke's Anglican College on display. May the spirit of excellence which the school is known for continue in Jesus name.

As we continue in this ceremony, kindly permit me a space to admonish our graduating students on the topic: "Rooted".

My counsel for you is simple and straightforward: Just go ahead with what you've been given. You received Christ Jesus, the Master; now live him. You're deeply rooted in him. You're well constructed upon him. You know your way around the faith. Now do what you've been taught. School's out; quit studying the subject and start living it! And let your living spill over into thanksgiving. Col.2:6,7 (MSG)

Roots refer to the part of the plant which attach the whole to the ground and carry water and nourishment to the rest of the plant via system of branches.

When seeds are sown in the soil, they germinate, sprout, send roots downward and branches upward, and produce fruit. The vital thing about plants is that they are to have strong roots to survive adverse environmental conditions. In order to be fruitful and actually produce something, plant has to be healthy. In order for a plant to be healthy, it needs to gain sufficient nourishment. It needs water, it needs healthy soil, it needs food (which it gets from the soil) and it needs sufficient light. Everything, except the light, is provided to the plant by its roots. Although, the plants starts out with flimsy roots, if it grows correctly, its roots will run deep into the ground and make for a firm foundation. However, without a viable root system, the plant will not gain what it needs to produce fruit. It will likely just continue to exist without fulfilling its intended



purpose or it may wither and die.

Plants and roots are symbolic of our connection to Christ. As Christians, Christ is the ground for the roots below, and the foundation for the building above. From our text (Col. 2:6,7), it is clear that when we accept Jesus Christ into our hearts as savior and as the Lord of our lives, the root process begins. We start to grow our roots into Christ, our firm foundation. That is the starting point and where our roots have opportunity to grow deep. Many Christians don't get to develop deep roots in Christ but shallow and flimsy ones. When we are rooted in Christ, there will be no way we will not survive the temptations of this world or the troubles of this life. However, because of the shallow root system of many Christians, they are easily uprooted by life's stormy challenges. The life of a Christian is beyond just having roots but deepening them in Christ.

The question is: how then do we

develop deep roots in Christ? We can develop deep roots in Christ by: hearing and being taught by Christ through His word (Eph. 4:21; I Jn.1:1-3, Isa.50:4-7), obedience to instructions from the Lord and the people he has placed over us (Col.2:6,7; Jer.35:1-10), determination and discipline to honour God and to follow through life ordained processes (Dan.1:8, 1 Cor.9:24-27), investment in prayers, keeping the right company (I Cor. 15:33; Ps.1:1-3), delighting and mediating on God's word always (Ps.1:1-3; Phil.4:8); being thankful in all situations (Col.2:7; 1 Thess.5:18; Rm.8:28) and having a strong desire for Christ and His word (Ps.42:1).

However, some of us have planted ourselves in things other than Jesus. Many have rooted their identities in relationships, traditions, family possessions, comparison, society, others' opinion, bank accounts, people, social media followership, jobs, and influential family

background. Where is your root?

Several benefits accrue from being deeply rooted in Christ. Some of which are: maturity and stability in life (Eph.4:13,14, ICor.15:58), manifestation of the spirit of excellence in all spheres of life (Dan.6:3), having a lasting impact in life and ministry, always fresh and productive (Jer.17:8), preservation and prosperity in life (Ps.1:2,3), bearing light to the world and being victorious over the world and its troubles.

As we grow our root deeply in Christ, our life endeavors will also be positively impacted. A deeply rooted Christian will advance greatly in his/her career, ministry, relationships and in marriage. He/she will survive the harsh economy situations bedeviling the world.

Considering the trio of Joseph, David and Daniel will encourage us that having deep roots in God is the way to go. They all paid the price of tedious and tiring rooting processes and they eventual produced fruits that were

conspicuously viable even in foreign lands. Even in old age, Caleb was still determined to take over his portion of inheritance; all because, he had got his roots firmly established in God's promises.

Digging our roots into anything other than Christ will only leave us vulnerable. These grounds are sinking and ephemeral. However, that is where exactly enemy wants us to put our confidence. It should be noted that a strong tree does not just sprout roots overnight and flourish- it takes time for lasting, sustainable roots to form. But when it is formed, it becomes a shelter to the oppressed and bulwark in seasons of crisis and trouble. So don't be discouraged when this process becomes hard, tedious and even trying. It will eventually produce viable fruits. How deeply rooted are you in Christ? Can you weather through the fiercest storms and toughest droughts? May you grow deeply into Christ in Jesus name.