

Plateau is not ceding market to Jaiz Bank
Page 15



Farmers lose N18bn to potato blight says commission Page 22

PDP BoT meets to reconcile party members Page 2

INEC raises alarm over fake registration portal Page 2

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FG still subsidising petrol price



Buhari



Sylva



Kyari

The Federal Government (FG), on Monday, said it is still subsidising petrol despite recent increase in pump price from government-regulated N165 per litre to N174-N215 per litre.

This was even as it blamed the recent hike on petroleum marketers.

The Minister of State Petroleum Resources, Chief Timipre Sylva, stated this at a stakeholders' consultation forum on regulations organised by the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority, (NMDPRA) in Abuja.

He said the government was yet to deregulate, adding that any increase in

price should be blamed on marketers.

He said: "I can tell you authoritatively, we have not deregulated. The government is still subsidising (petrol price). If there are increases in price, it is not from the government."

"It's probably from the marketers but of course I will talk to the Authority to ensure that they actually regulate the price. This is not from the government, we have not deregulated."

While also speaking on the new regulations being considered for the industry, he said the new regulation would clear up the sector for investments and opportunities.

"This administration

Cont'd on Page 2

Pantami rejects 5% excise duty on teleco services

The Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Isa Pantami, said he will frustrate attempts by the Federal Government to implement a five percent excise duty on telecommunication services.

Pantami said he was not consulted on the new tax which he said would suppress growth recorded in the sector.

The minister stated his position at the maiden edition of the Nigerian Telecommunications Indigenous Content Expo which was organised by the Nigeria Office for Developing the indigenous Telecom Sector, in Lagos.

The comment is coming few days after the Minister of Finance Budget and

Cont'd on Page 2



Pantami

N/West, S/West lead in voter registration

A total of 96,303,016 eligible voters have registered to vote in next year's general election, according to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). The Northwest is top on the table with 22,672,373 prospective voters.

It is made up of seven states: Sokoto, Kano, Kebbi, Katsina, Zamfara, Kaduna and Jigawa.

The region is being trailed by the Southwest, which has 18,332,191 voters. The zone is made of the six states of Lagos, Oyo, Ondo, Osun and Ekiti.

Prospective voters from the two regions account for 41.7 per cent of the total number of registered voters as gleaned from the INEC website by The Nation yesterday.

The electoral body had registered 84,004,084 voters for the 2019 polls. Thus, there are new 12,298,932 registered voters.

Northcentral is third with 15,680,438, followed by Southsouth with 15,299,374; Northeast,

Cont'd on Page 2

Voter registration figures as of Jan. 2018

N'Central	10,586,965
N'East	9,929,015
N'West	18,505,984
S'East	8,293,093
S'South	11,101,093
S'West	14,626,800

STATE	REGISTERED VOTERS (2015)	REGISTERED VOTERS (TODAY)	TOTAL
Abia	1,300,102	145,780	1,541,951
Adamawa	1,559,012	182,415	1,741,427
Akwaihom	1,080,759	157,008	1,837,707
Anambra	1,983,473	80,439	2,043,812
Bauchi	2,054,125	143,029	2,197,154
Bayelsa	810,373	144,021	754,394
Benue	2,015,452	169,011	2,184,463
Borno	1,934,079	146,553	2,080,632
Cross River	1,175,023	147,287	1,322,910
Delta	2,275,204	237,172	2,512,439
Ebonyi	1,074,273	90,769	1,171,042
Edo	1,779,738	107,427	1,887,165
Ekiti	732,021	110,710	842,731
Enugu	1,429,221	180,390	1,609,617
Gombe	1,120,023	60,423	1,180,440
Iiso	1,863,030	123,841	1,926,871
Jigawa	1,831,270	104,523	1,935,799
Kaduna	3,407,222	162,015	3,599,237
Kano	4,975,701	173,399	5,149,070
Katsina	2,827,943	139,439	2,967,373
Kebbi	1,470,648	132,394	1,603,012
Kogi	1,350,683	150,650	1,501,733
Kwara	1,142,207	77,260	1,219,527
Lagos	5,822,207	225,049	6,046,159
Nasarawa	1,242,097	138,187	1,380,854
Niger	2,014,317	110,048	2,124,365
Ogun	1,829,534	164,049	1,993,583
Ondo	1,524,055	57,097	1,581,752
Osun	1,407,107	170,715	1,577,822
Oyo	2,415,500	107,190	2,582,750
Plateau	2,001,825	174,108	2,176,023
Rivers	2,537,590	248,831	2,786,421
Sokoto	1,011,929	81,001	1,092,930
Taraba	1,340,952	165,250	1,505,902
Yobe	1,099,070	114,484	1,214,454
Zamfara	1,495,717	99,846	1,588,563
FCT	881,472	71,343	952,815
Total	68,833,476	5,162,289	73,995,765

News

FG still subsidising petrol price

Cont'd from Page 1

understands the need to have an all-encompassing, well thought out and unambiguous regulatory instrument that is painstakingly developed to meet present and future aspirations of government.

"This is required to attract much needed investments and create opportunities in the sector. Hence the need for stakeholders participation and engagement developing the regulations, processes and procedures", he stated.

He further explained that the regulations

provide clarity and certainty for investors, promote and build investor confidence, increase and

improve foreign and indigenous participation in these sectors.

Earlier, the Authority Chief Executive, Engr Farouk Ahmed, explained that the consultation was in line with the mandate of the Petroleum Industry Act, PIA 2021 which ordered that stakeholders must be consulted before any regulations are made.

According to him, the new regulations address issues like petroleum transportation and shipment, licenses and permits, gas pricing for domestic market, gas pipeline tariff, the environment, as well as the gas infrastructure fund amongst others.

Cont'd from Page 1

National Planning, Zainab Ahmed, announced additional tax at the stakeholders' forum on the implementation of excise duty on telecommunications services in Nigeria

When implemented, the excise duty would rise to 12.5 percent. Telecom operators had also said the burden will be pushed to the consumers.

Pantami said, "The Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy is not satisfied with any effort to introduce excise duty on telecommunication services.

"Firstly, I have not been consulted officially and part of the rulemaking is to invite stakeholders to make contributions, I was

Pantami rejects 5% excise duty on teleco services

not consulted officially. Secondly, if we have been contacted, we would have challenged the submission.

"The sectors that are contributing to our economy today are few. What we should be doing is to ensure that all other sectors can also contribute. A lot of sectors are consumers, these are the sectors that we should be tasked to contribute.

"A sector cannot be a consumer today; each sector must contribute a certain percentage to the economy. And if we fail to do that, we would be increasing the pressure and by doing that we would be destroying the digital economy sector.

"Excise duty is introduced to discourage the consumption of certain commodities like alcohol, and tobacco. But today, without broadband penetration, how can you perform financial transactions, how can you deliver lectures without that, how can you work in a hospital, these services are a necessity."

The minister reiterated that telecom companies pay two percent excise duty to the NCC, while telecom consumers also contribute for 7.5 percent for using the service.

Pantami argued that government ought to diversify its revenue portfolio in a manner that would not tamper with growth in the sector.

He said, "We will make further steps to fight it. As a

minister, based on the provision of the constitution of Nigeria, section 148, we are exercising the powers of Mr President.

"That is what the constitution says. At least, I am a major stakeholder. When the 7.5 percent VAT was added, I was not consulted, I only heard the announcement. And I think there is something questionable, and I am glad that we are on the same page with our National Assembly members here, they were not consulted, and they are part of the committees.

"Beyond making our position known, we will go behind the scenes and go against any policy that will destroy the digital economy sector. We will go to any extent to legitimately and legally defend its interest."

N/west, S/west lead in voter registration

Cont'd from Page 1

12,820,363 and Southeast, 11,498,277.

INEC shut its registration portal on Sunday, thus bringing the exercise to a halt for now.

A notice on the website yesterday read: "The CVR exercise has been suspended. Access to login to check the status of your completed applications will soon be restored."

The deadline for the exercise was first fixed for June 30 before it was moved to July 31.

A state-by-state breakdown of the new registration figure of 12,013,068 shows that Kano, one of the seven Northwest states, topped the table with 569,103 prospective voters.

Lagos State is second with 585,629.

From the statistics, 8,854,566 of the 12,013,068 new voters registered physically while 3,444,378 did theirs online.

The data also shows that 6,074,078 of the new registrants are males and 6,224,866 are females.

Youths form the major component of the new would-be voters. There are 8,784,677 of them.

There is a surge in the number of registered voters.

According to observers, there is an increased awareness about the sanctity of the ballot box. Many Nigerians now believe that votes will count.

Also, the candidates, political parties, civil society groups and INEC have intensified their sensitisation of the public to the importance of registering to vote in next year's polls.

The general election will commence in February



Mamood

next year in 176,846 polling units across the country.

Eighteen political parties will participate.

INEC, however, warned in a statement yesterday about the existence of fake online registration sites.

The agency, therefore, advised members of the public to avoid "such fake sites.

The statement by INEC National Commissioner and Chairman, Information and Voter Education Committee, Festus Okoye, reads: "Barely 24 hours after the suspension of voter registration, the attention of the INEC has been drawn to an online site urging Nigerians to enrol for "voter card registration".

According to him, the scammers claimed that the Federal Government had approved "individual voter card (PVC) registration online to avoid the unnecessary crowd in the NIMC (National Identity Management Commission) centres".

Okoye added: "The

commission states unequivocally that the site is not linked to the Commission and the link/portal are spurious and from a dubious source.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has raised alarm over the existence of a fake voter registration portal created by suspected criminals to hoodwink unsuspecting members of the public.

The fake portal was created barely a day after INEC ended its Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) exercise.

Festus Okoye, INEC's National Commissioner and Chairman, Information and Voter Education Committee, in a statement on Monday, said, "Barely 24 hours after the suspension of voter registration, the attention of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has been drawn to an online site urging Nigerians to enroll for "VOTER CARD (PVC) registration claiming that

"INEC is the only body constitutionally and legally mandated to conduct the registration of persons qualified to vote in any election in Nigeria and to update and revise the register when the need arises.

"The commission is solely responsible for organising, undertaking and supervising national elections in the country and does not share this responsibility with anybody or organisation.

"Members of the public are strongly advised not to succumb to the antics of online scammers and should avoid such fake sites.

"The commission has concluded the Continuous Voter Registration exercise nationwide and does not need to open an additional site or portal for the purposes of registration of voters."

...INEC raises alarm over fake registration portal

the Federal Government has approved individual VOTER CARD (PVC) registration online to avoid unnecessary crowd in the "NIMC" CENTERS.

"The Commission states unequivocally that the site is not linked to the Commission and the link/portal is spurious and from a dubious source.

"The Independent National Electoral Commission is the only body constitutionally and legally mandated to conduct the registration of persons qualified to vote in any election in Nigeria and to update and revise the register when the need arises.

"The Commission is solely responsible for organizing, undertaking, and supervising national elections in the country and does not share this responsibility with anybody

PDP BoT meets to reconcile party members

The Board of Trustees (BoT) of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), will today, Wednesday, meet to discuss the problems within the party.

The Chairman of the BoT, Senator Walid Jibrin, disclosed this in a statement on Monday.

He said a special reconciliation committee will be set up to reconcile aggrieved members of the party, especially Governor Nyesom Wike of Rivers State.

Jibrin decried the "confusion that has set in among some members of the party since the emergence of Atiku Abubakar and Governor Ifeanyi Okowa, as flag bearers of the party in the 2023 presidential election", saying the BoT will do everything possible to resolve the issues.

He assured party members

that plans were on ground to bring all members of the party together as one united entity.

He said the PDP is better off than the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), "especially their plans in trying to bring religious issues of Muslim-Muslim president and vice-president."

"I noticed with great concern, the unnecessary confusion following the outcome of the PDP primary elections, in which Atiku Abubakar emerged and Governor Okowa was appointed his running mate for the presidential election in 2023.

"May I point out very strongly that there is no problem as envisaged by some people in our great party.

"I want to assure everyone that all plans are on ground to bring all members together as one and united family", Jibrin said.

Jibrin noted the recent visit of some serving governors of the PDP, former governors of the party, as well as some former ministers and some members of the BoT to Governor Wike, pointing out that it is part of the reconciliation efforts.

"Interestingly, the BoT, the highest advisory body and the conscience of the party, is meeting on Wednesday, 3rd August, to discuss the issues accordingly by coming up with strong recommendations with a special committee for the special reconciliation of aggrieved members, especially Governor Wike.

"After the BoT meeting, we will meet with Wike and all aggrieved members and all past presidential aspirants.

"It is my prayer as Chairman of the BoT that the PDP will remain strongest and win all elections in 2023", he said.



Business & Economy



Sylva



Danbatta

Diesel price hike and Nigeria's telcom industry

Nigeria is currently selling diesel at N850/liter (\$1.616) which is above the average price of diesel per liter (\$1.4) sold across the world. UMAR FAROUK AHMAD writes.

DESPITE Nigeria being the 14th country in the world with the highest crude oil production, it's so unfortunate that the country is 109th in selling diesel at a cheaper price.

This is alarming because if diesel price continues to hike, many businesses in the country will crash and crumble including the telecommunication industry of Nigeria.

An increase in petrol majorly affects the transport commodity only. But in contrast to diesel, the increase affects both the transport and cost of production of commodities. The reason is that most of the trucks used for transporting commodities use diesel vehicles to operate. Likewise, the industries, and companies, among others for the production of the commodity are powered by diesel generators. Hence, diesel rise can make products increase by triple or quadruple their initial cost.

A study performed among Nigerian firms by Leadership Newspaper a few months back revealed that many businesses in Nigeria are struggling for survival. Concurrently, some have suspended operations as a result of surging diesel prices.

Analysts have attributed the current surge in diesel prices to the rise in the price of crude oil in the international market as a result of the Russia-Ukraine

crisis. Russia is an oil-producing country, while refined petroleum products come from Ukraine and other Western European countries. This has unquestionably impacted the price of petroleum products in Nigeria. The invasion of Ukraine by Russia has distorted global financial and energy markets, causing oil prices to climb above \$100 per barrel, the highest since 2014.

Therefore, the Nigerian Government should keep a close eye on the diesel price increase and make sure the price is subsidized to the barest minimum to its citizens for the betterment of the country.

In the telecommunication sector, Telecom sites are being powered by diesel generators 24/7 to maintain a consistent power supply. The absence of power supply even for a second in a telecom site would lead bad network because the antennas used for sending and receiving radio waves use electricity to operate. Also, the antennas can as well not be able to produce the network in our mobile devices which we use to make calls, connect to the internet, and many more.

This is the reason why telecom sites can not depend on grid electricity due to its inconsistency of power supply. As the diesel price crisis worsens,

Nigerian telecom operators' operational costs may increase further, as the industry reportedly consumes an average of 40 million liters of diesel each month to power and run their telecom sites.

According to the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC), the operational expenditures of Nigerian telecommunication companies increased by ₦265.25 billion from ₦1.4 trillion in 2020 to ₦1.66 trillion in 2021.

In 2022, the cost of diesel rose from ₦225 in January to over ₦800 in July, sending the yearly cost of powering telecom services to almost ₦400 billion, or ₦33 billion per month.

Based on market analysis, the price might surge in the coming weeks as 1 liter of diesel would cost over ₦1,000.

Gbenga Adebayo, the president of the Association of Licensed Telecoms Operators of Nigeria (ALTON) warned that the price rise and large operational costs, would hurt telecom operators and that ALTON would meet with the government to seek some kind of intervention to ameliorate the effect of these events on the industry.

Punch Newspaper reported that the cost of powering telecommunication services could hit ₦60 billion per month and ₦720 billion in one year if the cost of diesel attains ₦1,500/liter

as mentioned by marketers of the product.

Now, the cost of diesel to run network towers, base stations, and offices increased from ₦225 per liter to ₦850 per liter as of July 2022.

With the price of diesel rising to ₦1,000/₦1,500, ALTON may push further for the possible 40 percent increase in tariffs or even go higher to 50 percent.

This implies that call rates may drift between ₦6 to ₦9, while the SMS price cap may drift between ₦5 and ₦7; or more.

Also, with an inflation rate of 18.6 percent in July, and a decreasing purchasing power, customers are in for an addition to their current troubles.

According to the writer's

thoughts, the best solution to curb this issue of diesel rise and national grid failure on telecom sites is for the telecom industry to embrace solar power energy. As was written in my previous article that was published in Vanguard Newspaper, titled 'Solar power: The portent solution to Nigeria's energy crisis' (<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/06/solar-power-potent-solution-to-nigerias-energy-crisis/>), I explained judiciously how solar power is the best and the cheapest source of generating electricity, especially in a country like Nigeria which has a huge amount of sunlight.

Source: Economic confidential

"This is the reason why telecom sites can not depend on grid electricity due to its inconsistency of power supply. As the diesel price crisis worsens, Nigerian telecom operators' operational costs may increase further, as the industry reportedly consumes an average of 40 million liters of diesel each month to power and run their telecom sites."



PTAD to partner with anti-graft agencies

The Pension Transitional Arrangement Directorate (PTAD) has revealed plans to partner with different anti-graft agencies to ensure the reduction of pension fraud in the country. Executive Secretary of PTAD, Dr. Chioma Ejikeme stated this at a sensitisation workshop for anti-graft agencies in Abuja.

Speaking on the need for collaboration, Dr. Ejikeme says "It is important for agencies that like ICPC, EFCC, to really understand what we do, because of the perception of pension admiration out there as many people think PTAD keeps pensioners funds, which is not true.

"As such, we want to make sure that our processes and the way we conduct our payments is very well known to these agencies not just them, but also the general public."

The ES however acknowledged that there are few challenges in payment processes for pensioners, which form the bulk of the complaints



Ejikeme

received by the agency on a daily basis.

"Certainly, there are challenges in payment arising from the Government Integrated Financial Management Systems (GIFMIS), but the magnitude is really not significant.

She added that, "Consequently, we are here today to look at some of the minor challenges while we sit with the relevant stakeholders and look at how to address them and also get input from the financial managers of the government".

FG: 1.9m Vulnerable Nigerians'll get N38bn grants

More than 1.9 million vulnerable Nigerians are to benefit from about N38bn being disbursed as grants of N20,000 each to beneficiaries under the Grant for Vulnerable Groups programme of the Federal Government.

Data released in Abuja on by the National Cash Transfer Office of the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management indicated that the bank details of the over 1.9 million beneficiaries had been digitised.

This came as the Humanitarian Minister, Sadiya Farouq, kicked-off the disbursement of N20,000 each to vulnerable and poor residents of the Federal Capital Territory during the

commencement of the second round of the programme.

Farouq re-inaugurated the programme, which hitherto was known as Cash Grant for Rural Women, as she stated that it would now be known as Grant for Vulnerable Groups in order to encourage inclusivity.

She further said the Grant for Vulnerable Groups programme was introduced in 2020 to sustain the social inclusion agenda of the Federal Government.

The minister was quoted in a statement signed by the ministry's Permanent Secretary, Nasir Sani-Gwarzo, as saying, "It is consistent with the national target of lifting 100 million Nigerians out of poverty in 10 years.

"It is designed to provide a

one-off grant to some of the poorest and most vulnerable women in rural and peri-urban areas of the country. A cash grant of N20,000 is being disbursed to poor women and youths across the 36 states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory.

"Our target in the FCT is to disburse the grant to over 2,900 beneficiaries across the six Area Councils. In line with President Muhammadu Buhari's social inclusion, 70 per cent of the total number of beneficiaries is for women while the remaining 30 per cent is for men."

Farouq added, "In addition, about 15 per cent of the total number of beneficiaries is specifically allocated to the segment of the population with special needs, including Persons with Disability, internally displaced persons and senior citizens in the FCT."

In her remarks, the National Coordinator, Conditional Cash Transfer, Halima Shehu, announced that the Grant for Vulnerable Groups was now fully digitised.

She said, "From the National Cash Transfer office, we have fully digitised the process. We have over 1.9 million beneficiaries that now have NUBAN accounts in commercial banks across the country.

"This is a huge milestone because records have shown that there is no programme of this type that has achieved such success. Six months ago, we flagged off digitisation. All our beneficiaries now have debit cards from different banks across the country.

"We have given them a lot of coaching and mentoring financially and so we can now say that they have been financially included because they are now fully banked."



Farouk

Association of Bureaux De Change Operators of Nigeria (ABCON) has cautioned the federal government against policies that can worsen the impact of upward inflationary trend on the populace.

The association gave this warning in its Quarterly Economic Review for the second quarter of the year, Q2 '22, noting the severe impact of the sharp rise in commodity prices triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing Russian war in Ukraine.

"Nigeria needs to balance fiscal sustainability with the need to mitigate the effects of these overlapping crises on the poorest citizens. The excruciating pressure on commodities especially oil and gas globally is not exonerating the poor in Nigeria.

"Gallop energy prices as currently being witnessed in Nigeria, with lower real incomes, has increased production costs, tightened financial conditions, and constrained macroeconomic policy.

"Under these prevailing circumstances, the government must avoid all distortionary policies such as multiple taxes, subsidies, and all fiscal tightening, which could worsen the

ABCON cautions against policies that may worsen inflation

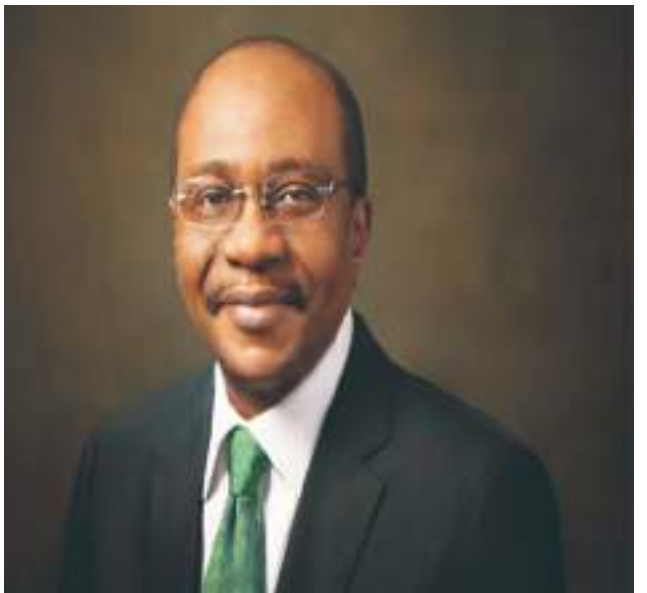
recent increase in commodity prices," ABCON said.

Against this background, it called on the FG to reprioritise its spending with emphasis on targeted relief for vulnerable populations, to cushion the impact of higher inflation, weaker economic growth and tighter financial conditions.

Such reliefs, ABCON explained, should include: Comprehensive harmonisation of all local, state and federal government taxes which currently is imposing a heavy burden on the citizens of Nigeria; Deliberate and dynamic

monetary policy to optimise interest rates to stimulate savings, investments and production; Better coordination of monetary and fiscal policies to avoid conflicting effects detrimental to set objectives.

ABCON also noted the sharp and persistent depreciation of the naira since the beginning of the year, warning that this trend will increase the debt service burden of the country and thus undermine the nation's credit risk as well as impede foreign capital inflows into the country as well as increase the debt service burden on the country.



Emefiele

NCAA enumerates challenges hindering night flights

Paucity of funds, security challenges are some of the problems making night flights impracticable in Nigeria.

Capt. Musa Nuhu, Director-General of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) made the declaration on Tuesday in Ikeja when he spoke with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN).

Quoting statistics provided by the African Development Bank in 2019, Nuhu said Nigeria would require more than N1.5 trillion to fix airport infrastructures gap.

He said poor infrastructure also contributed to the challenges faced in night flight operations in Nigeria's airports.

Nuhu explained that any airport planning to operate beyond dusk required large financial outlay and compliance with important conditions for safe landing and take-off of aircraft.

He listed some of the conditions as the provision of adequate number of competent personnel, adequate power supply and availability of ancillary service providers, among others.

The NCAA also told NAN that security risks and traffic level were other challenges associated with 24 hours airport operations in the country.

"All manners of security risks including kidnapping, robbery and others are evolving rapidly in many parts of the country.

"The evolving security challenges make night operations dangerous because many airports, by



Nuhu

reason of construction and operational requirements are located mostly on the outskirts of towns.

"The risks are enormous and seriously impacting on airports' operations, airport workers and passengers and crew even in daytime.

"Available data show that the levels of passenger and traffic activities are not financially viable or self-sustaining to operate a majority of the airports beyond sunset," Nuhu said.

He spoke with NAN on the sideline of the just-concluded 26th Annual Conference of the League of Airport and Aviation Correspondents.

The conference had: "Sunset Airports: Economic and Safety Implications" as its theme.

Nuhu also listed airport and Air

Navigation Services infrastructure, search-and-rescue and airline capacity as some of the safety implications of Sunset to Sunrise airports.

He said that the high risk of accidents during night operations at airports due to inadequate power supply from primary and secondary sources was daunting.

He stressed that night operations at airports depended majorly on functional and appropriately calibrated landing aids and serviceable automatic weather stations among other infrastructure.

Nuhu cautioned that the absence of the essential infrastructure could lead to catastrophic consequences during night operations. (NAN)



Business & Economy

Mainstreaming RMAFC into PIA implementation

As the implementation of the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA), 2021 gathers momentum, some institutions of government have started to critique the law, with the view of exploring how best to implement it for the overall benefit of the nation. AFONNE EMMANUEL writes.

ONE of the institutions, the Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC), recently organised a retreat with the aim of engaging various stakeholders to address some issues in the PIA in order to ensure smooth implementation and optimise the flow of revenues into the Federation Account.

At the end of the retreat on the PIA implementation in Uyo, the Commission decried the obvious neglect of its critical roles in the implementation of the law.

It observed that there are some sections of the PIA that are inconsistent with the provisions of relevant sections of the constitution.

It identified the inconsistency in the provisions of Section 24 (4)-(5) of the PIA, 2021 which stipulates the remittance of operating surplus of Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) into Consolidated Revenue Fund, while the Commission itself is being funded from the Federation Account.

The Commission made it clear that its role as the revenue mobilising institution of the nation was not properly considered in the enactment of the Act.

This was a major point raised in the communique issued at the end of the

retreat that brought together experts and stakeholders to brainstorm on the Commission's roles in the implementation of the Act.

In the communique signed by the Acting Chairman of RMAFC, Mr Umaru Abdullahi, the Commission said there was need for a second look at the Act to ensure productive implementation.

The Commission noted that its cardinal role of mobilising revenue into the Federation Account needed to be defined in the Act to ensure efficiency.

"Urgent measures should be taken to address sections of the Act that are inconsistent with the constitution.

"The measures can come in the form of judicial interpretation or legislative actions," it said.

It further stated that the operating surpluses from the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) and Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) should be remitted into the Federation Account.

"Such operating surpluses should not go into the Consolidated Revenue



Bello

Account as currently provided in the PIA, 2021," it said.

The Commission urged governments at all levels to collaborate towards tackling insecurity in the country to make the nation attractive to investors.

It also said that the shareholding of the NNPC Ltd should be clearly defined to reflect the three tiers of government.

It added that the existing collaboration between the FIRS and the RMAFC should be sustained to achieve the realisation of the new tax regimes in the PIA.

"There should be stringent operational policy regime to enable the nation to achieve and sustain the expected increase in revenue earnings under the PIA."

However, the participants agreed that it is still too early to gauge the exact impact of the PIA on the federation revenue, but careful monitoring of its implementation is required so that steps can be taken in time to mitigate any adverse fall outs.

RMAFC commended the President Muhammadu Buhari-led government for enacting the Act after several years of procrastination.

Gov. Udom Emmanuel of Akwa Ibom, who spoke at the opening ceremony, renewed calls for alternative sources of revenue for the nation, stressing that diversification will save Nigeria's economy from collapse.

Represented by his deputy,

Mr Moses Ekpo, the governor said that the country's overdependence on petroleum revenue had become counterproductive.

He said that investing in agriculture, small and medium scale enterprises, aviation and tourism would provide lifelines for the nation's economy.

Emmanuel said that the search for alternative energy sources was already having adverse effect on oil.

"The world is already thinking towards other sources of power. As a nation, we should begin to explore alternative sources of revenue.

"We have to urgently diversify our economy and be less dependent on oil. The industrialised nations are already looking at alternatives," he said.

"The world is already thinking towards other sources of power. As a nation, we should begin to explore alternative sources of revenue. We have to urgently diversify our economy and be less dependent on oil. The industrialised nations are already looking at alternatives," he said. The governor further stated that Nigeria should determine how the decentralisation of the oil industry would benefit the Federation Account and the host communities. Acting Chairman of RMAFC, Abdullahi, described the oil industry as a critical part of the nation's economy. He said that although the industry contributed less than 10 per cent to the country's GDP, it accounted for over 80 per cent of nation's foreign earnings. So any adverse change in the industry will have a major and long term impact on federation revenue."

The governor further stated that Nigeria should determine how the decentralisation of the oil industry would benefit the Federation Account and the host communities.

Acting Chairman of RMAFC, Abdullahi, described the oil industry as a critical part of the nation's economy.

He said that although the industry contributed less than 10 per cent to the country's GDP, it accounted for over 80 per cent of nation's foreign earnings.

"So any adverse change in the industry will have a major and long term impact on federation revenue.

"This is perhaps the reason successive governments have continued to give attention to the sector," he said.

Delivering a lecture, entitled: "Petroleum Industry Act 2021 and Its Impact on Federation Revenue," Mr Uche Nwagbara, a Director in RMAFC, said the PIA would promote efficiency in the sector.

Nwagbara who listed other benefits of the PIA to include: proper sector regulation and host community development, said that the Act was a good omen to the nation.

He noted that with the PIA, 2021, undue bureaucratic bottlenecks is removed by reducing time for approval of licences for new operators at the upstream, midstream, and downstream segments of the sector to a maximum of 90 days.

According to him, with the enactment of the Petroleum Industry Act, the sector is expected to attract more investors.

He also opined that the PIA envisages expansion of the sector to make it more profitable for the benefit of Nigerians and investors alike.

Nwagbara said that in the long term it is expected that government revenues will definitely increase.

He said that the increased revenue would be used to finance critical government projects like transportation infrastructure, expansion of electricity generation

and distribution, education, healthcare among others.

Nwagbara said that with the creation of the host community fund, it is expected that there will be reduced hostilities in the oil producing areas.

He said that this will lead to improved crude oil and gas production and increase in the federation revenue.

All in all, he said that the outcomes will be based on how the Petroleum Industry Act is implemented.

Mr Abdul Muhammad, in his presentation entitled: "Legal and Constitutional Issues in PIA Implementation," said the PIA is challenged by implementation issues regarding fiscal federalism.

Muhammad said the PIA was enacted to reduce the bureaucratic bottleneck associated with the management of Nigeria's oil and gas sector.

According to him, the Act will create efficient and effective governing institution, with clear and separate roles for the petroleum industry.

"The Act when fully implemented will establish a framework for the creation of a commercial oriented and profit-driven national petroleum company.

"Promote transparency, good governance and accountability in the administration of the petroleum resources of Nigeria.

"The PIA, 2021 will foster a business environment conducive for petroleum operations and deepen local content practice in Nigeria oil and gas industry.

"The Host Communities Development Trust Fund is the most laudable innovation in the Act, this will bring hostilities to the barest minimum if not eliminated," Muhammad said.

Indeed, the driving force of the Act, is to ensure national prosperity and peace in the oil producing communities.

(NANFeatures)(NAN)

Politics

Stop dragging APC into your problems

— group tells PDP

The All Progressives Congress Grassroots Governance Group (APC-G3) has advised leaders of the opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to stop dragging the ruling party into their intractable issues.

Deputy National Publicity Secretary of APC-G3, Kingsley Ndunagu, gave the advice in a statement issued on Tuesday in Abuja.

Ndunagu expressed misgivings that the Chairman, PDP Board of Trustees, Sen. Walid Jibrin, was trying to introduce religion into APC's choice of presidential and vice-presidential candidates.

"It is wrong of Jibrin to say that the problems arising from PDP's presidential primary could not be compared with the situation in the APC's Muslim-Muslim ticket issues.

"The PDP leaders are aware that their party may not even come out second in the presidential election. This informed their desperation to drag the formidable Tinubu/Shettima ticket into their trouble," he stated.

Ndunagu emphasised that Christians and Muslims have been living together as one in the country and would continue to do so.

He challenged PDP to explain to Nigerians how it intends to build national unity having reneged on the agreement to let power rotate.

"Their selfishness did not allow them to acknowledge



Adamu

the unity and stability of Nigeria like the APC did.

"Christians and Muslims have been living together in Nigeria, but selfish politicians are trying to divide us.

"The PDP should explain what they will tell Nigerians who want to live as one, how they want to unite our country.

"This is the same people who called for power rotation in 2014, but are now working against it.

"The APC as a responsible party wants all Nigerians to be one, irrespective of religion and ethnicity." Ndunagu stressed.

He argued that APC leaders, particularly President Muhammadu Buhari and northern governors went for power rotation.

"That is the way to go in a multi-ethnic society. From all indications, PDP may not even be in the second position in the presidential election, hence their desperation.

"Nigerians must see the Tinubu-Shettima ticket as being here to serve the country, and not a particular group of people," Ndunagu added. (NAN)

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has disassociated itself from an online website urging Nigerians to enrol for Permanent Voter Card (PVC).

INEC said this in a statement by Mr Festus Okoye, the National Commissioner and Chairman, Information and Voter Education Committee, in Abuja on Monday describing the website as fake.

"Barely 24 hours after the suspension of voter registration, has INEC attention been drawn to an online site urging Nigerians to enrol for voter card (PVC) registration, Okoye said.

He said that the scammers claimed that the Federal Government has approved individual Permanent Voter Card (PVC) registration online, to avoid unnecessary crowd at the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) centers.

"The Commission states unequivocally that the site is not linked to the commission and the link/portal is spurious and from a dubious source," he said.

Okoye said that INEC was the only body constitutionally and legally mandated to conduct the registration of persons

INEC disowns online voter registration website

qualified to vote in any election in Nigeria and to update and revise the register when the need arose.

"The commission is solely responsible for organising, undertaking, and supervising national elections in the country and does not share this responsibility with anybody or organisation.

"Members of the public are strongly advised not to succumb to the antics of online scammers and should avoid such fake sites.

"The commission has concluded the Continuous Voter Registration nationwide and does not need to open an additional site or portal for the purposes of registration of voters," he said.



Okoye

Cassava meal claims family of five in Kogi

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

FIVE family members at Usugnwe-Okaito Community in Okehi Local Government Area

of Kogi State lost their lives after eating cassava flour meal popularly called Amala.

Our Correspondent reliably gathered that those who died after eating the meal include a father, mother and three of their children.

According to the source, the three children died immediately after eating the Amala on Friday, while their mother died on Saturday, and the next day, Sunday, their Father also died.

The source said that the family members hail from Omavi, Ohupe ward but

are residing in Usugnwe-Okaito.

It would be recalled that such incident happened some years back in Okene Eba where a whole family were killed and just recently in Ogaminana and Osara, another incident happened which were all traced to food poisoning.

A senior staff of the Epidemiological Unit of the Kogi State Ministry of Health who didn't want his name in print confirmed the incident as the head of the unit was said to be out of town.

Youths kick off sensitisation against vote buying

A political group, Youths In Politics (YIP), Nigeria, on Sunday in Lagos kicked off voter education and sensitisation campaign against vote buying and vote selling ahead of 2023 general elections.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the campaign, titled, "Don't Sell Your Vote, Tomorrow Is Now", started in Ikeja area of the state and had in attendance some celebrities who preached against vote selling in 2023.

Addressing newsmen, the President/Convener of the group, Mr Micheal Nwabuo, said the sensitisation had become imperative following challenges the nation was facing.

Nwabuo said: "We are against vote buying. We are here to educate the general public not to sell their votes in 2023. They should vote the right person.

"We are not campaigning for anybody, all we are after now is to discontinue the trend of vote buying and selling in our elections.

"Enough is enough of suffering; people should not sell their votes but vote in right leadership based on their conviction and not because of the money collected from any politicians."

He said that the group would carry the same campaign against vote buying and vote selling to over 500 local government areas in Nigeria.

According to him, the youth group has over 9.6 million membership across the nation including celebrities to sensitise the public on the need to install right leadership.

Nwabuo said that it was better for people to go hungry for a while than to sell their votes and enthrone bad leadership that would bring years of hardship to them.

He added: "A lot of things are happening in the country that we cannot bear any longer, we just have to vote right leadership now.

"Time is going, we should not delay in putting right people in leadership.

"Nigeria should be competing with America with all the enormous human and natural resources at its disposal."

On the July 31 INEC deadline for the Continuous Voter Registration (CVR), Nwabuo urged the commission to extend the registration to capture more people who were seeking opportunity to register.

According to him, the group has about 60 celebrities who are ready to sensitise people more to come out and register to exercise their franchise.

Also speaking, Mr Seyi Awolowo, one of the group's leaders, begged Nigerians not to sell their votes for any amount, so as to create a better country for themselves and their children.

Kneeling down openly to beg the crowd, Awolowo said that people should not because of hunger sell their votes, adding that Nigeria must get its leadership right in 2023.

"The masses have the voting power, they should use this to create the country they want for themselves and their children," he said.

On the CVR deadline,

Awolowo said that it was not fair to end the exercise six months to the elections, saying many people had not got opportunity to register.

Also, Mr Odion Osaron, another leader of the group, said that the sensitisation became imperative because of the recent development in Ekiti and Osun governorship elections.

Osaron said: "It has become important for us to educate the voters on the importance of not selling their votes because where we are today as a nation is as a result of people who sold their votes.

"We should not repeat the same mistake. 2023 remains a very important year for us to install right leadership."

Fresh registration hits 10.4m as INEC suspends CVR



Mahmood

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) says it recorded 10.4 million fresh registration in the nationwide Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) before it suspension on July 31.

INEC said this in its CVR Update for Quarter 4, week 16, released on Monday, Aug. 1 in Abuja.

The commission also said that during the period, 12.2 million registrants completed their

registrations, of which 3.4 million registered online, while 8.8 million registered through physical registration.

INEC gave the gender breakdown of the registrants who completed their registrations to be, 6,074,078 male and 6,224,866 female.

The update also showed that 8,784,677 of the registrants that completed their registrations were youths, 2,430,709 middle aged, 956,017 elderly, 127,541 old persons, while 87,083 were Persons With Disabilities (PWDs).

INEC also said that during the period of CVR, the commission received 31,098,013 applications including those for voter transfer, requests for replacement of PVCs, update of voter information record, etc, of which 216,442 was from PWDs.

It gave the gender breakdown of those who applied to be 16,148,645 for

male and 14,949,368 from women.

A breakdown of the completed registration by states showed that Lagos has the highest number of registrants that completed their registration with 585,629 registrants, followed by Kano with 569,103 and Delta with 523,517.

Ekiti has the lowest number of people who completed registration with 124,844, followed by Yobe 152,414, FCT 211,341 and Imo with 213,270.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the last CVR commenced in April 2018 and ended in August 2018, the lead-up to the 2019 general elections.

It was scheduled to resume in the first quarter of 2020 but was suspended following the break out of COVID-19 pandemic.

However, INEC resumed the exercise on June 28, 2021 and suspended it on July 31. (NAN)

Politics

'Nentawe is APC's bona fide gubernatorial candidate'

The All Progressives Congress (APC) in Plateau State has read and watched with keen interest all the hullabaloo about its gubernatorial candidate, Dr Nentawe Yilwatda Goshwe who without mincing words remains the party's credible candidate of the 2023 general elections. SYLVANUS NAMANG writes.

THE claims and counter claims about his candidature are distraction which the party seriously frowns at some of the claims and comments against his candidature are products of absurdity while others are mischievous and diversionary.

Before now, the issue had been the laughable claim that the gubernatorial candidate had not been issued a certificate of return by the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC. This is based on ignorance as INEC issues certificate of return only to candidates who have won an election conducted by it.

Perhaps based on the morbid fear of the APC gubernatorial candidate by the opposition parties based on his intimidating credentials, which have given them sleepless night, they have conceded defeat ahead of the 2023 gubernatorial election.

The most ridiculous issue which is trending in the media is the one by some pseudo forces and fifth columnists led by the trio of Jacob Gyang, Elder Victor Useni and Musa Ardo who call themselves Progressive Foundation Movement (PFM). Our checks reveal that these characters are strange and unknown to any available records of our party. We therefore challenge them to unmask their true identity by publishing their membership details i.e. ward of registration and registration numbers.

The fictitious group which is being used by some forces who are desperately seeking for acceptance by one of the opposition parties in the state want to cause confusion and inflict some damage to the party before they leave.

The APC is fully aware of the nocturnal meetings being held whose outcome is this vain attacks and attention seeking.

Exactly two months after the primary election in which Dr Nentawe Yilwatda Goshwe emerged as the undisputable winner of the primary election after beating three other aspirants out of the eight aspirants who bought the party's form but which four withdrew before the contest, these so-called stakeholders are asking the Senator Abdullahi Adamu-led National Working Committee of the party to substitute the gubernatorial candidate. If we may ask, substitute him for what reason(s) and with who?

They claimed that the gubernatorial candidate did not meet the guidelines for membership of the party and was not duly elected at the gubernatorial primary election conducted by the electoral committee from the National Secretariat of the Party.



Bature

The self-styled Progressive Foundation Movement claimed Dr Yilwatda is not a duly registered member of the party as he joined the APC on 6th January, 2022 after resigning as INEC Commissioner in charge of Benue state in December 2021 and had not been granted waiver before the contest.

These claims are as spurious as they are totally based on ignorance of the party's new guidelines and the amended constitution. Asking the National Working Committee of the party which is the implementing organ of NEC to replace the APC gubernatorial candidate is invariably telling it to reverse itself for no cogent reason.

Dr Nentawe Yilwatda duly met all the set conditions and provisions of the guidelines and constitution of the APC before contesting the primary election on June 5th, 2022.

Article 9.1 of the amended constitution which deals with eligibility/registration states; Membership of the party shall be open to any citizen of the Federal Republic of Nigeria who has attained the age of 18 years and who accepts the aims and objectives of the party, and is willing to abide by the provisions of the constitution, provided such a person is not a member of

any other political party, a condition in which the candidate is more than qualified.

Sub section ii. of the same Article states; Application for membership shall be made to and cleared by the Ward Executive Committee of the party in the ward of the Local Government Area where the person was born, resides, works or originates. On-line registration shall also be acceptable provided it is acceptable by the National Working Committee.

The candidate more than passed this process like any other aspirant before he could qualify to contest as the party has many checks from the state to the national levels so as not to stand the risk of disqualification of its candidates.

On the issue of resigning as INEC Commissioner in December 2021, clear six months before the primary election, he needed only 30 days required for an employee of the public service preceding the date of election as provided in section E. of the APC guidelines for the nomination of candidates for the 2023 General Elections.

The candidate is of sound mind, has never been convicted for any offence nor adjudged to be bankrupt or a member of a secret cult which are issues that would disqualify an aspirant from contesting an election.

He was duly sponsored and screened by the party's appropriate organs before



Yilwatda

contesting.

On the allegation that the delegate list was concocted in Jos and not in the 207 wards of the state, this allegation cannot stand any integrity test.

All congresses of the party to elect five delegates for the State House of Assembly, Gubernatorial and National Assembly primary elections took place in all the 207 federal wards of Plateau state supervised by officials from the national secretariat of the party and witnessed by INEC and security agencies as provided in the party's guidelines.

If not the height of mischief and the desperate attempts to demarket our gubernatorial candidate who is the candidate to beat in the 2023 general elections, why the selection of only delegates for the gubernatorial primary to vent their adrenalin?

What Plateau State needs in 2023 is the best and that best is found in the combination of the youthful and most capable duo of Dr Nentawe Yilwatda Goshwe and his running mate, Honourable Pam Bot Mang. No amount of blackmail, subterfuge or denigration would stop this winning team.

No doubt, the party has its challenges like in other states which are normal fallout of any contest, moreso in fierce contest at gubernatorial levels where aspirants put in their energy and resources.

Those who lost at the primary election are definitely

aggrieved but this must not lead to throwing away the baby with the bath water.

The party in the state is not sleeping over these fallouts. It has begun the process of reconciliation across board as the primary elections remain a family contest.

Moreover there is only one position for each seat contested for. The party does not believe in a winner and loser syndrome in a win win situation.

There are different ways the aggrieved aspirants would be accommodated as losing election does not mean an end to the loser.

Those who are ambivalent or double-minded should reconsider their stand whether to move to another party at this point to add to their number and remain irrelevant as we have seen in the case of those who made such grievous mistakes in the past.

The accusation of the Governor Simon Lalong who is the leader of the party but who himself like his colleagues in other states was not a delegate at the gubernatorial primary election need to cease in order to allow the party concentrate on the elections ahead.

There is the need to demonstrate sportsmanship and without necessarily sermonising, God gives power to who he desires and no one's destiny can be stopped by a mortal that we all are.

IMAGES

CAN PARLEYS WITH PLSG, PIDAN AND YOUTHS

Below pictures were captured after a coalition of major interest groups led by CAN Plateau State at the Banquet Hall, new Government House Rayfield, Jos on Monday



Rev. Fr. Polycarp Lubo, CAN Plateau State Chapter with other interest groups after the meeting



Hon. Noel Dongur, Chief of Staff Government House (middle) shaking hands with the National President, Mwaghavul Development Association and Mr. Stephen Musa Sarki (right)



Barr. Chrisantus Ahmadu, Commissioner of Justice and Attorney General (left) with Hon. Dan Manjang, Commissioner of Information



Engr. Sunday Hyat, mni, Head of Civil Service and others after the meeting



Prof. John Wokton Wada, mni, Director General, Research, Planning and Documentation, Government House (left) with Mr. Chrisogonus Yilzak, MD/CEO, Plateau Investment and Property Development Company (PIPC)



Hon. Dan Philip Hirkop, Commissioner of Higher Education (right) with Hon. Edward Sunaur, Secretary, Pankshin LGC



Mr. Joseph Lengmang, Director General, PPBA (left) with one of the invited persons at the meeting



Dr. Mrs. Regina Soemlat, Commissioner of Finance with others after the meeting

Photos: DANLADI DUK

Politics

2023 elections and Peter Obi's chances

In the bygone era of military coups, by now, Nigerians would have been awoken to the familiar jingle waltzing through the air, heralding the arrival of soldiers who have come to 'liberate' the country from the 'corrupt' and 'inept' civilian government. Indeed, if anyone in the military was looking for an excuse to strike as things are in Nigeria now, the politicians have provided plenty for such, writes TAYO OKE.

IN the bygone era of military coups, by now, Nigerians would have been awoken to the familiar jingle waltzing through the air, heralding the arrival of soldiers who have come to 'liberate' the country from the 'corrupt' and 'inept' civilian government. Indeed, if anyone in the military was looking for an excuse to strike as things are in Nigeria now, the politicians have provided plenty for such, writes TAYO OKE.

The level of decay in the body polity today is nothing compared to that experienced in the events that led to the overthrow of the civilian government of Shehu Shagari in 1983. The military putsch was led by none other than General Muhammadu Buhari who, himself, was brushed aside by General Ibrahim Babangida, in the so-called palace coup in 1985. The military clung onto power until the citizens finally pushed them out in 1999. There is a feeling in the air that 1983 is very much upon us right now. There are those, even amongst the gallant pro-democracy fighters of the 1980s/90s who, in their frustration, now think Nigeria is ripe for a 'Rawlings'.

The late Flt Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings came to power in Ghana in 1981 through a popular military uprising, and set about 'wiping out' the old guard. Rawlings had declared the Ghanaian government "corrupt beyond redemption, and had acted to retrieve the nation from its "neo-colonial dependency". He himself later betrayed the revolutionary cause, but that is beside the point.

The point is Ignatius Acheampong, Fred Akuffo, and Akwasi Afrifa, all former heads of state, were executed. Hundreds more from the ministries departments and



Obi

parastatals also executed. Names of 'known' corrupt persons were announced on air, at random, with the exact amount allegedly stolen, and were compelled to refund the loot or face summary execution. The country's treasury suddenly became awash with previously looted funds, both real and imagined. Ghana then embarked upon a long road to recovery, and a fresh start.

Some owe the relatively stable civil order in the country today to that 'cleaning up' exercise by Rawlings. While Nigerians are also yearning for a revolutionary transformation of their country, but, as seductive as it may appear, they are not pinning their hopes on a 'Rawlings' in a military fatigue. By and large, Nigerians no longer have faith in democracy as currently practised in their country.

They are willing, even desperate, to avert a violent upheaval any forceful change of order might bring. They are equally apprehensive of the potential for a violent backlash that the business-as-usual politics of the ruling elite might engender. Ruling elite is carefully stated. They are not governing, but ruling elite. There is a world of difference between the two. Their lack of foresight threatens the welfare of all. It is also what could cause the system to implode unless quickly nipped in the bud.

The rapid rise of the former governor of Anambra State, Peter Obi (2006-2014), the presidential candidate of the Labour Party, in the scheduled 2023 elections, can be understood in this context. Obi is a youthful, energetic, and cerebral politician, who can hold his own in a roundtable with anybody, any day. Despite having been governor for two terms, he remains a blank slate upon which many people, (young and old), map their own design. It is the measure of the depth of the goodwill reposed in him that many people do not wish

to subject him to forensic interrogation on his policies. Even television interviews of him are often conducted with an embarrassing kid gloves like his appearance on "politics today" in front of the usually caustic Seun Okinbaloye, last week, Monday July 25, 2022. "Did you inform Atiku of your intention to join the Labour Party?" "Atiku said you would need a miracle to win", are snippets of the banalities the anchor spent precious air time throwing at Obi, until he himself pleaded to move the discussion onto more serious issues. Obi-maniac is becoming an infectious disease, surely. Not even respected political journalists are immune from it. For this write up though, Obi has serious questions to answer, not least on his core economic belief and moral compass.

In an environment where full-time professional politicians abound, Obi has tasted life as an entrepreneur, where he excelled and became financially secured before venturing into the murky world of Anambra politics, in his home state, where he also proved his mettle as a 'performing' two-term governor. What happened in-between remains an object of debate - and curiosity, "Pandora Papers" lifted the veil of secrecy surrounding Obi's financial dealings overseas last year. It was part of the revelations by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (www.icij.org), with which hundreds of media outlets around the world are affiliated. They are dedicated to exposing millions of documents linked to shadowy figures hiding their wealth in offshore accounts, on remote islands in the backwaters of Europe and in the Caribbean. In 2010, four years into Obi's first tenure as governor, he hired a shadowy agent in Monaco to help set up "Gabriella Investments Ltd", on the British Virgin Island, under the auspices of "Access International". The transaction was so airtight that no one knew about it, and no political firestorm broke out in Anambra over the governor of an impoverished state stashing wealth in offshore accounts, well away from his people. By the way, "Gabriella" is the name of Obi's daughter. The investment was later restructured into PMGG Investment Ltd in 2017, capturing the initials of members of the Obi's clan: Peter, Margaret, Gabriella, and Gregory, the youngest son. So far, there is no evidence showing that the "investments" were proceeds of crime.

"The rapid rise of the former governor of Anambra State, Peter Obi (2006-2014), the presidential candidate of the Labour Party, in the scheduled 2023 elections, can be understood in this context. Obi is a youthful, energetic, and cerebral politician, who can hold his own in a roundtable with anybody, any day. Despite having been governor for two terms, he remains a blank slate upon which many people, (young and old), map their own design. It is the measure of the depth of the goodwill reposed in him that many people do not wish to subject him to forensic interrogation on his policies."

NEWS

College committed to imparting knowledge

By JIDAUNA DARING

PRINCIPAL of Government College Jos (GC), Mrs. Salome Goshit has reiterated the school's readiness to always give the best to the students when it comes to impacting them with the needed knowledge.

Mrs. Goshit stated this during the speech and prize giving day and magazine launch of the College, held at the school Assembly Hall, recently.

She said that the College would not allow, neither would it tolerate any act that is capable of encouraging examination malpractice which has become the order of the day in some schools.

The principal also cautioned parents against withdrawing their children from the college and taking them to the passing centres so as to enable them come out with flying colours through examination malpractice.

Mrs. Goshit commended the teaching and non-teaching staff of the college for their commitment and diligent to work at all times, urging them to sustain such tempo.

She also appreciated the planning committee for the devoting their time to see success of the epoch making event and equally thanked the entire staff of the school for support and cooperation always accorded to her. She affirmed that the college also gives premium to the issue of the security of its students at all times both day and night.

Mrs. Goshit then congratulated the graduants for making the college their choice to sit for their final year SSCE and pray God to give all of them good results that would enable them to secure admission into various higher institutions of their choices.

Guest speaker on the



Goshit

occasion, Pastor Emmanuel A. Fwangkwai who spoke on a paper title: Virtuous minds: and the intelligent world. A need for young people to engage in intellectual, pursuit for benefit of educational excellence, society, and nation building", said that virtuous mind is the ability that helps people to develop intellectual character, both inside and outside of the school setting.

Pastor, Fwangkwai pointed out that the attributes to develop intellectual character development includes, one's ability to align with things like truth, knowledge and understanding.

He explained that the seven intellectual virtues include intellectual courage, carefulness, tenacity, fair-mindedness, curiosity, honesty and intellectual humanity.

According Fwangkwai, living in this modern times requires that people are socially, physically, morally and Psychologically alert to the challenges and peculiar needs of our times, especially in this age of wanton information era, that at the touch of a button, a

whole new world of possibilities is available for any who seeks it.

THE NIGERIA STANDARD reports that the occasion featured unveiling of the madin edition of the school magazine spoken words by four students, traditional dance and presentation of gifts, prizes to the best students among others.

'I will end criminals activities in Bauchi'

From Abbas Gungura, Bauchi

GOVERNOR Bala Mohammed of Bauchi State, has warned citizens of the state particularly community leaders against supporting or hiding criminals in their domains, saying that his administration will not tolerate any act of sabotage in the fight against terrorism and violence.

Senator Bala gave the warning when he visited Garin Sambo and Mansur communities of Gwana District in Alkaleri Local Government Area of the State over the recent attacks by unknown gunmen.

He said strengthening

A serving cabinet member and Commissioner for Careers and Security Matters in Sokoto State, Garba Moyi Isa has defected from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to the All Progressives Congress (APC).

This is coming barely 24 hours after the defection of the council chairman of Tangaza local government, Saliyu Bashar Kalanjine.

This is contained in a statement by the Special Assistant to Senator Aliyu Wamakko of New Media, Bashar Abubakar made available to **The Nigeria Standard** on Sunday, addig that Moyi, a retired colonel, said he dumped the PDP over alleged lack of transparency and accountability by Tambuwa According to the statement, Moyi is proud to associate himself with Wamakko's quality leadership, which he said, he would contribute in the Senator's giant efforts, while "announcing his resignation as member of the ruling PDP and that of the State Executive Council. Reciving Moyi, Wamakko enjoined him to be steadfast in campaigning towards the

Staunch member of PDP dumps the party

From ANENE AIKE, Sokoto



Adamu

victory of APC in Sokoto East Senatorial District and the state at large in the forthcoming 2023 general elections.

Moyi was accompanied to Wamakko's Sokoto residence by the APC deputy governorship candidate, Idris

Muhammad Gobir; APC senatorial candidate, Ibrahim Lamido Isa and the House of Representatives candidate, Abdulkadir Jelani Danbuga as well as APC chairman of Sabon Birni local government area, Yawale Sarkin Bak.



Mohammed

security structures through an active synergy with security agencies, stakeholders will provide

continued support and understanding, assuring that he will continue to provide dividends of democracy hence the need to collaborate with security agencies for a better society.

In his usual manner, Governor Bala has instantly approved the immediate renovation of Gwana District Head Palace in addition to rehabilitation of primary school for the benefit of the community.

In their separte remarks, the Chairman of Alkaleri Local Government Area and the District Head of Gwana expressed gratitude to Governor Bala for the sympathy visit and promised to support the State Government to tackle security challenges. Adding that the gesture by the Governor will surely be reciprocated in 2023.

Suspected bandits kill 3 police vigilantes

THREE Police Officers and five local vigilantes have been killed in an ambush by suspected bandits in Ajaokuta, Kogi state .

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

Federal Medical Center, Lokoja.

Confirming the killings, the Kogi state security Adviser, Commander Jerry Omadara (rtd) said that the 3 police officers and five members of local vigilantes were killed in an ambush on Saturday.

According to him, Divisional police officer, acting on intelligence report that hoodlums had invaded their farm and engaging in illegal activities, mobilised officers in collaboration with local vigilantes and headed for the area

"They were however ambushed and in the process Eight of them were killed including three Police Officers and five members of the local vigilantes".

Omadara however said that

The killings occurred when suspected movements were reported at the Ajaokuta police station.

Eye witness account told our Correspondent that the locals had repoted at the Divisional Police headquarters that some people were using their farms for criminal activities. The DPO immediately mobilised his men and some local vigilantes with a view to repel the impending attack.

Our source who pleaded anonymity said that unknown to them, the hoodlums had laid ambush for them and opened fire on sighting the security personnel.

He said that their corpses have been deposited at the

no matter what, the state government will not rest until the culprits were brought to book.

'Surge to acquire PVCs shows political re-awakening'

A former member of the House of Representatives, Mr Victor Ogene, says the last minute surge by Nigerians to acquire Permanent Voter's Cards (PVCs) shows political re-awakening by the populace.

Ogene, a former Deputy Chairman, Media and Public Affairs of the House of Representatives said this in a statement on Monday in Abuja.

He said that the push by youths, workers and women remained conscious reminders of their determination to oust "political parasites" from

He said that the state government under Alhaji Yahaya Bello has assured the people of the state adequate

the scene in 2023.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the Independent National Electoral Commission gave a July 31 deadline to end the Continuous Voters Registration.

However, many Nigerians have yet to register to obtain the PVCs, according to NAN findings.

Ogene said also that the popular "Obidient" movement of the Labour Party Presidential Candidate was propelled by Nigerians, based on Obi's antecedents.

"It is out of place for anyone to say that Obi was unknown

lasting solutions to insurgents activities in the state.

The Governor called for

government protection as Saturdays incident would not be allowed to repeat itself.

'Surge to acquire PVCs shows political re-awakening'

nationally until Atiku Abubakar, Presidential candidate of the PDP discovered him.

"Obi is a pace-setting two-time governor of Anambra State and he pioneered a novel Supreme Court pronouncement that resulted to some states now having staggered governorship elections.

"Obi has record of being Chairman of the South East Governors' Forum during his tenure and he was simultaneously the Vice-Chairman of the Nigerian Governors' Forum at the same time."

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described the Obi movement as unstoppable, saying the movement is geared towards taking back the country from political lackeys.

"The Obidient movement is propelled by the Nigerian people and cannot be halted," Ogene said.

Ogene said that in spite of Obi being a past governor on the platform of a minority party, he was also chairman of a pre and post-consolidation bank and an internationally acclaimed businessman.

News

Jos Main Market: Group calls to halt proposed reconstruction

By PALANG KASMI

THE coalition of Plateau Indigenous groups and other related organisations, have called for the suspension of the proposed work at the Jos main market (terminus).

The group gave their stance after holding a meeting Monday at Government House Jos, convened by the Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Plateau, Rev. Fr. Polycarp Lubo.

The CAN Chairman during a press briefing, at the end of the meeting between the groups and executives of the Plateau state Government told news men that the stakeholders are calling for a suspension of the proposed work due to ambiguity in the contract, and non-clarity of some grey areas.

The NIGERIA STANDARD NEWSPAPERS had reported earlier that Plateau State Executive Council had approved the reconstruction of the Jos Main market, rated as one of the largest closed door market in West Africa, which was gutted by fire in March 2022, through a Public Private Partnership (PPP) with Jaiz bank at an estimated total cost of N9.4 billion Naira in three phases.

Lubo disclosed during the briefing that he had convened the meeting following tensions in the state, and information circulating on social media, that the state government had mortgaged the lives and properties of its youths for 40 years through its ambiguous agreement with Jaiz bank.

Fr. Lubo said the groups were aggrieved and were showing their displeasure with government for not consulting critical stakeholders before getting into such an agreement on the market reconstruction, saying it is crucial to them because it concerns their future.

He said the groups after the meeting made a resolution suggesting that the reconstruction should be put on hold until proper consultation is done with them and other critical stakeholders.

According to the CAN Chairman, "After our meeting, we came to a conclusion that government should go and redress this situation and look into our concerns until our fears are being addressed".

"We (The groups) call on Plateau people to be kind enough to give us the benefit of doubt, that we have their interest at heart and will not allow anything to happen to them".

Chairman CAN Youth Wing, Mr Markus Audu Kanda, said their consultations with government was very important because indeed, there had been gaps and trust deficits between the government and the people regarding the contract.

He however said the meeting had availed the groups the opportunity to listen to government and have an insight into the

Understanding (MOU) between the State Government and JAIZ Bank, while the youths also gave their position to the government on their thoughts and concerns.

"We believe that the 40 years we are talking about is the time period of the youth of today, and if such decisions are taken with no inputs from the youths, then we believe it is not fair and good to us"

"Therefore we have suggested that what government is planning concerning the market reconstruction should be suspended until we are able to engage and educate people properly so that we can be on the same page, and agree holistically as people of Plateau state on the way forward" said the Youth Leader.

Plateau State Attorney General Chrysanthus Ahmadu, a Government representative and spokesman at the forum expressed concern that Plateau people have been misinformed on the reconstruction contract.

He said the 40 years term indicated in the contract is the sub-lease for the buyers, to help them recoup from buying the shops. Ahmadu said the agreement is that the allottees will be granted a 40 years sub lease by the Jos Main Market Authority at the end of 40 years after which the property reverts back to the market authority. "So if you are buying a shop know that you are buying for 40 years, it is not Jaiz bank to be given 40 years".

"Jaiz bank is just a financier, it is putting money for the

contractor to do the job, and at the end of it, they will sell 60 per cent while government will sell 40 per cent", he stated.

While assuring Plateau people of fairness and equity in the sale of the shops, he added that the people should be rest assured and put their mind at ease because even the 60 percent to be sold by Jaiz bank would be adequately supervised by government to guarantee fairness.

He disclosed that government was still discussing with the bank and no conclusion had been made, however an understanding had been reached on how the market reconstruction contract would be reached.

The Government spokesman however added that the Governor Simon Bako Lalong led government is proactive and has listened to the concerns raised by the stakeholders promising to table the issues being raised by the Coalition for further discussions.

The General Manager of Plateau Investment and Property Development Company (PIPC), Mr. Chris Yilzak who also described the meeting as a very positive consultation also disclosed to newsmen that the MOU between Government and JAIZ Bank had not yet been signed.

He however said the concerns of the people are genuine assuring that the interest of Plateau People had been at the forefront of the contract to make them benefit economically from the deal.



Lalong

suspected cultists kill woman, 65, remove one eye

Osun Police Command on Tuesday said the corpse of a 65-year-old woman, declared missing in Ilesa, was found on her farm with one of her eyes plucked.

SP Yemisi Opalola, Osun Police Spokesperson in a statement, explained that daughter of the deceased reported the discovery of her mother's corpse to the police.

She said, "At about 1.00 p.m on Monday, One Dare Oluoyemi of Odundun Area Ilesa reported that her mother, Oluoyemi Tunmise, 65, who the family had been searching for since Saturday, had been

found dead.

"She said her mother was found dead with one of her eyes removed by yet to be identified assailants on her farm at Fadahunsi Area of Ilesa, at about 11.30 a.m on Monday."

Opalola said the police had visited scene of the crime and had taken photographs.

She said the complainant that reported the incident and the other children of the deceased, however, refused the police to take the body of their mother to the mortuary or carryout further investigation.

She said they threatened to unleash violence and that they wished to bury the corpse.



In support of this awareness

Something is about to happen in the country. A new Nigeria is about to happen. Youthful energy and drive are being galvanized and a silent revolution is surely about to take place. Just two Sundays ago, I went to some part of the Jos city to sympathize with a relation who had been involved in an accident. While returning home, it began to rain. As the heavens opened up, I had thought that those struggling to register for their PVC would scamper for shelter so they are not soaked by the rains. To my utter amazement however, no one left the queue nor made for shelter. All of those on the queue remained where they were determined to get registered.

As I was ruminating over the uncommon patriotic zeal, it became obvious that things were about to happen. Considering the age of those who withstood the elements to get registered, it was obvious that change had come. What for example, was responsible for the sudden change in attitude from a segment that had hitherto been nonchalant and uninterested about elections in our country?

Are our political fault lines beginning to close? Are these young and vibrant sector beginning to realise the need to get involved in the running of their country in view of the massive and unfortunate failure of leadership in our clime? Questions which answers are held in the bowels of time. The silent revolution was echoed by Edo State Governor, Godwin Obaseki when he lamented and cautioned that the political elites need to look again at themselves and the way they play politics. He clearly has seen the handwriting and is cautioning his peers on the need to change gear so that the elites would not be swept away by the political tsunami that is raging on and threatening

to explode.

But the signs are ominous even to the blind. So much is at stake for the politics of the country to be left to those who obviously have run out of ideas. Young and vibrant people need to take over the political space just like in other climes. They need to bring in fresh perspectives. They need to adopt technology in achieving their goals and targets which are the in thing now. You can not succeed in a fast moving economy when you are armed with 18th century tools. This is the era of the digital citizens and the digital aliens need to be retired.

It is obvious that nobody gives up power without a fight. But even in fighting, the political elites seem not to have the tools to prosecute the war. The pace at which change is happening is so breathtaking that they are not capable of keeping pace with. Truth be told my generation and those before me have failed those behind us. We have been so selfish that we are eating the tomorrow of our



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children. We need to tread with caution and tact. Otherwise we risk being forced into retirement. It has started happening and unless we manage the transition well, we would be the losers.

What we lack, the young generation has garnered. They are skilled. They are world citizens. They are aware of what is happening elsewhere. They have technology at their beck and call. Not only that, they are ambitious and willing to try out new things. There is nothing we can do to hold them back but we can manage the transition if we want. We can deliberately put in place measures which would help open new vistas for them. We can make them a part of the efforts at resolving the problems that are threatening to eat up our society and which we have not been able to solve.

ASUU has been on strike and nothing has been done about it in the last six months. Government and stakeholders have failed to find ways of navigating around the problem. In spite of this, new private universities are daily coming on stream in obvious disregard for the children of the poor. These are the kinds of policies that are exposing the elites and are making them vulnerable, yet they seem so stoned headed that they do not see the ominous signs in the horizon.

We must work together to resolve, restore and grow our society together. The world is changing and our elites can not continue to push citizens to the wall like they are doing. What just happened in Sri Lanka is a signpost for others to tow the path of caution. It is often said that if your neighbours house is on fire, you must take measures to contain the fire so that it does not consume your own property.



News

Jos East stakeholders take measures to fight enemy

By **BULUS GAMBO**

THE Agwom Izere of Izere Nation, Rev Dr Isaac Azi Wakili has admonished stakeholders in Jos East Local Government Area to embrace unity of purpose, peaceful coexistence and harmonious relationship to check activities of hoodlums terrorizing people in the locality.

The Monarch who was speaking during an interview with the Information Section of the council shortly after a meeting held at the MDGs Hall, Angware, recently, pointed out that it became expedient for him to gather relevant stakeholders together including the five district heads, executive and Legislative councils, CAN, JNI, ardos, and miyetti Allah, Afizere National and Youth leadership, community leaders and security chiefs among others to brainstorm on measures of bringing an end to incessant killings and kidnapping by yet to be identified persons.

The Agwom Izere further used the opportunity to caution against consumption of illicit drinks, late hours events, taking law into their hands, under aged shepherding and called for synergy between farmers and herders, support to security operatives and constituted authorities,

Also bearing his mind, Executive Chairman of the Council, Hon. Yakubu Izang Ezekiel Said Jos East which was hitherto known for its peaceful coexistence, tolerance among religions, ethnicity is no longer safe and



Wakili

called for the need to close ranks and fight against the common enemy of progress for the betterment of all

The chief security Officer of the Local Government Area, while commending the effort of the Lalong led rescue administration on the Plateau, the commissioner of Police, Commandant, Operation Safe heaven and Security Chiefs in Jos East for the proactive measures taken in deploying security to the affected areas in the aftermath of killings and kidnapping to stop further breakdown of law and order said the Council would continue to accord all the necessary backing to the security operatives to restore fragile peace to the Local Government Area.

speaker after speaker, the Stakeholders unanimously agreed to unite together,

cooperate with relevant authorities, work in synergy with all security operatives and to expose any strange and suspected persons within their domains, even as special prayers for God's intervention upon the land were rendered by CAN and JNI leaders in that order.

It would be recalled that, recently, Armed bandits stormed Fobur and Fursum Districts, Killed Five people and kidnapped one person where the Agwom Izere Rev Dr Isaac Azi Wakili led a high powered stakeholders, including Traditional, Executive and Legislative Councils, Afizere National leadership, Youth and Women wings, CAN, JNI leadership and security Chiefs respectively on a condolence visit to the deceased families and that of the kidnapped victim who have

monitored digitally across the state."

He said the deployment of digital attendance record keeping would assist the School Based Management Committees, Education Administrators, Local Government Education Authorities and SUBEB to act swiftly on the issue of attendance of pupils in schools and ensuring high level of retention of pupils.

The chairman enumerated some major achievements of the board to include; establishment of 5,400 non-formal learning centres made up of the following; 3,943 Interested Qur'anic Schools, 1,751 Girl Child Centres and 156 Nobody Child Centres with a total enrollment of 790,500 learners.

"We have engaged the services of 15,810 facilitators, we provided shades, two sets of toilets and open dug well and other sources of water to 1,008 Integrated Primary Schools (IQS), we are also providing a monthly stipend of N5,000 to each of the 3,943 IQS "I want to assure you that all proprietors and we have provided centre improvement grant to each centre management committee the sum of N50,000 to 3943 IQS centres," he said.

In his speech, the Kebbi State Commissioner for Education,

THE Kogi State Government Office of the Public Defender and Citizen's Right Commission (PDCRC), has trained stakeholders in the area of access to justice and human rights and strategic plan for 2022 to 2026.

In his opening address at a two-day Capacity Building Workshop held in Lokoja on Friday, the Director General, Kogi PDCRC, Barr. Abdullahi Zakari, said the essence of the training was to build stakeholders' capacity and develop Strategic Plan for 2022 to 2026 as Standing Order and Rules of Procedure for PDCRC.

According to Zakari, the stakeholders will produce documents that define the future of the Commission for the next four years and standing orders and Rules of procedure to guide and regulate the operations of the Commission.

He added that the goal was to strengthen the Commission to deliver on its mandates and to enable the stakeholders take ownership of the document for ease of implementation of the plans.

He noted that the documents were also required to position the commission to have a global flavour to attract international best practices and possible interventions.

He commended His Excellency, Governor Yahaya Bello, for all that he has done toward ensuring that the Commission performs its functions optimally and efficiently, without any interference. Zakari also appreciated the Hon. Attorney General and State's Commissioner for Justice, Hon. Ibrahim Sanni Mohammed SAN, for his commitment to ensuring that the Commission get all the needed support and encouragement.

He disclosed that the commission had between 2020 and 2021, handled 25 cases in High Court, out of which 12 cases had been successfully concluded to inmates who are indigent and

PDCRC trains stakeholders on capacity building

who could not afford the service a Lawyer free of Charge.

The DG called on the general public to report any act of violations relating to human rights or domestic violence to the commission's office at the state's Secretariat.

On his part, the Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Ibrahim Mohammed SAN, said Kogi PDCRC was a product of justice sector reforms and was established in 2019, through the instrumentality of law.

According to Mohammed, PDCRC is an agency of Kogi State Government with the mandate to render free legal services in criminal and civil cases to the indigent and vulnerable residents of the state.

Represented by Mr Badama Kadiri, the Director Public

Prosecution, Kogi Ministry of Justice, Mohammed said PDCRC was also saddled with responsibility of ensuring the promotion, protection and enforcement of human rights at the state level.

He commended the Governor for making all the necessary provisions to ensure that the commission performed its functions efficiently and independently. The Attorney General stressed that the training workshop further demonstrated the Governor's commitment to have a formidable and efficient institution repositioned to deliver on its core mandates in ensuring access to justice for the indigent and vulnerable, and protection of human rights of Kogi residents.



Bello

Surge to acquire PVCs shows political re-awakening, says ex-Rep

A former member of the House of Representatives, Mr Victor Ogene, says the last minute surge by

Kebbi distributes 1,261 computers to aid attendance in primary schools

THE Kebbi State Universal Basis Education Board (SUBEB) says it has distributed 1,261 computer tablets to 1,261 primary schools representing 65 per cent of public schools in the state.

Prof. Suleiman Khalid, the Executive Chairman, Kebbi State SUBEB, made the disclosure at the Public Schools Verification Programme held in Birnin Kebbi, the state capital on Tuesday.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the verification tour was organised by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) to ascertain

areas of needs in public primary schools.

Khalid said, "I invite you to note the deployment of technology in our dear state. DLI 7 deals with the deployment of digital attendance and record keeping in schools.

"Under this programme, our pupils in the state will be daily monitored and this will no doubt assist on tracking and monitoring the attendance, check-in and check-out of pupils and teachers in schools.

"Today, classroom attendance stood at 374,855 pupils representing roughly 67 per cent of the pupils in primary is

Alhaji Muhammad Magawata-Aliero, recalled that in the year 2000, African member nations met in Dakar, Senegal and proposed "Education For All" by 2015 "meaning that by 2015 no member nation will have out-of-school children.

He, however, said, by 2015, Nigeria according to reports recorded 11.4 million or there about out-of-school children, while in many countries there were zero or less number.

The commissioner said according to reports, in Kebbi State, they have conflicting figure of 914,945 and 501,000 out-of-school.

He, therefore appealed to NBS to do justice in the course of their verification and assessment exercise.

On his part, the NBS State Officer, Kebbi, Malam Sa'idu Sale, said the exercise was expected to cover 17 states, assuring that of the affected states, "Kebbi has the highest number of schools totaling 7,217 to cover, more than any other states to be covered.

"I want to assure you that all schools will be visited, we are going to conduct a five-day training for our staff, I am assuring you that we have our staff in all the 21 Local Government Areas of the state and we are going to do justice to the exercise," he noted

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"It is out of place for anyone to say that Obi was unknown nationally until Atiku Abubakar, Presidential candidate of the PDP discovered him.

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time governor of Anambra State and he pioneered a novel Supreme Court pronouncement that resulted to some states now having staggered governorship elections.

"Obi has record of being Chairman of the South East Governors' Forum during his tenure and he was simultaneously the Vice-Chairman of the Nigerian Governors' Forum at the same time."

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Bagudu

Foreign Commentary

AU has a responsibility to protect Tunisia's democracy

The continental body missed many opportunities to put a stop to Tunisia's democratic backsliding, but it can still take action. ADEM K ABEBE writes.

ON July 25, exactly one year after Tunisia's maverick President Kais Saied sacked the prime minister, dissolved the parliament, suspended the much-celebrated 2014 constitution and started to rule by decree, Tunisians voted to approve a draft constitution proposed by him that critics warn will help entrench his one-man rule.

With less than 30 percent turnout, there are serious questions about the legitimacy of Monday's referendum. Nevertheless, the deep divisions within the opposition and the public's ever-growing disillusionment with the political system mean Saied may face little resistance as he moves to further consolidate his power.

Now, as they watch with worry Tunisia's democratic backsliding identified by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, many are questioning what the international community, and especially the African Union (AU) which counts among its objectives promoting "democratic principles and institutions" on the continent – could have done and can still do to keep the North African nation on the path towards true democracy.

Throughout the past year, as President Saied sacked judges, jailed opposition politicians and stifled public debate on the drafting of the new constitution, the AU chose to remain silent. Indeed, after the president's July 25, 2021 power grab, the continental union released only one brief and vague statement on the situation in Tunisia, expressing its commitment to the "Tunisian constitution", "promotion of political dialogue" and "the need to respond to the legitimate aspirations of the Tunisian people".

In fact, in February 2022, it signalled that it is mostly unconcerned with President Saied's actions by making the country a member of the AU Peace and Security Council – a powerful body charged with, among other things, monitoring compliance with constitutionalism and responding to unconstitutional changes of government.

It seems the AU opted not to prioritise Tunisia's concerning, but so far thankfully non-violent, democratic backsliding and instead focused its meagre resources on countries that are experiencing grave political instability, economic devastation and conflict.

"The AU should have at least sought to engage Tunisian authorities, the opposition and civil society groups, to ensure compliance with the principle of national consensus in constitutional reform processes established in the African Charter for Democracy, Elections and Governance – an instrument Tunisia signed that reflects established AU standards on constitutionalism. By intervening in Tunisia's much criticised constitutional reform process, the AU could have shown that it is treating all member countries equally and addressed criticisms of hypocrisy that have long been undermining its credibility. Furthermore, by holding Saied to account for his attempt to rewrite the constitution through dubious practices, it could have demonstrated that it is indeed serious about upholding continental standards for constitutional change."



Tunisians shout slogans during a protest against the referendum on a new constitution in Tunis

But this was undoubtedly a mistake. The fact that Tunisia is still relatively stable compared with many other nations on the continent does not mean its drift away from AU's declared democratic standards should be ignored.

The AU should have at least sought to engage Tunisian authorities, the opposition and civil society groups, to ensure compliance with the principle of national consensus in constitutional reform processes established in the African Charter for Democracy, Elections and Governance – an instrument Tunisia signed that reflects established AU standards on constitutionalism.

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countries equally and addressed criticisms of hypocrisy that have long been undermining its credibility. Furthermore, by holding Saied to account for his attempt to rewrite the constitution through dubious practices, it could have demonstrated that it is indeed serious about upholding continental standards for constitutional change.

The continental standards for constitutional change require (1) legality and compliance with the letter and spirit of constitutional rules for reform, (2) a genuinely consultative and participatory process, including, possibly, a referendum, (3) a free and stable political environment, and (4) a deliberative process that eschews unilateral decisions and instead necessitates inclusion beyond a single dominant person or political group.

In Tunisia, Saied simply disregarded the processes of reform outlined in the 2014 constitution and unilaterally adopted his own process, which allowed him to avoid any stringent requirements for the referendum, for instance, in the form of a minimum turnout requirement.

Moreover, despite purported efforts to allow Tunisians to submit their views, the process did not involve genuine participation and deliberation. Active AU monitoring and diplomatic engagement and an offer to provide comparative advice and technical support could potentially have contributed to ensuring a genuinely participatory and deliberative process.

The AU has yet again squandered an opportunity to define itself as a union of rules, rather than merely a club of incumbents.

In addition to potentially legitimising one-man rule, Tunisia's new draft constitution could set the stage for a president for life. While

the constitution establishes a two-term limit on presidents, it does not clarify whether Saied's current term would count, or whether he would be entitled to two additional terms, potentially enabling him to stay in power until 2035.

Moreover, the constitution allows the president to extend his term in cases of "imminent danger", which the president will have the authority to define, with practically no or limited legislative or judicial check on such determination.

Saied's track record so far and his proclivity to elevate his personal vision over the terms and spirit of the constitution mean Tunisians may now be bracing for a potential president for life.

But the AU can still take action to prevent this scenario.

It can engage Tunisian authorities to clarify their position and pressure them to confirm that the new constitution would not reset the presidential term count. As a member of the AU Peace and Security Council, Tunisia has a heightened moral responsibility to uphold the spirit of alternation of power imbued in continental standards.

Beyond the concentration of power in the office of the president, the most defining aspect of Tunisia's new constitution is perhaps its minimalism. The text outlines a government architecture but leaves details for further legislative regulation.

What is left out includes important details regarding the organisation and mandate of the second legislative chamber and its relations with the first chamber, the electoral commission, the judiciary, the judicial council, and the constitutional court.

The new parliament, which is due to be elected in December, will therefore have tremendous potential to shape the organisation of these critical bodies and to

preclude the president's grip on their independence. This means the upcoming legislative election may provide an important opportunity for Saied's opponents to limit his consolidation of power – and put the breaks on his perceived efforts to entrench one-man rule in the country. Indeed, if opposition parties manage to rally the supermajority that boycotted the constitutional referendum and translate that into legislative seats, it could allow them to temper the personalisation of power.

Given the overwhelming number of voters who boycotted the constitutional referendum, it is unlikely for Saied to secure in the December elections the parliamentary majority he needs to fully codify a one-man rule.

This means the AU can still move to help put a stop to Tunisia's democratic backsliding. It can offer technical support to all parties and enable the newly elected legislature to advance democratic goals as it passes the many laws needed to operationalise the new constitution. It can also insist that the new Tunisian government complies with continental standards regarding principles of separation of powers and effective and autonomous courts and other democracy promotion institutions.

The AU has a legal and moral responsibility to reduce the prospects of instability and insecurity in Tunisia. By standing up for democracy and rule of law in Tunisia, the continental body would not only help Tunisians sustain the democratic gains they made in the past decade, but also show the entire continent that it is indeed serious about holding its members to the standards of constitutionalism it set.

The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect Al Jazeera's editorial stance.

Foreign News

Electricity Four dead in South Africa

AT least four people have died during protests over the cost of electricity in a South African township, police officials have said.

On Monday, residents angry at the high cost of basic services barricaded roads with burning tyres and set ablaze a municipal building in Thembisa township, northeast of the financial hub, Johannesburg.

Authorities said two people were killed in alleged police shootings after the protests broke out in the morning.

"It's alleged they have been shot," local municipal police spokeswoman Kelebogile Thepa told AFP.

Later in the evening, Thepa said two more bodies had been found near the entrance of the burned building - bringing the total death toll to four.

Police were yet to confirm what caused the deaths, she added. Investigations were under way.

Protests over poor services occur regularly in South Africa, which is battling some of the highest unemployment and crime rates in the world. Power cuts have also become frequent in recent months, as national utility company Eskom battles high debts and a labour strike.

The latest bout of protests came less than two weeks after former President Thabo Mbeki warned the country could see an uprising similar to the Arab Spring, triggered by mounting discontent.

Last month, Mbeki accused President Cyril Ramaphosa of failing to deliver on his promises to tackle widespread poverty, inequality and unemployment, which stands at more than 34.5 percent, with youth joblessness at nearly 64 percent.

The situation has been worsened by the rise of food prices occasioned by disruptions in wheat supply as the Russian invasion of Ukraine continues.

A year ago, South Africa saw an outbreak of the worst violence the country



A mob of Donald Trump supporters stormed the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, to prevent the certification of President Joe Biden's victory

has experienced since the end of the apartheid era three decades ago. The large-scale rioting and looting then left more than 350 dead.

The 10 days of rioting followed the

imprisonment of former president Jacob Zuma for snubbing corruption investigators. They happened mainly in KwaZulu-Natal province but also in Gauteng where Johannesburg is located.

Al-Qaeda leader killed in US drone strike

THE US has killed the leader of al-Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri, in a drone strike in Afghanistan, President Joe Biden has confirmed.

He was killed in a counter-terrorism operation carried out by the CIA in the Afghan capital Kabul on Sunday, the US said. Osama Bin Laden plotted the 9/11 attacks together, and he was one of America's most wanted terrorists.

Mr Biden said al-Zawahiri had "carved a trail of murder and violence against American citizens".

The FBI updated its Most Wanted Terrorist poster on Monday with Zawahiri's status; "Deceased."

The 71-year-old Egyptian doctor took over al-Qaeda after the death of Bin Laden in 2011.

Mr Biden said he had given the final approval for the "precision strike" after months of planning.

Officials said Zawahiri was on the balcony of a safe house - where he reportedly often sat for hours - when the drone fired two missiles at him.

Other family members were present, but they were unharmed and only Zawahiri was killed in the attack, they added.

Mr Biden said Zawahiri's killing will bring closure to families of the nearly 3,000 victims of the 2001 attacks in which hijackers crashed passenger jets into landmark buildings in New York and Washington - including two skyscrapers in Manhattan.

Some 344 firefighters were also killed, Andrew

AN associate of the far-right Three Percenters militia has been sentenced to more than seven years in prison for joining a mob that stormed the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, and later threatening to harm his children if they reported him to the FBI.

Guy Reffitt of Wylie, Texas, was convicted by a jury in March of five felony charges, including bringing a gun onto the Capitol grounds and obstructing an official proceeding.

US District Judge Dabney Friedrich issued a sentence of seven years and three months on Monday - the longest yet for anyone involved in the riot. To date, federal prosecutors have won convictions in all but one of 13 trials tied to the Capitol attack, which sought to keep Congress from certifying former President Donald Trump's election loss.

Previously, the longest sentence for a January 6 case had been 63 months, but in those two cases, the defendants opted not to go

US court sentences Jan 6 rioters



A mob of Donald Trump supporters stormed the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, to prevent the certification of President Joe Biden's victory

to trial and to plead guilty. Friedrich on Monday also sentenced Reffitt to three years supervised release, a period she said she would oversee herself to police him for any violations. She additionally banned him from associating with militia groups and ordered him to undergo mental health treatment.

Earlier Monday, the judge said she was troubled by Reffitt's actions and comments suggesting he wanted to overthrow Congress, calling his statements "frightening claims that border on delusional".

Friedrich declined to apply a domestic terrorism enhancement to her sentence - the first requested in a January 6 case - even though the lead federal prosecutor and a former Capitol Police officer who provided a victim impact statement both said they believed Reffitt committed an act of terrorism that day.

Reffitt, 49 at the time of his conviction, never entered the Capitol, but video evidence showed him egging on the crowd and leading other rioters up a set of stairs outside the building.

US politics, Canada's multiculturalism, South America's geopolitical rise—we bring you the stories that matter.

His trial included testimony from his estranged son Jackson, who brought his father to tears as he told the jury that his father threatened him if he dared call the FBI.

At his sentencing, prosecutors introduced evidence showing Reffitt intended to commit additional acts of violence. In one text exchange after the January 6 attack, he told other militia members: "We took the Capital of the United States of America and we will do it again."

His daughter, Peyton, addressed the court, tearing up as she told the judge:

Jackson Reffitt also wrote a letter that was read aloud in court, "I hope to see my father use all the safety nets" available at prison, including mental health care, he added.

Reffitt told the judge on Monday that in 2020 he had been "a little too crazy," and he apologised to police and his family.

Ansbro, president of the New York Firefighters Association thanked Mr Biden for "helping to bring another level of closure to all impacted by these attacks".

Mr. Biden said that Zawahiri had also masterminded other acts of violence, including the suicide bombing of the USS Cole naval destroyer in Aden in October 2000 which killed 17 US sailors, and the 1998 attacks on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, in which 223 people died.

Douglas Sidiolo lost his sight in the Kenyan attack, and told BBC Newsday that while he never condones violence, news of Zawahiri's death is welcome.

The attack in Kabul early Sunday morning rocked the centre of the capital - we heard it on our street nearby.

Since then, speculation has swirled about who or what hit this "empty house" in the Sherpur neighbourhood known for its gaudy multi-storied villas.

Hours after President Biden announced news of

Zawahiri's death, workers in buildings nearby told us no one lived in the villa whose balconies are now covered with plastic sheeting. Adjacent shops were told by the Taliban to close their rooftops, Taliban guards pushed journalists, sometimes forcefully, away from the scene.

The streets are quiet - this news is explosive. It again highlights the weaknesses of the 2020 US-Taliban deal.

The Taliban say they agreed Afghanistan would never again be a base to launch attacks against the United States. But they never agreed to sever all links to groups like al-Qaeda including their long-time brother-in-arms, Ayman al-Zawahiri.

A Taliban spokesman described the US operation as a clear violation of international principles - but did not mention Zawahiri. US officials maintained that the operation had had a legal basis.

Under a peace deal struck in 2020, the Taliban agreed not to allow al-Qaeda or any other extremist group to



Bin Laden (left) and Zawahiri together declared war on the US and organised the 9/11 attacks

Feature

Plateau is not ceding market to Jaiz Bank

It is common knowledge that the Jos Main Market is one of the iconic landmarks of Plateau State and a source of pride to the citizens who hold it dear to their hearts. The destruction of the market in 2002 has therefore remained one of the most tragic incidents to ever befall the State which caused unquantifiable economic losses, emotional trauma and denied the State tourist and business opportunities which prevailed before its destruction. DAN MANJANG writes.

DURING the campaign for the Governorship of Plateau State in 2015, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (then candidate of the All Progressives Congress, APC) promised to rebuild the market if elected. Those who watched the gubernatorial election debate would recall that whereas Lalong promised to rebuild the market, his major opponent said otherwise. At the end of the day, the electorate made their choice based upon this promise and many others that the APC candidate offered.

Therefore, upon coming into office in 2015, the Governor began the process of rebuilding the Jos Main Market as one of his key priorities. His Rescue Administration contacted major financial institutions and investors within and outside the country for the project. Many came with huge enthusiasm and promises which appeared promising and prompted the Government to demolish the existing parts of the structure on May 17 2019 in preparation for the reconstruction. It is important to note that at this point that a lot of politically motivated propaganda had started being circulated against the efforts of the Governor where it was alleged that billions were spent to demolish the structure. This was false.

Nevertheless, the Government was not deterred and continued detailed discussions with the investors that indicated interest in rebuilding the market. These discussions got deeper but became stuck upon requests from the intending investors and financial institutions which in summary required that Plateau State:

• Gives them a Bank Guarantee, letter of comfort to own and manage the market for as long as it takes them to recoup their investment.

• Guarantee to off-take 70% of the shops (in other words buy them), Bring 20% of the cost of reconstruction aside the land being its equity etc.

These negotiations which involved many experts and key Government officials continued and the offers did not favour the State but put it at a disadvantage. Moreover, the Government was not in a position to give Bank Guarantee of almost 20 billion naira that some investors submitted. It could not also pledge to off-take the shops when built instead of buyers doing so. Many would remember that the Government was committed to settling backlog of inherited salaries from the previous PDP administration and ensuring paying regularly; completing abandoned projects inherited from the PDP; working to improve IGR among others which meant it could not guarantee such demands made by the prospective investors. The Governor further met with foreign and local investors who did not also provide any better deal for the State in the rebuilding of the Jos Main Market. Looking at other commitments of the Government already tied to its monthly income, it was not possible to enter into another funding that will be a huge burden for the State and nearly impossible to handle.

THE JAIZ BANK OFFER

Despite the setbacks, Governor Lalong kept hope alive and promised to do his best to fulfill his promise to the people of Plateau State who gave him their mandate in 2015 and 2019. This determination yielded positive results when the Governor upon learning of other huge market projects in various Northern, Eastern and South South States funded by Jaiz Bank Plc, decided to engage them on the idea of rebuilding the burnt Jos Main Market. Talks started in 2021 between the State Government and Jaiz Bank. Series of deliberations were held which brought up the following offer by the investing bank.

The Bank will finance the reconstruction of the market 100% with the Plateau State Government not required to pay a kobo.

The Land (over 7.4 hectares) is the equity of the Plateau State Government which it is contributing to the project.

The project will be done in three phases yielding a total of 4,321 shops which will be shared in the ratio of 60% (Jaiz Bank) 40% (Plateau Government).

The 60-40% ratio is for the purpose of leasing out the shops only. The entire market still belongs to the Plateau State Government.



Those who lease the shops from either Plateau State Government or Jaiz bank will own it for a period of 40 years after which ownership returns to the Government. At this point, new investors can purchase from the State Government or the existing buyers renew their leases.

As soon as Jaiz Bank finishes selling its 60%, it will cease to have any interest in the market as those holding the lease will deal only with the Plateau State Government through the management of the Market (Jos Main Market Authority) and the Ministry of Commerce which is a parastatal of the Government.

The entire shops will be sold to interested buyers without prejudice to faith, ethnicity or political affiliations. It is open for the public to invest in.

The first phase will be delivered and commissioned before the end of the tenure of Governor Lalong.

Having gone through the offer by Jaiz Bank, the State Executive Council further subjected the proposal to extensive deliberations and scrutiny and came to the conclusion that the deal was good for the State and the investor, hence its approval. Besides, the Government carried out its due diligence to study the track record of Jaiz Bank in delivering such projects. It found that the bank in partnership with Kano State government and private investors, is constructing a multi-million world-class drug-only wholesale market, the first of its type in Nigeria, at the Kano Economic City. In a similar arrangement, the bank in partnership with the Niger State Government, is developing three hectares in the Minna City Centre to provide for a shopping complex, modern underground parks, modern filling station, warehouses, corner shops, restaurants and a recreational centre. It is also doing so in Kaduna and Enugu States among others. Based on above examples of performance profile and experience the Plateau State Government is optimistic of the bank's capacity to handle the Jos market project and deliver.

Therefore, the Government has also engaged the leadership of the Plateau State House of Assembly and its relevant Committees on the benefits of the project to the State.

SENSITIZATION AND AWARENESS

Thereafter, the State EXCO mandated its relevant MDAs to carry out sensitization and awareness by engaging various stakeholders ahead of the signing of the MOU for Rebuilding the Jos Main Market. The Governor also

personally engaged top religious, traditional, elders and other leaders of thought on the project knowing fully the passion that they have on the market which is a great heritage of the State. As part of the engagement and sensitization, the Hon. Commissioners for Commerce, Information and Communication and other Government officials met with stakeholders representing various groups in the State to breakdown the content of the proposed MOU between Plateau State Government and Jaiz Bank. This was successfully done with questions being raised by those in attendance and answers provided.

Regrettably, the outcome of this engagement has been twisted, politicised and reported under the caption "Governor Lalong cedes Jos Main Market to Islamic Bank". This has unnecessarily invoked passions and emotions portraying a false narrative that the State was parting with its cherished heritage to an "Islamic Bank". While the Government respects the rights of its citizens to raise questions on every decision and make their observations and displeasure known, the Rescue Administration wishes to allay the fears being raised as the deal will not work against the State. Rather, it is an opportunity to once again raise the sleeping giant heritage of the famous Jos Main Market which has not added any value to the Government and its people since it was burnt down 21 years ago.

Government assures the citizens of Plateau State that sensitization and enlightenment will continue before, during and after the reconstruction in order to address genuine concerns which require answers and clarifications.

BENEFITS OF THE DEAL TO PLATEAU STATE AND ITS CITIZENS

While Jaiz Bank hopes to make profit from the partnership for its shareholders, the Government and people of Plateau State also stand to gain a lot from the reconstruction of the Jos Main Market. Here are some expected benefits for the State and its citizens.

The State will generate more revenue from the operations of the market and be able to carry out other projects and programmes for the good of the people.

The moribund Jos Main Market Authority (JMMA) will be brought back to life as it is saddled with the responsibility of managing the market.

All willing and able Plateau citizens will be given an opportunity to buy and own shops in the market either from the State Government (40%) or Jaiz Bank (60%).

Priority will be given to those who lost shops in the burnt market in the sales of the new shops.

Government will monitor the sales of the market to ensure that no individuals or groups are given unfair treatment over others in the sale of the market on basis of faith, ethnicity, political affiliation or other considerations. There will be equity, fairness and justice to all.

Property around the Jos Main Market area will appreciate in value

More jobs will be created during and after the construction.

More people will visit Plateau State for trading activities and tourism thereby generating more economic activities and revenue.

The market will further promote the efforts of the Rescue Administration in restoring the peace and harmony of the past since the market embraces people with different faiths, ethnicity and origins.

The success of this partnership will boost the confidence of other investors to come into the State and establish their presence and partner with the Government in other projects and programmes.

CONCLUSION:

From the foregoing, it is very clear that the intentions of the Plateau State Government is pure and well thought out as they are for the benefit of the State and its citizens. The terms of the MOU between the Government and Jaiz Bank are clear and be scrutinised and can be verified. The Rescue Administration under the leadership of Rt. Hon. (Dr) Simon Bako Lalong will never do anything to mortgage the heritage, rights and privileges of its people. On the contrary, the Lalong administration is buying back sold assets such as the BARC Farms which has been acquired. In the reconstruction of the Jos Main Market, Government has weighed all the options and found that this deal is the most favourable considering the lack of funds for the Government to carry out direct intervention or take a loan with astronomical interest rates. Leaving the market at its current state does not do anyone good because it is not generating anything for the State and its citizens. Rather, the land remains wasted and a hideout for criminals.

The Government wishes to assure the citizens that everything is being done to ensure that interested Plateau people benefit from the shops and also participate in the economic activities that will come up once the market is delivered.

Therefore, the Government appeals to all citizens to carefully peruse the project and avoid being deceived by politicians who are bent on ensuring that the market is not reconstructed so as to score cheap political point against Governor Lalong and the APC particularly at the eve of the general elections.

Bottom line is that Jos Main Market is the property of Plateau State and shall remain so for ever. However, it makes no economic sense for the property to remain at its current state of decomposition when it can be revived and put to use in a win-win situation for the benefit of the citizens. If any citizen has a better and genuine offer for the reconstruction of the market than the one on the table right now, the Lalong Government is a listening one and would pay attention. As at today, there has not been such offer. What is needed is the unity of purpose and the will to make this project a reality for posterity and the good of the people of Plateau State. Not everything needs to be politicised.

There is no need for anxiety, sentiments, misgivings, misconceptions and misrepresentation which is being pushed out by political forces that has resulted in name-calling, insults and hatred of both Government and individuals in the social media and otherwise. As a matter of fact as Government is aware of planned demonstrations being sponsored by the opposition against this noble gesture initiative between Plateau State Government and Jaiz Bank.

Let us always THINK and ACT Plateau.

Hon. Dan Manjang, anipr is the Commissioner for Information and Communication, Plateau State.

EYE'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Health

Causes and treatment of low back pain

Some causes of low back pain are specific to women. These include the conditions listed below.

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS)

PMS is a condition many women get before their periods. It has many potential symptoms, and you likely won't have all of them. Broadly, symptoms include:

- physical symptoms, such as:
 - lower back pain
 - headache
 - fatigue
 - bloating
- emotional and behavioral symptoms, such as:
 - mood swings
 - food cravings
 - anxiety
 - trouble concentrating

PMS usually starts a few days before your period, and it ends within a day or two after your period starts.

Premenstrual dysmorphic disorder (PMDD)

PMDD is a more severe form of PMS, where symptoms significantly interfere with daily life. Some people with PMDD may even have trouble functioning when they have symptoms. Fewer women have PMDD than PMS.

Pain is the most common symptom of endometriosis. Other symptoms include:

- very painful menstrual cramps
- pain during or after sex
- low back and pelvic pain
- pain with bowel movements or urination when you have your period

Endometriosis can also cause bleeding or spotting between your periods. Digestive issues like bloating and diarrhea can be common too, especially during your period. Endometriosis may make it harder for you to get pregnant.

Dysmenorrhea

Very painful menstruation is known as dysmenorrhea. Although it's usually manageable, it can be very severe in some people. You may be at a higher risk for dysmenorrhea if you:

- are under the age of 20
- are a smoker



stiffness.

- OTC painkillers. Over-the-counter (OTC) nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve), and aspirin, can help ease back pain and other types of pain associated with your period.

- Exercise. Staying active can improve your circulation and ease tense muscles.

- Gentle stretching. Regular stretching may help reduce lower back pain or prevent it from coming back.

- An ice pack. If your back pain is due to a muscle strain or an injury, an ice pack may help reduce inflammation, pain, and bruising. Ice packs work best within the first 48 hours of a muscle strain or injury.

- A pillow. Placing a pillow between your knees if you sleep on your side, or under your knees if you sleep on your back, may help ease back pain and discomfort.

- Good lumbar support. Using a chair with good lumbar support may help ease your back pain when sitting.

When to see a doctor

In some cases, it's important to follow up with a doctor to determine the cause of your back pain. See your doctor as soon as possible if you experience any of the following:

- you're unable to stand or walk
- your back pain is accompanied with a fever, or you're unable to control your bowel or bladder
- you have pain, numbness, or tingling in your legs

- the pain extends down your legs

- you have severe abdominal pain

- your back pain is severe and interferes with your daily life

- you have symptoms of endometriosis

- you have pain during pregnancy with vaginal bleeding, a fever, or pain while urinating

- you have back pain after a fall or accident

- there's no improvement in your pain after a week of home care

Depending on the cause of your lower back pain, your doctor may be able to provide treatment beyond home remedies or self-care measures.

Treatment options prescribed by your doctor may include:

- muscle relaxants
- cortisone injections
- hormonal birth control

for endometriosis, dysmenorrhea, PMS, and PMDD

- antidepressants, which may relieve PMS and PMDD symptoms, and also help with certain types of back pain

- surgery for severe endometriosis, which involves removing endometrial tissue from areas where it has grown outside of the uterus
- surgery to repair discs.

- bleed heavily during your periods
- have a family history of painful periods
- have an underlying condition, such as:
 - endometriosis
 - fibroids in the uterus
 - pelvic inflammatory disease
- Pain from dysmenorrhea is

usually felt in the lower abdomen, lower back, hips, and legs. It usually lasts for 1 to 3 days. The pain can either be dull and achy or it may feel like shooting pains.

Pregnancy
For most women, back pain happens between the fifth and seventh months of pregnancy, but it can start much earlier. You're more likely to have back pain during pregnancy if you already have lower back issues.

The most common place to have pain is right below your waist and across your tailbone. You may also have pain in the center of your back, around your waistline. This pain may radiate into your legs.

Other low back pain causes
There are also causes of lower back pain that can affect anyone of any sex. Some of the most common causes include the conditions outlined below:

Muscle strain

A muscle or ligament strain is one of the most common causes of lower back pain. It can be caused by:

- repeated heavy lifting
- bending or twisting awkwardly
- a sudden awkward movement
- overstretching the

muscle or ligament

Sciatica

Sciatica causes a burning pain or a pain that feels like a shock in your low back. It usually extends down one leg. In severe cases, you may also have leg numbness and weakness.

Disc degeneration

As you age, the discs in your spine can start wearing down. Degeneration can also be caused by injuries or repetitive motion. Most people have some disc degeneration after age 40. It doesn't always cause pain, but it can cause severe pain in some people.

Degeneration is most common in your neck and lower back. The pain may extend to your buttocks and thighs, and it may come and go.

Home remedies for low back pain

If your back pain is caused by conditions related to your menstrual period or a muscle strain, you may want to try the following home remedies to ease your lower back pain:

- A heating pad. A heating pad applied to your back can boost circulation, which, in turn, allows nutrients and oxygen to get to the muscles in your back.

- A warm bath. A warm bath can improve circulation and reduce muscle pain and



TEVE'S WORLD

Living

Preparing for life altering circumstances

MICHAEL F. KAY

There are times when life seems easy and everything is working out just as desired. During these times, stress-ridden thoughts such as "how will I get through this?" or "what happens when....?" rarely enter our awareness and front-of-mind thinking. Proper and effective planning, however, mandates taking into consideration the "what if's" that happen when you're not expecting them. I am referring to potentially life-altering experiences that you rarely contemplate when everything is working just fine.

Shutterstock

Consider for a moment how your life would change if the one of the following occurred:

1. Loss of a job due to a major shift in technology or the economy
2. Death of a spouse or partner
3. Disability due to accident or sickness
4. Divorce

How would your ability to achieve your goals be impacted? These are just a few examples of major disruptions or life-altering circumstances that could derail your journey in a significant way.

In these difficult times, you need to find an internal reserve of energy and hope to help you make your way through. In other words, you need to tap into your resilience.

What is resilience?

Resilience is the ability to regain or maintain a positive outlook and persevere in the face of challenge and adversity.



Where does resilience come from?

Like so many other human traits,

resilience can be woven into the fabric of one's being (nature) and/or it can be learned (nurture). One's

natural disposition may lead them to always look on the bright side or to look for the silver lining. For others, with an accumulation of life experience, they develop a resilience perspective and realize that, as the old saying goes, what doesn't break you makes you stronger. They develop an ability to recognize that it's important to keep going even when life hands you challenge after challenge—they develop perspective. More on that later.

Why is resilience important?

Resilience is characterized by positivity and productivity. A resilient person will maintain a positive outlook on life and continue to believe that. Even when life hands you lemons, there is lemonade to be made. They will continue to present to the world with a positive attitude. You are much more likely to be accepted and welcomed by every community with which you interact when you present in this way. When people view you favorably, they are more likely to like you and present you with opportunities. Opportunity leads to more positive experiences, which further reinforces one's

belief in resilience and their commitment to it.

How do we build resilience?

For those who are not naturally resilient, there are three tactics you can try to build this trait:

A Leap of Faith

The first is by taking a leap of faith or faking it till you make it. Studies have shown that smiling can make you happier. Being happier will help you feel more positively about your life. This increased positivity is the beginning of resilience.

A Different Perspective

The second tactic you can apply is to approach a trying situation from a different perspective. As is the practice in Co-Active Coaching, if you try to view a difficult experience from a different perspective (e.g. spend a few minutes deeply visualizing your favorite childhood experience and then approach your current crisis with the energy and creativity that characterized you in that earlier time in life), you will approach your current predicament with an altered, stronger sense of hope and energy.

Using Your Own Power

Last but not least, try approaching a challenging situation as if you are the only person in the world who can make it better. Ask yourself: if anything is possible right now (divine intervention and magic aside), what three things can I do to improve my circumstances? You may not be able to take every step at this very moment, but you can start to create a plan that you can execute over time until you have started to create positive change in your life circumstances.

How can we increase our awareness and ability?

Feelings of hopelessness and exhaustion can act as lightbulbs. If, in the midst of difficulty and hardship, you can recognize these feelings and turn them into reminders to:

- a) Smile;
- b) Engage in an exercise to see the current situation from a different vantage point; and
- c) Ask yourself what three things you can do to improve your circumstances and then start to do them

you will begin to strengthen your resilience muscle.

The time to plan is not after a major shift, but before the shift. Understanding and deepening your connection to resilience provides tools that are invaluable when the need arises. Thank you Marjie Terry for your words of wisdom.



Editorial

Arresting the rising cost of living

NIGERIANS have been going through a very difficult time with prices of staple foods and other goods and services being at their highest as a result of the over 100 percent price hike. This has unleashed untold hardships on Nigerians.

PRESIDENT Muhammadu Buhari had in 2020 when the prices of goods and prices rose astronomically blamed middlemen for it saying that they were responsible for the rise because they were buying and hoarding essential commodities. The story today has not changed and we all know that the reasons are completely at par with what the president said.

THE government therefore needs to put on its thinking cap and put in place measures to curb the escalation of the already bad situation so as to bring succour to the citizenry.

THE reasons being advanced for the situation in Nigeria at the moment as it concerns the hike in prices range from fuel scarcity which has continued unabated for some time now. Another is electricity shortage which has resulted in added costs for the production of some goods and services, exchange rate in which the value of the naira has continued to plummet and the Russia-Ukraine war which devastating impact is being felt the world over and the incessant insecurity situation in the country which has become a daily occurrence.

The federal government of Nigeria needs to step up its game and find a lasting solution to the myriad of problems confronting the Nigerian nation before it gets out of hand and consume us all.

NIGERIA already bears the title of the poverty headquarters of the world largely due to inequality in the distribution of resources with a large chunk of the population living below the accepted 200 naira per day average.

THE Nigerian government must take the bull by the horn and act fast in coming up with measures to either arrest or mitigate the spiralling prices of goods and services and, in fact, declare a state of emergency on prices of food and other items.

NIGERIANS' penchant and overdependence on imported goods needs to be curtailed. Stakeholders across board have lent their voices and advice that government agencies such as the Consumer Protection Agency needs to be strengthened. Also, of utmost importance is to divert from the usual seasonal farming as is obtainable now and go into all season farming so as to boost food production.

ALSO notable is the building of agricultural clusters around dams as seen in the case of the Kano state. But there are concerns too about the fact that most the dams have dried up. There is therefore, the need for government to ensure the dredging of these dams so they can be put to good use.

WORRISOME also is the activities of bandits and Fulani herdsmen who have either not allowed the farmers to go to their farms or have grazed their cattle and destroyed farmlands. Government must as a matter of priority curb insecurity once and for all if they are serious about solving the myriad of problems confronting us as a country else Nigeria will be brought to its knees.

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

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

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

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

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



Danger of Mobile shop sellers, drugs consumption

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

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

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

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

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

From Gohii Tuwan, Jos.

Significance of political awareness in the church

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

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

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

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

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

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

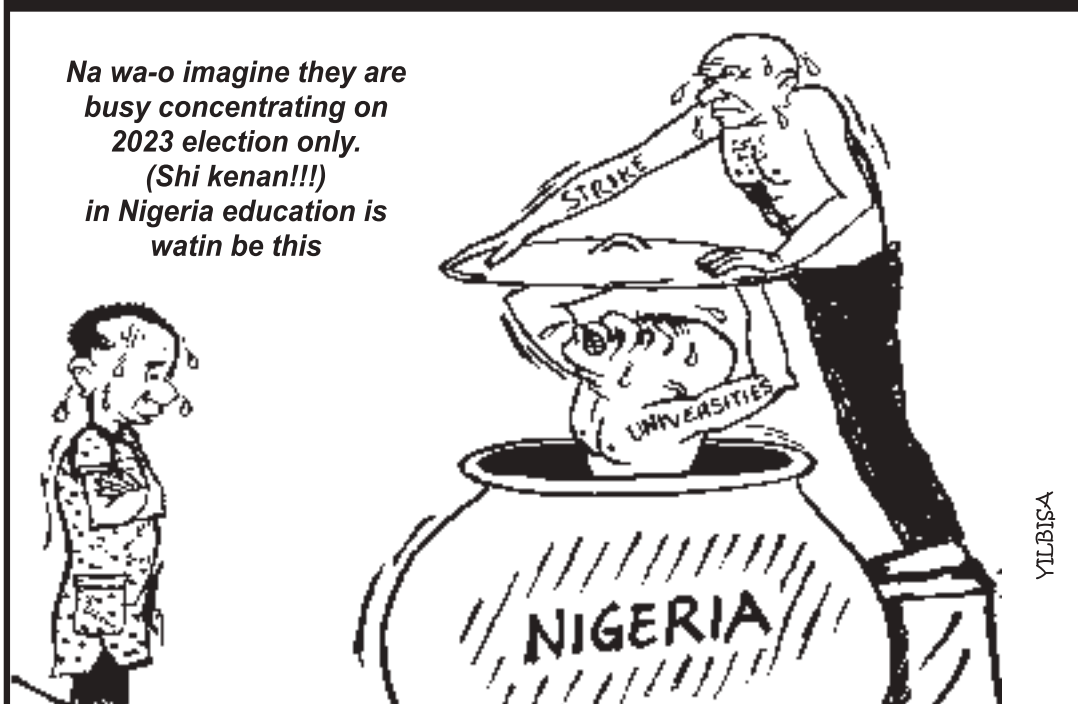
The focus is not just on the leaders but also on the electorate who should avoid the politics of money and exercise their franchise accordingly. Electorate were educated through the teaching to know their voting rights and maintain their spiritual lives.

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

Goodness Wakili writes from Jos

Standard Cartoon

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



Opinion

Putting the right man in the right place

By **FATAI IBRAHIM**

IF we don't help each other, then who will do so? Barbara Mandrell's 1948.

In his Maiden Speech Alh. Abubakar Sadiq Yelwa, the Managing Director Hydro Power Producing Development Commission pointedly said " My Vision and Mission is to see that those promises made to our people 48 Years ago by successful governments become a reality "

This captivating Quote from Mandrell's aptly captures the unique Personality of Alh. Abubakar Sadiq-Yelwa, the visionary and dynamic pioneer Managing Director of Hydro Power Producing Development Commission (HYPPADEC)

Interestingly, Alh. Abubakar Sadiq-Yelwa's antecedents and pedigree as one time commissioner for lands and Housing in Kebbi State and whose meritorious service to the State is without blemished and commendable. As he served with due diligence, tenacity, which are pointer to the fact that, his wealth of experience, exposure, will help bring to bear the desire development to the overall Communities in the Hydro Power producing Communities.

Be it as it may, Alh. Abubakar Sadiq Yelwa further enunciating on teething problems viz a viz Challenges been faced by the host Communities said " Most of the Communities have lost their houses, roads and Business Entrepreneurship due to the effect of the construction of kainji dam

In this regard, Alh. Abubakar Sadiq

Yelwa is like the great Greek Philosopher Aristotle who once posited that "Problem known is problem half solved" as one of the focal and purposeful leadership. Alh. Sadiq Abubakar Yelwa's Vision is his priority for entrepreneurship and human Capital Development in the affected communities, as way of giving them a new lease of life, which is now the new normal under the unique leadership of President Muhammed Buhari (GCFR)

Alh. Abubakar Sadiq Yelwa and his amiable team in HYPADDEC Commission, are always rising up to the occasion, by providing the necessary recipe in accelerating development of the affected Communities ravaged due to the effects of the Construction of Kainji dam.

Dr. Osborne C.J once said " Unless you try to do beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow" Alh. Abubakar Sadiq Yelwa paradigm shift, is on the youths changing their focus from white Collar job, to self-reliance, as well as giving Women equal opportunities to learn trade of their choice, as a way of improving their economic prosperity for the general wellbeing of the family.

These great attributes of teaching people how to fish in the affected communities, instead of giving them fish are great virtues of our able Managing Director Alh. Abubakar Sadiq Yelwa and his team in alleviating poverty, which is in line with the wise saying of one of the greatest motivational speaker's Dr. John Mason in his book " Why asked Why" where he adumbrate." One of the most exciting decisions, you can make as a

visionary leader is to be on the lookout for opportunities to invest in others"

This Write -up will not be complete without commending numerous initiatives and giant strides of Alh. Abubakar Sadiq Yelwa and his team, geared towards the common good of the greatest majority in the affected communities of hydro power producing states. As the great successes achieved so far in the Commission is due to the team spirit in existence in the commission, this is due to his ability in putting the right man in the right place as opined by Gen. Collin Powell who once said " No General can fight his battle alone, his success depends upon his ability, putting the right man in the right place'

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“Unless you try to do beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow” Alh. Abubakar Sadiq Yelwa paradigm shift, is on the youths changing their focus from white Collar job, to self-reliance, as well as giving Women equal opportunities to learn trade of their choice, as a way of improving their economic prosperity for the general wellbeing of the family.

Human augmentation, anticipation initiative and African youths

By **LEO IGWE**

HUMAN Augmentation projects the capacitation of human beings beyond their natural abilities and limitations. It is a basic aspiration of human beings and has been going on since the emergence of humans. Human enhancement is both physical and cognitive and promises to cure and overcome diseases and disabilities that encumber and debilitate human existence. Interestingly, human augmentation is one of the themes of this year's University of Cape and Geneva Science Diplomacy Accelerator (GESDA) Youth Anticipation Initiative.

This initiative aims to use the science of the future to shape the present. More importantly, it tries to mainstream African youth participation, making sure that the voice of African youths is heard in this important conversation. The Youth Anticipation Initiative is a thoughtful and commendable program given the fact that the future belongs to the youths.

To situate the link between human augmentation and African youths, I would like to recount a recent incident.

It happened in my community in southern Nigeria. On Monday, July 11, 2022, I got a call that people in my village woke up early in the morning to discover that someone had poured some white sand across the major footpaths. It was a strange sight that evoked fear and panic among the population. Community leaders quickly

summoned an emergency meeting to unravel what happened. Their inquiry traced the incident to a young man in his late 30s who was visiting. This gentleman lives in a city about 110 kilometres from his hometown. He works as a school teacher and also a part-time pastor at a popular Pentecostal church in Port Harcourt.

According to family sources, some weeks ago the mother informed him that the aging father, over 80 years, was ill. Some years ago, two of his brothers took ill and died under what some within the family deemed "mysterious circumstances". Before traveling to see the father, this young man went and consulted, not a medical doctor, but a senior pastor in his church.

The pastor told him to go and conduct a liberation prayer with some white sand and olive oil so that his aging and ailing father would recover. The ritual would supposedly neutralize any other malicious forces linked to the father's sickness and other misfortunes in the family and community. On Sunday night while the villagers were asleep, he went and poured some white sand and olive oil across the footpaths in the community as part of this prayer of liberation, and obviously, efforts to get his father healed.

The community leaders were angry and sanctioned him for

conducting this ritual without their consent and permission. They asked him to pay some penalty, to give the community some kola nuts, a goat, a jar of palm wine, and five thousand naira to appease the gods of the land. But the young man objected to paying the penalty, and later went back to the city. This young man indulged in this ritual exercise to increase the father's and by extension other community members' health and lifespan.

It was an exercise to tackle existential challenges. While this incident is not representative of what all Nigerian or African youths do or would do when confronted with illness and aging, it is indicative of a potent and pervasive mindset in the region. In the absence of technoscientific goods, African people deploy mythical formations and rituals in their efforts to cure diseases, defy death, and augment life.

They resort to using traditional, Christian and Islamic charms and accessories. Unfortunately, the mythical habit hampers the ability of Africans to use the science of the future to build the present, and increase health and lifespan. It stymies the possibilities of human augmentation and the potential of Africans to leverage other new science and technology advances. But the situation is much more complicated.

Existing techno-politics has

orchestrated a gap between Africa and the rest of the world. This gap has made technologies inaccessible and unaffordable for many people. If urgent measures are not taken to rectify the technological disconnect of Africa from the rest of the world, the gap would persist in the anticipated augmented future. If Africa does not witness some radical shifts in policy, orientation, and mindset associated injustices and inequities would even worsen. Although human augmentation and other emerging technological schemes point to much better, healthier and happier futures, risks and dangers abound.

While Africans must be optimistic about the prospects of human augmentation and other emerging technological programs, there is a need to exercise caution, and temper optimism with realism. The technological differential has created a situation whereby these goods and benefits have largely been elusive, unharnessed, and underutilized.

African countries have become a dumping ground of outdated and sometimes harmful technologies. Africans have been unable to access or optimally deployed existing technologies to tackle their everyday needs and challenges. Many Africans travel to Europe, America, India and the Middle East to access medical care at exorbitant costs.

And this trend is not changing for now. If these gaps are not narrowed or closed, Africa could be left further behind in the race for human augmentation and other futurist schemes.

In addition, existing technologies have yielded a situation where African countries are described as developing, less developed, or underdeveloped. If the gap is not rectified, augmentation could become an identity political issue. Augmentation could become a way of defining and identifying humans. Africans might end up being designated as a continent of unaugmented, under-augmented, or less augmented humans as opposed to augmented humans in the west and the rest of the world.

Human augmentation is a welcome development. Highlighting the risks and dangers associated with human augmentation should not be misinterpreted. It should not be seen as an exercise in despair, or an attempt to stop or oppose the process of human capacitation. Rather, noting these concerns is a way to ensure that necessary measures are taken to mitigate envisaged risks; that promises and possibilities of this exciting project are harnessed as anticipated for Africa and the rest of the world.

Leo Igwe is the author of a paper titled 'Transhumanism and Emerging Technologies: Exploring Ethics and Human Enhancement in Africa'

News



'We are voting individuals, not parties'

I have always maintained that a major part of the problem we have in this country is our gross height of being consistently inconsistent. Two, most of my fellow compatriots suffer from the combined attack of selective amnesia and general lack of history. We do not resort to what happened yester-years to tackle the issue of today. When you point this out to them, they tell you it doesn't matter any longer. Yet, as iconic Chinua Achebe succinctly inscribed it immortally, for one to escape from the heavy drops of the rain and make any headway, one must know where the rain started drenching one. ORI MARTINS writes.

IN our hasty resolve to steer clear of what has become a perennial politico-economic – social adversary, we have come out with another election diction, fantastically and beautifully laced with the sexy phrase: "We are voting individuals, not parties". In elementary literature, this is called comic relief. It can only give momentary happiness that is just skin deep.

You see, this is another trap, reminiscent of the IBB's imprimatur of yore. You know, "a little to the right, a little to the left". "Open secret ballot". Option A4". "Two party system". "New breed politicians". Perhaps, the one informed Nigerians saw as most nauseating and indeed, most truculent, was "interim national government" which also gave birth to "current impasse", "annulment" and "lasting democracy". In the end, the entire IBB transition of eight years was nothing but a beautiful score! Its attraction stinks.

Here we go again. Voting for candidates, not parties. This is political genocide that will only begat a comprehensive disaster, complete with wailing and weeping. Let us start with Anambra State in 2003. Then, a certain Peter Obi (now a sensation, movement and revolution) got the governorship ticket of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) and was later declared winner by the court. The process that produced him was APGA made possible by the Great Chukwuemeka Ojukwu's influence. Ab initio, Obi sauntered to

state limelight through the APGA.

Secondly, In 2011 in Imo State, the then Governor Ikedi Ohakim was enthralled in a religious pyrotechnics with the Catholic Church for allegedly flogging a priest. Ohakim was put on the proverbial cross and was politically executed. Unlike our Lord Jesus Christ, he never resurrected. And so, Imolites toed the Anambra option and chose APGA consequently upon which Owelle Rochas Okorochoa emerged. Okorochoa, in his bid to look appealing to the masses, vehemently disregarded all the structure of APGA – both state and national – and his end was

"The fact remains that when a candidate who feels it is his face and image rather than party's influence and manifesto that makes him to win an election emerges victorious, such a candidate becomes a demigod. He listens to nobody and respects no party manifesto and order. This is the basic problem of President Muhammadu Buhari, who feels that Ndigbo never voted for him and so he doesn't owe them any obligation. He rather turns to his Fulani and Muslim brothers whom he said gave him 98 per cent votes."

tragic.

The difference between Obi and Okorochoa was that the former was virtually unknown, while the latter was well known. It can be correctly said that while the electorate in Anambra looked unto APGA and Ojukwu to settle for Obi and it worked magic, Imo masses relied on their knowledge and appreciation of Okorochoa as a 'philanthropist'. It was a monumental caricature that produced a colossal disaster.

Politically, Nigeria borrowed copiously from the United States of America, but never borrowed her politics of growth and development anchored in history, statistics and data profiling. In America, the constitution provides for an independent candidate, just as there are two most visible, as well as prominent, political parties. If voting for individuals not based on party inclination is the best way, why have the Democratic and Republican parties dominated the American space without any private candidate winning any presidential election, at least, in modern or recent history?

The fact remains that when a candidate who feels it is his face and image rather than party's influence and manifesto that makes him to win an election emerges victorious, such a candidate becomes a demigod. He listens to nobody and respects no party manifesto and order. This is the basic problem of President Muhammadu Buhari, who feels that Ndigbo never voted for him and so he doesn't owe them any obligation. He rather turns to his Fulani and Muslim brothers whom he said gave him 98 per cent votes.

Finally, it is the party that defines who a politician truly is. For instance, Chief Godswill Akpabio is hailed in Akwa Ibom as a great governor who transformed the state. He was in the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). The moment he moved to the All Progressives Congress (APC) he became a complete failure. His tenure as Minister of Niger Delta was riddled with crisis and accusation of non-performance.

Rt. Hon Rotimi Amaechi, for six years as PDP governor of Rivers State, won several Governor of the Year awards as a truly performing governor. For obvious reasons, he jumped to APC. In his last two years as APC governor, he got bashes and knocks. Even as a minister, he was not reckoned with by Nigerians. Yet, it was the same Akpabio and Amaechi who did wonders in PDP that also failed in APC.

The party is supreme in a constitutional democracy. Had Segun Oni got the PDP ticket in Ekiti he would have won the election. But he went to SDP and most of his supporters voted for APC in protest and PDP for loyalty. But the gist is that, in spite of his avowed popularity, he failed.

In Osun State, had Adeleke joined SDP, NNPP, AA or any other party, he would have lost the governorship election, unless the masses urged him so.

For us to move forward as a country, we must strengthen the parties in Nigeria.

News

Killings: Lalong calls for Danda attackers arrest

By PLANGKASMI

PLATEAU State Governor Simon Bako Lalong has expressed outrage over the attack on Danda Chugwi village of Vwang in Jos South Local Government that resulted to killings and injury of some persons.

The Governor who described the incident as callous and condemnable also directed security forces to ensure that those behind the attack are apprehended and punished according to the laws of the land.

He made the call in a statement Monday adding that the action of the attackers is yet another desperation by crises merchants to instigate disharmony, suspicion, fear and orchestrate agony among the people leading to further violence.

According to the Governor, security agencies including the Police, Operation Safe Haven, Department of State Services (DSS), Operation Rainbow



Lalong

have been tasked to work with the local intelligence and ensure that those behind this wicked act are fished out.

While sympathising with the families of those killed and those injured, Lalong directed

the State Emergency Management Agency and the Peace Building Agency to visit the area and ensure that soccur is given to those affected and the community.

Bello appoints SUBEB sustainable dev goals executive

From MATHEW JWANTU, Minna

THE Governor of Niger State, Alhaji Abubakar Sani Bello has approved the appointment of Alhaji Saidu Ibrahim (Mainan Kontagora) as the new Executive Chairman, Niger State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB).

Secretary to Niger Government (SSG) Ahmed Ibrahim Matane,

disclosed that the appointment of Alhaji Saidu Ibrahim to the challenging position was based on merit, proven credentials, personal integrity, and outstanding records of decades of experience.

The SSG reminded the new Chairman of the policy direction of the present administration which is to improve the quality of life of the citizens of the State and urged him to pursue the reinvigoration of the Board within the context of the State Government's drive towards enhanced basic education in the State.

Ahmed Matane explained that the Executive Chairman is also expected to bring his knowledge, skills, and wealth of experience to bear in the performance of his new assignment by working diligently to justify the confidence reposed in him.

The Governor congratulated the new Chairman on the

appointment and wishes him success and God's guidance in the performance of the arduous duties of his office, the statement stressed.

Similarly, Governor Abubakar Sani Bello of Niger State has approved the appointment of Hon. Mohammed Bashar Harka as the new Director General, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) following the removal of Abdullahi Baba Arah as the Director General, SDGs by the State Governor.

The Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Ahmed Ibrahim Matane in a statement revealed that the appointment of Hon. Bashar Harka as the Director General of SDGs was based on merit, proven credentials, personal integrity, and outstanding records of experience.

He stressed that the new Director General is expected to bring his knowledge, skills, and wealth of experience to bear in the performance of his new assignment by working diligently to justify the confidence reposed in him.

Meanwhile, the Niger State Governor, Alhaji Abubakar Sani Bello has directed the immediate termination of the appointment of the suspended Executive

Chairman of Niger State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), Dr. Isah Adamu.

Recalled that Governor Sani Bello recently suspended Dr. Isah Adamu following some observed anomalies in the

7 persons killed in fresh attack in Danda village

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

NOT less than seven (7) persons were confirmed dead with several others sustaining varying degrees of injuries following an attack on the people of Danda, Chugwi of Vwang District Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State Sunday.

This came in a press statement signed by Senior Special Adviser to the Executive Chairman of Jos-South Local Government Council on Media and Publicity, Hon. Shamaki Gyang and made available to THE NIGERIA STANDARD in the capital city of Jos, Plateau State Monday.

The statement said, the attack was carried out by suspected herders as confirmed by the Chairman Berom Youth Moulders, Vwang District Emmanuel John Mangu revealing that the unfortunate incident occurred in the late hours of Sunday, 31st July while the people were fast asleep.

The Executive Chairman, Hon. Ambassador Gideon Dandereng, the Nwanne Idi Igbo of Jos-South, expressed fury on the failure of the security to avert the attack and called on security operatives to redouble up their efforts to apprehend the culprits who are still at large.

Dandereng, who is also the All Progressive Congress (APC) House of Representatives' Candidate for the Jos-South/Jos-East Federal Constituency, regretted the attack because this was not the first that such unfortunate incident has happened in the area.

He assured the people of the

From ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

Gunmen abducts baby, her mother 2 others, demand N10m

A four month old baby her Mother and two others have been kidnapped by Gunmen at Rafin Ciyawa village in Ningi Local Government Area of Bauchi State.

The incident was confirmed by two authorities, the Chairman of Ningi Local Government Area Mamuda Hassan Tabla, and Police Public Relations Officer SP Ahmed Mohammed Wakil.

Information from the area revealed that the gunmen invaded the village on the night of Thursday, 28th July at about 2 am during which the gunmen abducted one male, a nursing mother with her baby and another person.

The Police Command PPRO Ahmed Wakil, said "the gunmen went to the house of one Mr Nnami Sunday a businessman at Rafin Ciyawa village in Ningi LGA of Bauchi State took away his wife, Mrs Mercy Nnami 42 years old with her 4 months old baby boy and a sales boy, one Bala Ali who is 27 years old".

He said "On receiving the information, the Commissioner of Police, Umar Sanda directed the DPO of Ningi, Burra and the



Alkali

Area Commander to commence discreet investigations, Presently, the Command and a group of vigilante have been dispatched to the forests to comb the area for possible rescue of the victims. Other sister security agencies are collaborating with the Police on the rescue mission".

Chairman of Ningi Mamuda Hassan Tabla, also explained that 24 hours after the abduction, the kidnapers released the nursing mother and the baby after some amount was paid but are holding onto the businessman demanding the sum of N10m before they will release him.

In a related development, last Saturday another set of gunmen believed to be kidnapers abducted another businessman, Alh Ali Dogonruwa in his house located in Dogonruwa village in

justice.

While at the Danda Community on a visit to the scene of the attack to convey his heartfelt condolences on behalf of the people of Jos-South LGA, Dandereng, sympathized with the affected families and also appealed to the people to remain calm, as Justice must be achieved.

Again, gunmen block Nigerian highway, abduct scores of passengers

SCORES of passengers were, on Saturday, abducted when gunmen, suspected to be herdsmen, who blocked Enugu-Port Harcourt highway between Leru Junction and Ihube Community, a boundary between Imo and Abia states, Nigeria's South-east.

The gunmen, numbering about 30, were said to have attacked three buses along the road and abducted the entire passengers.

The attackers reportedly razed a military van and wounded two soldiers who attempted to confront them, before forcing all occupants of the three buses into a nearby bush, according a report by Vanguard newspaper.

Sources said the situation has caused fear among residents of the area.

Commuters were said to have mistaken the gunmen for police officers mounting roadblock.

Some of the commuters who stepped out of their vehicles to know the cause of a gridlock along the road, scampered for safety when the gunmen opened fire on the military van, a youth leader in the community was quoted as saying.

Ningi LGA.

Hon Mamuda Hassan Tabla, confirmed the development saying that he received the information with great shock and apprehension considering that he was trying to sort out a previous case before this case again.

He said that as a Council, a tight security measure has been put in place to ensure that all those in captivity with the kidnapers were safely released as well as ensure that such did not happen again in the area.

The Council Chairman said that the unknown gunmen are resurfacing in the area because of the rainy season which has turned the forest green everywhere thereby taking advantage to operate.

He lamented that because of the muddy nature of the terrain, security agents can no longer enter the bushes to comb it unlike during the dry season.

Chairman appealed to the State Government to deploy more well-armed security personnel, particularly soldiers to the area.

He expressed confidence that with more armed personnel, there will be effective patrol and combing of the entire forest to smoke out the bandits from their hiding areas as was done in the previous years which yielded positive results as the bandits fled the area thereby making the area free and peaceful for citizens of the area.

He said some people sustained bullet wounds, as motorists ran away, abandoning their vehicles.

Commissioner for Information in Abia State, Chikamnayo Eze, has confirmed the attack.

He, however, said the incident occurred at the Imo State side of the expressway.

Mr Eze, who is the Secretary of Umunneochi Security Committee, recently inaugurated by Governor Okezie Ikpeazu of Abia State, to tackle rising insecurity in the area, appealed for more time to provide details of the attack.

"In Umunneochi proper, there has been a mass reduction in the number of such incidents but they have migrated to the border between Umunneochi (Abia) and Imo States," he said.

The police spokesperson in Abia State, Geoffery Ogbonna, did not respond to calls and a text message seeking comments from him.

Kidnapping for ransom has increased in Abia State in recent times.

The latest incident occurred exactly one week after gunmen

abducted some travellers in Lokpanta, a community in Umunneochi Local Government Area of the state.

Mid-June, gunmen also abducted a journalist in Umuahia, the state capital. He was released about five days later, after N10 million ransom was reportedly paid.

Earlier in June, Uwadnachi Iweha, a medical doctor and the provost of Gregory University College of Medicine, Umuahia Campus, was also abducted.

He was whisked away while driving out of his residence at Umuajameze Ezeleke Umuopara in Umuahia South Council Area of the state

Mr Iweha is yet to be released, nearly two months after his abduction.

In May, Samuel Kanu-Uche, the Prelate of the Methodist Church of Nigeria, was kidnapped alongside two other priests, while they were on their way from a programme in Umunneochi Local Government Area of the state.

The clerics were released about two days later after reportedly paying N100 million to the kidnapers.



Bello

News

Farmers lose N18bn to potato blight says commission

By TERHEMBA DAKA, Abuja

Dr Hosea C, the Plateau State Commissioner for Agriculture says that farmers in the state lost potatoes worth N18 billion to potato blight disease.

Finangwal disclosed this when delegates from the National Root Crops Research Institute; Umudike paid the ministry a courtesy visit on Tuesday in Jos.

The commissioner said that out of the 150,000 hectares of land cultivated; 52,000 hectares were infected with blight resulting to 2,000 farmers losing N18 billion worth of potatoes.

Finangwal said that the ministry was proactive in reporting the case to Gov. Simon Lalong who immediately reported to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture.

He said that the Federal Ministry of Agriculture sent delegates from the research institute to the state to seek ways to proffer solution in curbing the disease.

In his response, head of the team Dr Joseph Onyeka, Director; Biotech Department said that they were in Jos to discuss with stakeholders on



Lalong

how to develop viable resistant seedlings.

Onyeka said the team would also look into the tissue culture laboratory to make it functional.

"We want to find preventive measures, upgrade the tissue culture so that quality materials and disease-free materials can be gotten," he said.

Onyeka said the team would also interface with the state government to work on storage facilities, tolerant varieties and processing facilities.

The director said that the team had come to help resolve reoccurring outbreak of the disease.

He said that farmers need to learn how to use fungicides as fungicides are protective not curative.

"Farmers must be sensitized and properly taught how to use fungicides and also take instructions from extension workers," Onyeka said.

He said that the group of professionals available on ground would work with stakeholders in the state to resolve the problem.

THE Afuko Progressive Youth of Lamingo in Jos-North Local Government Area, Plateau State, has organised a special sensitization programme to enlighten its members on political apathy, security and entrepreneurship for them to be self-reliant.

This took place recently, at the Izere Arena Gwafan Lamingo in Jos-North LGA of the state with a Theme: "Ending Political Apathy among the Youth, Curbing the Menace of Insecurity and Youth Involvement in Entrepreneurship to Eradicate Poverty".

The Chairman of the occasion, Comrade Nyam Vincent Nyam, said, the essence of the engagement was to enlighten the youth on current happenings in the society especially the aspect of political apathy where most put low interest on voting or participating in political activities.

He disclosed that, "just as the 2023 election is fast approaching, there is need for us to educate the youth on political apathy

APY sensitizes members on political apathy, security and entrepreneurship

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

and also alert them on security issues that are eminent in our society today. We also enlightened them on the importance of entrepreneurship for them to be self-reliant".

Presenting his paper titled: "End Political Apathy among the Youth", Hon. Prince David Azi Arin, said, "we all know that Nigeria in no distant time, will be conducting the 2023 general elections and it is high time for us to educate the youth on the need to come out and exercise their rights by voting the correct candidates.

According to him, "during last elections, the youth seem not to care about the election. Some will tell you that, whether they vote or not, the the candidate will certainly emerge or the candidate they voted for at

the end of the day will be the one that will be announced winner of the election. So, there is no need wasting their votes.

Earlier, the Chairman of Afuko Progressive Youth (APY), Comrade Azi Aware Peter, disclosed that, the National Youth Development Centre was domiciled in their area and that, they have reached its Coordinator and was willing to collaborate with them, hence the planning of this sensitization programme.

He said, "they have a lot of equipments like designing machines, tailoring machines, computers, welding machines and lots more. We are going to identify some youth and train them

Buhari calls for international collaboration to tackle insecurity

President Muhammadu Buhari Tuesday in Abuja commended collective efforts of nations towards tackling security challenges across the globe, and within Nigeria, urging more collaboration to check terrorism, banditry and insurgency.

Receiving Letters of Credence of Canadian High Commissioner to Nigeria, Ambassador James Kingston Christoff and Ambassador of Mexico to Nigeria, Juan Alfred Miranda Oritz, President Buhari told the diplomats that successes in taming insecurity had been recorded through collaboration across borders, and more could be achieved.

"The devastating effect of global insecurity, climate change and the post COVID-19 era has devastated global economies. Nations continue to struggle to recover from these multiple global challenges.

"The ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine has undermined the progress countries have achieved in tackling food security in the last decade. While, the political instability in Libya continues to fuel terrorism in the Sahel, as well as scuttle democratic sustenance in both West and Central African regions.

"Nigeria is not left out of the equation, as we are fighting to rid our country of banditry, kidnapping, herder/farmer crisis and insurgency. We are, however, making meaningful progress with the support of friendly countries like yours to sustain these fights until we overcome these challenges," he said.

At the regional level, President Buhari said Nigeria had been working with other Member-States of ECOWAS and other regional blocs, to deal with the problems of

terrorism, trans-border crimes, maritime crimes such as piracy and illegal fishing on our waters, illicit drug and human trafficking, banditry, as well as unconstitutional changes of government. "I believe that matters of security have become the business of all nations as these challenges go beyond the abilities of any single country to effectively contain. The world must, therefore, work closely together and Nigeria counts on your support in cementing the relations between our countries at both bilateral and multilateral levels to surmount these global threats to civilization," he added. The President urged diplomats to monitor political developments in the country, leading to the 2023 elections, but remain true to their professional ethics of non-interference. President Buhari noted that Nigeria was drawing closer to its national elections and candidates representing their parties at different levels were beginning to build consensus within their respective parties in preparations to the launching of campaigns across the country soon. "As the drums of campaign begin to rise, I urge you to be guided by diplomatic practice to ensure that your activities remain within the limits of your profession as you monitor the build-up to the elections and the conduct of the general elections," he said. The President also advised the diplomats to focus on building on the successes of their

predecessors. "The task before you require you both to build on the successes of your predecessors and further make efforts in the expansion and advancement of the cordial bilateral relations and cooperation between Nigeria and your respective countries. These relations as you all know, span across political, socio-economic and cultural spheres, that have overtime benefitted our people. "I am confident that, in carrying out your diplomatic responsibilities in the course of your tour of duties, you will spare time to appreciate the uniqueness and strength in our country's cultural diversities, in terms of both human and natural resources, as well as the flora and fauna across the country," the President noted. He said the cultural diversity of Nigeria "represents our pride as a nation and identity as a people," while urging the diplomats to also build friendship and acquaintances in the course of their stay in the country. In his remarks, on behalf of the ambassadors, the Canadian High Commissioner thanked the President for the ceremony of accepting the Letters of Credence. "Today marks formal beginning of our engagement with the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. We will work closely with ministers and officials to start a progressive relationship," Christoff said.



Aware

Katsina State Government organises Special Prayer Session for Allah's intervention

The Katsina State Government has organised a Special Prayers Session for Allah's blessings, bounties as well as intervention on current insecurity bedeviling the state and some parts of the country in general. Sheikh Abidu Yazid, Chairman of the Main Organising Committee of the session disclosed this at the 2022 prayers session in Katsina on Monday.

Yazid explained that the prayers wasorganised to thank Allah for his blessings and bounties as well as to seek for His intervention in the current insecurity bedeviling the state and the country in general.

According to him, Allah has tested many prophets and generations before us with different calamities at different times, prayed and overcame the situation. "It is in line with this practice, we organised thanks giving prayers Allah's blessings and bounties to us as well as to take out us out

from the present insecurity in the state and the country in general" the chairman said.

Earlier in a remark, the Katsina State Governor, Alhaji Aminu Masari thanked Islamic Scholars that participated in the special prayers session.

Masari said that in whatever people situation people finds themselves, they should pray for divine intervention.

The Nigeria Standard reported that prominent Islamic Scholars prayed against the current insecurity in the state and the country in general.

They enjoined the people to also fear God and continue to offer special prayers continuously.

The Nigeria Standard gathered that, similar prayers went simultaneously in the 34 local government areas of the state along with one organised in the state capital.

CHANGE OF NAME

DABOER

I, formerly known as **DABOER ANDY SHEPYONG**, now wish to be known and addressed as **DABOER DONATUS SHEPYONG**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

SPACE FOR SALE

JUMMAI

I, formerly known as **GAMBO AMARK JUMMAI**, now wish to be known and addressed as **JUMMAI AMARK**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

SPACE FOR SALE

When wrong leaders are in power



By **BULUS GAMBO**

IN the course of my journalism career straddling virtually three decades now; I have had the opportunity of meeting some prodigious men and women who have distinguished themselves in their chosen careers. One of such persons is none other than Prof. Ali Mazrui, the Tanzanian born American political writer on African and Islamic studies, reputable and globally acclaimed scholar who was not only passionate about the underdeveloped status of Africa but the ineptitude disposition of most of our leaders on the continent. Even though Mazruri had separately underlined some humanly created hiccups which had consequently hoven nations of Africa into reversible dilapidation, he was always quick to affirm that our leaders in this part of the world were and still are so selfish to a magnitude that they only think of themselves.

Even when Mummar Gaddafi held sway, building enclaves for himself, even when Mobutu Sese seko was amassing significant wealth, even when many tyrants and despots were

tormenting vulnerable negotiations gave them a whooping N60 million as ransom for the release of some kidnaped victims. Surprisingly, while the government has vehemently denied giving such an amount, one bandit who was turbaned with a traditional title in Zamfara State, north western Nigeria openly declared that he does not kidnap but kill innocent citizens. This particular bandit further noted with pride when asked about the number of lives he had killed disclosing boastfully that he could not recount the number of his victims of unnecessary mayhem.

Today, these acts of administrative ingenuity continuously perpetrated by our successive docile and vision-less leaders have derailed our dreams and developmental projections. In between their freeholds of phenomenal misrule, nations of the continent have been polarized, subjugated and milked with consistent unbearable hardship necessitated by elements of excruciating poverty.

Today, one of this African countries which is presently on its knees is Nigeria presently regarded as the most populous black nation in the world. In the past few months, it has become so evident that this nation is fundamentally sick and incapacitated with no practicable remedy in sight.

One of the most disturbing issues holding this country by its neck is the ongoing precarious sense of insecurity bedeviling the nation. Since the advent of this democratic dispensation, it has not been that worse than this time around. The activities of kidnappers, bandits and insurgents with boldness and impunity are already pricking our intellectual thoughts.

For instance, in a recent BBC documentary on the activities of bandits in Northern Nigeria released this year, Nigerians were shocked following the confessional statements offered by some of these heartless criminals. In fact, it became much more disturbing after one of the bandits disclosed that the incumbent government after



any and every standard that despite the billions of naira spend on the issue of tackling insecurity, the nation is still unable to make any headway.

Just some days past, the National Security Adviser, Babagana Monguno noted that tired of the unabated calamity bedeviling this country, Nigerians have stated seeking for self-help in an effort to protect themselves. This self-help connotes the fact that many communities are militarizing their domains, buying weapons and training themselves to acquire certain elementary skills of physical confrontation in this moment of uncertainty. What this equally means is that the citizens of this country have lost confidence over government's ability and or capability to protect them.

We have been abandoned in a forest full of loose hungry lions looking for anyone to deplete. In the midst of this unpleasant calamity, most Nigerians are finding it difficult to have three square meals a day. In this same country, our public universities are closed due to unending fruitless negotiations which have taken us nowhere. Come to think of it, the increasing fuel price in a petroleum producing nation like ours has contributed in no small measure to the sufferings the citizens of this country.

The hike in fuel pump price has continued to affect all facade of

our lives. In a situation whereby the government has almost failed in regulating the price of this essential commodity, vulnerable Nigerians are the ones bearing the burden of these excruciating predicaments.

Without any contradiction, many innocent citizens of this country are only but enduring this obvious hardship. In the last few years, government policies have left much to be desired even as people are yawning for any systematic improvement particularly regarding policies affecting the welfare of the entire vulnerable citizens.

Sad enough, the vision-less disposition of the leaders of this country has greatly polarized this nation. Consequently, nothing seems to be working for our good due our pretentious lifestyle coupled with glaring dishonesty which has truncated nearly all our hopes for a better tomorrow.

Summing it up in one of his pragmatic documentaries, Prof Mazuri explains that our contemporary leaders lack remedies to some of these challenges because they cannot give that which they don't have. For Mazuri, leaders in Africa have not lived up to our expectations because we have always been voting the wrong people into power.



By **CELESTINE ATTSAR**

THE present challenge faced by many households in Nigeria looking at the rise in the prices of food items is considered by many as a result of the country's bad agricultural planning and policies which were neglected in the past.

Nigeria is a country that is very much blessed with land suitable for farming varieties of crops suitable for human consumption.

Right from ancient time agriculture has been the major source of income in Nigeria's traditional setting but the search for any meaningful technological advancement has remained a mirage up till this

Lessons from Russia, Ukraine conflict

moment. Though governments in the past have introduced policies aim at improving the sector; mismanagement and corruption have bedeviled it which resulted in complete grounding of the various good policies. For example, former President Obasanjo during his reign as a military head of state introduced, Operation Feed the Nation, also; late President Shehu Shagari came up with Green Revolution. All these were government policies that were aimed at ensuring food security for the nation. This vision is yet to be achieved.

During the period of Covid-19 pandemic and now with the Russian Ukraine conflict, the world has learned that every country must produce food it consumes; as nature and geographical tension could cut the supply chain as it did of essential goods from more productive nations to dependent countries with global food prices spiking, and supplies of wheat, oil and other commodities halted following the conflict between Russia and

Ukraine. Nigeria is among countries that face a number of threats. Since 50% of the food consumed by Nigerian households comes from purchased source; food price inflation thereby has continued to threaten sources of livelihood. In particular, Nigeria's dependence on wheat import may lead to high prices of food items that are products of wheat.

At the same time; with Nigeria's capacity to produce other key items such as, fertilizer and natural gas: one would have expected it to take advantage of global market disruption from the crisis, especially where governments in the past had made frantic efforts toward developing our agricultural sector. Nigeria would have gotten customers in the international market to supply some of these items that the conflict has blocked.

Suffice it to say that attention should be focused on wheat, Nigeria is a huge consumer of wheat products. The Central Bank of Nigeria report has it that

wheat is the third most consumed grains in Nigeria after maize and rice with domestic production for only 1% of the 5 to 6 metric tons consumed annually. In 2020, Nigeria imported wheat worth over 2.15 million dollars, a 40% rise from the previous year and ranked as the world's fourth largest importer of wheat after Egypt, China and Turkey.

It is very clear that Nigeria's import dependency on wheat is not expected to decline anytime soon, due to fundamental problems such as low adoption of agricultural technologies, slow progress in agricultural research and development, climate driven disasters and armed conflicts.

Though in its efforts toward reviving the already neglected wheat farming in the country the president last year flagged off the first ever rain fed commercial wheat cultivation in Plateau State where he charged farmers to embrace wheat farming and stop the import of the product which he said gulfs over 2 billion dollars

annually. The president also said, the programme, which is in collaboration with the Central Bank of Nigeria's Anchor Borrowers Programme would transform the sector.

The launching of the programme is a welcomed development to Nigerians especially those interested in farming wheat as that will go along way in rewriting the country's name in gold as a major producer of wheat.

The Russia/Ukraine conflict should give our policy markers in the agricultural sector a rethink as we as a nation must give wheat farming the serious attention it deserves so that we can enhance our source of foreign income.

The conflict has now showcased to the world the capacity of a country of the size of Ukraine which is amongst countries that feed the world, thereby posing a great challenge to other nations to know that, it is time we make use of our God given natural resources to change the fortunes of our country for good.

By JIDAUNA DARING

CHRISTIANITY as a religion, clearly stated that there is time to be born and time to die. However, such times cannot be argued by anyone as we all know that we will not remain in this world forever. This therefore, remains the true reality of our life.

Since dead is inevitable to all mortals, it was indeed received and announced with shock the recent passing on to glory of late Ngo Dr. Naomi Vou Jugu who went to be with the Lord on June 28, 2022. She will be greatly missed by all who have come in contact with her and of course, her family and friends.

Although, the Holy Bible has made it clear that the death of a believer is like sleep awaiting Christ's coming and the resurrection of all who died in him.

In this regard, it was indeed a very bright, beautiful and of course joyous day on October 1st, 1940, when late Dr. Ngo Na'omi Jugu was welcomed to the world in the native town of Madu, Du District in Jos South Local Government Area (LGA) of Plateau State.

Dr. Ngo Na'omi Jugu's educational journey began thus: She enrolled her education at all levels at a very tender age, which further endeared her to the community. It was in this light that the Church elders' council of the church of Christ in Nations (COCIN) Madu after considering her commitments in church programmes and Girls' Brigade (GB) which they unanimously appointed her as the first captain of GB COCIN Madu.

What late Ngo Na'omi Jugu left behind are good legacies that she is going to be remembered for. In fact, she was fondly called Deloh Berom. This was because she exhibited early personae to cater the needs of her siblings and community.

This was a hallmark attribute which was displayed right from her childhood and it was perhaps acknowledged by the entire world and anyone who knew her, till her call to glory on June 28, 2022 at the age of 82 years.

The charismatic and adorable "Deloh Berom Ngo Na'omi" was dogged in all ramifications and has truly exhibited that in her endeavors and sojourn through life by breaking so many records.

With this records breaking, late Ngo, Na'omi Jugu was the first woman to be installed and revered with the title of the "Deloh Berom-mother of Berom" in Berom land and also the first Plateau Woman to be honored with the title: "Otun yeye Oba-the right hand woman of the Oba of Osun"

The deceased was the first to initiate the popular dance association; the Berom women cultural and traditional dance group," and became its first" leader, who led the group to win their first trophy at the Kaduna State National Culture and Art festival in 1977.

She was indeed subsequently recognized and honored by the then military Administrator of the Benue Plateau State, Late Joseph D. Gomwalk of blessed memory. This feat further

endeared her to the Berom and cultural Association, and was again recognized by the then late Gbong Gwom Jos, "Da David Fom Bot" of blessed memory.

Also in line with her love for the Berom land, the deceased was the initiator and the first pioneer president of the then Berom Women Association (BWA) now called Berom Women Development Association (BEWDA). She was equally the

commitment to church.

It was against this background that Governor Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State, Political associates, organizations, groups, friends and well wishers described the exit of the deceased as a colossal and irreversible loss considering her immense contribution to the development of Plateau State and beyond.

THE NIGERIA STARDARD

Deloh Berom, beacon of hope goes home



first and pioneer president of the Plateau State political women Forum.

Mama, as she was fondly called by many people was indeed again the first woman to be awarded with an honorary Doctorate Degree by the Jos ECWA Theological Seminary (JETS) for her outstanding achievements and accomplishments in mentoring young girls across board. In a similar vein, she was honored with an award of "Beacon of Hope" by the National Union of Berom Students (UBES), University of Jos Chapter.

In fact, some of the positions held during her life time include; Deputy National President, Widowhood in Nigeria Network, lifetime Ambassador of the ECWA Bishara 2 Jos, member of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) Reconciliatory and Discipline committee and chairman Board of Directors, VARNIC Nigeria limited among others.

Some condolence messages and tributes have adjudged late Dr. Ngo Na'omi Jugu as a rare gem, pillar, bridge builder, and also an advocate for justice and human rights.

The deceased had a legacy of hard work, compassion for the less privileged, a solid commitment to her family and a devotion to God as best as she could, and a profound

reports that the various groups of sympathizers disclosed this when they converged at the ECWA Unity Church Rayfield Jos to pay their last respects to late Ngo Na'omi Jugu during her funeral service, held at the above mentioned Church, recently.

They also described the deceased as a heroine, mentor and role model in different facets of life. In their different ways, they said they were going to miss her for all those good attributes that she was known for in the state.

Chairman, Plateau State Council of Chiefs and Emirs, Gbong Gwom Jos, Da Jacob Gyang Buba said that late Ngo Dr. Na'omi Jugu has been an activist of amazonic proportion always outspoken on issues that were dear to her and the people in any fora. He added that she had also contributed a lot to socio-cultural development of the Berom land which the entire Berom nation would live to remember her for at all times.

In his sermon during the funereal service, ECWA Bukuru, DCC chairman Rev. Ayuba Ashishe who took his reading from the book of Revelation,

admonished Christian faithful to always live upright life while on earth.

Rev. Ashishe said that everyone is going to be judged based on his or her deeds. He pointed out that anyone whose name will not be found in the book of life will be thrown into the Lake of hell fire.

In this regard, he urged believers to equally always amend their ways whenever they have gone wrong, so that their sin can be forgiven.

Chairman, Barkin Ladi Local Government Council (LGC), Hon Jock Alamba who spoke on behalf of other chairmen condoled the family and asked

them to take heart, saying that death is inevitable for all mortals on earth.

Hon. Alamba maintained that late Ngo Na'omi Jugu was a mother who did not discriminate against others in whatever she did. He called on her children to follow her foot prints.

Giving the vote of thanks, DSP Bulus Jugu appreciated those that have contributed to the success of the burial of their late mother.

Our correspondent reports that the remains of the deceased was later committed to mother earth at the family compound at Rayfield, Jos.

IMAGES

2022 SPEECH AND PRIZE GIVING CEREMONY OF UNITED FAITH

The year 2022 speech and prize giving of the United Faith Tabernacle College, Jarawan Kogi, Jos East took place last week at the college hall



Acting President of United Faith Old Students Association (UFOSA), Mr. Steve Omali (middle) flanked by his EXCO addressing the graduating set 2022



Head Boy of United Faith Tabernacle College delivering his speech



L - R: Elder T. D. Sambo, Board Chairman, Pastor Adewumi Dare, Presiding Pastor and the Acting Principal of the College, Pastor Longshik Benard Dansura



R - L: Mr. Steve Omali, UFOSA Acting President, Veronica Dariya, Nat PRO, UFOSA and set 2003 of the College, Sambo Abel Ayuba putting heads together



Acting President of UFOSA, Mr. Steve Omale reading his speech at the ceremony



A cross section of graduating class 2022 listening with rapt attention to speeches



A cross section of newsmen covering the 2022 speech and prize giving ceremony



Peter Mainasara (middle) displaying awards he received flanked by his parents, Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Mainasara and Mrs. Phoebe Shinker, UFOSA member of THE NIGERIA STANDARD newspapers Jos

Photos: DANLADI DUK

Odd World

Neighbour slammed for calling police about dog pooing outside

A homeowner has been criticised on Reddit for calling law enforcement on their neighbours, who let their pet dog go to the bathroom on their own patio, with people angrily agreeing it's a 'waste of police resources'

A homeowner has been slammed online for "wasting police time" after calling law enforcement on their neighbour's dog who goes to the toilet outside.

Taking to Reddit, the person started a thread explaining that the couple next-door often let their dog go to the bathroom on the patio.

They wrote: "I have some neighbours, a young couple around their 20s. They've lived in the apartment next to mine for two years. They have a dog. A small one.

"I've always noticed them taking the dog on walks but for the past two months, I just see them putting some pads on their patio and letting the dog s**t and pee there.

"I've made complaints to them multiple times, I've called them lazy and told them to give up the dog if they can't care for it properly."

When confronted, the couple defended themselves, explaining that they clean up after their dog at least twice a day and walk it every night.

"The girl also said its none of my business on why she and her boyfriend don't take the dog out on walks and they don't have to answer to me," wrote the user.

"The next morning I called the police on them. Authorities came and inspected

and said that no laws are broken as long as the area is getting cleaned up daily."

When the person spoke to police, they were told that the "couple has their reasons" and it's not the neighbour's business to know.

Other members of the community explained to the homeowner that the couple are expecting a baby and the boyfriend takes the dog out late at night whilst his girlfriend is on bedrest.

"Everyone in the building is now hostile against me," the user finished.

Reddit users were quick to respond and slate the person for thinking it's acceptable to call the police.

"I can't even imagine why anyone would think this was not OK, let alone a police matter," someone said.

"You just made a building full of enemies all because you are nosy and intrusive," another person commented.

One Redditor simply said: "You're a neighbour from hell", whilst a second wrote: "What an absolute waste of police resources."

Many people defended the pregnant woman and suggested they apologise to the couple.

"There are many reasons why people can't walk their dog. The dog may have an injury that's healing, it may have developed arthritis and can't walk as much or as long without pain, or a slew of other reasons that are none of your business," a person slated.

Source: The Mirror



Lamentations of the weak

I woke up a few days ago thinking of many people in Nigeria who have not eaten food perhaps for some days now. After all, I was recently made to understand that Nigeria presently tops the list of nine African countries with the highest cost of white bread. This is followed by South Africa, Algeria, Tunisia, Ghana, Mauritius, Egypt, Morocco and Kenya. But again, I stand to be corrected, had our successive leaders managed our resources well, none of these nations would have gotten closer to us in terms of systematic development and prosperity. Aside the rising cost of bread, it takes an extra sacrifice to buy many other commodities in our markets today.

I was also deep in thoughts about those who are presently sick but cannot effort to go to hospital for treatment due to lack of resources. Come to think of this with a sober reflection, since the advent of this democratic dispensation, our leaders who vowed to transform our country for the better are almost failing us. Most of them promised us heaven on earth even as we detested broken promises but the indicators of Human Development Index are not at all palatable.

Today, our narratives are that most hospitals in this country are becoming but visiting clinics. In our rural areas, the debilitating condition of most healthcare facilities constantly make tears freely flow out of our eyes. Beyond this pragmatic dilemma, I am equally thinking of many innocent citizens in kidnappers den for months and years forgotten by our leaders who are by constitutional provisions anticipated to protect us. As I write, I am aware of many innocent Nigerians held hostage in bushes begging for their lives to no avail. Many unlucky ones have been killed following the inability of their loved ones to raise ransom for payments.

A few days ago, many citizens of this country became so traumatized after hoodlums who kidnaped commuters along Abuja-Kaduna in a passenger train decided to display their victims' pictures calling on the Federal Government to do the needful if their relations intend to see them alive again. The video was so heart-touching considering the fact that even toddlers were not spared from this horrendous and nasty experience of video marketing for bargain. It is so pitiful knowing too well that all my life, I have never imagined that one day, human beings would be bargained for in such an agonizing and dehumanizing manner.

Today, many citizens of this country are perishing in afflictions, while for others, their hearts have failed them. No doubt, the wicked has risen against the church even as many are yet to decode these happenings. Our political leaders are playing politics with human lives while innocent souls are in a vulnerable situation left at the mercy of

these unrepentant criminals and terrorists.

Thus, it takes much more courage to survive in this country than any other place in this world. There is no justice and equity in the land even as our leaders continue to fumble without success in navigate us out of the present socio-economic and political dull-drum. Many within the political class are consistently manipulating us and the entire system to ensure that we continue to be subservient to their intrigues and administrative ingenuity without any revolt. The point however is; how can a nation be happy when some of its citizens have been chased out of their ancestral homes and are refugees in their fatherland? How can we be happy seeing our children staying at home as all universities remain closed for only God knows how long? Why should we be happy knowing too well that the resources of this country are not used consistently for the benefit of all?

What kind of a nation is this that in the midst of this calamity we have found ourselves in, speaking to power is a crime? Why must we continue to remain silent when all the odds are overwhelming us? Thus, I see nothing wrong with the constructive criticism offered by the Bishop of the Diocese of Sokoto, Rev. Fr. Mathew Hassan Kukah who recently spoke truth to power over the worsting situations in this country. I hold in high esteem Fr. Matthew Kukah who moved by the pains and trauma of the citizenry had to chastise the powers that be in such an appreciable manner.

Left in the middle of the ocean with no other place to go, many of our younger ones have equally lost hope of a better tomorrow. As it is, more than ten million children of this country are out of school mostly for no fault of theirs. Unfortunately, these same Almajiri children and other vulnerable ones roaming our streets are amongst those who have continued to give us sleepless nights. They are the ones who have joined forces with the derailed Boko Haram sect causing unbearable havoc in almost all the regions of this country.

Knowing too well that these increasing number of out of school children will not be in the best interest of our nation, our institutions have continued to be under lock and key. Many of these undergraduate students are becoming vulnerable and easy recruits for evil-doers and drug peddlers even as most of them have been knocked-off by challenges of life and do not think of a brighter tomorrow. This life has certainly been unfair to many innocent citizens of this country who for no fault of theirs have continued to wallow in abject poverty. This is definitely not the kind of Nigeria our founding fathers prayed and or dreamt of.

However, no matter how high a stone is thrown up; it must certainly come down someday. Therefore, whether the devil likes it or not, it is settled in heaven and very soon, the Egyptians we see, we shall see them no more. We must however be wise enough to play our part with all sincerity of purpose and responsibility towards opening a new chapter for this country.

View Point

Hunger kills as fertilizer fires up

The increase in price of fertilizer has thrown Nigeria into a serious catastrophe, whereas uncountable Nigerians have also been living from hand to mouth while others are forced to beg for money to buy fertilizer and apply on their farms. ADAM YUSUF MUHAMMAD writes.

FERTILIZER is a commodity in need by farmers around the globe especially amongst citizens whose source of livelihood depends solely on agriculture. In today's world, no farmer can survive without the use of fertilizer which is the backbone of providing sustainable food security in the Nation.

Flashing back to our Nigeria in 1990s fertilizer was mostly given out free to farmers by the government to farm and feed the Nation. Between 2000 and 2009 government give out fertilizer to farmers at a subsidized price. From 2011 till date, subsidized fertilizer is given at the rate of Five thousand Five hundred Naira but now; the wholesalers sells it to retailers for Fifteen thousand Naira (15,000) Naira per bag which is three times higher than its initial prices.

The Golden Fertilizer was around Seven to Eight thousand Naira (7000-8000) as at 2007 to 2012 but now the Golden fertilizer is not available because it is not affordable by farmers. The Golden Mix 20-10-10 was 9000 in 2014/2015 but today it sells at Twenty-Eight thousand Naira, (28000). The cheapest fertilizer is Urea which sold at the cost of 7000 before 2015 but it is now sold at 22000.

Considering the price multiplications of fertilizer above, the economic situation currently in Nigeria is beyond imagination and both the rich and the poor in the country are not left out of this ugly situation. Mind you, fertilizer is not the only input the farmer need. There are other inputs which the farmers need to get good harvests.

Interestingly, a man most eat



to live because food supports man with energy to pursue life's basic necessities. Fertilizer cost more than the food stuff at the moment. The price of fertilizer has now increased the prices of foodstuffs in the market where one measure of maize is currently two hundred Naira. Before 2015, it was fifty Naira, rice was three hundred, Naira and now it is seven hundred Naira thus how many of these measures can the poor afford?

Looking into the reasons why the prices of fertilizers fire up in geometric proportion, the business tycoons sell fertilizer used to increase the price for reason that doesn't ride anything home. The prices now fluctuates in the market as they sell it at different prices.

The government should be vigilant in the market to watch out prices at which these sellers sell to the consumers. Nigeria is a country with a mixed economic system so, there

has to be a price Control board. For this to happen, the government has the right to regulate the prices of goods and services. They should therefore determine the price of fertilizer to make sure it is sold to farmers at an affordable price. Had it not been that capitalism operates in Nigeria, the forces of demand and supply should not have been determinants of price but in our own case the government have major say in the prices of goods and services including fertilizer.

The farmers are not contented because some of them cultivate more than they can control that is why they run short of fertilizer to apply. They also spend more than they get in their farms and this causes shortage of funds to fertilize farms for good harvest.

To get out of these plights of insufficient food in the country, the government should create a direct linkage between them and the final users of fertilizers. This is because; when the government subsidized the fertilizer, the whole sellers and the retailers will triple the price before it reaches the

consumer just as it is evident today where the government price is five thousand five hundred Naira (5500) but the subsidized fertilizer is today been sold by business men to farmers for seventeen thousand Naira (17,000).

Farmers on their own should understand the value of manue. They should also be advised by extension workers to cultivate what they can manage and how they can manage it which includes; the time for applying fertilizer to their crops, the type of crop and the amount of fertilizer they should apply to it. This can be achieved through the use of media and extension workers where the media should educate them on agricultural development programs. These solutions when implemented will bring an ease to the current food insecurity devastating the country. A hungry man is an angry man and we all know that insufficient food leads to war and excess food leads to peace. This piece should be a wake-up call to the government, fertilizer sellers and the farmers.

"To get out of these plights of insufficient food in the country, the government should create a direct linkage between them and the final users of fertilizers. This is because; when the government subsidized the fertilizer, the whole sellers and the retailers will triple the price before it reaches the consumer just as it is evident today where the government price is five thousand five hundred Naira (5500) but the subsidized fertilizer is today been sold by business men to farmers for seventeen thousand Naira (17,000)."



A major take-away at Justice Dongban-Mensem's son's burial

ON Friday, July 29, 2022, all roads led numerous personalities, sympathisers to Demshin, in Shendam Local Government Area of Plateau State.

It was for the burial of Prince Paeke Shepnaan whose parents are His Royal Highness Miskoom Isa Dongban, the Long Dorok of Dorok Chieftdom and Justice Monica Dongban-Mensem, President Nigerian Court of Appeal.

Prince Paeke had died in his sleep at the age of 38, and his death was a tragic experience to the family as they face a situation of losing another son, 10 years after losing his brother in a hit and run accident.

The burial attracted sympathisers including Governors Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State, Abubakar Atiku Bagudu of Kebbi State, Mohammed Badaru Abubakar of Jigawa State, Abubakar Sani Bello of Niger State including the Acting Chief Judge of the country, Judges of the federal and state courts, former Jigawa Governor Saminu Turaki, Former EFCC Boss Nuhu Rubadu, Bishops and clergy, politicians, office holders from the public and private sectors, family and friends of the family.

So many tributes flowed from Paeke's workplace, family, friends, traditional Council, Jurists, and Governors, many of whom saw him growing up and socialising and they described him as a humane, receptive and humble hardworking young man with great dreams and aspirations before death knocked at his door.

The St. Peter's Claver Catholic Church



Demshin where the funeral mass took place was full to capacity, with more than half of the population having to sit outside the church.

The Bishop of Bauchi, Hillary Dachelem in his remarks drew the attention of the people to some major lessons to take away from the funeral. He lamented the worrisome insecurity bedeviling the country. He commended the great display and show of love to the bereaved family with mourners cutting across political, social and religious lines.

Then he asked two governors, Simon Lalong of Plateau and Atiku Bugudu of Jigawa to stand up and wave to the crowd, and they did.

The Bishop then said "They are brothers, and good friends. But how are they doing it?"

"Are you happy being together?" asked Dachelem and they said yes. He went further to explain to the congregation how they stand for each other as friends despite their religious and ethnic differences.

"Then why are we killing each other as Christians and Moslems. Why so much hate? You see Christians or Moslems saying the other must not be allowed to live. But how can it be? We must learn how to live in peace with each other, and that is the only solution to our country's insecurity".

The Bishop said from his observation, the elites and political class know how to love themselves and socialise with each other despite their different political and religious affiliations therefore he said their followers must learn how to love each other too.

The Bishop also explained his level of tolerance in Bauchi State saying there is a mosque in front of his house, and he has shown love and tolerance to people around him.

The Man of God also described a case of interreligious and political tolerance between Governor Lalong and Bauchi Governor Bala Mohammed of the major opposition party the PDP saying when Lalong came to Bauchi to attend his Book Launch, they worked together and attended the event as a family.

Dachelem urged the Nigerian people and society to work together collective on peace and unity or else "we will pay for it, let us deal with this problem decisively because we will all pay for it" he said adding that a very beautiful Nigeria is possible if we all work it out irrespective of religious, ethnic and political affiliations. God will give it to us and it will be possible to have peace".

After the funeral mass, the remains of late Paeke was laid to rest in the family compound in Demshin, Shendam LGA of Plateau State.



News

Governor Bala to employ 2,000 youths on security

Suspected kidnapers, cattle rustlers were reported to have killed a 75-year-old man Alhaji Katu Ma Dukkuna and abducted his three grand children, rustle his cattles in Shafa ,village of Duguri District in Alkaleri Local Government Area of Bauchi State, where the state Governor pledge to recruits 2,000 youth as vigilantes to fight banditry across the State.

Residents of Shafa village recently explained to journalists in Shafa when Governor Bala Mohammed visited them to commiserate with the families of the deceased, that the kidnapers stormed the house of the Late Katu Mai Dukkuna, with intention to abduct him for ransom but he resisted the attempt and they shot him to death at close range.

A resident of the area, Malam Sunusi told Journalists

From
ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

that the gunmen had earlier visited his farm but when they could not find him, they went to the house where they tried to kidnap him but ended up killing him and went away with three of his grand children – two females and a male.

The villager added that the kidnapers also took away some of his cows leaving the family in a mourning mood; a development that has now thrown the entire village into a panicking situation.

Another villager, Sani Umar said that for about a week before the incident, the gunmen have been coming to the village looking for who to kidnap considering the fact that most of the people are cattle breeders and farmers thinking that they have money.

He said that as of the last time the kidnapers made contact,

they were demanding the sum of N50m ransom for the 3 abductees before they will release them,

He said that the amount is on the high side but added that negotiations are ongoing in order to secure their release.

The villagers, called on the state government to come to their aid as the activities of the bandits have negatively affected their existence as they can no longer go to the farm in the rainy season.

Younger brother to the late Katu described the incident as a surprise to the family.

He said , his late elder brother was a peace lover who contributed to the development of the village.

He called on the state government and security agencies to team up and rescue the children who he said had spent about 5 days in captivity and may be in danger due to the rainy season.

This is coming a few weeks after several people were killed and some abducted in Toro, Alkaleri, Tafawa Balewa, Misau and Ningi Local Government Areas of the state.

The incidents prompted the Governor to embark on assessment visits to the affected communities to commiserate and assure them of his administration's commitment to end banditry and give them hope that Government is doing everything to protect their lives and property.

The Governor said that "A lot of criminality is happening here,

may be because we are far from the centre. A lot of atrocities are happening here because the economic activities here are much. We have the best lush vegetable soil, agricultural soil where our people have been farming for so many years.

"We have so many minerals here that are why we are having problems. We are trying our best, the local government is trying its best, the state government is also trying its best., The federal government is also doing its best", he stressed.

He said , "Our policy of community engagement has taken us everywhere in the State where this ugly incident has happened. We went to Toro, we went to Gwana District, Mansur and then Tafawa Belewa to engage with the people".

Governor Bala said that "But as the security agencies would always say, this cannot happen without collaboration with some obnoxious elements within us, including some members of our traditional institution, even some security personnel, therefore we have already requested the two traditional district heads to be circumspect to look inward, because we are looking, inward because we too we are looking so that we can arrest this issue of compromise and information giving to the bandits.

"There is no way somebody from Zamfara or somewhere will visit that secluded place like Shafa and kill someone unless he has an informant.

The security agencies cannot

do it alone. And that is why we are establishing a system of feedback".

He said that "And I heard that some people within us are even feeding the bandits in their secret place by giving them grains and flour, that is the report I received, and we are going to go after such people no

District Head urges people to pray for peace in Katsina

THE District Head of Mani Local Government of Katsina State, Alhaji Umar Isa has urged the people of Mashi local government to pray for peace and security in Katsina state and Nigeria in general. Isa who is also the Durbin Katsina, made the appeal during the celebration of his 20 years on the throne in Mashi last Saturday.

He said in view of the rising insecurity in the state and the country in general continuous prayers is needed from all and sundry to take the people out of the bad situation.

"It is only prayers that can save us from the unfortunate situation in our state and some parts of the country in general" the District Head said.

According to the Village Head, he will carry everybody a long irrespective of any differences.

matter how highly placed they are to make our people safe and secure."

Governor Bala promise to recruits 2000 Youths as vigilante to help the government in the fight against banditry,cattle rustling across the State.

He listed the affected local government areas that included Alkaleri, Tafawa Balewa, Toro, Ningi, Misau, and Ganjuwa.

By
IBRAHIM INGAWA, Katsina

" I am happy to say, we, in Mashi local government, are living peacefully with one another, without any differences or ill- feeling against each other"

The Nigeria Standard reported that Babani ascended the throne of District Head of Mashi after the death of his elder brother, AlhajiSunusi Isa who was a senior police officer.

As part of activities marking the celebration, the Durbin Katsina, District Head of mashi bestowed traditional titles on prominent sons of the local government who contributed to the socio-economic and political development of the area.

The Nigeria Standard further observed that, important didnitaris within and outside the state and across graced the occasion.



Bala

Sports

My dad burned my training gear - Tobi Amusan



Tobi Amusan won 100m hurdles gold at the World Athletics Championships after a world record time in her semi-final heat

TOBI Amusan has become a world record holder and a world champion in the 100m hurdles, but she still remembers her father burning her running gear.

A fourth-placed finisher at both the 2019 World Athletics Championships and the delayed 2020 Tokyo Olympics, the Nigerian's persistence has finally seen her engrave her name into the track and field record books.

The 25-year-old ran a time of 12.12 seconds - shaving almost a tenth of a second off the previous world record - in the semi-finals of the World Championships in Oregon before going on to win gold in the final.

However, it always seemed as if the odds were stacked against her running career from the beginning.

"My parents are both teachers, they are strict disciplinarians," Amusan told BBC Sport Africa.

"When you grow up in such a family, they feel you should focus on school. And being a female, they think you are going to go astray, lose focus and all of that."

"But because my mum saw what I didn't see [in] myself, she felt she could give me a chance. And she kept telling me not to disappoint her."

"My mum would tell my dad I was going to church while I sneaked to practice or tell him I was going to a school debate while I went to an out-of-state competition. That's where it all started."

"My dad got really mad one time when he found out [I was running]. He burned all my training gear and told my mum that's the last time he wanted to see me in a stadium."

Fast forward several years, and tears of joy flowed freely as Amusan stood on the top step of the podium at Hayward Field on a historic

day for Nigeria, which saw the country's national anthem played at the World Athletics Championships for the first time ever.

"It has not sunk in yet, maybe the magnitude of what just happened it will hit me later," she said.

"I go out there and put 100% in every championship and it's just never enough. Every time it's a fourth-place finish."

"Then this time my 100% is not only a gold medal but a world record. Trusting myself just made everything easier. I'm thankful to the man above for keeping me healthy. When God says it's your time, it's your time."

She had to overcome doubts from officials in Nigerian athletics before picking up her first senior hurdles title at the African Games in Congo-Brazzaville in 2015.

"The typical Nigerian approach is to make you feel like you cannot make it," she said.

"I wasn't expected to medal at those Games. There were so many voices saying I couldn't but I used that to show that I could - and that title changed my life."

"That's how I got a scholarship to the United States. I can say that's really when my athletics career began. I never dreamt of going to the United States. I just wanted to run fast and be one of the Nigerian greats."

Since moving to attend the University of Texas, El Paso, Amusan has not looked back.

She won gold in the 100m hurdles at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Australia, and later the same

year took her first African Championships title on home soil in Asaba.

Yet at major global events, she would agonisingly miss out on medals - finishing fourth at the World Championships in Doha three years ago and then again in Tokyo last year.

"2019 was tough because I remember running the fastest time in the qualification rounds, around the same time in the semi-finals and the same time in the final," she said.

"I ran so fast but wasn't fast enough to get a medal. I was broken, I was devastated. That was one of the most horrible experiences."

"I moved on, and then came the Tokyo Olympics. Things just crumbled a month before when I strained my hamstring at practice."

She has constant support from her mother, but her father has remained unfazed by her exploits.

"Honesty, he still doesn't support me doing track," she said.

"He just feels like there's more to life than running around. Every time I call him when I'm at a competition he just says 'Okay, do your best, God will help you' and that's it." The newly-minted world champion and record holder - who also picked up a cheque for \$100,000 for her blistering showing in Oregon - will now defend her Commonwealth gold in Birmingham.

Given Amusan's starting success, her father will surely embrace her achievements

soon.

with Kai Havertz as their first choice forward after the departure of Romelu Lukaku.

Having signed winger Raheem Sterling for £47.5 million from Manchester City, the Blues have switched their attention to strengthening their defence.

Kalidou Koulibaly has arrived from Napoli, while they have been working on deals for Jules Kounde and Presnel Kimpembe.

Her father may have doubted her, but Amusan has always had plenty of belief in her own ability.

Back in November 2016 she tweeted:

"Unknown now but soon I will be unforgettable, I will persist until I succeed." That message has remained pinned to the top of her social media profile and provides a summary of her rise to glory in Eugene.

Yet her journey into athletics started as somewhat of an accident at Our Lady of Apostles Secondary School in Ogun state, Nigeria.

"I used to be on the soccer team, but I would be all over the place on the pitch," Amusan said.

"My coach suggested I go try out on the track team and I became the fastest girl on the team, and that's how I got on the school relay team."

She went on to make the national squad for the 2013 Africa Youth Games in Nigeria,

but she missed out on a place on the relay team and went on to win a bronze in the long jump instead.

Competing over hurdles was another unexpected switch in Amusan's journey to stardom, and is where she would truly break through on the senior stage.

"The officials were always picking who they wanted in the relay team. Sometimes they would say I didn't have the experience so they would pick whoever was their favourite," she explained.

"It was a lot of pressure on a young athlete. I considered quitting. I really wanted to travel with the senior national team and some coaches told me to try the hurdles."



Sports

'Sultan did not endorse anyone for NFF Presidency'

Contrary to a recent report stating that the Sultan of Sokoto, Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar, has endorsed one of the aspirants for the forthcoming elections of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), investigations have revealed it was all false. According to the report, the Sultan of Sokoto gave his support to one of the candidates running for elections to become the next President of the NFF during a visit last week. Indeed the candidate also boasted of having the endorsement of three northern state governors in a bid to win the elections that is yet to have a fixed date or template for the transition.



Pinnick

Authoritative sources from the Palace of the Sultan of Sokoto on Sunday said: "As a policy, the Sultan welcomes all Nigerians and foreigners alike and indeed all men and women of goodwill who come to pay home and seek his blessings but does not endorse candidates involved in a political contest for office be it football or social circles. The source made reference to even President Muhammadu Buhari, when he received Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, Gov Umahi, and Gov Ayade who all went to seek his blessings. Eventually the presidential primaries decided the matter. Ace broadcaster and the Kogunan Sokoto, Dr Danladi Bako, also responded on the issue at the weekend by corroborating the findings by our reporter. Bako said: "The Sultan does not get involved in elections of any sort. Be it political, social

or traditional office, neither does he have preferred nor favoured candidate. People do a lot of name - dropping to mislead the public." As the NFF Presidential

elections draws closer, desperation is setting in for some contestants. It is hoped that as directed by the Federal Government the NFF Congress will have the final say.

Kano Government repairs Katsina United FC bus

THE 2021/2022 Nigeria Professional Football League, NPFL season might have been won and dusted, however, the ripples still vibrate and this time, it is the repair of Katsina United Football Club's coastal bus by Kano State government. The Kano State Government fulfilled its promise by repairing the Katsina United Fc Vehicle Vandalized by the irate supporters of Kano Pillars during week 23 league encounter.



It could be recall that during the MD 23 of the just concluded NPFL season the Pillars fans disrupted the

match at the 89th minutes of the game and vandalized the

visiting team bus The Government of Kano State

handed over the repaired bus to the management of Katsina United FC as directed by the League Management Company, LMC

Katsina United management expressed appreciation to the Kano State Government for fulfilling the promise and prayed for God to avert the reoccurrence of the incident which they said is tarnishing the good image of the North Western part of the Country in the sporting activities. However, both clubs were relegated from the NPFL. Kano Pillars were relegated to the lower division, Nigeria National League, NNL following deduction of 6 points from their accruing league standings due reoccurrence of fans violate acts.

Abia Warriors, Amakpakabor part ways after cup ouster

NIGERIA Professional Football League, NPFL side, Abia Warriors of Umuahia, Abia State have parted ways with its coach, imama Amakpakabor.



Amakpakabor

Just two years after his appointment as the Abia Warrior's gaffer, imama Amakpakabor has found himself in the football labour market after both parties decided not to renew his two-year contract which expired in July.

Imama's situation was made worse following 2-1 defeat Abia Warriors suffered against Nigeria National League, NNL side, Ottasolo FC in the Round 64 of the 2022 Aiteo/FA Cup.

Flowing the "unexpected" result, the management of Abia Warriors Football Club announced that it has parted ways with Coach Imama Amakpakabor after

the expiration of his two year contract.

The club thanked the former home-based Super Eagles coach for the services rendered and wished him well in his future assignment.

Since taking over the affairs of the club in July 2020, Abia Warriors had consistently struggled to remain afloat in the

elite league needing last day of 2022 NPFL season to escape the drop.

When Contacted the, the Media officer of the Club, Chigozie Nwosu, he confirmed that the parting was on a mutual consent as the club was not ready to renew his contract.

Sports Commissioner receives medals won by Kogi athletes

COMMISSIONER for Youth and Sports Development, Idris Musa, yesterday, received in his office, medals won in four different Sports by Kogi athletes. Musa while receiving the medals commended the Athletes for their zeal and passion, saying that their effort will not go unrewarded.

He promised that sooner or later the state government will reward Athletes who have made the state proud in their different Sports. Earlier, the Director of Sports,

From **AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja**

kogi State Sports Council, Mr Okpanachi Onipe said the medals were won in four different Sports namely, Athletics, Boxing, Cricket and Rowing/ Swimming respectively. Kogi State won Four(4) Gold medal at the just concluded Access Bank marathon race and four(4) Bronze medals at the Okpepke marathon race,

CHAN 2023: Nigeria, Ghana battle for place in Algeria



Dare

Cameroon.

Nigeria failed to qualify for the last edition of the competition hosted by Nigeria in 2014 in South Africa where they lost on penalties to Libya in the final.

El-Kanemi Warriors, Doma United squeeze into next round

El-Kanemi Warriors Football Club of Maiduguri on Saturday defeated Kun Khalifat FC of Owerri 2-1 in an Aiteo/Federation Cup round of 64 match played in Abuja.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the match

played at the Area 3 football pitch saw the two sides having to slug it out on a rainy evening.

Paul Obata gave the two-time Cup champions an early lead by scoring in the first minute of the

match, after a mix-up in the Kun Khalifat defence.

On resumption of the second half, the Kun Khalifat players made dangerous forays into the El-Kanemi Warriors' goal area but were stopped in their tracks.

Muktar Ismail extended their lead in the 71st minute, before Chijioke Ekpemadu pulled a goal back for the Owerri-based side who play in the Nationwide League One (NLO).

Hassan Abubakar, Head Coach of El-Kanemi Warriors, later commended his players for performing according to instructions in spite of the tough opposition.

The coach of Kun Khalifat FC, Obinna Uzoho, on his part attributed their loss to fatigue and poor traveling arrangements.

In another match of the competition, played earlier at the same venue, Doma United of Gombe defeated Apex Crane FC from Delta 4-3 in a nery penalty shootout.

AN reports that the game had ended in a barren draw after 90 minutes of play.

Bartholomew David, the coach of Doma United, lamented the goal scoring chances his players missed during the game, insisting his team could have won during regulation time.

"It was a tough match. Maybe my players underrated the opponents a little bit, because we should have wrapped up the game during regulation time.

"But I am glad we won through penalty kicks." Now the next thing is to start planning for the next round and correct our lapses," the coach.

one Gold medal at the National Boxing Championship help in Kaduna, one (1) Gold medal at the Admiral Porbeni National Boat and Rowing race and one (1) Silver medal at the PWC U-17 Cricket Championship help in Abuja. Present at the presentation were; the Ag. Permanent Secretary, Mrs Funmilayo Bello, Director Sports Development, Mr David Ogazuma, Head of Coaching and Training, Mr David Amade and other top management staff of the Ministry and the Sports Council.

Sports



Lawal

I trained hard to win gold in Birmingham

TEAM Nigeria second gold medal winner Rafiatu Folashade Lawal said she trained hard to win at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, BSNSports.com.ng reports. Lawal was in dominant form in Women's 59kg Weightlifting, lifting Nigeria's 2nd gold medal as she did it in

-Lawal

style breaking three Games' records to lift a combined total of 206kg.

"I'm so excited and happy because I didn't expect what happened on Sunday. I wasn't under any pressure because of the support my English opponent received from the home fans. I've trained very hard and my target coming here was to get the gold medal," Lawal told Making of Champions.

Lawal became the third Team Nigeria weightlifter to win a medal in the event after Edidiong Joseph Umoafia won bronze in the Men's 67kg and the first gold medalist for Team Nigeria at the 2022 Games Adijat Adenike Olarinoye in the Women's 55kg.



Olarinoye

Oyetola hails Olarinoye's record-breaking

THE Osun State Governor, Adegboyega Oyetola has described Adijat Adenike Olarinoye's gold medal heroics at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, the United Kingdom, as a stellar and record-breaking performance, BSNSports.com.ng reports.

Olarinoye won Nigeria's first gold medal at the competition when she lifted 92kg in the Snatch, 11kg in Clean and Jerk, lifting 293kg in total to set a Games record for accumulated lifts on Saturday, July 30, 2022.

The gold medal made her emerge overall best in the women's 55kg category of the weightlifting event.

In a congratulatory statement on Sunday by Ismail Omipidan, the Chief Press Secretary to Governor

Adegboyega Oyetola, the governor hailed the Osun-born weightlifter for her impressive performance.

Oyetola also disclosed that Osun and Nigeria are proud of her.

"On behalf of the government and good people of Osun, I am very delighted to congratulate a distinguished daughter of Osun, Adijat Olarinoye, for winning Nigeria's first gold medal at the ongoing 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

"Nigeria and our state in particular is proud of your stellar and record-setting performance. Your success is no doubt a reward of your hardwork and determination over the years. We are happy to be associated with you and wish you all the best as you continue to represent the nation with pride and courage," the governor said.

VETERAN Judoka, Tunji Disu of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has emerged a silver medalist at the 33RD edition of the United States Open Judo Championship.

The Deputy Commissioner of Police, who participated in the veteran category gave a good account of his Judo skills as he fought off stiff competitions from other Judokas, most especially world number One, Woods Glen of the United States to achieve the feat.

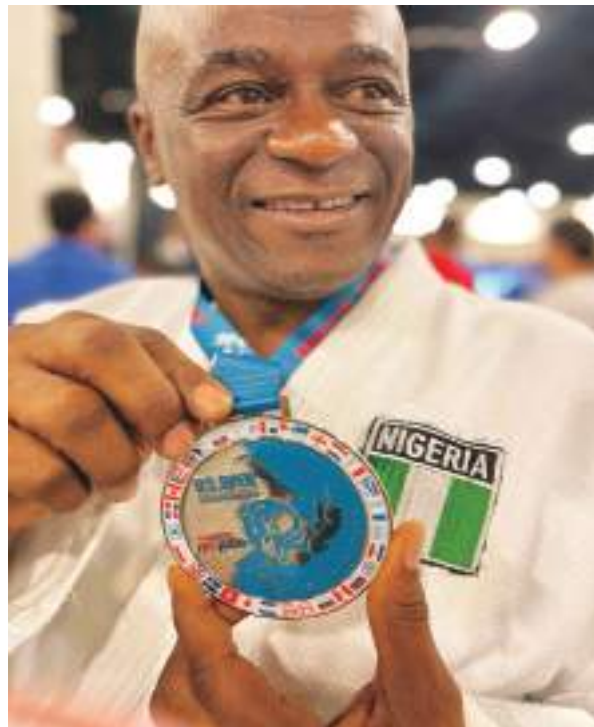
The Super-Cop who heads the renowned crime bursting department, Intelligence Response Team (IRT) has been an ardent practitioner of Judo over the years, despite his tight schedule

The Lagos-Island born combat sport expert attributed his victory to adequate preparation ahead of the US Competition.

This is not the first time the 56-year-old is winning laurels in Judo. Disu clinched two gold medals at the 1990 edition of the National Sports Festival in Bauchi and also a recipient of two gold medals at the Nigeria Police Games

Nigerian cop wins silver at judo championship

he participated in. championships organized by the Nigeria Police, through his office as the Chairman, NPF Judo Association.



Disu

Nigeria kit made last-minute after team left in lurch

SPORTSWEAR manufacturer has come to the rescue to produce last-minute kit for the Nigerian team at the Commonwealth Games.

MG Sportswear in Kidderminster was approached to make hundreds of items on Tuesday after the team said they were let down by their suppliers.

Manager Gino Ruffinato said his 14 staff had been working around the clock to get the garments finished.

As the Games begin, he will personally deliver the order to Birmingham later.

Mr Ruffinato said he initially

thought Tuesday's call was a "wind-up".

"As it progressed I started getting emails with orders on, so at that point I thought, hang on, I think this is serious," he said.

"When they hit us with the deadline saying it needs to be there for Friday and today was Tuesday... there's all the fabric, the print, the designs to get out in two days. It was a bit hair-raising."

His team has been working long hours to fulfil the order, making 200 pieces of kit including running vests and shorts, staff tracksuits and even 400 Nigerian badges to adorn the

sportswear.

The atmosphere at the factory has been "panic stations" he joked, but said: "Everybody's embraced it, they've worked hard and done many hours to make sure it happens."

Nigeria sent a 93-strong team to Birmingham for the Commonwealth Games, which opened on Thursday night. The sporting events are already under way and will continue over the next 11 days.

"I still pinch myself - I'll be looking on the telly and seeing the MG Sportswear brand for a national team," Mr Ruffinato said. "It's wonderful."



There are 93 athletes competing for Nigeria at the Birmingham 2022 Games



Quest



writer

Ambassador Usman Sarki

FRAGMENT

"The book *For the Liberation of Nigeria* published in 1978 still remains one of the most influential and authoritative writings on the governance and administration of the Nigerian State and an expose of the deficiencies and improvisations that have beset the progress of the Nigerian nation from colonial times to when the book was published. The lamentable situations in Nigeria that Dr. Usman tried all his life to expose and correct still remain with us, unfortunately, and this requires that all Nigerians of goodwill should see it as their patriotic duty to continue to be seized with such challenges and seek remedies within their individual abilities and compass of existence."

AMBASSADOR USMAN SARKI

Bala Usman and 'national question' in Nigeria

"COMING to grips with the reality of the process of the formation and transformation of our society beyond banalities and quibbling on ethnicity is clearly essential for comprehending one of the most serious political problems facing the peoples of this country"

– Dr. Y. B. Usman in *"History and the Basis for Nigerian Unity"* from ***For the Liberation of Nigeria*, 1978.**

The most profound thoughts and ideas must ultimately be grounded on the reality of the human condition for them to be of any relevance or significance. The dictum of Karl Marx that the point of philosophy should be to change the world rather than interpret it becomes more poignant in this respect than any other postulation on the affairs of mankind. Much discussion is now taking place in Nigeria about the situation of the country especially around its governance structures, policy directions, and the way and manner democracy is being practiced. These issues form what has been inappropriately termed the "National Question" by commentators in Nigeria. These predicaments and discontents have largely constituted the contexts of the analysis of Nigeria's internal contradictions and dissonance, as well as the proffering of a way out of these strictures. Understanding Nigeria's current predicaments and looking for solutions to them will entail both the conscious and conscientious study of her past and an examination of her present conditions based on factual assessment of the internal dynamics that have influenced her economic and political development over the years.

Making a recourse to the authorities in their respective fields of study to seek for inspiration and guidance is always the best course of action in times of challenging circumstances and contradictory postulations about the manner and process in which Nigeria's fortunes are being shaped or formed. A recourse to the ideas and precepts of Dr. Yusuf Bala Usman has, therefore, become imperative now more than ever before, on account of the seemingly chaotic and discordant notes that are being sounded with regards to the way Nigeria should be governed, and how her fortunes might be retrieved and channeled toward better and effective delivery of services to the people. Beset with myriad and egregious difficulties,



Usman

Nigerians are bewailing their misfortunes while desperately looking for solutions to their exasperating problems. This essay is a reflection on these contemporary dilemmas and an attempt at pointing to the essential solutions that have been provided decades ago, by the perspicacious and prescient studies of Dr. Y. B. Usman in many of his articles and speeches during his lifetime of intellectual labour and social and political struggles.

The book *For the Liberation of Nigeria* published in 1978 still remains one of the most influential and authoritative writings on the governance and administration of the Nigerian State and an expose of the deficiencies and improvisations that have beset the progress of the Nigerian nation from colonial times to when the book was published. The lamentable situations in Nigeria that Dr. Usman tried all his life to expose and correct still remain with us, unfortunately, and this requires that all Nigerians of goodwill should see it as their patriotic duty to continue to be seized with such challenges and seek remedies within their individual abilities and compass of existence. This much, or this little, as the case may be, is what every Nigerian should be called upon to render to their country. The first prerequisite for doing so is the correct understanding of

Nigeria's history and the processes that shaped her evolution and progress to this day. Without such a foundational requirement, it will be futile to attempt to contextualise any discourse, or propose any solutions to the challenges confronting the country, and satisfactorily addressing issues surrounding the "National Question", as currently being understood.

Understanding history both in the theoretical and practical contexts will aid us in following the antecedents, and understanding the processes, while searching for the remedies, to a wide variety of issues that have made the situation in Nigeria so perilous and disconcerting today. Only in this way, I believe, as did Dr. Usman and many other thinkers of his age, can we appreciate the genesis of situations and offer correct remedies to the challenges that are hindering the emergence of Nigeria as a united, peaceful, prosperous, progressive and truly democratic country. One issue underlying the discourse on the "National Question" in Nigeria today is the issue of ethnicity and identities and interests linked to it. The exploitation and framing of this issue as the most important factor in the "National Question" seems to be the most challenging and also the most exasperating difficulty facing all attempts at

seeking reconciliation and amelioration of the problem of national unity in Nigeria. Try as we may, we seem to be blocked like an immovable obstacle by this monolithic object placed before our mental faculties, that is preventing us from seeing clearly where our collective interests lie, and where our detriments are being sown and reaped and by whom.

The fact that most endeavours and discussions on the Nigerian condition today have been made rather subjective and reduced to ethnic issues and their associated intricacies and imagined discontents points to the paucity of original ideas among the commentators and discussants of the contemporary situation in our country. This lack of originality has meant that other tenuous tendencies and ideas should be found to replace jaded and impractical ideas so as to make it impossible for deceptive and misleading propositions to be placed before the Nigerian public as remedies to their problems. One such "remedy" that is recurrently placed before Nigerians, and by which they have been befuddled, is the notion of restructuring of the country that has now become the mantra in many public declarations and discourses. The other, of course, is the elevation of tribal interests and objectives over and above any national outlook, thus leading to the whipping up of hysterical sentiments among the masses in some parts of the country around separatist agendas and ethnic nationalism. It has become possible to generate and sell such vacuous notions to the masses in the absence of any concrete ideas and examinations of the challenges facing the country and her people, based on the correct diagnosis of the problems, and the historical perspectives as to their origins and development.

For the Liberation of Nigeria offered clear backgrounds and progressive prescriptions toward understanding and remedying the problems besetting the Nigerian nation, including a correct appraisal of the elements of the "National Question". Its chapters are replete with analysis of various existential issues and subjects, along with prescriptions toward finding solutions to many of them, both at the academic and governance

levels. Most of the problems that were raised and examined in short articles in the book are still confronting Nigeria and continue to stunt her development. Such matters as national unity, national development, national planning, the civil service, and the wider issues of governance around which the fortunes of the nation are advanced or marred, are taken up and conscientiously discussed, within the limits or restraints placed on the author by the nature of public speeches and newspaper articles. These are the issues that today resonate loudly and disconcertedly in our debates about our democratic governance and distribution of the national wealth, for instance. They are also the underpinning issues surrounding the discourses on the "National Question" with the fanciful notions of restructuring the country and the abrogation of the national constitution at its heart.

These suppositions are based on the misconception of Nigeria's historical evolution and the interrelationships between and among its various ethnic groups before colonialism and its aftermath. Nigeria as constituted today has no discernible external threats or enemies, but her own citizens who seek to destroy the country at the slightest pretext and more so on the basis of some spurious questions of ethnic nationalism. The arguments about "ethnic nationalities" and their growing significance and centrality to the "restructuring" debate and separatist agendas also point to the negation of the historical realities of Nigeria. False premises about the separate and distinct nature of the different ethnic groups that comprised Nigeria existing independently of each other before colonialism are now being propagated to bring about the forced restructuring of the country and advance the agendas towards separatism and her dissolution. The fact that before the imposition of British colonial domination the different ethnic groups in Nigeria have been interacting in concrete, defined and interchangeable manners with one another across different divides and boundaries, seems to have been willfully ignored or downplayed by the proponents of restructuring and the agitation for separation.

To be concluded