NANS apologises to Aisha over Mohammed's arrest

Page 2

Students protest withholding of ASUU salaries

Page 4

'Journalists are critical stakeholders in electoral process'

Page 21

FG approves paternity leave for male civil servants

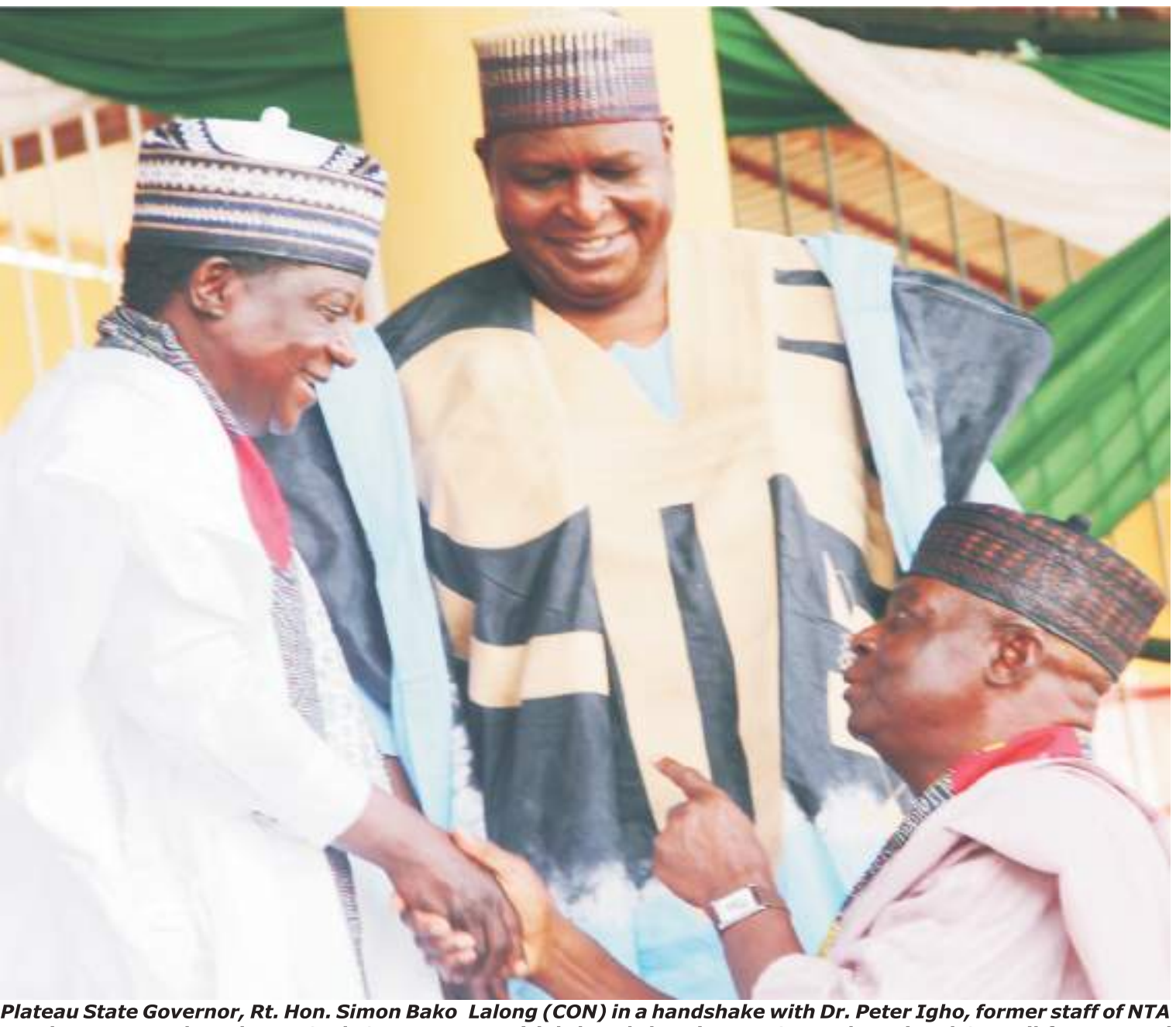
Page 2

THE Nigeria Standard

IN DEFENCE OF FREEDOM SECULARISM FEDERALISM ®

VOL. 13 NO. 781 | WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2022 | N200 | Email: nigeriastandarddailynewspaper@yahoo.com

2023: 'Our allegiance only to Nigerians'



Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (CON) in a handshake with Dr. Peter Igho, former staff of NTA Headquarters and producer, Cock Crow at Dawn (right) and the Director General, National Council for Arts and Culture, Otunba Olusegun Ronsewe yesterday at the opening ceremony of 1st Plateau Festival of Arts and Culture (PLAFEST) 2022, with the theme: Cultural Heritage: A Tool for Curbing Insecurity at the Rwang Pam Township Stadium, Jos *Photo: DANLADI DUK*

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Monday reassured Nigerians that its allegiance and loyalty over the 2023 general election are to Nigerians.

The commission warned its workers – regular and ad hoc – against compromising all electoral laws.

The INEC Chairman, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu, spoke at the opening of a two-day induction retreat for the commission's administrative secretaries in Lagos.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the retreat was organised by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Yakubu, who was represented by the INEC National Commissioner in charge of Election and Party Monitoring Committee (EPMC), Mr. Sam Olumekun, said the retreat was part of the preparation of INEC for the 2023 general election.

According to him, in the last 23 years since the return of democratic rule, the commission has recorded a steady progress with the nation's elections getting better and citizens' confidence in the process increasing.

"Let me repeat once again that the commission's allegiance is to Nigeria. Our loyalty is to Nigerians who want free, fair, credible and verifiable elections.

"It is in this respect that I want to warn all members of staff of the commission to be

Prof. Mamood

neutral and professional in their conduct during the forthcoming elections," Yakubu said.

The INEC chairman said since 2011 general election, the reliance on new knowledge and experience gathered from the conduct of previous elections, enhancing electoral integrity and improving voter experience through innovations, planning and technology had guided INEC through several elections.

"Consequently, our elections have become better, electoral outcomes less contentious and less stressful," he added.

Yakubu noted that with the first poll in 2023 general election remaining about 88

Continued on page 2

ECOWAS moves to strengthen fight against cybercrimes

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission has moved to build bridges between cybercrime units to enhance both formal and informal cooperation in the fight against cybercrime

The Commission aims to assist member states to build capacity in units dedicated to fighting cybercrime and dealing with digital evidence.

As such through the project 'Organised Crime: West African Response on Cybersecurity and fight against Cybercrime (OCWAR-C) representatives from member states of cybercrime met in Dakar-Senegal, from 23 to 25 November 2022.

The OCWAR-C project coordinator, Mrs Rabiyatou Bah Ly reiterated the essence of the OCWAR-C project in the region and indicated that the close cooperation between the Directorate of Digital Economy & Post of the ECOWAS Commission and the focal points in the member states has led to several achievements recorded to date.

She stated that this meeting of heads of cybercrime units aims to create a framework conducive to information sharing and to encourage cooperation and collaboration to effectively fight against cybercrime in the region.

In delivering the address on behalf of the ECOWAS Commissioner in charge of Infrastructure, Energy & Digitalisation, the Director of Digital Economy & Post, Dr Kouame Raphael Koffi highlighted the increase in internet connectivity across the region and the opportunities this expansion brings for innovation and why the region needs to accelerate its digital transformation efforts across all socio-economic sectors to meet the growing demands of our citizens.

He illustrated that the increased internet connectivity has promoted the presence of malicious actors who exploit internet vulnerabilities as well as the increase in cyber threats and attacks.

He reiterated the need to explore opportunities for regional cooperation and identify ways to improve such

Continued on page 2

Covid - 19 CASE UPDATE; 41 NEW CASES CONFIRMED; 4.00 p.m. November 29, 2022; TOTAL CONFIRMED: 225,255 . DISCHARGED: 259,643 . DEATHS: 3,155; NCDCToll-free Number: 080097000010

News

2023: 'Our allegiance only to Nigerians'

Continued from page 1

days, there was the need, more than ever, for the commission to remain focused to deliver a successful general election.

"This retreat, is therefore, an opportunity to not only bring our Resident Electoral Commissioners (RECs) up to date about preparations, procedures and requirements for a successful election but also to get the commitment of our administrative secretaries towards attaining the highest level of efficiency in implementing the strategies outlined for a successful 2023 general election.

"In this regard, administrative secretaries are expected to be effective coordinators and provide timely progress reports and highlight challenges to proactively addressed without affecting relevant timelines," he said.

Yakubu stressed that the administrative secretaries were also expected to fully support their RECs to ensure the effective coordination and deployment of men and materials focused mainly on delivering expected outcomes.

The INEC chairman urged state offices of the commission to have regular reassessment of preparedness to identify and address possible bottlenecks and update the relevant authorities of the commission.

He added: "Over the last two years, the commission has increased the deployment of technology in elections in Nigeria."

Yakubu said INEC had designed systems, portals and developed them to cater for different electoral activities, ranging from voter registration and accreditation, result transmission from the polling units.

The INEC chairman noted that such portal was also meant to cater for the nomination of candidates by political parties, accreditation of polling agents and observers, among other activities for elections.

"Of these innovations, most Nigerians are now familiar with the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS), which doubles as a device for accreditation as well as upload of the Polling Unit level result sheets to the INEC Result Viewing (IReV) portal on Election Day.

"The combination of the BVAS and the IReV portal has come to stay as a means of voter accreditation and transmission of election results.

"I urge you to thoroughly familiarise yourselves with the election technologies of INEC," he said.

Lagos INEC's REC Olusegun Agbaje said it was imperative for the electoral umpire to step up its preparation for the conduct of 2023 elections, hence the retreat.

The Lagos REC urged INEC not to rest on its oars but to redouble efforts to achieve a seamless conduct of the polls.

He said: "There is no gainsaying in the fact that the tasks ahead rest squarely on you all as accounting officers whose ingenuity would be relied upon to effectively manage the logistics and indeed all aspects of the conduct of the elections.

"It is, therefore, incumbent on all participants to bring to bear your wealth of experience and expertise to ensure an efficient and effective management of the entire process of the election with particular attention to the election logistics in your respective states."

In his goodwill message, UNDP's Chief Technical Advisor Deryck Fritz said the peaceful transfer of power was inextricably linked to processes and outcomes that must be accepted by the political actors, civil society and the general populace.

"INEC, as the constitutionally mandated electoral management body, must be – and also be seen – to be the impartial and neutral arbiter of the electoral contest.

"In line with SDG 16 on Peace, Justice and strong institutions, UNDP continues to support inclusive, transparent and credible electoral processes for peaceful and cohesive societies," he said.

Fritz said the retreat would provide an important opportunity for information-sharing and discussion on the preparations and key aspects of the electoral process to ensure uniform understanding and consistency of implementation of electoral procedures.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the retreat was attended by all the INEC administrative secretaries nationwide and top management workers of the commission.

ECOWAS moves to strengthen fight against cybercrimes

Continued from page 1

cooperation through the exchange of information and harmonisation of structures and instruments to better fight cybercrime. He concluded by reaffirming that the Commission remains committed to ensuring that the capacities for units in charge of cybercrimes will be built and maintained.

On behalf of the Ministry of Communication, Telecommunications and Digital Economy, the Technical Advisor for Cybersecurity, Mr Cheikh Fall, welcomed all participants and expressed appreciation that Senegal was chosen to host the 2nd edition of the heads of cybercrime units.

He stated that the implementation of the OCWAR-C Project finds its full meaning for Senegal insofar as it reflects the real ambition of Senegal as highlighted by the guiding principles set out in the National Cybersecurity Strategy "SNC2022" for trusted cyberspace. He indicated that this meeting correlates with strategic objective 4 of the SNC2022" – Build cybersecurity technical knowledge and capabilities across all sectors.

NANS apologises to Aisha over Mohammed's arrest

Aisha

THE National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) has apologised to Aisha, wife of President Muhammadu Buhari over the arrest of a student of the Federal University, Dutse Jigawa, Aminu Mohammed by Police operatives.

Many Nigerians condemned the alleged arrest of Mohammed over a tweet on the First Lady.

NANS claimed contrary to previous reports that Mohammed was arrested by the Department of State Services, he was arrested by the Federal Capital Territory Police Command, who traced Mohammed to Jigawa where he was picked up.

NANS in a statement on Tuesday by its President, Usman Barambu, apologised on behalf of the Nigerian students to the First Lady, while also calling for Mohammed's release.

"The leadership of NANS received with concern the news of the unlawful arrest of Mohammed by the Nigeria Police on the instruction of Aisha Buhari. Upon receiving the news, I, Mohammed's family and friends swung into action to trace the whereabouts of Mohammed. After some days of searching, we got the information that he was at the police unit in Wuse Zone 2. I met with Mohammed at the police custody.

"It was alleged that Mohammed some weeks back posted Aisha Buhari's picture on Twitter with the caption *"Su mama anchi kudin talakawa an koshi"* (translated from Hausa to 'the mother has gotten fatter by eating masses' money').

"Just like the normal way angry citizens have different ways of expression on the social media. On November 18, 2022, the police from Abuja tracked Mohammed to the Federal University Dutse and picked him without any written/verbal invitation or informing the school management or his family," Barambu narrated.

The NANS President alleged Mohammed was taken straight to the Presidential Villa where he was allegedly brutalised, beaten, maltreated and humiliated by the police "on the orders of Aisha Buhari, after which he was unlawfully detained at a police facility at Wuse Zone II till date. I, alongside our team of lawyers, met with Mohammed at the police facility where he confirmed the incident to me. Until now, Mohammed has not been arraigned by any competent court of law or granted bail by the police."

"We want to, on behalf of all the Nigerian students, tender our unreserved apology to the First Lady Aisha Buhari, for the action of Mohammed which might have caused her and her family pains. However, as leaders and public office holders, we must overlook some criticisms if we want to really forge ahead and do the right thing.

"We demand a detailed explanation by the Nigeria Police on why they will go to the school premises and 'kidnap' a student without due process and took him straight to the Presidential Villa where he was brutalised which violates his fundamental human rights," the statement said.

NANS said Mohammed had sustained various injuries and had not accessed any proper medical attention. "We call on the police as a matter of national interest and urgency to release Mohammed unconditionally or be prepared to face the Nigerian students.

"However, we are calling on our teeming students to be careful and apply decorum in dealing with people especially our leaders. They should be mindful of what they post on social media.

"We want to inform the general public to be patient as we await response and actions from the Inspector General of Police on a letter earlier sent to his office," the President added.

FG assures Abuja-Kaduna train passengers of safety

THE Federal Government has said the security features on the Abuja-Kaduna train will guarantee maximum safety of passengers.

Minister of Transportation, Mu'azu Jaji Sambo, gave the assurance during an inspection tour of security features and other measures put in place to protect passengers ahead of its planned resumption of services.

The minister was accompanied by his counterparts in Water Resources, Engr. Suleiman Hussein Adamu; Transportation, Prince Ademola Adegoroye; Chairman Governing Board Nigeria Railway Corporation, Ibrahim Musa, Directors of the Federal Ministry of Transportation and the Managing Director of the Nigerian Railway Corporation, Fidet Okhiria.

Sambo said the train service on the corridor is 90 per cent ready and assured that the remaining 10 per cent would be achieved in the next couple of days.

The Minister, who said the introduction of NIN would help check cases of racketeering, also hinted at slight changes in the mode of operation of Services, adding that the number of trips will be reduced.

Sambo also said passengers should expect some increase in fares.

He said a panel consultation with the management of the Nigeria Railway Cooperation and the management of the ministry is ongoing.

FG approves paternity leave for male civil servant

THE Federal Government has approved a 14-working-day paternity leave for male civil servants.

The approval was contained in a circular issued by the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (HoCSF), Dr. Folasade Yemi-Esan.

Marked ref no: HCSF/SPSO/ODD/NCE/RR/650309/3, and dated 25th November 2022, the circular titled: "Computation of Leave Based on Working Days and Approval of Paternity Leave in the Public Service", said the approval was in line with the provisions of the Public Service Rules, 2021 Edition.

Buhari

"Government has also approved Paternity Leave for serving male officers whose spouse delivers a baby.

"The period of the leave shall be fourteen working days. The leave shall not be more than once in two years, and a for maximum of four children.

"Where the family of a male officer adopts a child under four months old, the officer will similarly enjoy Paternity Leave for a period of fourteen working days", the circular stated.

It said the request for such leave shall be accompanied by the Expected Date of Delivery's (EDD) report of the officer's wife or evidence of approval of the adoption of the child by the relevant government bodies.

Recall that the Federal Executive Council (FEC) has in September, approved a 14-day paternity leave for male workers in the Federal Civil Service, to make men properly bond with their newborn baby or adopted one.

According to Yemi-Esan, bonding was important to help the newly-born or adopted baby properly bond with the father in the early period.

"We've also gotten approval to include paternity leave. This is something that is new. And this is something that the unions in the service asked that we include, and luckily, we've been able to include it.

"We've also been able to ensure that leave now is calculated based on working days, not on calendar days, that also has been approved.

"We also have introduced the transition from paper service to a digital service. So these are some of the new things that are in the new PSR that has just been approved by the federal executive council", she said.

Monetary policy and redesigning the naira

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) announced that the bank would release re-designed naira notes by December 15, 2022, while existing notes would cease to be regarded as legal tender by January 31, 2023. Through this policy, the apex bank aims to control the money supply, inflation, as well as, curb counterfeit currency and ransom payment to kidnappers and terrorists.JOSEPH NNANNA writes.

ALSO, the apex bank noted that available data indicated that N2.73 trillion out of the N3.23 trillion currency in circulation was outside the banking system and supposedly, held by members of the public.

Furthermore, the Nigerian currency in circulation has more than doubled since 2015, rising from N1.46 trillion in December 2015 to N3.23 trillion as at September, 2022.

Historically, the re-design of the Naira started in the last 30 years. In 1973, the naira was changed from metric to decimal which precipitated the change from pounds to naira and kobo. In 1977, the highest denomination at the time, the 20 naira note was introduced. In 1979, the government minted the N1, N5, and N10 notes respectively.

In 1984, similar reason in line with the recently announced CBN policy to issue new banknotes as regards to ameliorate the rate of trafficking and counterfeit precipitated the change of all banknote colours. During President Olusegun Obasanjo's regime, the N100 was introduced to the economy for circulation in 1999, the N200 in the year 2000, the N500 in the year 2001, and N1000 in the year 2005. On 30th September, 2009 following the successful money supply and performance of the N20 (polymer) banknote, the CBN redesigned and converted the N50, N10 and N5 banknotes into polymer substrate.

Despite the various monetary policy measures and reasons for the re-design of the naira by the CBN, there were both positive and negative effects of the re-design. From the positive-view, the re-design would enable the apex bank effectively control the liquidity in circulation, thus reducing inflationary pressure in the economy. Also, the policy may likely improve the security situation in the country as ransom payment may be aborted.

The re-design would force people to put money into the banks which helps the cashless agenda and would be complemented by the increased minting of the e-naira. Also, this will help the Federal government reduce counterfeit notes and reduce the speculative attacks on the naira in the FX parallel market.

Although the policy comes with some positive implications to the real economy, it has several drawbacks as the economy is yet to recover from the market disruption caused by the Russia-Ukraine war.

First, with the new policy, dollarization is imminent. In situations where policies are implemented with a limited window for adoption, hoarders of local currency are likely to exchange their Naira for dollars as a store of value, thus, intensifying the dollarization trend in Nigeria.

Secondly, from the monetary economics literature, a decrease in liquidity is likely to result in reduced economic activity, which translates to lowered GDP, and increased unemployment. Thus, the apex bank must apply caution in implementing the policy as well as learn from the experiences of other developing economies such as India, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe.

Implication of re-designing the naira: A case study of some selected developing economies

Quantitative easing (QE) strategies by the apex bank can come in many forms like the demonetisation policy, issuance of new banknotes or re-designing of banknotes. Several developing economies have adopted this measure and were ultimately unsuccessful.

In 1982, Ghana demonetized its 50 cedi currency. The exercise was highly unsuccessful as the general public resorted to foreign currency and physical assets. The public lost confidence in the banking system which precipitated the decline in economic activities and unemployment rose significantly. Also, Zimbabwe in 2015 demonetized her currency in order to stabilize its economy crippled by hyperinflation.

The Zimbabwean government replaced the Zimbabwe dollar with the American dollar. The demonetization was unsuccessful as hyperinflation worsened, resentment grew among the public, economic growth declined and export took a major hit due to loss of competitiveness. India in 2016 also experienced economic downturn after thedemonetization policy by the Reserve Bank of India, to stop the circulation of R500 and R1,000 notes for six months.

Emefiele

Years after the implementation of the policy, Bloomberg data showed that net savings in India was 50% lower than the five-year average pre-demonetization. The India economy lost 1.5% of GDP in terms of growth and unemployment surged with thousands of MSMEs shutting down operations.

In my opinion, the cost of redesigning the Naira is disproportionate to the expected benefits highlighted by the apex bank. Presently, Nigeria is experiencing high fiscal deficit, high inflation, high unemployment, underemployment, high youth unemployment, and a slowing GDP.

However, judging from the past demonetization policies by some selected developing countries above, almost all the nations after the demonetisation policy experienced economic downturn, unemployment rising steadily, GDP growth declining etc.

Redesigning the naira would come with increased logistics costs, and what I would consider avoidable dislocations to small business operators in Nigeria. Indeed, there is never an appropriate time to redesign any currency, however, given the vast number of unbanked in the country especially in the rural areas, where some states do not have banks in their local governments, it would be prudent to increase the implementation window to enable sensitization to all groups in the country. In short, the January 31st deadline is too short, and may cause more people to fall below the poverty line.

Additionally, since the policy announcement, only 52billion naira has been captured in banks across the country. My suspicion is that while more monies will still be returned to banking halls, the quantum of monies the apex bank seeks to sequester may likely remain elusive since for the greater part of a year, Nigeria has been faced with excess liquidity in Naira and FX illiquidity in dollar largely attributable to the oil theft which has made it difficult to grow the revenue base of the country.

Alternative policy measure rather than currency redesign

From the monetary policy perspective, global best practice demands that countries restructure their currencies every five to eight years. Thus, the re-design of the Naira by the apex bank is justifiable; it's a crucial step towards ameliorating the large volumes of money in circulation outside the banking system; but the problem is more than just the redesign but about the low confidence levels of Nigerians in the Naira.

Nigeria is presently experiencing macroeconomic uncertainties as the inflation rate hit 20.77% – the highest in 17 years, and crude oil production continues to decline below the 1 million barrel per day mark exacerbated by theft in crude oil.

In conclusion, the apex bank must tread with caution in implementing this policy as other countries have fallen victim and had to pay a heavy price to lift their economies to a level of economic prosperity, financial system stability, and global confidence and acceptance.

To be sure, since price stability remains the focus of the apex bank, ameliorating the high inflation, and exchange rate volatility should be in focus and achieving this would require better coordination with the fiscal authorities, exploring channels to improve the remittance and foreign reserves to a more tolerable level and introducing a stabilization policy.

In summary, stabilization policy refers to the adjustments of monetary policy to keep the economy growing without large fluctuations in unemployment, inflation and interest rates. This will certainly aid in controlling excess liquidity in the economy.

Professor Nnanna is chief economist, Development Bank of Nigeria. This article represents the opinions of the author, and is the product of professional research. It is not meant to represent the position or opinion of the Development Bank of Nigeria.

Source: Business Day.

"Alternative policy measure rather than currency redesign From the monetary policy perspective, global best practice demands that countries restructure their currencies every five to eight years. Thus, the re-design of the Naira by the apex bank is justifiable; it's a crucial step towards ameliorating the large volumes of money in circulation outside the banking system; but the problem is more than just the redesign but about the low confidence levels of Nigerians in the Naira. Nigeria is presently experiencing macroeconomic uncertainties as the inflation rate hit 20.77% – the highest in 17 years, and crude oil production continues to decline below the 1 million barrel per day mark exacerbated by theft in crude oil."

Business & Economy

CBN targets 95% financial inclusion by 2024

THE Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has unveiled seven key policies and products that will aid the realisation of 95 per cent financial inclusion in Nigeria by 2024.

The policies include, the revised National Financial Inclusion Strategy (3.0), the Strategy for Leveraging Agent Networks for Women's Financial Inclusion, the National Fintech Strategy, the Payment System Vision (PSV) 2025, the Nigeria Financial Services Maps, the CBN Regulatory Sandbox and a Fintech Bridge between the Central Bank of Nigeria and the Central Bank of Egypt.

According to the statement the 2022 International Financial Inclusion Conference organized by the CBN and its partners within the financial inclusion governance committees themed: "Financial Inclusion for all: Scaling Innovative Digital Models" had in attendance over 5000 participants from at least 78 countries around the world.

The Deputy Governor, Financial System Stability, CBN, Mrs. Aishah Ahmad, observed that the conference came at a critical time in Nigeria's financial inclusion journey and stressed the role of policymaking in advancing financial inclusion in Nigeria.

She said, "Nigeria is indeed at an important tipping point for financial inclusion. At no time has there been a prevalence of an enabling regulatory environment, proliferation of digital technology, innovation and collaborative platforms between the public and private sector – all strategic levers required to scale financial inclusion in Nigeria."

In her remarks, the United Nations Secretary-General Special Advocate (UNSGSA) on Inclusive Finance, Queen Maxima of the Netherlands, highlighted the role to be played by the new National Financial Inclusion Strategy in providing a genuine chance for improving livelihoods, such as strategies leveraging the National Insurance Number, Bank Verification Number amongst other policies.

The conference also showcased 20 fintech and start up companies at its Innovation Labs exhibition focusing on various solutions targeted at facilitating payments, digitizing informal financial services platforms and bridging the financial inclusion gap.

The statement recalled that the CBN Governor, Godwin Emefiele who chairs the National Financial Inclusion Steering Committee pointed out that since 2012 to date, over 59 policies and initiatives have been implemented by stakeholders to achieve the objectives of financial inclusion in the country and these policies and initiatives cut across the banking sector, the insurance sector, the capital market sector and the

Emefiele

institutions responsible for infrastructural development for financial inclusion in Nigeria.

Emefiele noted that the apex bank has prioritized financial inclusion through its invention for over four million smallholder farmers and SMEs creating over two million jobs adding that the CBN aims to achieve 95% rate of financial inclusion in Nigeria by the end of 2024.

SMEDAN begins matching fund programme

Fasanya

THE Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), in partnership with Sterling Bank Plc, has started a matching fund programme for agro-based Nano, Micro and Small Enterprises (NMSEs).

This is contained in a statement issued recently in Abuja by the Head of Corporate Affairs Division of the agency, Mr Ibrahim Mohammed.

Mohammed quoted the Director-General of SMEDAN, Olawale Fasanya as saying that the intervention was to deliver credit to the sub-sector in six selected states of Anambra, Bayelsa, Delta, Ebonyi, Ekiti and Osun.

According to Fasanya, the programme is a promotional mechanism to enhance enterprise output, competitiveness as well as job creation and the disbursing entity, under the programme shall be Sterling Bank Plc.

He identified Nano, SMEs operating in the real sector with value-added agricultural products as the target beneficiaries for the programme. Fasanya said that prospective beneficiaries may apply for financing within the range of N500,000 and N2.5 million. "The interest rate applicable on all financing under this programme shall not exceed single digit per annum.

"The financing tenor is for a maximum period of 30 months effective from the date of first disbursement. "This is inclusive of moratorium which may vary between three to six months depending on the type of enterprise," Fasanya said.

He further said that applicants or enterprises wishing to apply must be within the agribusiness value chain. "The applicant/enterprise must have a Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) registration or state approved registration and a movable asset to be registered under the National Collateral Registry (NCR)," he said.

Fasanya said that NMSEs can apply by clicking the icon smedan/sterlingbankmatchingfundprogramme on the SMEDAN website (www.smedan.gov.ng).

According to him, once migrated to the smecredits portal, pre-qualification of applicants shall commence.

"Pre-qualified applicants shall be required to pay a processing fee of N10, 000 for the business plan template on the platform. A separate training fee is not required," Fasanya said. (NAN)

FG unveils trade information portal

THE Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment on Monday in Abuja inaugurated the Nigeria Trade Information Portal (NTIP) in fulfilment of World Trade Organisation (WTO) trade facilitation agreement.

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Otunba Adeniyi Adebayo, described the portal as an outcome of collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) with support from the European Union and German Technical Cooperation.

"As you are aware, UNCTAD commenced the establishment of trade information portals in three West African countries, namely Nigeria, Benin and Mali as a pilot phase in 2016.

"This is with a view to assisting developing WTO member countries in complying easily with the WTO-Trade Facilitation Agreement.

"Today, it is with great satisfaction that we acknowledge the success of the collaboration between UNCTAD, GIZ, EU and the Federal Government. Our ties have indeed become stronger over the years", he said.

The minister said that the online information portal which clearly described import, export and transit procedures was a great step toward the enhancement of transparency, predictability and a mechanism for trade facilitation reforms in Nigeria.

"NITP is not only a tool to enhance transparency in accordance with Article 1 of the WTO-TFA but also to identify bottlenecks and unnecessary administrative constraints and also to drive the expected reforms for trade facilitation.

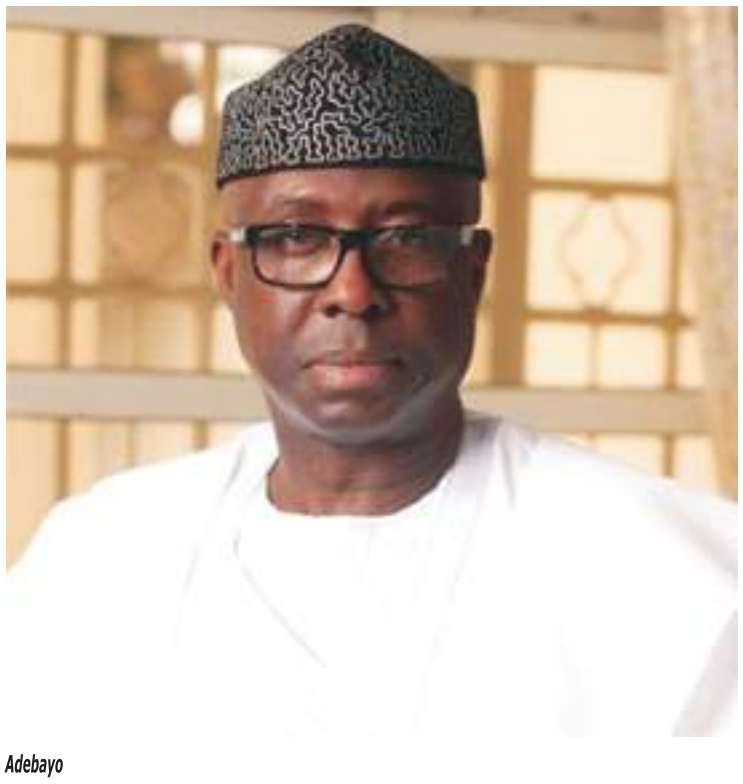
"Establishment of NITP is a major breakthrough for automation of trade procedures in Nigeria.

"It is important to state that trade information portals in some pioneer countries have contributed in building trust between various stakeholders," Adebayo said.

According to the minister, some of the key features of the NITP (https://nigeriatradepprtal.fmiti.gov.ng) include a content management system where all texts, colours, pictures and logos of the public interface can be modified.

"Others are procedures and all corresponding data can be registered and updated, menus can be organised and administrative rights can be easily configured from password-protected administrative interface.

"System administration requires no computer expertise and can be mastered after few hours of training," he said. (NAN).



Adebayo

Nigeria's inflation may drop to below 15% - *Emefiele*

THE Central Bank of Nigeria is targeting a drop in the country's inflation rate to less than 15 per cent by end-2023.

The governor of the apex bank, Godwin Emefiele, stated this at the 57th Annual Bankers Dinner organised by the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN) in Lagos at the weekend.

He said for the rest of 2022 and towards mid-2023, Nigeria's rate of inflation is projected to remain elevated and above the 12.5% growth-aiding threshold.

"However, on the backdrop of our previous policy measures, and as the effect continues to permeate the system, our inhouse model-based simulations indicate that inflation rate could fall steadily to less than 15 per cent by end-2023," he said.

The CBN governor said with the cumulative hike of the Monetary Policy Rate (MPR) by 500 basis points in 2022 by the bank's Monetary Policy Committee, he is confident of an ensuing period of sustained disinflation

While noting that Nigeria's headline inflation, which rose from 15.60% in January to 21.09% in October, was consistent with global trends, Emefiele said Nigeria is not the worst hit as Turkey and Argentina had hyperinflation above 80% while Ghana and Ethiopia also had rates above 30%.

He said the Russia/Ukraine war, along with the sanctions placed on Russia by the US and its allies, led to a spike in crude oil prices.

He lamented that while global developments steadily drove crude oil prices upwards in 2022, Nigeria's oil sector performance has been abysmal and domestic crude oil production plunged from over 1.9 million barrels per day in April 2020 to 1.1 million bpd in September 2022.

Emefiele also said the redesigning of the naira became imperative as analysis of the key challenges primarily indicated a significant hoarding of banknotes, as over 85% of currency in circulation was held outside the banking system.

"This policy will quicken the attainment of a cashless economy as it is complemented by increased minting of our eNaira. It will curtail currency outside the banking system and, as monetary policy becomes more efficacious, help to rein in inflation," he said.

CIBN president, Dr Ken Opara, commended Emefiele, for keeping inflation and other related economy indices, especially the naira, from distortions exacerbated by declining production levels fueled by the high cost of production, insecurity, dwindling government revenues, foreign exchange volatility and uncertainty in the global oil market.

"Through the careful management of the Monetary Policy Rate (MPR), the CBN continued to drive the recovery path of the Nigerian economy through the expansion of credit to the real sector, guided management of foreign reserves and promoting sound financial environment and monetary policy," he said.

Nigerians can now earn dollars LEGITIMATELY by participating in the premium domain business; our clients acquired a premium domain for $700 and profited $13,000 within 3 weeks. Click here see how you too can do it.

Can Africa buck the recession trend?

Africa may be able to avoid the worst impacts of a global downturn, although this will depend on whether African countries can speed up the implementation of much-needed reforms. RAJNEESH NARULA and JON FOSTER-Pedley writes.

THE world is bracing for the next recession. Post-pandemic, global supply chain disruptions persist, and conflict in Ukraine has decimated a key source of fertilisers, energy, and staple diet produce, such as wheat. Together with rising inflation and the cost of living, this has put substantial pressure on the global economy. A recession now seems inevitable. But some examples from Africa suggest that while the continent may slow down, it may not dig as deep into the recessionary trough as other, more developed, markets.

The positive case

Economic green shoots are evident across the continent. For example, Benin's cotton production is soaring, and it is set to become one of the biggest producers in the world; the majority of the world's platinum group metals (PGMs) – critical for renewable energy technologies and catalytic converters responsible for reducing car emissions – are in the ground beneath Southern Africa; and through the much-heralded leadership of Hakainde Hichilema, Zambia has halted its spiraling debt, and is now set to grow above 4 percent over the medium term. In the meantime Ghana's cocoa trade is booming. With further plans for greater processing of cocoa to be done in-country, the West African nation could seize even more potential from this widely desired and lucrative little bean.

Furthermore, global investors are eyeing up climate-related opportunities in Africa, most notably in energy, agriculture and water

Adesina

– three resources the world could never go without. This provides further evidence that there are some regions that are well placed to buttress against the worst effects of a global recession; they may even continue on a growth trajectory, albeit a little slower.

The negative case

But before we get carried away with enthusiasm for these positive signs, it is also impossible to ignore the fact that there are persistent challenges that continue to limit the continent's potential. For example, in a recent Henley Business School webinar, MD Ramesh, group chief executive officer of TGI Agribusiness, pointed out that while agriculture is a success story, the continent still imports around $45bn worth of food. This is a large sum, made larger by the fact many African governments lack the capacity and reserves to continue paying for these imports in foreign currencies. This ratchets up the risks for food security in many countries.

And as the West, most notably the US and Europe, raise interest rates, the screws on the fiscus are being tightened still further. Speaking alongside Ramesh, Nosa Igbinadolor, special reports editor at BusinessDay, Nigeria's leading financial newspaper, highlighted how the dollar has become stronger relative to local currencies, leading to increased importing costs, which in turn pushes up the costs of living.

"Inflation has ballooned in Nigeria," Igbinadolor said, "and there are ongoing fears it could lead to social strife."

Factors to tip the balance

The line between these two cases is thin, and a few key factors may help tip the balance one way or the other. Four areas in particular stand out.

First, Africa needs to sort out its debt problem. Approximately 80 percent of debt repayments go towards servicing interest, and cynical onlookers comment that the other 20 percent disappears to corruption. This has got to change. Effective governance and more responsible control over treasuries are required to manage the balance of what comes in versus what goes out. African economies are undoubtedly growing, at a faster rate than much of the rest of the world; but if the coffers are sieve-like, losing money to debt and corruption, then, even if revenue collection improves, internal development will never take off like it needs to.

Second, a free flow of currencies is crucial to the point above. For example, in Nigeria, local business is encouraged to bring in foreign currency – there are policies supporting this; but investors cannot easily get their money out – there are policies restricting this too. Thus, many potential investors are reluctant to invest it in the first place.

The dual exchange rate system – designed to stabilise revenue and reduce pressure on foreign reserves through multiple currency valuations – is partly to blame. It may have worked at one point in time, but now, as the gap between the official and the black market rate diverge alarmingly, Nigeria and others need to implement reforms to allow currencies to flow more freely in and out.

Third, to support that free flow of money, and to ensure it is allocated most efficiently, states may have to partner more effectively with private capital. Some governments in Africa are wary of private capital, especially if linked to foreign investors. It may be that they fear a loss of control, or it is a remnant from the legacy of colonialism – a rejection of foreign intervention; but for some reason, governments see investor money and private enterprise more as a competitor than as a collaborator.

Many African governments have, however, embraced Chinese investment, seen as an alternative to Western interference, to help speed up infrastructure development. But Ramesh points out three problems with this approach: 1) the Chinese can bring in low-quality companies with exploitative practices; 2) in some cases they've built low-quality infrastructure that doesn't last; and, 3) the Chinese are seen as unscrupulous negotiators with African leaders – which means that rather than the investment helping to build and strengthen African economies, they can be left the poorer.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Africa needs to diversify beyond resource extraction with minimal processing. This is the best long-term defence against deep and prolonged recessions, as it not only hedges varied value offerings, but also creates value-added differentiators that make those offerings indispensable in the global market.

While many countries have already identified these fundamental reforms as critical, there is something of a lag in implementation. This would have to change. The stark truth is that without the political will and the business savvy to make these reforms a reality – and quickly – Africa's green shoots will likely wither and die, and the coming global recession will engulf us all.

Rajneesh Narula is the director of the Dunning Africa Centre and Jon Foster Pedley is the dean and director of Henley Business School, Africa, and the chair of the Association of African Business Schools. This article is based on a recent webinar hosted by the Dunning Africa Centre.

Source: Business Day.

"First, Africa needs to sort out its debt problem. Approximately 80 percent of debt repayments go towards servicing interest, and cynical onlookers comment that the other 20 percent disappears to corruption. This has got to change. Effective governance and more responsible control over treasuries are required to manage the balance of what comes in versus what goes out. African economies are undoubtedly growing, at a faster rate than much of the rest of the world; but if the coffers are sieve-like, losing money to debt and corruption, then, even if revenue collection improves, internal development will never take off like it needs to. Second, a free flow of currencies is crucial to the point above. For example, in Nigeria, local business is encouraged to bring in foreign currency – there are policies supporting this; but investors cannot easily get their money out – there are policies restricting this too. Thus, many potential investors are reluctant to invest it in the first place."

Politics

Speaker pays tribute to late lawmaker, condoles Mutfwangs

By PAULINE DALLONG

Speaker of the Plateau State House of Assembly (PLHA), Rt. Hon. Yakubu Yackson Sanda has described the death of Hon. Eric Dakogol, member representing Qua'an Pan North constituency as a huge loss to the entire PLHA, his immediate family, the people of Qua'an Pan and indeed Plateau State at large.

The speaker who spoke through his Deputy, Rt. Hon. Saleh Shehu Yipmong during a condolence visit to the deceased residence, said a five man committee has been set up to liaise with the late legislator's family for befitting burial arrangements.

Dakogol

He disclosed that the late member was one of the strong pillars who sharpened the legislative framework of the ninth assembly, adding that his commitment in addressing the challenges of his constituents, including his sound contributions on bills and motions on the floor of the House would be greatly missed.

Sanda noted that as a House, they will miss a loyal, honest, loving, compassionate colleague, brother and friend whose heart of human kindness and jovial spirit will forever speak volumes of his personality as a legislator per excellence.

He urged the family to accept the loss as the will of God and prayed for God's comfort for the family and the entire people of Qua'an Pan.

Responding on behalf of the family, Qua'an Pan Council Chairman, Hon. Ernest Da'a who appreciated members of the state assembly for the visit said they were strengthened by the show of love, describing the late Dakogol as a bridge builder, whose focus was on peace, unity and development of his people.

Meanwhile, the speaker and his entourage were also at the Rayfield residence of Barr. Caleb Mutfwang, to condole with him over the demise of his mother, late Mama Briskila Manasseh Mutfwang. While commiserating with the family, he noted that Mama's motherly advise and love would be greatly missed, adding that the spiritual upbringing she bequeathed her children and immediate community was worthy of emulation.

Responding, Barr. Caleb Mutfwang, the state PDP Governorship flag bearer appreciated members of the PLHA for the visit and show of love, describing his mother as a humble, kindhearted and resourceful person whose legacy will forever remain in their hearts.

Bokkos killings: Lawmaker appeals to PLSG

By PAULINE DALLONG

WORRIED by the magnitude and incessant destruction of lives and property, the member representing Bokkos constituency at the Plateau State House of Assembly, PLHA, Hon. Amurudu Usaini has made a passionate appeal to the state government to come to the aid of Bokkos LGA.

The lawmaker, who was in company of the Council Chairman, Hon. Joseph Guluwa and other personalities from the area made the appeal during an assessment of Ser community which suffered an attack, recently.

Ser, a community in Kwatas ward of Bokkos LGA is alledged to have come under severe attack, following a riprisal by persons believed to be Fulanis on the assumption that the people were responsible for killing a Fulani woman in the wake of the Maikatako unrest.

Nine persons, including women and children were said to have lost their lives while houses, harvested food crops and other valuables were destroyed during the attack which happened at midnight.

Hon. Amurudu while assessing the level of destruction, commiserated with the families of those who lost their loved ones, assuring that he will do his part as their representative by ensuring that the matter is presented at the floor of the House.

Usaini

Speaking during the visit, the Chairman Bokkos Local Government Area, Hon. Joseph Guluwa called on the people to not take the law into their hands as security operatives were doing their best in unraveling those behind the dastardly act.

He urged residents of all communities to be watchful and be at alert, adding that any suspicious movements and activities by unknown persons within their domains should be reported to the security personnel.

The member representing Bokkos constituency and others thereafter attended a mass burial for the victims.

PDP governorship case: Court dismisses suit

From VICTOR GAI, Jalingo

THE Court of Appeal sitting in Yola had on Friday thrown out two suits seeking the disqualification of the Taraba State PDP governorship candidate, Col. Agbu Kefas.

Professor Jerome Nyameh, an aspirant in the primaries, had dragged Kefas to court on the grounds that he was not qualified to participate in the May 25th, 2022 governorship primaries.

He is also seeking for the disqualification of Agbu, on the grounds that he did not purchase the expression of interest and nomination forms and that he was the party's State Chairman before the primary.

According to the Legal Adviser, PDP Taraba State, Musa Simon, who witnessed the judgement, Nyameh's appeal was dismissed for lack of merit. He however disclosed that there was a dissenting judgement by one of the panel judges.

"The gamut of the judgement is that the appeal lacks merit. The majority judgement by two judges out of the three dismissed the appeal for lack of merit and that the parties should bear their cost.

"However, there was one dissenting judgement among the three judges. Justice Husseini dissented. He said the issue of purchase of forms, the issue of screening, are not to be left as a party internal matter but that it run contrary to the provisions of the electoral act and the party guidelines for the primary. That there should be a fresh primary from today excluding Col. Agbu Kefas," he disclosed.

Ayu

The Court also dismissed the suit by another aspirant in the PDP governorship primary, Hilkiah Bubajoda Mafindi, seeking the disqualification of Agbu Kefas.

Reacting to the judgement, Taraba State PDP Chairman, Inuwa Bakari, expressed happiness over the judgement. He said the case was an internal party matter and that the appellant should have explored internal party mechanisms to express his grievances.

According to Bakari, the PDP is united and formidable to contest the governorship election and that anytime soon, the campaigns would begin.

Suspected arsonists burn INEC office in Ebonyi

The Independent National Electoral Commission office in Izzi Local Government Area, Ebonyi State was on Sunday set ablaze by some unidentified persons.

This was disclosed in a statement signed by the National Commissioner and Chairman, Information and Voter Education Committee, Festus Okoye.

The incident which occurred around 10am left the main building and all the movable and immovable items inside it burnt.

According to the statement, the burnt items include 340 ballot boxes, 130 voting cubicles, 14 electric power generators, large water storage tanks, assorted office furniture and fixtures and yet to be determined quantities of Permanent Voters' Cards.

Okoye

However, the Commission said the Nigerian Police Force have commenced full investigation into the incident.

The statement read, "The Resident Electoral Commissioner for Ebonyi State, Mrs Onyeka Ugochi, reported that our Izzi Local Government Area office located in Iboko, was set ablaze this morning.

"The incident occurred around 10.00am when some unidentified persons set the entire building ablaze.

"Although no casualties resulted from the attack, the main building and all the movable and immovable items inside it were destroyed. These include 340 ballot boxes, 130 voting cubicles, 14 electric power generators, large water storage tanks, assorted office furniture and fixtures and yet to be determined quantities of Permanent Voters' Cards.

"The attention of the Nigeria Police Force and other security agencies has been drawn to the incident and have commenced investigation.

"Sadly, this is the third attack on our Local Government office in less than three weeks following similar attacks on our offices in Ogun and Osun States on 10th November 2022.

Voters urged to shun partisan politics

From ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

ALL Progressives Congress gubernatorial candidate (APC) in Bauchi State come 2023 general elections, Air Marshal Sadique Baba Abubakar, has pleaded with registered voters to do away with partisan interests and vote for the candidates of progressives at all levels.

The gubernatorial candidate who was speaking to party faithful in Ningi Local Government while receiving thousands of defectors from the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP), said public office was about competence and commitment to serving humanity.

The retired General urged the electorate to join the APC in restoring security, job creation, and skills acquisition in order to reduce reliance on paid jobs, saying "Our party has outlined programmes that touch the life of the common man directly.

Sadiq said the most important target on the table of the APC is fairness and ensuring equitable distribution of appointments and sharing common wealth to all concerned.

Speaking on behalf of the defectors, a former member of the Bauchi State House of Assembly, Hon. Abdulmumini Hassan Ningi, said they left their former party because of poor performance in the past four years and lack of equity, fairness and justice

Hon. Ningi assured APC of total victory in the coming elections. He described PDP as selfish, retrogressive, confused and greedy party particularly in Bauchi State, where the party and the government is a wash out because of its maladministration and financial carelessness.

Nigerians anxiously demanding violence-free election

As political campaigns intensify and enter a crucial stage ahead of the 2023 general elections in Nigeria, there are concerns among stakeholders that the wave of violence could undermine the credibility of the poll. They are, therefore, asking the contenders to play by the rule and ensure violence-free polls, IWOK INIOBONG writes.

SINCE electioneering campaigns started, there has been an unprecedented rise in the number of violent attacks on parties' campaign trains and also on the facilities of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Observers say it is the worst possible start– one of the highest witnessed in the last two decades.

There is increasing fear among observers that with the recent amendment to the Electoral Act, to guarantee electronic transmission of results and the use of Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS), measures expected to drastically check electoral fraud and give credibility to the electoral process, politicians may be looking at the next easy way out to undermine the process.

Observers also fear that part of politicians' desperate tactics could be to engage thugs to disrupt elections in opponents' strongholds and scare people away from coming out to vote, which would ultimately give them advantage.

There are reports that many politicians have equally threatened to deploy violence against their opponents to aid their victory at the poll.

Although some would say it is not new, as desperation among politicians to win at all cost has been fingered to be one of the reasons for the spate of violence that have characterised elections in the country.

For example, in the 2019 presidential poll, in Okota, a town in the Oshodi/Isolo Local Government Area of Lagos State, which is a stronghold of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), several touts alleged to be members of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), intimidated, wounded and scared away several PDP supporters and party members from voting.

Also, hundreds of electoral materials, including ballot papers were burned and INEC officials chased away from performing their duties in the area.

Observers had alleged that it was a calculated attempt by the ruling party to undermine the process and aid their victory. As such, there are increasing concerns that a similar situation may repeat itself in several parts of Lagos and across the country.

Despite repeated assurances to Nigerians by the INEC that it was prepared to conduct free and fair polls next year, stakeholders are still concerned about the commission's readiness and capacity for the task ahead.

Part of the fears stems from the worsening insecurity situation across the country and the after effect it would have on conducting credible polls, especially voter turnout, security of INEC officials and election materials in several violence-prone locations.

Experts say it is not an understatement to declare that the country is currently at war against itself, with the continued spate of attacks, kidnapping for ransom and killings in several parts of the country, especially in Northern Nigeria.

Yakubu

Nigeria's leading political actors and political parties have been accused of being culpable; using several measures to guarantee their success at the polls, while failing to prevent their supporters and members from engaging in violent acts.

In the last two decades, the spate of violence and hooliganism has undermined the credibility of elections in Nigeria and also frustrated efforts to deepen gender inclusion.

Last week, the Federal Government noted that the spate of violence associated with electioneering ahead of 2023 poll poses a threat to the successful conduct of the elections. National Security Adviser (NSA), Babagana Monguno, warned politicians at the quarterly consultative meeting of the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in Abuja recently.

Represented by Sanusi Galadima, the NSA, however, said security agencies were strategising on new measures to counter the rising wave of violence in the polity.

"The NSA has observed the violent dimensions of electioneering campaigns, which characterise attacks on campaign rallies, political campaign offices as well as the passing of uncomplimentary remarks and uncouth utterances among politicians which were recently witnessed in some states.

"All these signal threats to the smooth conduct of the forthcoming elections in February," he said.

Similarly, some days ago, the United States government threatened to sanction anyone who interferes with the democratic process or instigates violence in the 2023 general elections.

The US also said it would not shy away from applying sanctions, including visa restrictions, on those found culpable of election rigging.

Political Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Nigeria, Rolf Olson, gave the warning at the Hubert Humphrey Fellowship Alumni Association Annual Seminar 2022 on 'Promoting Electoral Integrity in Nigeria: Prospects and Challenges' in Abuja.

It also supported the decision of INEC to deploy the BVAS, and electronic transmission of results from the poll.

"It never ceases to amaze me how often we see comments, claims, and assertions from people in social and traditional media about what our supposed objectives are in the elections, which candidate or party we favour; how to interpret certain statements or actions of ours in terms of what it means about our intentions or perceptions.

"In reality, I think it's quite simple to interpret us, especially when it comes to the elections. We always try to be clear in our messages, so let me be clear here on several important points: The United States does not support any individual candidate or party in this election cycle or any other one for that matter.

"Our interest is in supporting credible and transparent elections that reflect the will of Nigerian voters, in a process that is conducted peacefully, full stop," he said.

Parts of the challenges that have hindered the smooth conduct of elections in Nigeria in the last two decades are thuggery and hooliganism, leading to the death of hundreds of political actors and their supporters.

According to the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) report, violence, violation of ballot secrecy, and harassment of voters and journalists characterised Nigeria's 2019 general election.

The report stated that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) worked in a porous security and politically-charged environment, making the electoral officials exposed to physical attacks and intimidation.

"The elections became increasingly marred by violence and intimidation. This harmed the integrity of the electoral process and may deter future participation.

"Around 150 people died in election-related violence during the campaign period and over the election days. INEC reported attacks on its offices, and also fatalities, abductions and sexual assault against its officials.

"There were insufficient accompanying transparency measures. Other procedural weaknesses continued, including in regards to checks and transparency in the results process," part of the report stated.

Adelaja Adeoye, a former national publicity secretary of Action Democratic Party (ADP), said: "It is the duty of INEC and the security operatives to ensure that the electorate goes to the poll without fear of harassment.

"There must be adequate security to nip in the bud all these fears of violence because this is not the first time we are going into the election.

"It is the desperation of politicians to win at all cost that is aiding the violence and killings during and before election.

"Also, because no one is held accountable, there is impunity in the country; if the law is applied people will learn.

"You know politicians always want to move one step ahead of INEC and don't expect to see anything less next year."

INEC offices in Osun, Ogun and Enugu have been attacked in recent times, forcing police and other security agencies to increase security surveillance around its offices across the states.

Political thugs have also attacked or disrupted rallies of opposing parties in states like Zamfara, Borno, Kaduna, among others, leading to fears that security personnel would be overstretched during the election.

Some days ago, stakeholders in Conflict Research called the attention of security agencies to the threats posed by the various conflicts ravaging the country, urging for all efforts to ensure a violence-free 2023 general election.

Ukoha Ukiwo, a professor, who is the Technical Lead of the Managing Conflict in Nigeria (MCN) Programme, who spoke recently to the media on his findings on electoral violence, said that on-going armed conflicts by different ethnic militia groups would set the tone for electoral violence in 2023.

"In reality, I think it's quite simple to interpret us, especially when it comes to the elections. We always try to be clear in our messages, so let me be clear here on several important points: The United States does not support any individual candidate or party in this election cycle or any other one for that matter. "Our interest is in supporting credible and transparent elections that reflect the will of Nigerian voters, in a process that is conducted peacefully, full stop," he said.

IMAGES

NUJ HOLDS TRAINING FOR JOURNALISTS ON ELECTION REPORTING

the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Plateau State Council last week organised training for Journalists on election reporting and entrepreneurial skills at the Hotel Samaritan, Rayfield, Jos

Special guest of honour, Commissioner for Information and Communication, Hon. Dan Manjang declaring the training open.

A cross section of participants listening to speeches during opening ceremony

Some participants taking notes at the training

Participants at the training keenly taking notes from the resource persons

Some participants taking notes at the training

Coss section of journalists during the opening ceremony

Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) State Chairman, Mr. Paul Jatau delivering his speech, flanked by the representative of the NUJ National President, Ladi Emmanuel, the Union's Auditor

PHOTOS: DANLADI DUK

Journalist with the Faith Chapel, Danjuma Dickson Auta (left) regiestering as participant of the training

Politics

Conduct of peaceful elections: Role of journalists, CSOs

As we gradually come closer to the 2023 general elections, political activities have been heightened with Nigerians becoming apprehensive and citizens expressing one fear or the other as to how it will all play out, writes LUCY CHINDABA.

Participants at the capacity building workshop

AT the center of it all is Nigeria's electoral umpire the Independent National Electoral Commission INEC who face the daunting task of delivering to Nigerians a free, fair and credible elections come 2023 devoid of the inherent problems that have hitherto been experienced or associated with elections in Nigeria over the years.

It is in an attempt to nip the problems in the bud and keep its promise to the electorate of being an unbiased umpire that the commission embarked on a series of engagements with various stakeholders who have critical roles to play in ensuring the success of the general elections that a two-day capacity building workshop for journalists and CSOs on conflict sensitive reporting, 2023 general elections and countering fake news was held at Grand Cubana Hotel Abuja recently.

The workshop, which is a collaboration between the NUJ, INEC and CDD, was aimed at building the capacity of journalists and CSOs in the country who have a very critical role to play in ensuring the success of the exercise next year, as well as ensuring professionalism and ethical conduct among media professionals and Civil Society Organisations.

The importance of having credible elections cannot be overemphasized and journalists are the voice of the media that dishes out the information and how news or issues are reported can either douse or escalate a matter. The aim is to equip participants with what is needed to help have a seamless 2023 election, hence a lineup of the activities for the two-day capacity building program were as follows: a keynote address by the NUJ National President on the role of the media in the conduct of peaceful elections, key issues in the Electoral Act 2022, demonstration of the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System, BVAS, vital voter education and communication: Issues and concerns which were treated on the first day.

On the second day of the training, the topics handled were: Conflict sensitive reporting in elections, countering disinformation in Nigeria's elections and a practical hands-on session on selected tools for fact checking, as well misinformation/disinformation in Nigeria's electoral process.

In a welcome remark, State INEC Voter Education and Publicity, VEP, Director, Grant and Partnership Manager of Centre for Democracy and Development Mr. Damian Ihekokonye on his part said the training is a partnership to ensure a peaceful 2023 elections by equipping journalists and CSOs with the right knowledge on how to identify and counter fake news that may affect the 2023 elections.

He said, "Journalists need to be sensitive to the environment, Nigeria is at the moment experiencing one form of conflict or the other across the six Geo-Political Zones, so we are making sure journalists are responsible in their reportage that will contribute to credible elections and also ensure conflict free elections.

Ihekokonye stated that, particular emphasis will also be placed on the issue of fake news, adding also that it is very necessary that Journalists take the issue of peace as a cardinal point and take into consideration the need to be careful so that areas that are already fragile do not explode or implode.

On his part, Mr. Victor Aluko, Head Voter Education and Publicity of the INEC said as a commission they are happy with this opportunity and partnership as the need for this engagement cannot be overemphasized.

He explained that there was a change in the law and the technology hence the need for this engagement for all relevant stakeholders and in this case journalists and CSOs. He revealed that due to the important role of the media, the INEC chairman will be meeting with all media executives across the country to ensure the mother of all elections come 2023.

He reiterated the Commission's commitment to Nigerians that results will be transmitted from the Polling Units electronically to the INEC result View Portal on the election day, that INEC will use BVAS in all the Polling units across the country, as engineers are currently configuring the BVAS.

"These are innovations to ensure that the election is not only transparent, but clean and credible so that whosoever wins elections, will know he won clean and clear. Whosoever wins elections, either as President, National Assembly member, Governorship or State Assembly will be declared winner," he said.

He noted that INEC is training all its over 160, 000 staff in the country because the laws has change, saying it is also important that Journalists all over know the details of the electoral act as well as the details of the new technology deployed so that they can inform the people.

INEC therefore, promised to deliver a free, fair and credible election by ensuring one man one vote is a reality and assured that the voter register will also be made available to political parties to make the election a water shed.

Contributing also, Abuja council chairman of the NUJ, Emmanuel Ogbeche, while welcoming participants expressed appreciation to INEC and CDD saying, "the 2023 general elections is a milestone and stressed that whatever we report as journalists should be factual."

He stressed the need to be mindful of second information from political actors that while journalists are part and parcel of the process they must remain non-partisan, be factual and be on top of the game.

National President of the Nigeria Union of Journalists, NUJ, Chief Chris Isiguzo, in a Keynote Presentation on, "Role of Media in the Conduct of Peaceful Elections" advised journalists to be professional in the discharge of their responsibilities, by exhibiting the highest level of ethical standards before, during and after the elections.

According to him, "While we concede that it is inevitable to eliminate crises and conflicts from our society, it is important to make deliberate efforts toward conflict resolution and peace building through our conducts as journalists.

Adding that, it was imperative for journalists to guard against being used to spread fake news and other reports capable of threatening national peace and security mainly because as media professionals, they should brace up to the challenges ahead, especially since they are expected to participate in the process of social reconstruction and democratisation.

Isiguzo said, "The role of the media in peace promotion or conflict escalation has been heightened by several factors which include ownership and funding, editorial policy, and the regulatory agencies. Therefore it is proper to suggest peace journalism as an instrument in promoting peace and reducing the dysfunctional conflict to the barest minimum, he emphasized.

He added, "As Journalists, we are expected to develop a thorough understanding of the elections and the electoral process, an understanding of conflicts and convey these to citizens in a way that reflect the truth in all their complexities.

The NUJ National President added that proper foundation established by Journalists will provide citizens with the opportunities they require to make informed judgments about issues involved and perhaps help the government in taking meaningful decisions.

In a presentation on key issues in the 2022 Electoral Act, by Director Legal Drafting and Clearance of INEC, Mrs. O. O. Babalola, represented by an Assistant Director, Mustapha Abubakar, explained that INEC had proposed 91 amendments to the NASS and 48 were approved.

He said some key innovations had been achieved in the 2022 electoral amendment act which include: that INEC can suspend election on grounds of security threat, officers must subscribe to issue of neutrality, parties must give 21-day notice to the commission failure of which may lead to dissolution of the election, submission of list of candidates extended to allow the parties prepare very well, and issuance of timetable for activities of the political parties.

Others are: Introduction of technology in the nomination of candidates and also the forms are to be purchased online therefore eliminating shortchanging of some candidates, in the event that a candidate does not submit the form by 6pm of the closing will not participate as the portal shuts down automatically, publication of list of candidates is also mandatory and also that the Commission has power to postpone election in the event of the demise of a candidate, amongst others.

Also speaking, Dr. Lawrence Bayode, Deputy Director ICT, INEC, said the need to ensure that votes count necessitated the deployment of Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS).

In a presentation on countering disinformation in Nigerian elections the presenter explained that there was a difference between misinformation, disinformation and malinformation. That while misinformation means to push false information unknowingly, unintentionally, disinformation is to push a totally false information to purposely disinform the public, malinformation is true, correct information, but twisted to misinform.

In the practical hands-on session on selected tech tools for fact checking fake news journalists were taught some apps to use in fact checking fake news which has so far done more harm than good in the country and some examples of the harm done by fake news including the case of Ebola where so many people died as a result of the information circulated on social media that people should take salt to prevent being infected.

A communique issued at the end of the workshop noted that media professionals owe it as a duty to ensure peaceful elections through accurate reportage devoid of biases and sentiments, and as watch dogs of the society has the capacity to enthrone good leadership through professionalism and effective conflict management techniques.

That media professionals and CSOs have critical roles to play in the coming elections hence the capacity building engagement to broaden their knowledge on the provisions of the 2022 electoral Act, and the new technological innovations introduced, especially the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS).

Also, that journalists must avoid sensationalism and relying on social media without fact checking information at their disposal before going to press, and the media must always beam their search lights on the electoral management body, INEC, to ensure it is impartial, competent to ensure it delivers credible polls to Nigerians and the international community.

The session noted that Journalists and CSOs should be aware of their enlightenment role, investigative role and expose wrong doings in order to attain credible elections, and that journalists and CSOs should know about the sensitivity of their environment with needed information or trainings.

At the end of the training, participants commended the organisers of the forum, describing it as timely and in the right direction towards a hitch free, successful 2023 general elections, and urged INEC, the Media and CSOs to ensure continuous collaboration toward a successful 2023 electoral process.

NEWS

Qua'an-Pan LGC inaugurates illicit drugs committee

NATIONAL Drug Law Enforcement Agency's Committee on Illicit Drug Control for Qua'an-Pan Local Government Area of Plateau State has been inaugurated.

Inaugurating the committee in Ba'ap, the council's headquarters recently, the Executive Chairman of the LGC, Hon Ernest Abner Da'a charged them to work assiduously on their mandate of sensitizing the public on the dangers of illicit drugs.

Represented by his Deputy, Hon Helen HennietWapmuk, the Chairman who acknowledged the serious harm the use of illicit drugs has inflicted on several communities within the Local Government, expressed the hope of a turnaround given the caliber of members of the committee.

The inauguration of the committee was the outcome of the visit of Gen. Buba Marwa, the Chairman of the NDLEA, on Governor Simon Bako Lalong, where it was agreed that in order to curb drug abuse, such committees should be

Da'a

established in each of the 17 LGAs in the state.

Membership of the committee was drawn from the NDLEA, education, health, Women Affairs, Office of the council chairman, clergy, traditional institution, NGO, youths, among other groups, with the council chairman as chairman and Area Commander as its co-chairman.

The committee has among its mandate, the implementation of the NDLEA policy of drug reduction, as well as develop appropriate intervention strategies to prevent use of illicit drugs.

The inauguration was witnessed by members of the Executive and Legislative Council, clergy, traditional rulers, staff of the NDLEA and representatives of the various interest groups.

Plateau records 102 cases of violence against women/girls

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

PLATEAU State has recorded over one hundred and two cases of violence against women, girls and other vulnerable persons and settled fourty-two cases over the year, across the state.

The state Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Hon. (Mrs) Rebecca Adar Sambo, disclosed this Friday when addressing journalists at a press briefing on the occasion marking 2022 16 Days of Activism and International Human Rights Day, held in her office at JD Gomwalk Secretariat Jos, the state capital.

The commissioner who was represented by the ministry's Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Hassana Aliku, said, "Since its inception, the 16 days of the campaign have focused on raising awareness on gender-based violence against women.

"This is an important part of the struggles, but this alone is not enough. Now! It is time to step up the demand for full accountability. Survivors must get justice, and available policies and laws must be implemented to curb impunity.

"A total number of 102 social cases were received, out of that 42 were settled, 47 were placed under maintenance/upkeep, 3 were reunited with their families and 12 cases are under investigation", she disclosed.

Aliku, however, said, it was sad that since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, insecurity in some parts of the state and other complex emerging issues, the violation of women, girls, and other vulnerable persons increased.

She disclosed that trafficking, child abandonment, spousal and sexual assault were daily issues of contention in the ministry saying, "I sincerely wish to thank His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Plateau State, Rt Hon Barrister Simon Bako Lalong, CON, for being gender-friendly.

"He has included women in his cabinet and established Gender and Equal Opportunity Commission. He has just keyed the state into the Nigeria for Women Project along with other states, a World Bank funded project.

Sambo

Ensure professionalism throughout electioneering period -CAN Chairman

Bello

From MATHEW JWANTU, Minna

CHAIRMAN Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, Niger State Chapter, Most Reverend Bulus Dauwa Yohanna has urged the media to remain resolute in their reportage ahead of 2023 general elections.

Reverend Bulus stated this during a familiarization visit to the leadership of the Correspondents' Chapel of Nigerian Union of Journalists, Niger State Chapter.

He pointed out that the media plays a key role in sensitizing the general public, hence the synergy with the media is crucial.

He then called on the media to adhere strictly to professionalism with responsible journalism that will enable the electorate to make informed choices among the candidates contesting various elective positions.

The chairman who is also the Catholic Bishop of Kontagora said the reason of his familiarization visit is to first, thank the union for the unflinching support and coverage of CAN activities in the state.

Responding, Chairman of the Correspondents' Chapel of NUJ, Comrade Yakubu Mustapha Bina urged the Chairman, Christian Association of Nigeria to sustain established relationship and assured to be a father to all especially now that the country is in a critical period of election.

He thanked the chairman for appointing a member of the Correspondents' Chapel as Media Aid and promised to support his administration at whatever level.

Comrade Bina called on the state CAN Chairman to offer special prayers for the church, entire NUJ and the country at large.

58 bag First Class degrees

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

58 Salem University graduands bagged first class degrees in various disciplines out of a total number of 960 graduating students at its 5th combined convocation ceremony held at the weekend.

The Vice-Chancellor of the university, Professor Alewo Johnson Akubo who disclosed this in his speech during the occasion, said that 149 post graduate students also graduated from the institution.

The VC charged the graduands to be good ambassadors of their alma mater as they go into the wider world and labour market to face theatre of challenges.

According to the VC, "You can either pray nor wish troubling times away. They come to us all, both small and great, hence the need for you graduating students today to remain good ambassadors of Salem brand in and out of season.

"The University since my assumption of office as the 4th Vice Chancellor, has worked assiduously to ensure full accreditation of all the programmes offered in the institution by the National Universities Commission (NUC)

"However, Salem University under my watch had its fair share of challenges, particularly in the areas of students' enrollment and funding. We have, inspite of all odds, continued to consolidate on the gains made by my predecessors".

The Kogi State Governor, Yahaya Bello while speaking during the ceremony, promised sustained partnership with Salem University in the provision of quality education to citizens.

The Governor who was represented by the Commissioner for Education, Science and Technology, Wemi Jones, commended the proprietor of Salem University, Dr Sam Amaga for the giant strides recorded in the institution interms of academic and infrastructural growth.

Bello also praised the University for complementing government's efforts for citizens to have access to affordable and quality education.

"My administration values education as number one priority inview of its importance as the bedrock of any nation's economy and uplifting of the living standard of the people hence the reason why we devoted 30% of the state government budget in funding education

"Kogi government will continue to be part and parcel of Salem University in partnership for sound education and will not hesitate to provide adequate security to enable the university operate without hindrances.

Alewo

News

'Journalists are critical stakeholders in electoral processes'

By JIDAUNA DARING

RESIDENT Electoral Commissioner, (REC) Plateau State, Oliver Tersoo has said that Journalists are critical stakeholders in electoral process at any given election in Nigeria.

Tersoo who was represented by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Head of Voters Education, Micheal Otoba stated this at a two day training workshop organized by the Nigeria Union of journalists, (NUJ) Plateau State Council for journalists on Election Coverage and Entrepreneurship, held at Hotel Samaritan, Rayfield Jos.

He assured journalists on the Plateau of the commission's readiness to have more trainings and interaction with them as partners in progress in the state.

Tersoo maintained that he would continue to remain media friendly to the members of the Pen Profession at all times. He adjudged the workshop as timely, especially now that the 2023 general elections is at the corner.

Declaring the training workshop open, Commissioner for Information and Communication Plateau State, Hon. Dan Manjang applauded journalists on the Plateau for always conducting themselves in a professional way or manner.

Manjang added that the present administration in the state had not encountered any challenges with journalists in reportage since the inception of the

Mahmood

administration.

He then challenged journalists to always sharpen themselves with more skills as watch dogs of the society. He called on journalists not to relent in their efforts in educating the electorates particularly on election matters through their respective media.

The commissioner cautioned journalists against zooming into partisans politics which was not the best for anyone who needs to be accorded respect from the people.

In his remarks, NUJ National President, Mr. Chris Isiguzo who was represented by the NUJ National Auditor, Ladi Emmanuel commended the organizers for putting together training workshop that would further add more knowledge to journalists on election coverage and entrepreneurship.

Isiguzo urged the participants to make good use of what they have learnt during the workshop.

Earlier in his remarks, NUJ Chairman, Plateau State Council, Mr. Paul Jatau expressed delight with the participants for honouring the invitations given them for the training.

Mr. Jatau pointed out that the essence of the workshop was to keep journalists abreast of the guidelines on election coverage for better output ahead of 2023 general elections in country. He appreciated all the resource persons for coming to do justice to paper presentations that were billed for the training workshop.

THE NIGERIA STANDARD reports that the two day training featured 9 different paper presentations.

Bala X -rays achievements in Bauchi health sector

From ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

EXECUTIVE Governor of Bauchi State, Senator Bala Mohammed has reaffirmed that his administration will continue to address challenges in the health sector, especially in areas of service delivery, infrastructure, and human resource.

The Governor gave the assurance during the weekend at the commissioning of two state-of-the-art Primary Health Care centres at Gida-dubu Housing Estate and Fadamar-Mada community, where he said, the two commissioned healthcare centres, are among the 15 health facilities constructed by his administration in 2022.

He explained that since assumption of office in 2019, his administration had given high priority to the health sector and development of its citizens where he constructed 4 General Hospitals and 15 Primary Health Care Centres in addition to the renovation and equipping of 10 secondary and 10 Primary Health facilities across the state as well as 107 and 204 primary and secondaryhealth facilities renovated and upgraded through the support of EU-UNICEF and NSHIP projects respectively.

Governor Bala said, it was not out of place to express thanks and appreciate to developmental partners for their numerous support to the state in the health and other sectors of development. He said that the state government had redeemed its Primary Health Care MoU counterpart obligations 100%, and therefore reiterated continuous commitment to the MoU partnership.

The Governor used the occasion to disclose that in his efforts to improve the standard of the state's health training institutions, his administration constructed and furnished two hostels, two lecture halls and ICT centre in the Aliko Dangote College of Nursing Sciences Bauchi. The same things were replicated in other tertiary health institutions.

"To address the lingering challenges of human resource for health, the government lifted inherited decades long embargo on employment, particularly in the health sector. We have recently recruited 1,061 health workers from different cadres of health profession. This is in addition to the 116 community midwives recruited and deployed to serve at various Primary Health Care facilities across the state.

"As a measure to maintain the saturation of health care professionals in the state, this administration has also re-introduced the pre-service scheme where students offering medical and health courses are given automatic employment upon admission into tertiary institutions.

Earlier in his address Commissioner of Health, Dr Sabi'u Abdu Gwalabe, congratulate the communities of Gida-Dubu and Fadaman Mada and joined them to appreciate the people's Governor, Bala Mohammed for making their decades long dreams a reality. He added that the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Primary Health Care Development Agency have identified experienced health professionals and already posted them to serve in the facilities.

"We in the health sector have no words to express our appreciation to the high priority given to the sector. Within the first 3 years of the tenure of this administration, laudable projects and programmes were initiated and accomplished. These include; construction, renovation and upgrade of health facilities at both primary and secondary levels including staff accommodations, provision of consumables, recruitment of frontline health workers and equipment among others", he said.

Random MUSINGS

With Paul Jatau

piringkwap77@gmail.com

Mission to kill education

IN the past eight months of this year 2022, public universities have been under lock and key. There were a lot of back and forth between the lecturers and government yet no concrete agreement was reached between the two. Some ray of possibility was, however, gleaned when the House of Representatives intervened by bringing together the two parties in the dispute promising to work out a political solution to the intractable problem. But as soon as the situation seemed to be calming down and returning to normal some people who are not interested in settling the dispute put a spanner in the works.

Salary payment which was a pre - condition for the reopening of these public institutions was flatly disregarded and that turned the whole agreement on its head. Lecturers in some institutions were selected, some paid their salaries while in some institutions only seventeen days - worth of salaries were paid them. Reason for this was that one Minister for Labour had written and instructed that the Ministry of Finance only pay the lecturers, who are ASUU members, for seventeen days. On the other hand, members of CONUA, a newly registered university union were paid their full salaries.

This unfortunate event turned every hope of getting the institutions back working on its head. It forced university unions to respond to the action by putting on hold teaching of the students thereby prolonging the nightmares of not only the students but those of their parents who on daily basis have been praying for the amicable resolution of the protracted and unnecessary problem.

This action of the Minister of Labour is typical of the posture of some members of the cabinet of the present administration. First, was the attempt by the administration to cause bad blood and a split within the major Labour Centres, the NLC and the TUC. Unfortunately, this fell flat on its head when the two Labour Centres realised that they were being led to the path of perdition by those who did not mean well for them. Then it was the turn of the NBA. Everything was done to ensure a split but that too was dead on arrival. One wonders what it is that the administration wants to achieve by whittling down the powers of collective bargaining, when there is more than enough for it to chew.

One would not be far off the mark if one posits that there is a mission to destroy education by some who do not mean well for education in this country. It is no wonder then that there is the granting of a lot of new operational licenses for private owned universities. I think it is more noble to find better means of dealing with the situation than this crude and uncivilized way the so -called minister, who is the undertaker in this instance is doing. It is even sadder to think that the political party in power would sit by and watch whatever gains it has achieved being destroyed by someone who is supposed to help the party win elections.

The arrogance and nonchalance with which the minister attends to labour issues is sad. What is even more intriguing is the fact that those who are doing all to kill public university education are those who benefitted from it. Yes, even if government alone cannot afford to fund education, is there no way it can systematically introduce gradual changes without rocking the boat? Are there no models we could copy to smoothly introduce change rather than this primitive and insensitive manner? The Minister for Labour has adopted a tout like posture in dealing with the ASUU issue. But he must be called to order by sane and more calculative people. He cannot destroy the platform on which he rode to power with no one calling his bluff.

This is election year and he should be aware that most of these students who he has helped in prolonging their stay at home are watching. The last voter registration exercise should be lessons enough for any sane politician. The number of young people who came out to do the registration should send signals to saner people.

Indeed, the action of this undertaker only confirms and remind us of the Okija saga which almost turned democracy on its head. The sordid event that played out at the time is a sad reminder that such a character should not be trusted with such an important and sensitive position. As a matter of fact, the Okija episode left a sour taste in the mouth of all right -thinking people giving the character the unenviable status of being the only sitting governor that was kidnapped. The Presidency must intervene by doing the needful. It should support the House of Representatives to ensure that it wins back those that have been wounded by the unfortunate act of one who is supposed to promote its cause. From every indication Ngige is on a mission. Having lost the presidential primaries of the APC, he has sought and found a way of destroying the party he claims to belong to. And, now that ASUU has gone back on indefinite strike, one hopes that APC's eyes would have been open to see the destruction that their Minister is doing to them.

"Indeed, the action of this undertaker only confirms and remind us of the Okija saga which almost turned democracy on its head. The sordid event that played out at the time is a sad reminder that such a character should not be trusted with such an important and sensitive position. As a matter of fact, the Okija episode left a sour taste in the mouth of all right - thinking people giving the character the unenviable status of being the only sitting governor that was kidnapped. The Presidency must intervene by doing the needful. It should support the House of Representatives to ensure that it wins back those that have been wounded by the unfortunate act of one who is supposed to promote its cause. From every indication Ngige is on a mission. Having lost the presidential primaries of the APC, he has sought and found a way of destroying the party he claims to belong to. And, now that ASUU has gone back on indefinite strike, one hopes that APC's eyes would have been open to see the destruction that their Minister is doing to them."

News

FG disburses grants to vulnerable groups

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

Bello

THE Federal Government through the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, has commenced the disbursement of N20,000 cash grant to 3,415 vulnerable groups (GVG) in Kogi State.

The Minister, Hajia Sadiya Farouq, who inaugurated the disbursement in Lokoja, recently yesterday, said other beneficiaries under the National Social Investment Programmes (NSIP) would also get their various package. She said the programmes include: Government Enterprise and Empowerment ProgrammeProgram (GEEP 2.0), Digitised Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT), NPower and Home Grown School Feeding ProgrammeProgram (HGSFP).

She said the NSIP remained a project that is consistent with the deliberate nationalNational agenda of President Muhammadu Buhari, to lifting 100 million Nigerians out of poverty by 2030.

She said the GVG was designed to provide a one-off cash grant of N20,000 to some of the poorest and most vulnerable Nigerians in the rural and semiperi-urban areas to ease them out of poverty.

The minister, who was represented by the Director of Special Duties in the Ministry, Mrs Nadia Soso-Muhammed, said their target was to disburse the grant to 3,415 beneficiaries across the 21 local government areas of Kogi.

She noted that President Buhari through his deliberate social inclusion agenda, had directed that 70 per cent of the beneficiaries should be women, and 30 per cent youths.

She added that 15 per cent of the total beneficiaries would be allocated to the people with special needs and the senior citizens.

She explained that the GEEP 2.0, was in three categories: Trader-moni, Market-moni and Farmer-moni, in which beneficiaries would get loans ranging from 50,000 to N300,000 with zero interest depending on the category.

She stressed that the GEEP 2.0 was designed for the vulnerable and low-income Nigerians involved in commercial activitiesactivity and capacity but never had opportunity to access loans.

She said about 1,142,783 potential beneficiaries had been registered across the 774 LGAs in Nigeria out of which 50,394 were from Kogi.

She added 14,404 out of the 50,394 registered in Kogi had been verified out of which about 3, 437 were enumerated and selected for payment in the first phase.

The minister said a total of 9.9 million children are currently being fed nationwide. And added, adding that President Buhari had approved additional 5 million children to be included.

The minister She commended Governor Yahaya Bello for his immense contribution and commitment which had ensured the great success the NSIP had recorded in Kogi.

Farouq urged alleneficiaries of the various programmes to use the grant and the loans to improve their productivity, create wealth, employment, and improve their living standard.

In his remarks, the Governor thanked the President and the Minister for all the various intervention programmes that the federal government had put in place for Kogi people and Nigeria at large.

The governor, who was represented by the Head of Service, Mrs Hannah Odiyo, thanked the Ministry for identifying with the people of Kogi during the flood disaster that ravaged the state. He noted that aside partnering with the federal government on NSIP, he established healthcare programme, known as "Bello Care Programme" which had been taking taken care of the health needs of the vulnerable citizens of the state free of charge.

The governor said that as 'a pacesetter,'pace setter' he remained committed and will not relent in setting the pace for others to follow in all aspects of the economy.

He urged the federal government to do everything within its power to make Kogi a disaster resilient state, so that it could withstand the incessant flood disasters.

Earlier, Hon Abdukareem Suleiman Onyekehi, the state's State's NSIP Focal Person, said the programmes were huge and unprecedented, and meeting government's aims and objectives towards eradicating poverty, and creating job.

Onyekehi, who doubles as the Special Adviser to the Governor on Special Projects, said a total of 353,768 beneficiaries had directly and indirectly benefitted from the NSIP in Kogi State.

According to him, 12, 964 youths benefitted in the Npower Batch A and B, while over 26,000 are benefiting in batch C (Stream 1&2) with 30,000 monthly stipendsstipend.

The focal person added that about 200,000 public schools' pupils are currently benefitting in the school feeding programme with the engagement of 3000 cooks in the state.

He further said that over 74,000 poor and vulnerable citizens are beneficiaries of the conditional cash transfer who are receiving N10,000 bi-monthly, aimed at eradicating poverty in the state.

He, therefore appreciated the president , the minister and the governor for the laudable programmes.

The representatives of the minister and the governor presented the cash grant and other items to the various beneficiaries based on their categories.

Mr Ibrahim Arome, the Chairman of Persons with Disability in Kogi, who spoke on behalf of the beneficiaries, thanked the president, the minister, the Governor and the focal person for the gesture.

Arome specially thanked the governor for the practical inclusion of persons with disability in the state, saying they have been involved directly in all the intervention programmes.

Chairman tasks contractors to complete water projects

From ANENE AIKE, Sokoto

Tambuwal

A call on contractors to complete Rural water projects awarded by Sokoto state government - Chairman Binji LGC.

THE Chairman of Binji Local Government Area local government area of Sokoto State, Alhaji Wadata Maikulki, has called on contractors handling the 1.5 million litres semi-urban water supply project to complete the project for the people's benefits.

Maikulki made the callmade when a team of journalists led by Chairman of Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), Sokoto State Council, Mr Dalhatu Safiyal-Magori, visited the area as projects monitoring tour visited the area.

Wadata said the water project was part of local government uniform projects initiated by Sokoto State government in all the 23 local government areas of the state.

Maikulki explained that many local government areas were enjoying the benefits of the project with the exception of Binji, noting that non completion have robed the people of the area the benefits of accessing a clean potable water as obtained in other places.

He also lamented that the project is still at concrete laying state for tanks while water rigs were drilled since two years ago.

The council chairman also called on the state government to intervene, stressing that several efforts on contacting relevant government officials was done on the issue.

Maikulki said the area has have benefited with numerous projects by the state government that includes construction of Mega Premier Hospital mega premier hospital which is ongoing, renovation of district heads palaces in Binji and Bunkari towns.

Other projects inspected include construction of upstairs classrooms at Government Day Secondary School Maikulki, Sabon Gari Primary School among many others in the schools.

He further led journalists to the renovated Jumu'at Mosques at Gwahitto, Dalijam, Bunkari, Maikulki and Binji along with upgraded Primary Healthcare Centers at Maikulki, Gidan Mai-Debbe and Bulkari towns.

Other project he led the team to, comprise comprised of constructed Women Development Center women development center, Divisional Police Station which is also ongoing and solar powered boreholes at Soro, Gidan Bawa and Runji towns.

He added that the local government council also drilled boreholes to improve water supply in 15 communities, constructed culverts, electrification projects, Islamiyya community schools among others.

He further said people of the area have equally benefited with economic empowerment supports comprising N20,000 small scale businesses grants given to 100 persons among others.

Maikulki called on benefiting communities to safeguard their projects, noting that the infrastructure were meant to uplift people's lives especially those living in the rural areas.

The Council Chairman added that Binji is among the LGAs faced with security challenges as Qarani, Gidan Qirya communities are not easy accessible due to insecurity.

He said the council spends much in trying to support security agencies and vigilante groups on efforts to address the challenges.

PPC NUJ Exco visit Executive Secretary Muslims Pilgrims Board

By HOSEA NYAMLONG

EXECUTIVE Secretary of the Plateau State Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board(PSMPWB), Barr. Auwalu Abdullahi has assured the Exco of the Nigeria Union of Journalists(NUJ),Plateau Publishing Corporation(PPC)),Chapel of the board's support to partner with the union in progress.

Abdullahi disclosed this during a courtesy visit by the Exco of the NUJ, PPC Chapel in his office on Monday.

He pointed out that being the fourth estate of the realm, the pen profession over the years has played a vital role in the society by informing and educating the public.

He added that citizens rely so much on your information dissemination, because the power of the pen is much greater than the power of sword.

Abdullahi admonished members of the union and the general public to be weary of care with some people who parade themselves as journalists, but their stock in trade is dissemination ofbusy disseminating fake news within the public space, through other social media.

Earlier in his a speech by the Chairman of the PPC NUJ Chapel, Mr. Israel Nanjul Lar, commended the Executive Secretary of the board for ensuring that the air lifting of Muslims to the Holy Land was done in accordance with the rules and regulations guiding the board, since he ascended the his inception of office.

He stressed that in Islam, pilgrimage is one of the five pillars that is very important in the lives of every Muslims.

According to him, "the union would support the board in all of activities by sensitization of the public about the activities of the board.

He recalled that the late J.D Gomwalk of blessed memory, established **THE NIGERIA STANDARD** to serve as the voice of the Middle Belt and for the voice of the Middle Belt to be heard.

Lar maintained that the union would stand by him in ensuring that there is synergy between the union and the board.the synergies

Auwal

Feature

Durbar: Northern Nigeria culture hub

The word 'durbar' is a noun derived from a Persian word ''darbar'' which means house or court room or hall of audience. Though, it is the process of cultural revivalism and consciousness. The term made an intrusion into the cultural lexicon of other groups/ ethnic groups especially in the neighboring areas like India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. it was first used in India in its original context. MATO HAFIZ MUHAMMAD writes.

DURBAR has an interesting history which has linked together pre-colonial forms of martial display, the contrived spectacles of colonialists, and post-colonial celebration of epoch events in the emirates of northern Nigeria. The Durbar festival dates back to the colonial hay days with political overture in mind. It was first linked to the ceremonial assemblies marking the ascendancy of Queen Victoria as the empress of colonial India in1877 as well as the one that held to commemorate the visit of King George V to India in 1911.

More so, the contextual meaning of the idiom was introduced by the colonialists to what was, until recently, Northern Nigeria. Furthermore, in the course of their domination over the swathe, the British held sway to several durbar festivities. For instance, in 1911, 1924, 1925 and 1948 durbar became a colonial momentous take-away. These durbars were primarily ceremonial in nature and served to remind local rulers and the people of their subordination to British colonial subjugation. In a nutshell, they are British 'object''.

However, since the attainment of independence of Nigeria, durbars have become a colonial vestige in the northern Nigeria.so, durbars have been organized for national celebrations of historic events for instance, 1960 during Nigeria's birthday and in 1977 in Kaduna to mark the 2nd word black and African festival of arts and culture [FESTAC].

The syncretism of durbar tradition with British colonialism has led many people to despise the events, with some justification, as a colonial innovation and therefore out of tune with the historical and cultural development of Nigeria. On the other hand, Sir Fredrick Lugard is the 'precursor'' of durbar in the former northern Nigeria,

Accordingly, the history of durbar in some ways be associated with the tradition of durbar in the North. The most striking aspect seems to have been the long existence of horses, camels and donkeys in many of the communities particularly Borno, the Hausa states, Jukun kingdom and the Nupe kingdom. Horses seemed to have been most important in the military operations of these areas. Many of the pre-colonial rulers based much of their military power on the strength of their cavalries. While the principal role of the horse seemed to have been on the battle field, it was also an important means of transportation. On ceremonial occasions horse exult dignity and awe to onlookers and

riders/jockeys.

The institutionalization of durbar in the post-colonial era was a genuine creative attempt to re-kindle the form and spirit of an ancient traditional institution. With renewed concentration on cultural identity and authenticity durbar is surely destined to become a lasting ritual ceremonial event in the Northern Nigeria. It will garnered to enlist services of dancers, horse riders, acrobats, musicians, artisans, archers- to sustain its corporate character through the participation of the emirs, chiefs, districts/ wards heads, journalists, tourists and the diplomatic corps.

Royalty, colours, frills, pomp and pageantry, glamour and heritage, these are some of the epithets to capture the festive mood. Durbar comes with different nomenclature. Hawan sallah, Hawan Daushe, Hawan Bariki, jahi race and Hawan Ganni or samno. Durbar is an occasion used in paying homage and reaffirming loyalty by the district heads to the emir. Durbar is usually led by the emir with the aim of expressing joy on sallah day and to entertain people on their cultural and historical heritage. It also serve as a 'town hall'' to unit people, bring them closer to the emirate and give them the opportunity to listen to policy statements from the horses' mouths. Two days are set aside for the festivities.

The procession of fully dressed horses, in splendid colourful garb, is usually on display, as drummers, trumpeters, archers, king's [elite guard] yan' kwalwali and yan' sulke dramatized, war-like situations. The long procession of horse riders is specially formulated according to rank and position. First in the line is the sarkin Tuta or custodian of the emir's flag, followed by Yan baka [archers] and the emir's trumpeters. Least I forget, durbar is an annual carnival to mark the end of Ramadan, eid kabir or maulud. Durbar fest has a procession of horsemen, musicians, musketeers, acrobats bodyguards. Finally, horsemen brandish their swords and charge at full gallop to stop an inch away from the Emir. Mammoth crowd cheer and rush onto the parade grounds flinging whatever they carry, then the Durbar is over.

By and large, durbar is no more a colonial relic. Meanwhile, it is ripe for the national commission for museums and monuments and other tourism practitioners to re-package and market it to other countries. It is also a money earner and image cleanser then it stores the cultural reposition of the people moreover, it can take off thousands of idle hands off-streets. Durbar is Northern Nigeria cultural opus.

Foreign News

Biden, Macron ready to talk Ukraine

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron is headed to Washington for the first state visit of Joe Biden's presidency — a revival of diplomatic pageantry that had been put on hold because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Biden-Macron relationship had a choppy start. Macron briefly recalled France's ambassador to the United States last year after the White House announced a deal to sell nuclear submarines to Australia, undermining a contract for France to sell diesel-powered submarines.

But the relationship has turned around with Macron emerging as one of Biden's most forward-facing European allies in the Western response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This week's visit — it will include Oval Office talks, a glitzy dinner, a news conference and more — comes at a critical moment for both leaders.

Macron

The leaders have a long agenda for their Thursday meeting at the White House, including Iran's nuclear program, China's increasing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific and growing concerns about security and stability in Africa's Sahel region, according to U.S. and French officials. But front and center during their Oval Office meeting will be Russia's war in Ukraine, as both Biden and Macron work to maintain economic and military support for Kyiv as it tries to repel Russian forces.

In Washington, Republicans are set to take control of the House, where GOP leader Kevin McCarthy says Republicans will not write a "blank check" for Ukraine. Across the Atlantic, Macron's efforts to keep Europe united will be tested by the mounting costs of supporting Ukraine in the nine-month war and as Europe battles rising energy prices that threaten to derail the post-pandemic economic recovery.

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby on Monday described Macron as the "dynamic leader" of America's oldest ally while explaining Biden's decision to honor the French president with the first state visit of his presidency.

The U.S. tradition of honoring foreign heads of state dates back to Ulysses S. Grant, who hosted King David Kalakaua of the Kingdom of Hawaii for a more than 20-course White House dinner, but the tradition has been on hold since 2019 because of Covid-19 concerns.

Macron was also Republican Donald Trump's pick as the first foreign leader to be honored with a state visit during his term. The 2018 state visit included a jaunt by the two leaders to Mount Vernon, the Virginia estate of George Washington, America's founding president.

Macron will have his private meeting with Biden followed by a joint news conference and visits to the State Department and Capitol Hill before Macron and his wife, Brigitte Macron, are feted at the state dinner. Grammy winner Jon Batiste is to provide the entertainment.

Macron will head to New Orleans on Friday, where he is to announce plans to expand programming to support French language education in U.S. schools, according to French officials.

For all of that, there are still areas of tension in the U.S.-French relationship.

Biden has steered clear of embracing Macron's calls on Ukraine to resume peace talks with Russia, something Biden has repeatedly said is a decision solely in the hands of Ukraine's leadership.

Perhaps more pressing are differences that France and other European Union leaders have raised about Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, sweeping legislation passed in August that includes historic spending on climate and energy initiatives. Macron and other leaders have been rankled by a provision in the bill that provides tax credits to consumers who buy electric vehicles manufactured in North America.

The White House, meanwhile, plans to counter that the legislation goes a long way in helping the U.S. meet global efforts to curb climate change. The president and aides will also impress on the French that the legislation will also create new opportunities for French companies and others in Europe, according to a senior Biden administration official who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity to preview the talks.

Macron's visit comes about 14 months after the relationship hit its nadir after the U.S. announced its deal to sell nuclear submarines to Australia.

After the announcement of the deal, which had been negotiated in secret, France briefly recalled its ambassador to Washington. A few weeks later Macron met Biden in Rome ahead of the Group of 20 summit, where the U.S. president sought to patch things up by acknowledging his administration had been "clumsy" in how it handled the issue.

Macron's visit with Harris to NASA headquarters on Wednesday will offer the two countries a chance to spotlight their cooperation on space.

France in June signed the Artemis Accords, a blueprint for space cooperation and supporting NASA's plans to return humans to the moon by 2024 and to launch a historic human mission to Mars.

The same month, the U.S. joined a French initiative to develop new tools for adapting to climate change, the Space for Climate Observatory.

Pakistan Taliban ends ceasefire with gov't

THE armed group Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), also known as the Pakistani Taliban, has announced the end of an indefinite ceasefire agreed with the government in June and issued orders to its fighters to carry out attacks across the country.

"As military operations are ongoing against mujahideen in different areas, … so it is imperative for you to carry out attacks wherever you can in the entire country," the group said in a statement on Monday.

The group, which is ideologically aligned with the Afghan Taliban, said it is facing a rising number of attacks by the Pakistani military, particularly in the Lakki Marwat district of Pakistan's northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

"We submit to the people of Pakistan that we have repeatedly warned you and continued to be patient so that the negotiation process is not sabotaged at least by us, but the army and intelligence agencies do not stop and continue the attacks, so now our retaliatory attacks will also start across the country," the statement said.

Al Jazeera reached out to the Pakistani military for comment but did not receive a response.

The TTP has been waging a rebellion against the state of Pakistan for more than a decade. The group demands the imposition of hardline Islamic law law, release of key members arrested by the government and a reversal of the merger of Pakistan's tribal areas with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

On November 16, the TTP claimed responsibility for an attack on a police patrol in Lakki Marwat, about 200km (125 miles) southwest of the provincial capital, Peshawar. Six policemen were killed.

After the attack, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said "terrorism" continues to be one of Pakistan's foremost problems.

The TTP made its declaration hours after the government said the state minister for foreign affairs, Hina Rabbani Khar, will visit Afghanistan on Tuesday.

According to the foreign ministry, Khar will hold talks on regional security with the Taliban government in Kabul.

Security specialist Asfandyar Mir of the United States Institute of Peace told Al Jazeera that while the TTP has been escalating its violence recently, it has also exercised restraint by not carrying out attacks outside tribal areas.

"I have inferred the targeting as a function of Afghan Taliban pressure on the TTP to calibrate their escalation," he saId. "Now if the TTP follows through in its declaration of countrywide attacks, the key question is how will the Taliban respond."

The government and the TTP have held multiple rounds of talks facilitated by the Afghan Taliban, the last of which took place in June. The talks began weeks after the Taliban took control of Kabul last year.

Despite the ceasefire, the TTP continued its attacks this year, saying they were defensive in nature and only in retaliation for operations carried out by Pakistan's military.

According to data compiled by the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, an Islamabad-based research organisation, at least 65 such attacks took place in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through the end of October. They killed at least 98 people and wounded 75, it said.

Mirza

Sunak: Era of UK-China relations over

IN his first foreign policy speech, Mr Sunak said the closer economic ties of the previous decade had been "naïve".

The prime minister said the UK had to replace wishful thinking with "robust pragmatism" towards competitors.

But he warned against "Cold War rhetoric", adding that China's global significance could not be ignored.

Mr Sunak has faced pressure from Tory backbenchers to toughen the UK's stance on China since he took over as prime minister last month.

His speech, at the Lord Mayor's Banquet in London, comes after protests in China over the weekend against the country's strict Covid lockdown laws.

Police have made several arrests, and a BBC journalist was detained while covering a protest in Shanghai on Sunday. He was beaten and kicked by the police during his arrest and held for several hours before being released.

Mr Sunak told the audience of business leaders and foreign policy experts that, in the face of the protests, China had "chosen to crack down further, including by assaulting a BBC journalist".

"We recognise China poses a systemic challenge to our values and interests, a challenge that grows more acute as it moves towards even greater authoritarianism," he said.

Media caption,

Watch: BBC journalist Ed Lawrence arrested covering China Covid protests

He added that the "golden era" of UK-China relations was "over", along with the "naïve idea" that more trade with the West would lead to Chinese political reform.

The phrase "golden era" is associated with closer economic ties under former Prime Minister David Cameron - but relations between London and Beijing have since deteriorated.

In his speech, Mr Sunak echoed the phrase used in the review - that China is a "systemic challenge". He said there would be more details of the review in the new year.

Somali troops overpower al-Shabab fighters

SOMALI security forces have stormed a hotel in the capital to end a near day-long siege by al-Shabab fighters who killed nine people at the building near the president's residence in the capital, police said.

Gunfire crackled from inside the hotel as the special forces fought the rebels more than 12 hours after the armed group stormed the building in the centre of Mogadishu.

A police spokesperson said 60 civilians had been rescued, while a government minister said he and others had kicked down a door to escape after being caught in the hotel following evening prayers when a suicide bomber struck and the gun battle broke out.

Abdullahi

The assault underscores the continuing ability of the al-Qaeda-allied group to stage deadly attacks with sometimes high casualties inside the city even as President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's government presses an offensive against them.

Ali said the rebels had killed eight civilians and later added that one soldier had also died in the siege. Five soldiers were injured, he said.

Six al-Shabab fighters had been involved in the attack, with one blowing himself up and five shot dead by the security forces, Ali said.

Al-Shabab, which controls swathes of the country, claimed responsibility for the attack, saying in a statement that it was targeting the nearby presidential palace.

The armed group, which is seeking to topple the government and establish its own rule, frequently stages attacks in Mogadishu and elsewhere.

Government officials in Mogadishu often use the Villa Rose hotel for meetings. Some officials also live there.

Somalia's environment minister Adam Aw Hirsi said the assault on the hotel, where he lives, began with a deafening explosion by a suicide bomber who was followed by fighters on foot to breach the perimeter of the heavily guarded hotel.Asked what the government would do next, he said there was no turning back and the government would "not let up the fight".

Somalia government forces, supported by clan militias and, at times, African Union troops and United States air strikes, have made a number of battlefield gains in their offensive against al-Shabab over the last three months.

The US military has conducted several air strikes against al-Shabab this year, but it was not clear whether it was involved in Monday's battle.

Despite being pushed back, al-Shabab has still been able to stage large attacks on both civilian and military targets.

In October two car bombs exploded at Somalia's education ministry next to a busy market intersection, killing at least 120 people. It was the deadliest attack since a truck bomb exploded at the same intersection in October 2017, killing more than 500 people.

Somalia's parliament said it had postponed a scheduled session for both of its houses on

Feature

Safeguarding cultural heritage for sustainability

Cultural Heritage (Tangible and Intangible) is of increasing significance to each society. Why this is so, is not entirely clear but probably it has to do with the increasing speed of modernization and scale of change in society. In such circumstances, evidence of part societies can be an anchor in rapidly changing world. In many societies too, heritage can be an important definer of identity. Understanding the past can also be of great importance for managing the problems of the present and the future. UGWUOKE JULIANA UCHENNA writes.

THE range of what is regarded as heritage has broadened significantly in the last 50 years. Today there is need for heritage to be protected and society as a whole should be involved with heritage protection and managing. It is no longer, if indeed it ever was, the preserve of academics and antiquarians. Nowadays, communities are increasingly involved in their heritage. Cultural heritage properties have continued to maintain strong links with communities with added tangible and intangible expression of value.

Sustainable development which is development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their own needs sustainable Development Commission (SDC 2011). It can be interpreted in different ways, but at its core is an approach to development that looks to balance different and often compelling needs against an awareness of the environment, social and economic limitations which we face as a society. The consequences of development are too great to imagine, from global socio-economic meltdown driven by greed to change in global climate change resulting from our irresponsible use of the cultural resources found in our environment, therefore, while fragile tangible cultural heritage is an important factor in maintaining cultural diversity in the face of growing globalization, an understanding of the roles tangible heritage can play in our different communities helps with intercultural dialogue and encourages mutual respect for other ways of life.

The studies of sustainability, shows that the only positive way in which sustainable development is achieved will yield a lasting cooperation among organizations. In other words, to achieve sustainability in cultural heritage, every organization has a duty to integrate the conservation of historic buildings which portrays the local builders' expertise, aesthetic, historic and religious values among others.

Prof. Tijani

Protection of cultural heritage or safeguarding cultural good means all measures to protect cultural property against damage, destruction, theft, embezzlement or other loss. The term monument protection is used for immovable culture property. Cultural heritage has the potential to promote access and enjoyment of cultural diversity. It can also enrich social capital and create a sense of individual and collective belonging which helps to maintain social and territorial cohesion.

Cultural heritage is central to protecting our sense of who we are (our identity). It gives us an irrefutable connection to the past to ascertain social values, beliefs, customs and traditions, that allows us to identify ourselves with others and deepened our sense of unity, belonging and community and national pride.

Cultural heritage both contemporary and creativity and the heritage of the past has a huge value for the vitality and evolution of peoples and their culture. Museums have a key role in supporting, both in a way that promotes inclusive of sustainable and development.

The UNESCO convention as safeguarding of the tangible cultural heritage (2003) as well as ICOM definition of the museum (2022) focuses on the roles of the museum and by the extension similar institution in the safeguarding of living heritage by considering two main questions. How can museum contribute to safeguarding living heritage, especially at the level of local communities?

If museum have been conventionally concerned with tangible cultural heritage, their raison être is the community or communities they serve whose identity is bound up in complex ways with museum collections. Since living cultural heritage is as suggested to is closely tied up to the identity and continuity of a group, we need to consider how straight forward it would be to add living cultural heritage to material evidence in the understanding of museums responsibilities. In re-emphasizing the classic role of museum from archives of material culture to a more dynamic role involving the safeguarding of living cultural heritage, it may be the case that local rather than national museum will play a crucial role.

Community collaboration in safeguarding cultural heritage is a process of participation through which people groups and organizations work together to achieve results. In this instance it is to safeguard cultural heritage. This cultural heritage provides emotional and intellectual platforms on which individuals, groups, organization and communities create their identity. Working together as a group to protect and safeguard tangible cultural heritage should be encouraged as its results will be highly productive.

Collaboration accomplish shared vision, achieve positive outcome for the audience they serve and build an inter-dependent system to address issues and opportunities. It also involve the sharing of resources and responsibilities to jointly plan, implement and evaluate programmes to achieve common goals and In this case it is the safeguarding of our cultural heritage for sustainability.

Collaboration with communities in safeguarding cultural heritage in the context of cultural heritage, the conservation of historic heritage, requires the solicitation of community involvement in order to achieve its full potential as a society and to reinforce that cultural heritage for everyone.

Therefore, the museum should do all in its powres through shared responsibilities and cooperation and, or collaboration with local communities to safeguard the cultural heritage of the people. All measure local and global, traditional and modern should be put in place to safeguard cultural heritage for sustainability. This is so because without our cultural heritage we run the risk of losing our identity and social cohesion.

Members of the Antiquity Protection Unity (APU) of the museum in particular should be adequately trained to identify threats, risks and theft and vandalisation of cultural heritage (tangible) and act quickly and decisively to mitigate such risks. Other professional groups in the museum (archaeologist, ethnographers, curators, conservators) need to be on the look out to identify threats to our cultural heritage, be it environmental or human and act fast to mitigate and arrest such threats.

The move towards a more anthropological conception of cultural heritage in international cultural policy making over the last 15 to 20 years has brought with it much greater focus on ordinary people and communities as the creators and transmitters of heritage as well as its protectors and inevitably, on the rights that they enjoy with regards to this. Today the issues of safeguarding cultural heritage has shifted to that which closely responds to what communities and individuals identify as their heritage and to which they ascribe a particular significance.

In conclusion therefore, this paper stressed the role of museum professionals or museums in its evolution as required in the safeguarding of cultural heritage and that this evolution is in tune with the general shift towards community engagement by and a greater variety of types of museums.

In other words, the primary activities of museums are set out in the recommendation as preservation, research communication and education, and all of these speak directly to safeguarding actions set out in 2003 convention (Article 2.3). Transmission is of course, a central part of this process and the draft. Recommendation also mentions museum as spaces for cultural transmission, intercultural dialogue. Learning, discussion and training also play an important role in education (formal, informal and lifelong learning) social cohesion and sustainable development (UNESCO 2015, paragraph 2). Moreover, museums have great potential to raise public awareness of the value of cultural and national heritage and of the responsibility of all citizens to contribute to their care and transmission.

A central subject of this is an emphasis towards the central role that APU and other museum professionals can play in supporting more community driven approaches to heritage safeguarding.

UGWUOKE JULIANA UCHENNA, a staff of National Museum Jos, (C.A.P.O).

EVE'S WORLD

With Henrietta Gonzuk

Living

Personal secrets you should never tell anyone

HAVE you ever told someone more they need to know?

No, but after having a phone conversation, you think you should have said less.

All things being equal, you are not alone. This is only for you, so don't read it anyone else.

The truth is that a lot of us have a bad habit of wearing our hearts on our sleeves. Even people who don't know us will be able to see us. We don't need that at all. Secrets are what make life taste good, all things being equal, so we don't really need them. Keeping a clear separation between your personal life and your professional life is a difficult (but important) skill to master. You must be very careful about who you share your secrets with, because not everyone wants to be nice.

Importantly, you should be careful so that the small things in your own life can't be used to hurt you. It's good to have a basic list of personal information you should never give to other people. In case you don't know how to make your own rundown, we're here to help you out! Indeed, we've added a few insider facts that you should always try to keep to yourself, no matter how strong the desire is to share them with everyone.

As Joan Collins says, "The secret to having an individual life is not answering too many questions about it."

The following is a list of things. is there 6 things you shouldn't tell your friends?

1. In the past, I was angry.

We all have bad stories about our own lives that we can tell about people we don't like. It may be hard for you to think of those classmates or former partners who made you angry years ago, but maybe you still do. There's no doubt about it. In every case, it's best to let go of these feelings and look into them as little as possible. This is true for you as well as for other people, because pessimism is bad for you. To feel and to pay attention. People like to talk to people who are positive and have interesting stories to share, not people who worry about people they don't know. Relinquish anything that's making you stressed. Try to focus on the present, and you'll see that more and more people will be eager to talk to you.

2. Material things

Obviously, some things in life are worth more than they cost. It's true that sometimes we can't help but brag about the new car we just bought or the new phone we just bought for a low price. Parks and Recreation may not tell you this, but your partners don't want to know about how you've been taking care of yourself. It can make you look like you're too focused on how much money things are worth instead of how important they are. The best frill is being unobtrusive. You should try to spread it all over your talks.

3. Goals for the Future

You might think it's crazy, but there is science behind the fact that you're more likely to reach your long-term goals if you don't tell anyone else about them. At the point when you tell others what you want to do in the future, you almost feel like the satisfaction of

achieving the goal has been taken away from you. Accordingly, you don't work as hard to get it. As long as you don't talk about your goals, though, you have a much better chance of getting them done. What's more, when you've done that, you can tell the whole world about it.

In this case, your income

Only people who work at your bank should be able to find out more about how much you make. It's not a good idea to talk about able to stop them. That way, you won't be in a situation where you don't know how much you're getting paid.

money in public because no one can tell what anyone else's financial situation is. It might look like you're bragging about something that doesn't have any real value. Cash, as well as information about accounts, can break up relationships in a bad way. When your financial situation is made public, people start to look at you in different ways without you being able to stop them. That way, you won't be in a situation where you don't know how much you're getting paid.

5. Great things have been done.

Some people say that good deeds always bring good luck. That's true, but if you start bragging about it, it changes into a completely different story. You should never be afraid to do well. In this way, you're taking away the good you've already done. Many of the world's best humanitarians aren't well-known for a good reason. There should be more attention paid to those you're helping and less to yourself when you do something kind. In this way, you're taking away the good you've already done. Many of the world's best humanitarians aren't well-known for a good reason. There should be more attention paid to those you're helping and less to yourself when you do something kind.

6. Problems in the family

If it's your distant family or your close family, keep the issues under wraps, no matter who they are. Try not to get people's trust mixed up. As someone who is close to these people, you've been told about these secrets. They haven't let you tell them to everyone in your group of friends, though. They had faith in you, and breaking that faith is the most terrible thing you could do. Be aware of what others know that you don't. Because of this, you can expect them to treat you the same way.

EVE'S WORLD

With Henrietta Gonzuk

Health

Stay healthy this harmattan season

COLD, dry and dusty air is what the harmattan season is known for. The surroundings is usually dusty with outbreak of Flu and dryness of skin which leads to crack skin. Most people experience cough & sore throat which is due to the dry dusty air inhaled from the surroundings. Also, dry skin and broken lips are common during the harmattan season.

In addition, the weather makes people susceptible to flu & cold and although the body has adaptive mechanisms that help reduce the effects, it is only wise to take good care of ourselves in order to prevent infections and stay healthy

STEPS TO STAY HEALTHY THIS HARMATTAN SEASON Drink Plenty of Water

Because of the extreme dryness of the air, It is of utmost importance to increase fluid intake this period to reduce dehydration. While going out or in the office or wherever you find yourself, ensure you have a bottle of water with you at all times to increase the motility of mucus.

Warm tea like Peppermint Tea or Arabian Tea will help provide you with warmth to fight cold.

Drink Turmeric Ginger Tea with Honey & fresh lemon juice

Turmeric Ginger Tea, Honey & fresh Lemon juice is a natural remedy which soothe the dry irritated areas of the throat and give you the comfort you need, this combination also relief sore throat and cough and keeps you warm.

Bathe With Lukewarm Water:

Oh yes, you heard it right! Lukewarm Water ☐ The mornings are really cold and having a shower with cold water never an option; however, on the contrary, hot water isn't also an advisable option for you as it strips the skin of its natural oil barrier, thus resulting in dryness and itching. Hence, opt for lukewarm water.

Eat Plenty of Fruits and Veggies

Fruits and vegetables are good sources of vitamins and minerals which are essential to stay healthy and hydrated during these harmattan season. They contain a high water and vitamins content, which helps to reduce dehydration & dryness of skin caused by the dry air this harmattan season. The fruit also helps fight infections and build immunity against a chronic cough and other infections associated with common cold.

Take Products That Boost Your Immune System

Research shows that the Harmattan dust particles affect negatively the health of the people causing the respiratory disease to adults and children. Health cases such as cough, catarrh, and respiratory disease are mostly reported in the hospitals during the Harmattan season.

Foods like citrus fruits, broccoli, garlic, ginger, spinach, almonds, sunflower seeds, turmeric, papaya, green tea help boost your immune system and hence help prevent infections these harmattan season.

Exfoliate Your Skin

Exfoliation is a process of removal of the oldest dead skin cells from the skin's surface. Exfoliating your skin a few times a week will help shave off dead and dry skin cells and allow new skin cells to come up.

Make sure you use a gentle body scrub like sugar or coffee twice a week. Note however, that if over exfoliation occurs, your skin's oils will still be depleted, and because of the dry harmattan weather, dry skin may eventually occur.

Wear The Right Clothes

Wearing the right clothes in this harmattan season helps to prevent common infections or diseases that spread during this season. Thick and heat absorbable clothes keep heat released from the body trapped inside and limit radiation of heat to the surroundings. Hand gloves and well-covered shoes also that you need.

provide enough warmth that you need.

8. Choose Safe Products

The harmattan season is not the time to use harsh content on your skin like high alcohol or astringent content face cleansers or hand washes as this will strip your skin off its natural oils.

Also, opt for mild products such as a moisturizing body wash, a cleanser that contains ceramides (fatty molecules that make up the outer barrier of your skin) as they help the skin hold in moisture and an oil based body lotion such as Palmer's Cocoa Butter; you can even moisturize using shea-butter or olive oil.

Skin Care

People usually develop cracked lips and skin during this harmattan period. The following can help protect the integrity of your skin and prevent dryness. Good body moisturizers can be used to prevent dryness of the skin. They are easily absorbable and increase the hydration of the skin. Other home-made moisturizers are:

Eat Healthy Fats

Not all types of fat are bad for you. There are healthy fats you can consume without the fear of excess cholesterol and also can be heart-healthy. Healthy fats give you energy. You can get healthy fat from polyunsaturated fats such as in nuts, seeds, almond oils ,Coconut oil and fatty fish.

healthy. Healthy fats give you energy. You can get healthy fat from polyunsaturated fats such as in nuts, seeds, almond oils ,Coconut oil and fatty fish.

Avocados are also a great source of healthy fats.

Drink Healthy Tea Always

Healthy Herbal Teas are loaded with antioxidants which fight free radicals in your body. Free radicals are compounds that can cause harm if their levels become too high in your body.

Drink Herbal teas that contain garlic like Immunity Tea. Scientists think garlic has some things in it that may fight the common cold. They're still figuring out how exactly, aabut early studies are promising. However it works, it's a good excuse to toss in a few extra teabags.

Immunity Tea

Remember Your Hands, Feets and Lips

One of the worst things about harmattan is the dry lips, hands and feet that comes with it, this makes moisturizing of utmost importance this harmattan season.

Your hands, feets and lips are the most vulnerable areas of your body during the harmattan season. As a result, you need to take extra care of these areas as we tend to swipe out the moisture from them very frequently, like when we eat, or visit the bathroom or change shoes/walk barefoot.

To maintain a soft and succulent lips, hands and feets this harmattan season it is necessary not to leave your house without a lip balm and your hand lotion handy.Conclusion

Doing all these will go a long way to help you stay healthy this harmattan season.

THE Nigeria Standard

Editorial

Kolmani oil field as blessing to Nigeria

HISTORY was made recently when sixty- six years after crude oil discovery in the Niger Delta region, President Muhammadu Buhari flagged off the drilling of crude oil at the Kolmani Oil Prospecting Lease (OPLs) 809 and 810, Kolmani field site located at the border of Bauchi and Gombe. The ground breaking event was very symbolic being the first oil field to be discovered in the northern part of Nigeria.

UNDOUBTEDLY, the discovery has broken the notion that oil can only be found in the Niger Delta region. Every Nigerian has a reason to celebrate because it is a blessing to Nigeria and will better our lot just as oil in the Niger Delta has.

NIGERIA National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC made the discovery two years ago that there is over one billion barrels of oil reserves and 500 cubic feet of gas within the Kolmani area of Gombe and Bauchi states. It is remarkable that this is the first discovery of commercial quantity of oil after several crude oil exploration in the upper Benue Trough.

AS to be expected, it has already attracted over 3 billion dollars investments to the state.Very promising for an area that has suffered from the activities of insurgents like Mai tatsine and Boko Haram.

THE KolmaniOil fields will be developed by Sterling Global Oil, New Nigeria Development Commission (NNDC) and NNPC Ltd. There is no doubt that this development promises better living conditions for the host communities, infrastructural development, social amenities, foreign direct investments, income generation, employment opportunities and boost to the internally generated revenue for the two states among so many advantages.

IT is also a plus to Nigeria because it will open up a lot of opportunities and benefits. Firstly, it will ensure energy security. In addition, it is a plus to financial security,food security as well as overall socio – economic development for the country as pointed out by President Buhari. Further more, it will increase Nigeria's oil reserve and reduce poverty in the region.

IT is, indeed, necessary for the government to learn from its mistakes and do everything possible not to repeat the mistakes of the past. An important point is for NNPC and its partners is to do everything within their means so as not to degrade the soil of the host communities as obtained in the Niger Delta. They should follow international best practices which will be beneficial to them all in the long run.

WE add our voice to that of the president and advise NNPC and its partners to ensure and sustain harmonious relationship with the host communities. They should guard against isolating them.Give them a sense of belonging so that they will own the project too and work for its good. This strategy is for the avoidance of crisis, pitching themselves against the locals and to discourage oil bunkering. By all means, they should take their Corporate Social Responsibility serious.

IN line with the observation of Minister of State for Petroleum, Timipre Sylva, that a lot of oil was yet to be discovered in the country, we throw our weight behind him to urge the Federal Government not to relent in embarking on exploration in the country as more oil would be discovered. If it had not taken a step of faith, to explore, Kolmani Oil field would not have been discovered.

KUDOS to the Federal Government for its determination that has yielded fruits in Kogi. They have proudly joined oil producing states and has stated enjoying derivation fund.

GOMBE and Bauchi are known to be agrarian in nature. Not for any reason should they down their farm implements for the glow and promise of the black gold. Let's not forget that food security is threatened and it does not hurt to have several sources of income. Bear in mind that the government is working assiduously towards diversifying the economy to reduce dependence on oil.

THE Federal Government on its part must swing to action to ensure the necessary infrastructure are put in place to kick start the process of exploration. This is capital intensive and needs the commitment of the FederalGovernment.

GOVERNMENT should be aware that this pleasant news will attract both the good and the bad to the axis. It behoves on them to beef up security and be well equipped for any eventually.

WE congratulate Bauchi and Gombe states who are our neighbours for this windfall. And wish them well as the exploration of oil commences.

How to end kidnapping in Nigeria

KIDNAPPING in Nigeria is getting worse particularly in the North West and North Central region. It became more pronounced in communities with less security and counter enforcement. Although the government took some actions against the rising cases of kidnapping around the country however nothing seems to have changed.

The kidnappers invade schools and other places and abduct people including very important personalities and destroyed properties without witnessing any stringed resistance from security agencies in most cases. Therefore changing the security architecture and reformation will maximally overcome the power of these kidnappers and it will enable the Nigeria forces to have full control of every region or hideout around the county.

Furthermore, the change from old tactics by The Nigerian forces to apply New ones, that is creating a modern system of operation of combating kidnappers, is necessary. This will surely help the forces to tackle them after gathering the information about how they operate around small communities and tracking their pathways to bombard their hideouts using drones and other technology.

Furthermore, securing government forces, information from being leaked to kidnappers will help to keep them in the dark on actions against them. A special court should be set up for speedy trials and conviction of culprits.

Also the government should priorities security and stop Supplies of information, food items, and other basic amenities to kidnappers and enact punitive laws against sponsors of kidnapping.

Ibrahim Khadija Hassan is an IT student from Federal Polytechnic Bauchi.

Jos Abattoir market kicking up a stink

ABATTOIR is located along Dogon Karfe road Jos. It is somewhere between the boundaries of Jos South and Jos North.

As one proceeds into the market premises, a strong smell usually emanates from animal waste. Abattoir market sanitation is very poor.

The environment in which animals are slaughtered for human consumption is very poor. A lot more can be done concerning the hygiene of the environment to reduce. As this horrible stench the market used to be a very big market until when the crisis in Jos happened, making most of its part to be mainly for butchers. Major butchers come to Abattoir for large purchases and subsequent distribution of meat through their business outlets in different parts of the city, but one considerable concern is hygiene and the status of the facility.

The markets hygiene status needs to be improved drastically for public safety. If possible, the government should provide a public private initiative and also the training and empowerment of local butchers on global best practice which will be a needful. Apart from the woeful condition of the place, the Abattoir lacks water and security.

It is under these challenges that the butchers always busy themselves to meet up with their obligation. While security challenges affecting the market are many, the authorities seem to be faced with the problem of boys coming around to smoke and fight one another and vandalize government property. They cut pipes and cables. In some cases, they break shops and steal butchers property. Those in authority should look into this urgently to create a more safe environment for all.

Lama Esther Daniel is an I.T Student from JPTS, Institute of Science Management. and Technology, Jos.

The only pathway to success

SUCCESS is said to be an achievement of one's aim or goal.

Indeed, every individual's dream is to be successful in life as nobody and no religion to be precise encourages failure which is the pathway to success or states that or requires commitment determination .

To be successful in life, the masses are therefore advised to have role models who are successful, research on how they became this successful and later emulate them. Hard work, commitment and patience will go a long way towards achieving a desired result.

Nowadays, most youths are so much in a haste to acquire wealth by "hook or by crook" without due consideration of such act. I do hear people say no good thing comes easy instead it is quite true one has to be patient before achieving anything tangible in life..

The pathway to success has much limitations, which include laziness, bad peer group influence, bad group influence in the sense that some friends do discourage his or her fellow peer group from working towards success. I hereby acknowledge individuals never to be reluctant in building a successful life sometimes life seems to be so unbearable due to the economic instability of the country, in some cases individuals have become mere suicidal.

Nevertheless, all hope is not lost "when there is life there is hope". One has to be passionate in working towards a successful journey in life. For it is biblically said faith without work is of no gain.

It requires an everyday effort towards a desired result. God's time is the best I totally agree with such statement in the sense that every individual is assigned to wait on God's appointed time.

Delay is not denial, one's expectations could be delayed in some situations but nevertheless, move on for life has so many challenges, and lessons to offer.

Government as an institution has a vital role today in creating awareness campaigns by sensitizing the populace in schools, organizations, businesses enterprises, on the need to be successful.

Jonathan Rabo Dammo is of the Plateau State Polytechnic, Mass Communication Department.

STANDARD CARTOON

Kidnappers and delegates are the jobs that pays more than Central Bank and NNPC in Nigeria.
"Cash flow no network problem" True or False?
Government must answer this question.

Opinion

Terrorism in Nigeria when will it be over?

By TIMOTHY JOSEPH

When should Nigeria strike the final and deadly blow on these deadly audacious criminals, whom government has already pronounced as terrorist.

While some of them are fighting liberation wars against the oppressive state structures, some are just trying to feed themselves and a good number of them have repented and were speedily deradicalised and rehabilitated.

About 80,000 of them are now in military custody including Bashir Bulabuduwage, the Chief executioner of Boko Haram, who surrendered with his family to the troops of operation Hadin Kai in Borno state on 12 of September, 2022. He has a very good professional testimony, having executed about 1,000 Nigerians and abducted countless others including several security operatives. This is in addition to 1,600 "Repentant Terrorist" whom according to the minister of information Lai Mohammed, had learnt trades and were released into the populace.

I ask this question because these terrorist have crossed all reasonable boundaries and have breached the threshold of government leniency. From the attacks on Kaduna Airport, Train Aka, couple with the wholesale kidnapping, torture and retailing of the passengers, the embarrassing attack on Kuje prison and the daring attack on the presidential advance party in Katsina two days before then.

There was the Owo massacre at St Francis Catholic church, in which at least 40 people were killed in the daylight attack at shiroro, Niger state, killing about 37 soldiers, seven mobile policemen and six civilians while four Chinese miner's and other residents were abducted, the murder of 30 vigilante members in Gidan Dan Ina, Zamfara state, the kidnapped of 80 people in kwari village in Jibya LGA of Kastina state, and 29 weeding quest in Zamfara as well as the sacking of 30 communities in Zamfara.

The terrorist were audacious enough to ban political activities in some Kaduna communities, where farmers in Birnin Gwari had paid at least 400 million in taxes in the past two years. There was a report that Boko Haram has killed at least 33,127 in 10 years, killed 7, 222 and abducted 3,823 between January and July 2022, with the north east, north central and north west as highest in that order, and has killed 115 with 131 abducted in January 2022 alone with 15 killed in August.

The bandits had the audacity to serve a quit notice on five villages in Wase LGA of plateau State (sabon zama, Gindin Dutse, Anguwan Tsoho soldier, Anguwan Yuhana and Anguwan mangu) failing at which it would be war. Making the threat real, on Monday 17 Oct, 2022 at about 9.30 pm, gunmen invaded Nyalum community of Wase local government area of plateau state and went straight to the traditional rulers house Salisu Idris, and killed him before adducting five members of his family including his two wives.

A band of sympathetic bandits had the liberty to abduct some Zamfara health workers, collect five million ransom, and eventually changed their minds and returned both the captives and the five million. In the same vein, some of these bandits also kidnapped 10 policemen returning from Osun state elections, abducted 50 people at a siting in Niger state and attacked Kaduna milinium city. They imposed a 12 million tax on farmers from Kwaga, Kwanan-Shehu, Unguwan Liman and Unguwan Shekerau in Kaduna state, and gave them a deadline, they also collected about 19 million and a Boat as protection levy from residents of 14 communities in Anja LGA of Zamfara state. The citizens probably took a cue from the state government which gifted 15 brand new Hilux vehicles and cash to leaders of different Repentant gangs of bandits in 2020.

Sometimes ago, information minister Lai Mohammed had accused the substantially defeated bandits of going after soft targets in response, they changed strategy and became daring enough to attack Nigerian army convoys in Zamfara and Katsina, and ambushed presidential guards in Abuja, all with casualties. They also attacked several military formations and police camps across the land.

While all these was happening, the Federal government through its aides kept assuring the populace that the terrorist would be crushed by December 2022, that the security forces had done wonderfully well, and that President Buhari will leave Nigeria safer and more secure before may 29, 2023. Indeed, President Buhari gave those statements a presidential backing when he declared during the 2023 Budget presentation that banditry and kidnapping would be significantly reduced before he lives office.

While it is of facts that security situation in some parts of the country has fairly improve recently, the fact still remain that terrorism, kidnapping and banditry is far from over as government will want us to believe. One wonders the kind of miracle the Buhari administration will be able to perform within 7 months to its exit that it did not perform in the past 7 years? That Notwithstanding, the Armed forces must be commended for some of the recent feat being recorded in the country especially in the North East. For Nigerians to overcome insecurity in the country, All hands must be on deck. Citizens must be willing to assist the security agents with adequate and timely information because they can not do it all alone and there is still much more to be done to defeat insecurity in Nigeria.

Timothy Joseph is of the Ministry of Information and Communication

Nigeria's horrifying poverty rate

By BONIFACE CHIZEA

WE must not be surprised that the National Bureau of Statistics has estimated the multiple dimensional poverty Index in the country at 133 million persons representing 65 per cent of the population of Nigerians. This data I suppose simply confirms what most of us already feel and suspect.

My position on the reliability of the index is that we should imbibe the habit of cutting national institutions charged with such specific responsibilities of producing targeted index slack by giving them the benefit of the doubt. We should expect them to be professional in discharging such assignments as there will be no reasons whatsoever for it to be otherwise. Therefore, there is no need to argue with the figures and the major centres of poverty in the country as highlighted in the Report which included Sokoto, Jigawa, Yobe and Bayelsa states .

The reason for this situation is not farfetched. It is directly due to lack of productivity in the economy. All it takes is to remember that the official data on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is under 3% per annum. When your population growth rate is higher than your GDP rate as a nation you are on the highway to entrenching poverty in the land.

The reasons why we don't have productivity in the economy are well rehearsed. It is partly historical even if it got compounded by contemporary developments: COVID-19 as well as the senseless ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

Historical causes are largely due to what has been commonly referred to as the "Dutch Disease." This is a situation whereby countries with natural endowment underperform because of unwholesome dependence on resources from this one source. In Nigeria we were somehow conscious of this fact that as far back as 1986, we articulated the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) which had the sole thrust of diversifying the economic base of the country so that revenue would also accrue from non-oil sources. But despite an expertly articulated program, we came badly short on implementation and that really is the long and short of the problem. Today we all collectively bemoan our failure in this regard.

The other area of problem we had was wrong policy choices. We have natural endowment in fossil fuel but lack the capacity to refine what we consume. We literally imported all the refined products we consumed and ended up not recovering the cost of importation over many years. The subsidy we paid ballooned out of hand as it became a cesspool for unbridled corruption. In summary this explains why productivity has eluded us as a Nation amongst other off shot; related reasons.

There are also those who think that we should have floated the Naira to allow the exchange rate to be determined by the market. But the fundamental problem is that you don't have a market in this respect in the country. What sort of market is that where you only have one dominant supplier with insatiable volumes of demands? And for those of us who have been around for some time, there is no manner of experimentation that we have not tried, only to beat a retreat as the reality of free falling rate of exchange stares us in the face. No doubt floating the Naira is on the cards as soon as we are in a position to drastically reduce demand through for instance the termination of fuel importation.

What to do is well known. We just need the political will to actualise the strategies we have dutifully identified. We hope that elections 2023 will unleash the much anticipated change in paradigm. This change we all await must enthrone nascent pristine values that will make our leaders selfless as they eschew corruption in all its ramifications as the future of the country is prioritised as they pilot National affairs.

Dr Boniface Chizea, an economist and CEO, BIC Consulting.

Change of Name

RUTH
I, formerly known as **RUTH ZAKARIA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **RUTH KWAUZIGA ZAKARIAH.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

AHMED
I, formerly known as **AHMED SULE OZEJE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **AHMED SULE OHIKWO.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

ABDULATEEF
I, formerly known as **ABDULLATIF ANKE RASHIDATU, ABDUL RASHAD LATEEF**, now wish to be known and addressed as **ABDULATEEF RASHIDA ABDULSALAM.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

PLANG
I, formerly known as **MR. PLANG EMMANUEL**, now wish to be known and addressed as **PLANG NANBAL SUNDAY.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

GANYIR
I, formerly known as **GANYIR VONGLANG INNOCENT**, now wish to be known and addressed as **GANYIR VONGLANG DASHE. D**ate of birth is from 05/12/1995 to 30/05/1995. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

KURUTU
I, formerly known as **DALANG K. STEPEHN**, now wish to be known and addressed as **KURUTU STEPHEN.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

AISHATU
I, formerly known as **AISHA YUSUF K.**, now wish to be known and addressed as **AISHATU YUSUF K.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

ABDULRAHMAN
I, formerly known as **ABDULRAHMAN AHMAD**, now wish to be known and addressed as **ABDULRAHMAN MUHAMMAD BELLO.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

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

BAKWAI
I, **BAKWAI YAKUBU DANIEL,** wish to state that my Correct date of birth is 21/04/1999 not 21/04/1990. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

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

AHMAD
I, formerly known as **ADO MUBARAK**, now wish to be known and addressed as **AHMAD MUBARAK.** Correct date of birth is 01/01/2002 not 01/01/1996. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

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

PAUL
I, formerly known as **DUAKDAT DAGRUM PAUL**, now wish to be known and addressed as **PAUL DAUKDAT DAGURUM.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

WOPLONG
I, formerly known as **WOPLONG GALISCO OBED**, now wish to be known and addressed as **WOPLONG OBED KOPDUN.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

YAKUBU
I, formerly known as **SINUSI ALI YAKU**, now wish to be known and addressed as **YAKUBU SUNUSI ALI.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

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

YONLA
I, formerly known as **DA'AT YONLA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **YONLA DA'AT MAKLU.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

KWAPPET
I, formerly known as **KWAPPET NAMCY NUKUP.**, now wish to be known and addressed as **KWAPPET NANCY NUKUP.** Correct date of birth is 26/1/1995 not 01/01/1996. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

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

GARBA
I, formerly known as **CLEMENT MONICA ONYAIDU**, now wish to be known and addressed as **GARBA MONICA ONYAIDU.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

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

SATI
I, formerly known as **SATI RAYMOND DANOK**, now wish to be known and addressed as **SATI PETER DANOK** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

JOHN
I, formerly known as **EMMANUEL DANPYANG JOHN**, now wish to be known and addressed as **JOHN EMMANUEL MASAJI.** Correct date of birth is 17/08/1988 not 07/08/1993. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

EZEKIEL
I, formerly known as **JOSEPHINE BENJAMIN**, now wish to be known and addressed as **EZEKIEL JOSEPHIN KWONKAT**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

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

GARSHEMA
I, formerly known as **GALUMJE SAMUEL**, now wish to be known and addressed as **GARSHEMA SAMUEL EMMANUEL.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

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

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

MRS. MIRI
I, formerly known as **MISS LAWAN PRISCILLA MILAT**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS MIRI PRISCILLA MILAT.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

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

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

LAGAH
I, formerly known as **LAGAH DANBABA ACHINAH**, now wish to be known and addressed as **LAGAH SHEDRECK ACHINA.** Correct date of birth is 01/01/1991 not 28/01/1987. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

KHADIJA
I, formerly known as **KARA'ATU MUHAMMED.**, now wish to be known and addressed as **KHADIJA MUHAMMED IDRIS**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

BITYEN
I, formerly known as **KOOMHAM PETER BITYEN**, now wish to be known and addressed as**BITYEN KOOMNAAN PETER.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

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

NANDANG
I, formerly known a **NANDANG ADI B.** now wish to be known and addressed as **NANDANG BINFAT ADI.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

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

TIMOTHY
I, formerly known as **MOSES KENRET FWANGAN**, now wish to be known and addressed as **TIMOTHY KYENRET.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

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

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

VERONICA
I, formerly known as **JATAU VERONICA GOSON**, now wish to be known and addressed as **VERONICA PANKYES DATOM.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

EMMANUEL
I, formerly known as **EMMANUEL SAMSON PAM**, now wish to be known and addressed as **EMMANUEL GYANG SAMSON**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

TATSHAK
I, formerly known as **JAMES REUBEN TATSHAK**, now wish to be known and addressed as **TATSHAK NANRIBET DIYELMAK.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

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

BARA'U
I, formerly known as **USMAN MUHAMMAD,** now wish to be known and addressed as **BARA'U TAMASIN.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

EZE
I, formerly known as **EZE AUGUSTINE MOROJA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **EZE NWAKPA AUGUSTINE.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

DAKU
I, formerly known as **DYAKU HALIMA AYAWO**, now wish to be known and addressed as **DAKU HALIMA AYAWO.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

NUHU
I, formerly known as **GAIUS TALATU**, now wish to be known and addressed as **NUHU TALATU LINUS.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

FELIX
I, formerly known as **DAYEN DORIS HABILA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **FELIX LINDA.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

ERESHE
I, formerly known as **ERESHE MARY USHANG**, now wish to be known and addressed as **ERESHE MARY JANE USHANG.** All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

GODIYA
I, formerly known as **JURTE GODIYA DANIEL**, now wish to be known and addressed as **GODIYA SIMON SUWA**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

SPACE FOR SALE

SPACE FOR SALE

SPACE FOR SALE

SPACE FOR SALE

KARU LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL, NASARAWA STATE
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVES CHAIRMAN

In it's meeting of Wednesday 23/11/2022 the (F&GPC) fFinance and General Purpose Committee of Karu Local Government under the able chairmanship of **HON. JAMES B. THOMAS**, in his effort to provide more infrastructure development to the people across the local government area have approve the following projects,

- Construction of 9km Road surface dressing from Angwan Tiv to Koya

- Construction of Box Culvert between Abui and Tattara road*

- Construction of 2 number Box Culvert between Furi and Abui

Signed: Ibrahim Umaru Wali (Bunun Nasarawa)
Director works, housing, Transport Land and survey.

For Executive Chairman

Dangote plans 300,000 fresh jobs for Nigerians

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

AFRICA'S foremost industrialist, Aliko Dangote, is optimistic that the new multibillion naira investment in the sugar sub-sector would help provide no fewer than three hundred thousand jobs in Nigeria.

A statement from the Corporate Communication Department of the company which was made available to journalists in Lokoja on Sunday, quoted the Group's President, Aliko Dangote as saying that the company was providing fresh funds and thus expanding its operations in the sugar sub-sector.

Mr. Dangote, who was speaking at the flag-off ceremony of the 2022/2023 Crushing Season and Out grower Scheme Awards in Numan, Adamawa State, said the opportunities would include both direct and indirect jobs.

Mr. Dangote, expressed optimism that the massive investment will create over three hundred thousand jobs for Nigerians.

He said: "We are making massive investment in Adamawa State through expansion of DSR Numan's sugar refining capacity from 3000tcd to 6000tcd, 9800tcd, and to 15,000tcd. DSR will be able to create about three hundred thousand jobs, direct and indirect, with positive multiplier effects on the economy nationwide."

Dangote

The Dangote Group is the biggest employer of labour in Nigeria outside the government.

Mr. Dangote was appointed Chairman, National Job Creation Committee in 2010 to assist the Federal Government in providing more employment opportunities for Nigerians. The Dangote President had also announced that his company was doubling its spending on CSR schemes in host communities in Adamawa State, the location of its 32,000 hectares integrated sugar complex.

Speaking in Numan, Minister of Industry, Trade, and Investment, Otunba Adeniyi Adebayo, described the Dangote Sugar Refinery as the biggest contributor to the development of the sugar development effort of the Federal Government.

The Minister also commended Mr. Dangote for the massive support through his Corporate Social Responsibility scheme. In the same vein, the Dangote Refinery and Petrochemicals is expected to create some 250,000 job opportunities when completed next year. Already Dangote Cement Plc is one of Africa's biggest job providers in the manufacturing sector.

Bello promises support for VCDP

From AMEDU JOSEPH Lokoja

GOVERNOR Yahaya Bello of Kogi State, has restated the continuous support of his administration for the Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP) to boost agriculture and ensure food security in the state.

The VCDP is a Federal Government programme supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (FGN/IFAD-VCDP) to sustainably enhance rural incomes and food security.

Bello gave the assurance at the weekend, when the IFAD Country Director, Ms. Dede Ekoue, led a delegation on a courtesy visit to the Government House, Lokoja, The governor noted that Kogi used to be called a 'civil service' state in spite its agrarian endowment, saying his administration had turned it into agriculture friendly and the real food basket of the nation.

Bello appreciated the team for the value the IFAD-VCDP activities was adding to the farmers and agricultural produce in the state.

He commended the Programme Coordinator (SPC), Dr Stella Adejoh, for her tenacity and doggedness in always achieving results. The governor expressed hope that the organization would give more support to farmers especially those whose farmlands were destroyed by the recent flood disaster

Bello

"We are hoping that we will be able to support them greatly using every resources that are available to us.

"Our own commitment would not fall short in terms of counterpart funding and every other thing that you will require to support IFAD," Bello said.

He stressed that agriculture remained the highest employer of labour in the country, assuring that his government would continue to take full benefit of it.

The governor commended President Muhammadu Buhari for what his administration had been doing for the country in terms of agriculture. Earlier, the IFAD Country Director, Ms. Dede Ekoue, said the team were in the state for a Mid-Term Review (MTR) of IFAD-VCDP activities being implemented in nine States including Kogi.

According to her, the objective is to access all the progress made, look critically at challenges to be addressed, and opportunities to further leverage on to scale up the impacts.

"We want to do our work based on evidence which shows that youths are priority for Kogi State. We salute your dedication to gender equality as well as youth inclusion in Kogi.

She thanked the state government for all the support given to VCDP activities in the state, especially the prompt payment of its counterpart funding, and hoped it continued.

The country director sympathised with the government and people of Kogi over the recent flood disaster that ravaged the state.

In his vote of thanks, the Commissioner for Agriculture, Mr David Apeh, said the government always takes seriously all donor supported project in the state.

Apeh noted that the partnership with VCDP had resulted in boosting food security, enhanced economic growth and improved the wellbeing of farmers in the state.

Earlier, the State Programme Coordinator (SPC), Dr Stella Adejoh, thanked the governor for his commitment to fully supporting the VCDP activities in the state. She equally thanked all the Mid-Term Review Team members stating that she is ready to learn from the visiting team for effective and efficient programme implementation in the state. Other members of the team include: Dr Fatima K. Aliyu, VCDP National Programme Coordinator (NPC); Dr Peter Kush, Director Federal Ministry of Agriculture; Dr. Jonathan Agwe, IFAD Regional Rural Finance Specialist.

Others are: Dr. Onoja Ameh, Lead Advisor, Country Programme Advisory Team (CPAT); and Dr Samuel Eremie, Mission Technical Lead, among others.

Students protest over withholding of ASUU salaries

From ANENE AIKE, Sokoto

STUDENTS of Usman Danfodio University Sokoto (UDUS) Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) have staged a peaceful protest over the issue of withholding salaries of the lecturers .

The protest which took place within the university's premises and the Vice Chancellor's (VC) Office where the chapter chairman handed over protest letter to the Vice Chancellor.

Both the members of the union and students carried placards with inscriptions such as "Respect the Principles of Collective Bargaining," "We say no to casualisation of intellectual labour" and "ASUU is a protector of public Institutions." "Our future counts," We are tired of staying at home.

Adamu

A lecture with theme: Federal Government attempt to criminalise strikes in the labour sector and casualisation of academic staff was held before the rally.

Students under the leadership of Students Union Government (SUG) and its president, Shamsudeen Umar, accompanied their lecturers in the protest rally.

They also chanted different songs demanding immediate payment of the withheld salaries emphasizing the dangers of empty stomach.

Addressing the crowd before handing over the letter for onward submission to President Muhammadu Buhari, the branch chairman of ASUU, Prof. Muhammad Mustapha, said the union convened a special congress and the rally to discuss the issue that attract attention.

Mustapha noted that the protest was to express displeasure on the decision of the government to pay October salary on a pro-rata basis.

He was also quoted as saying "We don't know why the government took such a decision but to our knowledge such decisions violate the rules of engagement for academics.

He added that the condition of service for the academic staff differs from those of the mainstream civil service. He stressed that academicians are employed to teach, conduct research and community services.

He said the union just stopped the teaching component during the strike but to our dismay, we were paid on pro-data basis.

The ASUU leader appealed to the speaker, parents, students and other well-meaning Nigerians to call on Mr. President to urgently resolve the dispute between the union and federal government.

Receiving the letter, the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Lawal Bilbis, commended the union leaders for being orderly. He assured them that he will submit the letter to the appropriate places.

Bilbis, who was represented by Deputy Vice Chancellor, Administration, Prof. Ibrahim Magawata, urged lecturers and students to continue to be law abiding citizens.

Also there were lectures presented by Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) leaders in Sokoto, Mr Sa'idu Yakubu, Mr Abdallah El-Kurebe, Prof. Lawalli Alkali, Prof. Abubakar Bagudo and Prof. Faruk Tambuwal.

CMMRC, CIPP condemn Bokkos killings, destruction of farm lands

By HOSEA NYAMLONG

Conflict Management Mitigation Regional Council Plateau State and Community Initiative to Promote Peace(CIPP), have condemned in totality the gruesome attacks and senseless killings, destruction of farm produce and the killing of animals, in particular the killings of women and children.

This was contained in a press release signed by Comrade Sadeeq Hongs, Joint Secretary of CMMRC, CIPP and made available to SUNDAY STANDARD on Saturday in Jos.

CMMRC is calling on the state government to swiftly investigate these ugly incidents of unlawful killings of innocent citizens with a view to bringing the culprits to justice.

They urge the citizens to keep calm, maintain law and order and conduct themselves peacefully as they ventilate their grievances on the current state of affairs in their domains.

They say they share in the grief of those who lost their loved ones, we commiserate with them and Pray God to Comfort and strengthen them.

In line with the Motto of Plateau State, which is Home of Peace and Tourism, they demand that all the organs, persons and authorities of the Government in Plateau State Should Promote and Preserve Peace While Praying for Wisdom, Courage and Willingness to what is Right in other to achieve Peace and Tranquility throughout the State.

NEWS

Taraba presents N172.73bn 2023 budget

From VICTOR GAI, Jalingo

THE Taraba State House of Assembly had on Tuesday received the 2023 Appropriation Bill estimated at N172,732,537,459.40k, representing an increase of N22,949,641,62:50k or 15. 32% from the 2022 budget.

It also comprises of the sum of N74,556,829,88.15k, representing 43.16% as recurrent expenditure and N98,177,708,371:25k representing 56.8% as capital expenditure.

Gov. Darius

The budget tagged: Budget of Fulfillment, Rescue Mission and Transmission was presented to the House by Governor Darius Ishaku.

According to him, the thrust of the budget would be towards the completion of critical ongoing projects and providing the superstructure for the incoming government to carry on.

He stated that this would be achieved through improving revenue mobilisation, strengthening monitoring and evaluation among others.

Earlier on, Speaker of the House, Professor Joseph Albasu Kunini, acknowledged the town hall meeting which was convened to enable the people make their inputs in the 2023 Appropriation Bill. He described it as unprecedented in the history of budget process in the state.

He added that in the span of the present administration, a total of 176 Bills and Executive Orders have been processed by the House and assented to by the governor which he also described as an unprecedented feat.

Plateau holds Festival of Arts and Culture

By PALANG KASMI

IT was a day for colourful displays as Plateau State held its maiden edition of the Festival of Arts and Culture (PLAFEST 2022).

The 4-day cultural fiesta with the Theme "Cultural Heritage: A tool for curbing insecurity" took place at the Rwang Pam Township Stadium on Tuesday November 29 2022.

The event attracted cultural enthusiasts from the 17 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the state including key functionaries and officials from the government and private circles, many traditional rulers from across the state, and participants from over 15 states of the federation.

Declaring the event open, Plateau Governor, Simon Bako Lalong expressed happiness that history has been made with the event coming into fruition.

Gov. Lalong

He called on the legislative arm of government to make the cultural festival law in the state so that yearly, the event will be celebrated and sustained.

He described the state as a tourism hub endowed with fantastic natural potentials with historical sites that can attract UNESCO and world standards.

The Governor promised that all the outstanding and best intellectual artistes discovered at the end of the 2022 festival will be sponsored abroad to get popularity and come into limelight.

Director General (DG), National Council for Arts and Culture, Otumba Olusegun Runsuwe in his remarks described Plateau State as a special state in the history of Nigeria that is known for setting great historical records.

He commended the Governor for being able to spearhead love, peace and security in his government's agenda to make the state a hub of tourism and development.

Runsuwe called for religious and ethnic tolerance among Nigerians, recalling that Plateau has brought up many artistes, sports men and women, musicians, actors, media personalities, and leaders in government and the private sector who are making waves across the world.

While presenting a souvenir to the Governor for being an ambassador of peace across the country, Runsuwe also disclosed that " Governor Lalong was the one who saved Nigeria from shame in 2020 during Covid-19 by taking the bold step to host the National Festival of Arts and Culture (NAFEST) despite the challenges of that period adding: "This move helped in showcasing Nigeria to the world map as a safe country".

The DG said the gesture made the country to be the first to hold the biggest event in Africa during Covid- 19 period in 2020.

Commissioner for Tourism, Culture and Hospitality, Hon. Cecilia Yilkorah said the state is happy to hold the first edition of the festival and praised the Governor for coming up with the initiative that will unite the state through showcasing its cultural diversity for the unity of the country.

She assured that the after the event, the ministry will advance more partnerships to make the state to become a tourism hub in line with its slogan "Home of Peace and Tourism".

In his Goodwill remarks, Chairman, Plateau State Traditional Council and the Gbong Gwom Jos, Da Jacob Gyang Buba commended the governor of the state for hosting a successful maiden event and urged the next governor to sustain it.

PROBATE NOTICE

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE OF PLATEAU STATE OF NIGERIA PROBATE DIVISION

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first Column hereunder died into on the date and place state in the said column.

AND WHEREAS the person whose name(s) and addressed and relations to the deceased are set out in second column hereto has/have applied to High Court of Plateau State if grant of letter administration of the Real and personal properties/ estate of the said deceased NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that letters of Administration will be granted to such person/persons unless a "NOTICE TO PROHIBIT the grant is filed in the Registry within twenty one (2) days of from the date hereof.

NAME OF DECEASED PERSON	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT(S) FOR GRANTS
LCPL Stephen Atogo Bulus, late of Plateau State. Died on the 23rd Sept., 2022, at Kachia, Kaduna State.	Nelson Ishaku Stephen Bulus Esther Stephen of close to ECWA CHURCH Tudu Wada Jos North LGA, Plateau State, lawful son of the said deceased.

NAME OF DECEASED PERSON	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT(S) FOR GRANTS
Yunusa Hassan also know as Hassan Maigida Yunusa, late of Kogi State. Died on the 3rd July, 2022, at Imane Olama Boro, Kogi State.	Nasiru Hassan Yunusa No. 12 Giginya Road Costain Quarters Kaduna State, lawful son of the said deceased.

NAME OF DECEASED PERSON	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT(S) FOR GRANTS
Gokum Chorbak also known as Chorbak Gokum Gokawat, late of Plateau State. Died on the 22nd May, 2022, at Jos Plateau State.	Chorbak Joseph Nengi & Blessing Chorbak of Langshi village Kanke LGA Plateau State, lawful widow/son of the said deceased.

NAME OF DECEASED PERSON	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT(S) FOR GRANTS
Fompun Daguk Gwanle, Late of Plateau State. Died on the 26th August, 2020, at JUTH, Plateau State.	Fompun Nandak Yusufu & Fompun Nandom Daguk, of No. 53 Lohwol Top Rayfield Jos Plateau State. Lawful sons of the said deceased.

NAME OF DECEASED PERSON	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT(S) FOR GRANTS
Bongtim Lohdir Patience, late of Plateau State. Died on the 23rd December, 2019, at Keffi Nasarawa State.	Ringbyen Linda Bongtim & Anya Bongtim, All of Hwolshe Jos South LGA, Plateau State, lawful sisters of the said deceased.

(ANDRAWUS MAIKAI)
Ag. PROBATE REGISTRAR
PLATEAU STATE OF NIGERIA
JOS

Tribute to the late Leader Pankshin Legislative Arm, Hon Aristarkus Namfwang Yamsat

PANKSHIN Local Government shares in the grief of the demise of the Hon. Leader Legislative Arm Hon. Aristarkus Namfwang Yamsat who passed unto glory on the 18th November 2022 as a result of fatal accident with his colleagues who are receiving treatment at various hospitals.

As a council, we received the news with a rude shock and we are saddened that another star has been removed from our shores having being the Leader Legislative Arm of Pankshin Local Government Council.

Though, very painful and devastating, we are comforted that he is resting with the Lord.

The Leader was indeed a young charismatic leader, matured promising experienced Politician who stood for truth and Justice in both his private and public lives. He was outright and Firm in condemning negative tendencies among his cabinets.

We shall indeed Missed his wise counsel, pragmatic and purposeful leadership qualities, passion for National integration and Socio-Economic transformation of not just the Jing Ward alone but the entire Local Government Council and Plateau State as a whole.

We pray that the good Lord will grant his immediate family, the good people of Pankshin Local Government Area the fortitude to bear the irreparable lost.

May God grant his soul eternal rest Amen.

Adieu!!! Leader

Signed:
Jacqueline Dakat
Head of information unit
For: Nde Kakmena Audu Goteng
Executive Chairman Pankshin Local Government Council.

Jungle justice, not our way of reasoning

BY JENNIFER YARIMA

GONE are the days when people suffer and die in silence over their inability to open up on issues that negatively affects them. One of such issues bedeviling our society and left conspicuously hidden under the auspices of conspiracy of silence is the rampant case of sexual molestation and other forms of violence being experienced by mostly women and children in the society today. After enduring these difficulties for long, many people now have learned to open up and not die in loneliness as the case used to be in the past.

Certainly, times are changing and many people are becoming more informed and aware of their rights and privileges which had eluded them as a result of culture and traditions that had caged most victims of this carnage in slavery.

The common saying, "when you see something say something" has been of immense help for people to be each other's keepers and sensitive to their environment particularly when it comes to issues as such. Yours sincerely has always wept over the wreck-less behaviors being exhibited by some people who have no regards for human dignity. Such people are not at all remorseful over the increasing cases of the maltreatment meted the vulnerable in our society.

One was recently shocked to the bone marrow concerning the show of shame displayed by some unscrupulous elements who paraded themselves as 'vanguards' of Agunese Affam-Mmaku community in Enugu State, following a viral video of a naked woman which trended on the social media alleging that she was caught stealing a basket of snails from a sacred forest.

Fortunate though, voices of reason have risen to condemn the inhuman treatment meted this woman who was stripped of her pride over allegations of stealing meager pieces of snails. It hurts to know that these snails were either manufactured in the laboratory or offered to the gods but termed as sacred on the basis of outdated and harmful laws.

Her abusers who were mostly youths subsequently forced the middle aged woman who is a widow to carry the basket of the snails on her head. It's sad that a mob made up of these youths had to beat her up stripping her naked, tied palm fronts round her naked waist and neck before parading her round the community. This traumatic experience not only weighed the woman down but her children and relations who were left wondering how their mother would eventually overcome such shame.

The pathetic aspect of the misfortune is that it has drawn the attention of interest groups and the public, particularly women groups in Enugu who have described the act as dehumanizing. In a joint statement, the women groups said it was inhuman to strip a woman over allegations of stealing a mere basket of snails. It has gladdened the hearts of many that elders in the land have not also tolerated the ruthlessness of these young men who carried the law into their hands.

Their collective voices have demanded for the prosecution of the perpetrators of this dastardly act. Therefore, many stakeholders are stuck to their guns that the culprits must be brought to book. One had however wished that such an ugly situation never took place. The woman had denied that she did not commit the crime, but was just transacting her normal business. How much longer will the womenfolk continue to be victims of societal ridicule and trash is the question many people are asking.

One is not giving any excuse for any crime if it's genuinely committed, but we must not resort to jungle justice in such a cruel manner. As a people, we must come to the reality of the fact that there are more decent ways of addressing crimes than resorting to a situation whereby laws are taken into our hands through the exhibition of jungle justice rather than ensuring that suspects undergo legal judicial process before they are convicted.

Therefore, it would have been more for these youths to have considered her plight as a widow and treated her fairly. If her husband were to be alive, I am pretty sure that it wouldn't have been this bad with no respite to the woman.

> “ ***One had however wished that such an ugly situation never took place. The woman had denied that she did not commit the crime, but was just transacting her normal business. How much longer will the womenfolk continue to be victims of societal ridicule and trash is the question many people are asking. One is not giving any excuse for any crime if it's genuinely committed, but we must not resort to jungle justice in such a cruel manner.*** ”

Between betrayal and ambition

BY KENNETH DARENG

I monitored closely how events unfolded at the just concluded national convention of the Peoples Democratic Party [PDP] and the political intrigues that led to the emergence of former Vice President Atiku Abubakar who picked the party's nomination for the 2023 Presidential election after defeating his closest rival Governor Nyesom Wike with a hundred plus votes.

All that is now confined to the history books but what has remained a talking point is, how Governor Aminu Tambuwal of Sokoto State, also a Presidential aspirant decided at the 11th hour to abandon his close ally Wike and stepped down for Atiku Abubakar which automatically threw the spanners in Nyesom Wike's political ambition to fly the PDP's flag as its presidential candidate at the convention.

Many political observers have ascribed Tambuwal's acion as an act of betrayal. Wike himself at a reception organized for him shortly on his return to Port Harcourt from the convention alluded that he was on his way to victory if not for Tambuwal.

Perhaps, by now the word '' BETRAYAL'' should not be strange to most individuals as husbands, wives, brothers, friends, colleagues friends, political associates or generally as Nigerians or as Africans who might have at one point or the other felt betrayed. Indeed such a pain does not go away, it serves as a constant reminder to the person carrying such burden which can be for a life time.

Ironically if Wike felt betrayed, then what would Chibuke Amaechi be telling him? I heard supporters of Asiwaju Ahmed Bola Tinubu calling Vice President Yemi Osibanjo a traitor then forgetting what their principal did to former Lagos state Governor Akinyumi Ambode.

History has shown betrayal has lived with mankind from ancient days till date with the examples in ancient Rome BC, Julius Ceasar was betrayed by his closest friend Brutus who at the point of dying after being stabbed by his friend, asked; ''etu Brute…'' [even you Brutus?].

Jesus Christ was betrayed by one of his disciples Judas and so it has been with different forms of betrayals across all strata of society today. Sometimes it is the quest for personal or group interest that leads to such actions which also depends on the motive and at what cost. Some would even smile and say it is matter of interest with no permanent friend nor enemy. But whether we like it or not our conscience must prick us at that moment when a betrayal is about to be committed that is if that individual has any.

In Africa, we have seen quite a number of such instances like that of Thomas Sankara who was brutally assassinated by his childhood friend Blaise Campaore who later took over power in Burkina Faso. And here in Nigeria we have had many of such right from the post- Independence era where Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe was said to have been betrayed by the power brokers of the South West by supporting the North in installing Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as Prime Minister while he was a mere ceremonial President. So it went during the 1966 military coup which changed the narrative from one betrayal to another which has today succeeded in creating a deep wound in some cases. For example, the Coup that toppled General Gowon was announced by his friend and fellow Plateau man Major General Joseph Nanven Garba, while the coup that terminated General Muhammadu Buhari was spear headed by General Ibrahim Babangida.

Therefore, it may be right to say that betrayal is always driven by ambition which not only hurts the other person it also creates a gulf of personal hatred and anger with dire consequences which now penetrates across political, ethnic and religious divide with the potency to divide even what is call Nigeria.

IPC empowers female journalists, Bloggers with digital skills

By PALANG KASMI

WHEN the Female Journalists and Bloggers converged in Abuja for the two-day skill enhancing, capacity building, mentoring training workshop, they had a lot of expectations.

They started by first presenting their pre-training expectations with most of them expressing a strong desire to arm themselves with the required digital skills to compete effectively with modern journalistic trends of reporting.

The two-day training organised by the International Press Center (IPC) and funded through the component 4b: Support to the Media of the European Union support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) II Project took place at the Peniel Apartments Conference Hall Abuja, from 21st to 22nd November 2022.

The training which sought to build a professional media as catalysts of democratic accountability, credible elections, and good governance was very interactive with intensive practical class sessions.

With about 80 percent of participants from the north and a selected few from the Southern part of the country, the female journalists were taught on ways to attain credibility and professionalism.

Nigerian Editor, Africa- Check, Mr. David Ajikobi in his presentation on "Factual accuracy and combating fake news: The place of fact-checking and data use in reporting of 2023 elections, identified relevant digital tools and applications for meeting the goal.

"Ensure you Fact-check claims by politicians and avoid being caught up in the bandwagon effects of spreading false stories and claims" he warned adding that "Everyone who creates and shares information in this political era has an agenda".

"Anti government and government groups and individuals seek sympathy, fraudsters seek money, Bloggers seek online traffic therefore find the root of conspiracy theories and fact-check news to identify the actors", the fact-checking Expert Ajikobi advised.

On his part, Founder of Journalism Clinic and Blogger of mytori. com, Mr. Taiwo Obe spoke on "Impactful reporting of electoral processes and 2023 elections: Focusing and telling stories that matter", pointing out the entrepreneurial aspects of media work, impactful content creation and ways to set up a news hub in line with the trending digital trends of online news media by using smart phones.

Post evaluation: Trainees experiences

Sometimes, such trainings come and go with the winds without making any impact on the trainees but the organisers of the IPC/EU training urged the female journalists to go back to their newsrooms and blogs as more vibrant and result oriented personalities.

In a bid to find out how impactful the training is, one of the trainees and the Nigerian Television Authority reporter Bauchi Office, Elizabeth Kah said she benefited immensely from the training.

"I am glad I now know how to fact check fake news websites, images and videos, how to utilise my phone to promote my work using various apps like Canva and anchor, how to focus my reports on the under reported in the society, use evidence in reporting for the people to enable them take informed decisions in the 2023 elections and in other areas, employ safety tips while covering the 2023 elections. I also got a good opportunity for Networking with female journalists from other states of the country" said the NTA reporter.

Another beneficiary of the training, an Editor of the News Agency of Nigeria, Gombe Office, Hajara Usman Leman said she was glad to be a part of the life-changing experience and training.

"The workshop was timely, and the training I got has broadened my horizons, especially in the aspect of fact-checking fake news, the need for a journalist to write stories that will make an impact in somebody's life".

For a Blogger, Faith Awa Maji from Katsina State, who also benefitted from the training, she disclosed that she has now gathered more journalistic digital skills to enhance her blog Faith Maji's Blog.

While calling on more national and international bodies to embark on such digital trainings to empower Nigerian women, the Blogger said she is now more informed and equipped with the right tools and skills.

"Just see how this two-day training has impacted my life" She said adding: "No doubt, Nigerian Female Journalists are lagging behind but we are coming back to the fold through this training by the IPC and the EU. Hence, I call on government, Donor Agencies, Non-governmental Agencies and related bodies to make training of female journalists and Bloggers a priority".

Another reporter from the News Agency of Nigeria Ekiti Office, Bolanle Lawal, commended the IPC and EU for organising an eye-opener forum for female Journalists across the country.

"I went for the training with high expectations for Election Reporting but I was amazed that I got more than Reporting. The training opened my eyes to opportunities in technology such as canva designs, web designs and many more. I also learned about Online media platforms".

Making female journalists to be relevant, impactful, and professional in their job especially in the digitised media era, was the main reason why the training was organised in the first place, said IPC Executive Director Lanre Arogundade earlier in his welcome address.

He disclosed that over 30 female journalists will be mentored to write impactful award winning, human angle political stories that would touch on female politicians, underrepresented groups, and the political system.

He also advised the female media practitioners to gear up and be armed with modern technological skills and media trends to be relevant and on the job.

Also in her remarks the President, Nigeria Association of Women Journalists, Ladi Bala, was emphatic as she challenged the women to utilise the opportunities given them to gain new digital skills to do their job in the Newsrooms in a challenging world.

She tasked the trainees to be at the forefront of reporting People with Disabilities, participation of female politicians and other under represented communities and groups in the 2023 elections.

On her part, Head of International Society of Media in Public Health Abuja, Mrs Moji Makanjuola in a paper tagged " Electoral processes and 2023 Elections: According priority to issues of women and other underrepresented" challenged participants to write and capture impactful stories that discuss accessibility, gender policies of government and electoral bodies, and voting statistics of women and underrepresented groups in human angle forms.

Women Journalists are too organised, they don't want to take risks. But there is a thin line between what journalists do and advocacy. Therefore we should endear to write stories that come from the heart", She said.

Participants in a group phtograph

NAWOJ President in company of paper presenters

IMAGES

NUJ HOLDS TRAINING FOR JOURNALISTS ON ELECTION REPORTING

the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Plateau State Council last week organised training for Journalists on election reporting and entrepreneurial skills at the Hotel Samaritan, Rayfield, Jos

Chairman NUJ, Mr. Paul Jatau, putting heads together with Vice Chairman, Ayuku Pwaspo at the registration point during the training

Faith Chapel Chairman, Mr. Raph Madugu (right) with participants at the NUJ training

From left are, Commissioner for Information, Hon. Dan Manjang, GM PPC represented by Malam Zakari Haruna, PPC Director, Admin and Personnel and the PLASIEC, Commissioner, Electoral Operations, Patrick Mangin

From left are, representative of NUJ National President, Ladi Emmanuel, representative of General Manager, PPC, Malam Zakari Haruna and the NUJ Chairman, Paul Jatau

INEC HoD, Voter Education, Mr. Michael Otokpa (left) with INEC Deputy Director/HoD Legal, Uche Elekwa Esq

Assistant Director, NBC, Jos Zone, Mrs. Ayodele Brown (right) CSP Simeon Obinna of Plateau Police Command and Alfred Alabo, PPRO

Some NUJ Participants at the training on Election Reporting

PHOTOS: DANLADI DUK

Special guest of honour, Hon. Dan Manjang, members of the high table in a group photograph with training participants

Odd World

'I hate the name my wife picked for our child'

A man has taken to Reddit to share how he hates the name his wife has picked out for their daughter and now he is in two minds about signing her birth certificate because of it.

When it comes to naming a child, many parents spend hours brainstorming names before settling on one they both like. But some opt for a simpler solution - with one parent naming their firstborn and the other naming their second.

This strategy didn't quite work out for one expecting father, who is now trying to sway his wife away from an "unprofessional" name for their daughter. Taking to Reddit, the dad explained how he named their son without any input from his wife. The 36-year-old said: "Our agreement was that I got to name the first baby, and she got to name the second baby.

"She didn't have any strong opinions or preferences with regards to naming our son so I went with what I thought was a strong, somewhat unique name but that could just as easily suit a musician as a lawyer or doctor.

"I picked the name Calvin Heath, the middle name after my brother who unfortunately passed away and my wife was fine with it."

But now the couple are expecting their second child, the man claims he is in two minds about signing his daughter's birth certificate because he doesn't like the name his wife has picked out for her.

"My wife told me she wants to name our daughter Ever Winter Rain where Ever is the first name and Winter Rain is the middle name.

"I don't think this is a good name and that it isn't fair to our daughter because Ever is a word and I don't think it passes the Supreme Court Justice test.

"It doesn't sound professional, it's confusing because it's a word and I don't think it would suit her into adulthood."

"I suggested Winter as the first name with a more normal middle name like Emma so she has options but my wife refused. But our agreement was that she got to pick the name."

"Would I be in the wrong if I refused and don't sign the birth certificate if she wants to name her Ever?"

While most users agreed that he should speak up about disliking the name, others came up with variations of the name in an attempt to help him reach a middle ground.

One user said: "Normally I'd say that they made an agreement and he needs to stick to it, but.it kind of sounds like a bad goth band name or something?

"It's the Ever, I think. I feel like either Winter or Rain would be a good name.

"If she insists, though, I'd call her Eve for short. No one said she gets to pick nicknames, too, I hope."

Source: The Mirror

SMS Only: 08111186564. E-mail: wolfcatcher2004@yahoo.co.uk

Plateau politicians doing the unthinkable

SOME years back, one of my friends had an ample opportunity to represent his people as honorable councilor in one of the local government area in Plateau State. As God will have it, he was eventually voted the leader of the legislative arm of that particular council. My friend's unexpected rise to power at the grassroots was welcomed with great joy and happiness considering the traumatizing moments he had survived before his eventual victory at the polls.

We were witnesses to the suffering my friend had experienced in the past and had consistently prayed God to remember him no matter how little any such an office would offer him. So, when the Lord eventually upgraded our friend, our limitless joy superseded reasonable boundaries.

As we joined many of his relations in jubilation praying God for a successful tenure, I had cause to approach him one fateful day advising that since he was debuting on the political landscape, he would need all the prayers and publicity he can get to help boost his rising profile. As a journalist, I offered to provide him such service for free in my organization to help in my own little way possible. Many other friends of his also offered themselves to help in anyway possible to enable him succeed without much hiccups. I can still recall with great nostalgia, my friend's positive response and assurances of representing his constituents and doing us proud, a promise he intended against all odds to unfailingly keep.

Unfortunately, nothing near such promises of his came to pass after his eventual inauguration and assumption of office. These anticipations did not come to fruition as my friend completely changed his color and turned deaf to our advice without any remorse.

I did not however notice these negative happenings immediately, at least not until a colleague drew my attention to the fact that our honorable councilor does not pick phone calls or respond to text messages anymore. Sooner than later, this same issue started proliferating within the constituency reemphasizing that the honorable councilor had since cultivated the habit of excommunicating himself even as his new found friends were either his legislative colleagues and or other prominent members of his political party hierarchy.

Just as the popular adage goes, 'wonders shall never end', I took it upon myself to confirm this sad and unfortunate story making the rounds which further confirmed that our councilor friend had become an acting big man. True to their words, my friend had for long changed color.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, the local government council that year approved several car loans giving them the choice of choosing any luxury car, my friend went for the craziest. After totally forgetting where he was coming from, he threw discipline and good character to the wind. After all, it was basically a time for him to squander, eat, drink and forget all sorrows.

At the end, my friend's tenure came to an end and like a wild wind without any reasonable impact on his community. Throughout his entire tenure, he left his constituency stranded. Already, he had deserted his friends and there was no way he could re-step himself back to them. For me, our umbilical cord had already been cut-off and relationship severed. Not too long after this, he had to park the car he could no longer manage even as his political colleagues and friends deserted him.

Though my friend is not the only individual fame had transformed to become a monster; it has always been quite a pity seeing such persons' tenure come to an end with nothing to show for it.

Within the life-span of my career; I have seen chairmen who successfully served their tenures, ending up completely broke and bankrupt with absolutely nothing to show for it. Yet, others coming after them have failed to learn any thought-provoking lessons from such experiences.

In the past decade, most Plateau politicians I have noticed lack this spirit of helping their vulnerable constituents. Many of them do not believe that helping others rather than their relations is fruitful. Therefore, it is becoming a tradition that when politicians on the Plateau are seeking for any public office, we see them begging for favors in a most astonishing humble manner, but once they win elections, their benevolence automatically becomes history.

In most cases, most Plateau politicians based on their character are one unique different set of people yet your sincerely to comprehend in life. Many of them think that they are wiser staying aloft from their anticipated social responsibilities, the truth however is that they are but foolish, selfish, greedy and unthankful to God for His blessings and watch over them. All said and done, it is still unthinkable that despite the high-profile public service holders and remarkable politicians which the state has continued to produce, not much has been achieved in our quest in moving an appreciable percentage of the citizenry out of abject and excruciating poverty. Unlike other states of the federation where politicians and top government officials find it all joy spending millions on educational sponsorship of the citizenry, most Plateau politicians are still ideologically imbedded in the philosophy of sharing stipends and drugs to its vulnerable youth ever ready to cause all sorts of mayhem and acts of calamity on innocent people.

Many of our politicians and political officeholders are never interested in the future of our children but only helping them significantly to become nusance and menace to the society. Though Nigeria has had several decades of manageable democracy, not many are appreciative of that which our politicians have dished out as dividends of this civilian regime. Though our political leaders have continued to allocate humongous resources for developmental purposes, the resultant execution of most white elephant projects have been the order of the day.

Indeed, most of our rural areas are still left in an unimaginable deplorable condition. More than ninety percent of our rural occupants are impoverished beyond proportion even as our children are enveloped by drug related activities.

Here on the Plateau, this sad development is nothing much better as most areas are still lacking basic amenities. Our youths have been turned into political thugs by this same people we stood under the rains and sun to elect them into office. This same people who do not mean us well are basically interested in our votes and that which can better their bread and butter. These same friends and brothers of ours are the ones refusing to treat us as human beings.

View Point

Bauchi Za'ar Day: An event worth celebrating

IT have been a tradition that during every first (1st) Saturday of November each year, all Za'ar (Sayawa) sons and daughters across the world do come back home to celebrate this cultural event. Looking down memory lane, the reasons for the yearly celebration was to commemorate and usher in a New Year and to show gratitude to the gods for a bumper harvest. That is how it has been celebrated right from ancestral times and this tradition has been kept alive till date,. WULUMBA ILIYA JATAU writes.

IN this modern times, the rationale behind the Za'ar day has been modified to incorporate showcasing of our rich cultural heritage to the outside world, to reaffirm our collective resolve as one people and an avenue to socialize and make merry. I always feel at home whenever I happen to be there even though of recent, a seed of discord had been attempted to be sown amongst the Za'ar people. Gradually, the once loving, peaceful and interesting traditional event is turning out to become an avenue for show of force between the various interest group Lhmb Za'ar is becoming a socio-political gathering where people in power and authority will come in all their grandeur apparatus to reaffirm their dominance over others.

Those present at this year's occasion will bear witness to the high present of security (military personnel) with Armor Carrier vehicle, Gun trucks, Machine guns and constant sporadic unnecessary shooting of live ammunitions into the air in presence of our revered traditional leaders, the very custodians of our culture without remorse. Despite all these challenges, it is believed that the Za'ar nation will make amends and heal its festered wounds.

That is why the Za'ar Day with its intents is needed now, more than ever for as an avenue for Za'ar people to come together and discuss as one people with a view to having common ground. Prof Chinua Achebe rightly said and I quote, " A man who calls his kinsmen to a feast does not do so to redeem them from starving. They all have food in their own houses. When we gather in the moonlight at village ground, it is not because of the moon. Every man can see it in his own compound. We come together because it is good for kinsmen to do so. Therefore, let us continue with team spirit and enjoy the power of togetherness. Let's smile not because we don't have problems but because we are stronger than these problems" .

Alone, I can smile but together we can also laugh. Alone, I can enjoy but together we can celebrate. Alone, I can talk but together we can speak. Let us promote things that unite us over things that cause disunity. Unity is our Greatest Strength.

On the 19th of November 2022, barely two (2) weeks after the celebration, Za'ar residents (ZDA) Bauchi under the able leadership of Comrade Ishaya T Audu in conjunction with various traditional Za'ar groups and unions also organized a day for Za'ar residents in Bauchi at Harmony High School, Yelwa, Bauchi State to have another experience of the recently concluded Lhmb Za'ar back home. The event started well with Za'ar stakeholders. Notable among the dignitaries in attendance was Engr. Isuwa Galla, the ZDA president worldwide among many others.

Former Chairman, Bogoro Local Government Area, Hon. Iliya Habila with President, Za'ar Development Association (ZDA) Engr. Isuwa Gallah at the event.

Ketura Babas, outgoing Miss. Za'ar National presenting incoming Miss. Za'ar Bauchi, Chongchasumi with a crown.

There was cultural display, Za'ar dance, and many more events in the programme that was interesting. What took the center stage was the brilliant and eloquent speech by the speaker, the immediate past Chairman of Bogoro Local Government, Hon. Iliya Habila, (Matawallen Bogoro), (JP).

He spoke on the title, "THE IMPERATIVES OF UNITY AND PEACE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ZAARLAND". Hon. Habila posit that "Peace cannot be achieved through violence, it can only be attained through understanding ". - Ralph Waldo Emerson. He added that, cultural days are days set aside by respective peoples to mark thanksgiving to God for his protection, blessings and mercies in the past year. Over the years, following the centralization of Za'ar Cultural festival popularly known as Lhmb Za'ar, the organized Za'ar communities outside Tafawa Balewa and Bogoro Local Governments, the traditional areas of the Za'ar ethnic nationalities have also come to institutionalize the celebration of Za'ar Day as a way of bringing together all Za'ar sons and daughters to make merriment, exchange ideas and views and brainstorm on contemporary issues within and outside the Za'ar Land.

He applauded present crop of leaders of the association for sustaining this historic and epoch making event adding that, this year's theme which is "The Imperatives of Peace and Unity to the Development of Za'ar Land" was both timely and apt, considering the present socio-political developments in Za'ar Land. He drew the attention of the public to the fact that culture is the holistic way of life of a people- interrelationships, dressing, food, worship, education, marriage and all other components of social interactions of a people. The former Chairman elaborated that, since time immemorial, the Za'ar nation was known for its rich culture and values of peace, unity, hard work honesty and faithfulness in service, among others. These virtues have made the Za'ar man and woman to stand out in all spheres of life which is very true. In fact, these virtues have also continued to be the strength of the Za'ar in its existence right from the dark days through the period of modernization and in our contemporary days where we are battling with the encroachment of alien cultures into Za'ar culture. As has been stipulated by sociologists, the only thing permanent in life is change. However, if change does not yield positive results, then that change is not desirable. That is why despite embracing modernity and civilization, those aspects of culture that are good are still retained by the people.

He added that, In Za'ar Land, the culture of peace and unity had been the strong pillars of our progress and development. In fact, in all, no development can be achieved in the absence of these two important ingredients. Even where development has been achieved, peace and unity must be sustained. Otherwise, the development achieved would be reversed as can be seen in nations that engaged in conflicts and wars. Yet, peace and unity do not exist in vacuum-there must be deliberate and conscious effort to have and sustain them. He also suggested that for peace, unity and development to take place, certain vital things must be achieved:

Law and Order: No society can achieve peace, unity and development while its citizens are lawless and in disorder. Whether developed or developing, what keeps all societies together is law and order. Laws are supposed to check the excessive tendencies of individuals, both leaders and the led.

Respect for Leaders and Elders: As societies develop, elders and leaders are those who are supposed to transmit Cultural values to young generations and even generations yet unborn. This is a natural phenomenon because the old gather experiences which are transmitted to the young generations. So, it is laws of nature that elders and leaders are to provide path to progress and development while the led and younger ones are mainly required to follow while their inputs are also respected.

Respect for Authorities and Government: Respect for government and other authorities are necessary if development of any society will be attained. Government has the responsibility of enacting laws, channeling the path for development as well as maintaining law and order. Though the mandate of governance is always given by the people in democratic regimes, the people are duty-bound to obey the government. Even when the people feel the people given such mandate have not delivered, the laws have also provided for a democratic and civilized way of retrieving the mandate by the people through the polls and other means.

To be concluded

Lalong flags off senatorial campaign, hosts PLAFEST 2022

It was home coming for Governor Simon Bako Lalong as he stormed the APC party office headquarters in Shendam Local Government Area (LGA) to flag off his senatorial campaign last week.

He was received by excited drummers, dancers dressed in the customised regalia of his party the APC. A large crowd of party supporters and stakeholders were also on ground to welcome him to his constituency.

The excited crowd chanted party songs, while disk- Jockeys and DJ's were seen moving in their vehicles with large speakers, vibrating special songs with the Governors name embedded in the lyrics.

Lalong promised to represent his constituents well at the Senate if given the mandate, he also inaugurated his campaign council to kick off campaigns.

Goodwill donations from friends, well- wishers and the his wife, Regina gave a boost to the campaign with a donation of 10 vehicles and other incentives.

After the Shendam campaign flag off, Lalong who is also the Director General (DG) of the APC Presidential Campaign Council proceeded to Lagos to join the Tinubu/Shettima campaign train and they were received by a mammoth Lagos crowd that displayed a lot of enthusiasm to the presidential team.

Among other events that topped activities at Little Rayfield last week was when the Gindiri Old Students Association (GOSA) came for a courtesy visit to intimate the Governor on its activities for the celebrations of the establishment of the association at 50.

Led by their National President Engr. Sunday Hyat, who is the Plateau State Head of Civil Service,

GOSA praised government for being instrumental to giving most of their members appointments. Hyat presented a list of a week long line up of activities including road work, sanitation exercise, visit to traditional rulers, commissioning of projects, dining and wining with students of the school, and ending the celebrations with its decades-age-long tradition of holding a reunion service at the Ulster Church Gindiri.

Governor Lalong had during the courtesy visit commended GOSA for being a force to reckon with in the state and for occupying key positions in his cabinet.

He urged the old students to continue to make an impact by setting the pace based on their records of excellence in the state, nation and across the world.

PLAFEST 2022.

It was a day for colourful traditional displays as the maiden edition of Plateau Festival of Arts and Culture (PLAFEST) took place at the Rwang Pam Stadium Jos.

As chief host and initiator of the cultural event, Governor Lalong was excited that it had come into fruition, as a forum that will be marked yearly to celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the Plateau People.

Dancers and participants from the over 53 ethnic groups from the 17 Local Government areas of Plateau state attended, including participants from 15 States of the Federation, personalities and traditional rulers from across the state and country, among them Niger, Kogi, Jigawa, Nassarawa, Borno, Federal Capital Territory, Lagos, Kaduna, States.

While horse riders and masquerades performed displays that attracted the attention of guests, there was a march past and dance displays by the different participating ethnic groups across the country.

Governor Lalong in his remarks at the forum apologised for shifting the event due to his numerous tight schedules.

He recalled that in line with the philosophy of the Late Joseph Gomwalk, the Plateau man is peaceful and hospitable and does not tolerate it when you dabble into his culture.

"Plateau people love and respect their Culture. We are very proud of our culture and I thank God that this event is coming at the end of the year, after harvests, so that it will usher in other series of cultural festivals across the state".

Special recognition was given to Mr. Peter Igho, nicknamed a "Jos son" who is the producer of popular NTA programs like Cock crow at dawn, Behind the clouds, and AM Express. Recognition was also given to Otumba Olusegun Runsuwe, the Director General of National Council of Arts and Culture who was introduced as a "Plateau Son" at the forum for his love and support to the state.

While speaking, Runsuwe said he is always excited to be in Plateau state stressing the need for unity, as he recalled how the state hosted the National Festival of Arts and Culture (NAFEST) in 2020.

He said when the dance displays was going on, there was a clear picture of Nigeria irrespective of the cultural diversity. He urged participants to enjoy Plateau, the only state with great temperature, climate and natural temperate endowments.

In his goodwill message, NTA's award winning former producer, Peter Igho used the forum to announce that the Popular TV drama series "Cock Crow at dawn" that had gone comatose will soon be revived.

He called for support of the state government, traditional rulers and other stakeholders to support the project. He also stressed that in the 80's and 90's, the choice of location and shooting of the sit-com on the Plateau was informed by the good weather, natural endowments and its rich cultural diversity stressing that this means there will a comeback to Plateau for shooting of the TV drama series.

Governor Lalong and the Gbong Gwom Jos all expressed excitement and their unalloyed support to the good news.

News

'Introduce proper visual art education in elementary

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

A Visual Art expert based in Jos, Plateau State, Da Mark Rwang, has called on the Federal Government to reconsider the important role art has played in the development of our society and introduce proper art education in both primary and secondary.

He made the call Saturday, while in an interview with **THE NIGERIA STANDARD** in Jos, the State capital on the occasion marking his weeklong Art Exhibition, held at the National Library Jos, the Plateau State capital.

The expert said, "I think it is important to redirect our minds to how painting can outlive the present moment because there are things that truly cannot be quantified, particularly the philosophy that is in art work. Tell me what is it that you see that is beautiful that is not designed?

"It would interest you to know that the American society for instance, were importing carpets and furniture from Europe about two hundred years ago, that was in 1820 to 1830. But they said it would be good to introduce art education in secondary schools and that has helped their society a lot.

"So, I think that, we should encourage art. I think that art should be taught properly in the primary schools and I also think that same should happen in our secondary schools because there are very few art teachers these days. So, I want to use this opportunity to call on the Federal Government to introduce proper art education in these schools", he appealed.

Rwang said there was need for government to make younger ones visualize their thought, lay down their thinking so that others could enjoy and things could be engaged because there are a lot of thinking in design. That was why another word for design is: "Intelligence Makes Visuals".

He disclosed that, some part of western world have introduced animation in their elementary schools because animation has a way of making children to think slightly further saying, "there are ways you write animation story and execute animation because even all the movements are created.

"So, if you teach kids about movement, they can anticipate something. They can anticipate something even before it comes because the movements are created by them. So, lots of intelligence is in art and there are so many things there to freely think and impact our society positively", he enthused.

Adamu

By HOSEA NYAMLONG

Lalong commissions six storey classroom block

EXECUTIVE Governor of Plateau State, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong has given thumbs up to the Executive Chairman of Plateau State Universal Basic Education (PLSUBEB), Prof. Matthew Sule.

Lalong commended him stated this during the commissioning ceremony of the newly completed six classrooms storey buildings at the Transfer Baptist Science Primary School in Shendam Local Government Council recently. He pointed out that this would enhanced the quality of primary education in Plateau State.

He stressed that the teachers should work hard to ensure that they impact the right knowledge to the pupils as they are the leaders of tomorrow and without education, they cannot reach attain the desired height.

He assured them of government's Government support and the continuous supervision of teachers because" to whom much is given, much is expected.".

Earlier in a welcome speech by PLSUBEB chairman, he said that the concept of model primary schools in the state was meant to re- introduce a standard of a conducive environment for teaching and learning environment that gurantees high productivity.

Sule added that the school has the population of about one thousand pupils, so, with the commissioning of the classrooms, the school will return to its one shift, not the two shifts earlier run by the school.

Naantuam

He appealed to parents to reciprocate this gestured by the willingness to send their children to the school by enrollment.

According to him, "That"that the board has harmonized the teaching and learning timetable across the 17 Local Government Areas of the State, which is simultaneously running

"Schools have also adopted a unified system of examination from nursery to grade six. Examination, examination will no longer be written on the blackboard for pupils again, but would be on sheets of paper for them to provide answers. This was in preparation for pupils to write external examinations".

He maintained that the board has introduced a new set of school uniforms uniform for the entire primary schools in the state. This State, this would pave way enable for easy identification of pupils where ever they are. More so , with this era of security challenge.

Sule appealed to stakeholders in education to adopt the approach of persuasive to help in returning all struggling children back to school. This would further helped to improve on the enrollment of children in primary schools.

Highlights of the event was the commissioning and the inspection of the newly completed classrooms by the Executive Governor alongside his wife and other dignitaries that grace the occasion.

Feature

Pursuing the repatriation of Nigeria's looted artifacts

The discourse on repatriation and restitution of looted and illegally acquired Nigerian cultural objects in European museums back to their Nigerian places of origin has been on-going. In fact, many more are in auction houses and galleries outside African continent, while there is no comprehensive audit of these materials, they are estimated to run into hundreds of thousands. GONI YUSUF LAWONDO writes.

NIGERIAN'S post-independence government have made a number of requests for the return of looted and illegally acquired Nigerian cultural objects in the collections of European museums while the majority of those requests were denied, a few were honoured.

However, it is, indeed, a mission that demands national and international diplomatic negotiations and working within reasonable ethical and legal frameworks.

The best known of all Nigerian looted heritage objects outside the country are the Benin objects. These are royal works of art made in bronze, brass, ivory, bone and wood. Four thousand (4,0000) of these (see Layiwola 2010) were plundered from the Benin kingdom following the British punitive expedition of 1897. Some of the objects were auctioned to defray the cost of the expenditure.

In fact, about 3,227 of these looted objects are scattered between 16 museums in the United Kingdom, USA, Germany, Austria and Netherlands. Others in Belgium, France, Italy and Switzerland are unaccounted for.

Next to Benin objects is Nok and other Nigerian baked clay sculpture from Ife, Zaria, Funtua, Katsina and Kwatarkwashi. A number of the accidental finds of Nok were turned over to the Nigerian Department of Antiquities which brought about Jos Museum in 1952. Others especially those plundered from burial sites, were trafficked to Europe.

Another illicit trafficking of Nigerian artifacts were stolen museum pieces such as, masks, ancestral drums, traditional doorposts, ife sculptures and Igbo ukwu.

Gert Chesi in Schwaz Austria an ethnologist who researches voodoo, has been active on the Nigerian scene as an illicit antiquities collector. His 'House of the people', a private museum built in 1995, housed the most splendid collection of Nok terracotta anywhere in the world. Because of the pressure of Icom as Nok was registered in it records of red list (ICOM 2000), which means they were protected by Nigerian law and could not have been sold not exported legally. Chesi 'House of the people' was renovated in preparation for donating its collections to the city of schwaz.

The postcolonial situation of illicit trafficking was the continuation of thefts, looting and illegal digging of artifacts. Factors that influence these acts are poverty, ignorance and lack of awareness of significance of artifacts. At the head of the looting are the Artifacts Rescuers Association of Nigeria (ARAN). This is an association of art dealers committed to the 'collection' and 'sale' of Nigerian antiquities, many times as agents of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM).

Eighteen of the biggest museums and galleries in the world signed the unilateral declaration on the importance and value of universal museums (DIVUM) to the effect that their holdings are the heritage of mankind. In fact, they argued that they house these items for global enjoyment, these museums declaration was a bold and arrogant notice against repatriations and return of looted artifacts. These museums take the position that their collections, no matter how acquired, are universal and anything done to deplete them through returns would be a great loss to global cultural heritage. Insecurity in African museum environment has also been used as a reason for the refusal by western museum to support the return of African objects in their holdings.

The Nigerian museum establishment acknowledges that the issue of returns, restitution and repatriations are about diplomacy and bilateral negotiations, the country has not achieved much using this means. The 1979 National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) (Decree no 77 and the 1970 UNESCO convention and the 1995 UNIDOTT convention have also not effectively checked the illicit trade in Nigerian antiquities nor led to appreciable returns.

The list of Nigerian objects particularly at risk from looting was drawn up at the workshop on the projection of African cultural heritage held in Amsterdam from 22 to 24 October, 1997.: (1) Esie (2) Ife (3) Nok

In 2010, acting on a tip off from the French, the US Homeland Security Investigation (HIS) and the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) intercepted ten terracotta statues at the John F Kennedy Airport. These together with a carved tusk were returned eight artifacts including two terracotta heads to Nigeria (Dokolo, 2018) and the French have returned five terracotta statue that were smuggled out of Nigeria by French national in 2010.

The Benin Dialogue Group in 2007 comprises the Nigerian officials and the Benin court participated in an exhibition "Benin Kings and Rituals: Court Art from Nigeria" in Bienna at the museum for volkertunde. The exhibition later moved to Berlin, Paris and Chicago. A large number of object on exhibition were objects looted by the Britain in 1987 following the punitive expedition against the Benin kingdom. After the exhibition, the museum of ethnology Vienna lured the NCMM into starting an open dialogue on the "accessibility of the art treasure of the Benin Kingdom and other Nigerians". The Benin Dialogue Group officially debuted in 2010, the second held in Berlin 2012 while the third meeting was held in Benin City Nigeria 2013. In fact, nothing of substance came out of the first three meetings.

The British museum failed to host the fourth meeting in 2014 as scheduled nearly aborted the group until students of Jesus College, Cambridge, protested over the continued display of the OKUKOR in their dining hall. The students demanded that the artifact be should returned to Nigeria because of the protest University of Cambridge stepped into the gap created by the refusal of the British museum to host the fourth meeting of the group.

In 2017, the University hosted the group at its trinity college where the issue of "rotating loan" of looted Benin objects by European museum to Nigerian explored officials of the NCMM and the Benin Court represented the Nigerian side. 15 European museums were in attendance. The meeting agreed to establish a permanent display in Benin City of looted materials from European museum in collaboration with the NCMM and the Benin Court. The meeting also agreed to establish a legal framework to guarantee the immunity of loaned objects from seizures in Nigeria. The fifth meeting was held at the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden in 2018.

However, Nigeria is yet to bring demands for restitution of cultural heritage before the UN intergovernmental committee. Though much of the dispossessed world is embracing Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as a possible route for the return of their stolen artifacts/heritage, Nigeria has yet to begin the complex process of demanding the return of its cultural treasures using the ADR as an alternative of litigation.

For more than a decade, the Benin Dialogue Group moved shortly, but make significant achievement in return of looted artifacts. The University Aberdeen, in Suotland, and Jesus College at the University of Cambridge have each surrendered the single Benin piece it had owned. The German government has committed to returning all of its Benin objects; the first two were delivered to Nigerian authorities in July, 2022. The Smithsonia Institution has likewised pledged to give most of its small collection of Benin work to a museum in modern-day Benin City. In August, London's Horniman museum of anthropoly and natural history pledged to return its Benin items. The University of Oxford and its museum may also soon surrender their significant collections.

The returned of these artifacts will give birth to Edo museum of West African Art, German authorities will also return more than 1,100 artifacts to the West African countries. About where to keep these returned artifact NCMM says some of the priceless sculptures will be stored in the National Museum in Benin once it has been expanded and others will be stored at the museum in Lagos.

Former NCMM DG, Mal. Abdallah Yusuf Usman said in Lagos 2014 that Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) Boston, U.S. has returned eight artefacts, which include works of bronze, terracotta, wood of Benin, ife and oron origin of Nigeria. This was achieved four years ago after the Ministry of Tourism Culture and National Orientation opened dialogue with foreign museums.

Usman said about four years ago from 2014, Nigerian NCMM started sharing and collaboration with European museums on the need to jointly find a way of resolving our differences concerning the holding of Nigerian artefacts. He added that the collaboration has resulted in the return of over 100 objects in the last few years and over 2000 objects in the last few months of this year.

NCMM DG, Prof. Abba Tijani said the commission was working tirelessly on preparing a conducive environment for the artefacts to be kept in an international standard. He said that upon return of the artefacts, the NCMM would organize a series of exhibition where they would be displayed for the general public to have a glimpse of them.

LAWONDO is an Assistant Director Research (Ethnography) National Museum, Jos.

Sports

What do African teams need?

Ghanaian fans celebrating their team3-2 victory over South Korea

AFTER two rounds of games, Africa's five World Cup representatives now know what they need to qualify for the last 16 in Qatar.

Three sides from the continent have their destiny in their own hands going into the final round of group games, but two others need to win and then hope other results go their way.

If two sides finish level on points, final group standings will be decided by goal difference, then goals scored before head-to-head results and fair play records come in.

If records are still identical, lots will be drawn - and if the the latter sounds far-fetched, do not forget that Senegal became the first side to be **eliminated on fair play** in Russia four years ago.

The equation is fairly simple for the African champions - the Teranga Lions must beat Ecuador on Tuesday (15:00 GMT) to be sure of progressing from Group A, while the South Americans need just a point to go through themselves.

Senegal could go through with a draw but only if the Netherlands lose to Qatar, which seems unlikely, by a margin of three goals - or a margin of two goals and Senegal outscore the Dutch by a goal.

Given the hosts have lost both their games so far, Aliou Cisse should not count on such a favour and has promised "not to overthink the game" against Ecuador.

"We understand that winning will allow us to continue the adventure and that's what we want to do," Cisse said. "We are OK, we are dealing with pressure and stress. For me, it is good stress."

Tunisia are up against it as the Carthage Eagles sit bottom of Group D after a goalless draw with Denmark preceded a 1-0 defeat by Australia.

The North Africans have to beat defending champions France, who are already assured of a last-16 place, and must score their first goal in Qatar on Wednesday (15:00 GMT) to have any chance of doing so.

Even then, that will not be enough if Australia beat Denmark.

Tunisia will progress on goal difference if they win and Australia-Denmark ends in a draw, but a win for Denmark would see it come down to goal difference, goals scored or even, possibly, the fair play record.

Tunisia were the first African country to win a game at the World Cup, when they beat Mexico 3-1 in Argentina in 1978, but they once again look set to fail to reach the knock-out stages - for the sixth time out of six.

Sunday's stunning 2-0 victory over Belgium leaves Morocco in a strong position in Group F, with four points from two games.

A draw in their final match against Canada tomorrow will be enough to reach the knock-out stages for just the second time, and first since topping their group in 1986.

Morocco could win the group if they win and Belgium beat Croatia in the other match - or if the Atlas Lions and Croatia are both victorious and the North Africans better Croatia's margin of victory by two goals.

"We've matched two of the best teams in the world," coach Walid Regragui said. "Of course it will be tougher if we get to the knockout stage but that's the level I want to get to.

"With these fans, with these players and this spirit we can do anything. The competition is not over, we have to recover quickly for the game against Canada."

The Indomitable Lions seemed to be crashing out early when trailing Serbia 3-1 with half an hour left in their second group game, but a Vincent Aboubakar-inspired comeback saw the Central Africans draw 3-3 and live to fight another day.

Senegal knocked Qatar out of the World Cup last time out

Tunisian fans have backed their team in great number but have yet to see them score a goal

Similar to Tunisia, Cameroon need a victory against one of the heavyweights of world football - in this instance, five-time World Cup winners Brazil themselves - in their final game on Friday

The Brazilians are already through to the last 16 but for Cameroon, like the North Africans, a win may not be enough depending on the result of the Serbia-Switzerland game.

"It is possible to beat Brazil," coach Rigobert Song said. "We believe in ourselves, we did not come here to just go through the motions. Cameroon still has a contribution to make to this tournament."

Ghana held their nerve to beat South Korea 3-2 on Monday and secure a vital three points after a defeat by the same scoreline to Portugal in their opener.

Monday's win keeps the Black Stars' fate in their own hands, and while a draw could be enough if Portugal beat South Korea, the West Africans know that victory over Uruguay in their final match on Friday (15:00 GMT) will see them through.

The prospect of knocking out Uruguay at the same time adds further spice to a tie already smothered in it, since the game is a rematch of the 2010 quarter-final, which saw Ghana narrowly miss out on becoming the first African side to reach the semi-finals.

In an unforgettable clash, Uruguay's Luis Suarez was sent off deep into extra-time for a handball on the goalline to stop a certain goal - prior to Asamoah Gyan missing the resulting penalty, and the South Americans going on to win via a shoot-out.

Suarez could again feature as one of three survivors from the Uruguay starting XI from that match in Johannesburg, while Andre Ayew is the only member of Ghana's 2010 squad in Qatar - even if he did not feature in the last eight match in South Africa.

"It will be very difficult but I'm not a guy that thinks much of revenge," coach Otto Addo said.

"It was a really, really long time ago. I am a strong believer if you don't seek too much revenge on these kind of things, sometimes you get the blessings."

Sports

Cameroon kept their hopes of reaching the World Cup last 16 alive as they battled back from two goals down to draw a six-goal thriller with Serbia in Group G.

Cameroon roar back to keep hope alive

CAMEROON took the lead through Jean-Charles Castelletto but Strahinja Pavlovic and Sergej Milinkovic-Savic replied to give Serbia a half-time advantage.

Aleksandar Mitrovic added a third for Serbia and they looked to be cruising to a win that would have put them in a strong position to progress from the group.

However the Indomitable Lions roared back thanks to Vincent Aboubakar's superb lob and Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting's equaliser three minutes later.

Mitrovic had a chance to regain the lead for his side but the Fulham striker curled a shot wide in the closing moments after being teed up by Dusan Tadic.

Both sides lost their opening match so this result leaves them two points adrift of second-placed Switzerland, who **lost 1-0 to group leaders Brazil** later on Monday.

Both Serbia and Cameroon need to win their final games, against Switzerland and Brazil respectively, to keep alive their qualification hopes.

In arguably the tournament's most entertaining game so far, Serbia started brightly and Mitrovic twice went close to giving his side the lead.

He hit the post before flashing a shot wide after the ball fell kindly to him in the box as Serbia made all the early running.

However Cameroon took the lead against the run of play when Nicolas N'Koulou flicked on a corner and Castelletto tapped his first international goal home from close range.

Serbia did not panic, though, and turned the game on its head in first-half stoppage time.

Pavlovic headed Serbia's first World Cup goal in 335 minutes of play before Milinkovic-Savic beat Cameroon keeper Devis Epassy with a low drive.

When Mitrovic finished off a brilliant Serbia passing move to give them a two-goal cushion, Dragan Stojkovic's side looked to be heading for a comfortable victory.

However, substitute Aboubakar gave Cameroon hope when he raced clear and, perhaps thinking he was offside, cut inside past a defender and casually scooped the ball over Vanja Milinkovic-Savic for one of the tournament's best goals.

Three minutes later the striker again beat the offside trap but this time squared the ball for ex-Stoke City striker Choupo-Moting to level from close range.

While Cameroon looked dangerous when they pushed for a winner, it was Mitrovic who had the best chance to snatch the victory, but he curled wide as Serbia were left to rue their inability to close out the match.

A defeat would have left Cameroon relying on Switzerland to beat Brazil in order to avoid elimination with a match to spare.

Instead Rigobert Song's side retain hope of getting out of the group stage for the first time since 1990, albeit their final game will be a difficult match against Brazil.

Coach Song suspends Andre Onana from Cameroon squad

Cameroon coach Rigobert Song has suspended Andre Onana from his squad after saying the goalkeeper asked not to play their second World Cup group match amid reports of a falling out between the pair in Qatar.

Inter Milan keeper Onana started for the Indomitable Lions in their Group G opener against Switzerland, a 1-0 defeat, but he was replaced by Devis Epassy for **Monday's 3-3 draw** against Serbia.

He was not listed among the substitutes.

In a statement, Cameroon's football federation (Fecafoot) said that "following Song's decision, Onana has been temporarily suspended from the group for disciplinary reasons."

Now led by former team-mate Samuel Eto'o, Fecafoot expressed "its full support" for the coach, 46, as he implemented policy "aimed at preserving discipline, solidarity, complementarity and cohesion with the national team".

Reports of dissatisfaction with Song's tactical nous have emerged from the Cameroon camp, with suggestions the coach and goalkeeper have disagreed over Onana's regular venturing out of his box.

The former Ajax Amsterdam star had more touches (61), some far from his penalty area, than any other goalkeeper at the World Cup against the Swiss, but his progressive approach is seemingly at odds with Song's.

"He is an important player, but we are in a difficult tournament," said the coach after the thrilling draw.

Andre Onana (left) and coach Rigobert Song, pictured during training on Sunday, have fallen out in an apparent row over tactics

"I know what I have to do, and that is to ensure that the team takes precedence over any individuals.

"Andre wanted to step out and we accepted that position. In a squad, discipline is important."

Onana started all of Cameroon's games this year, having **served a nine-month doping ban last year.**

Asked by news agency AFP whether he would start Cameroon's final match, Onana's replacement Devis Epassy said "you'll have to ask the coach" and insisted there was no problem in the camp.

Cameroon fought back from 3-1 down to grab a point and keep alive their hopes of progressing to the last 16.

Substitute Vincent Aboubakar was pivotal in their comeback, beating the offside trap to pull a goal back in stunning fashion with a scooped lob before setting up the equaliser three minutes later.

The result also ended an unwanted record for Cameroon of eight consecutive defeats at the World Cup, a run stretching back to the 2002 tournament in Japan and South Korea.

"In these competitions you have to show desire for victory," said Aboubakar.

"My team-mates played a great first half despite some small mistakes. We felt they [Serbia] were shaky and a bit tired. When I came on, I tried to make the most of it.

"[The] most important [thing] is to give the Cameroon people joy. What matters is the mindset and the collective spirit, and in that regard we played a great game."

One point from two games means the Central Africans will have to beat five-time champions Brazil in their final group match on Friday (19:00 GMT) to have a chance of going through to the last 16.

Former Liverpool defender Song said his side's spirited second-half showing against Serbia was 'part of our DNA as Cameroon footballers' and thinks they can pull off an upset against the South Americans.

Ronaldo comes close on landmark goal

IT was the moment Cristiano Ronaldo thought he had joined Eusebio as Portugal's World Cup record goalscorer - well, for a couple of minutes anyway.

The Portuguese forward's jubilant celebrations convinced everyone his head had got the last touch to Bruno Fernandes' cross for the crucial opener in his country's 2-0 win over Uruguay.

Not only was it a goal that sent Portugal on their way to qualification for the knockout stages with a game to spare, it was also going to be his ninth World Cup strike - bringing him level with the great Eusebio.

But then came the uncertainty. While Ronaldo was clearly convinced it was his goal, the replays were not so conclusive.

Initially named as the goalscorer, it was not long before the goal was taken away from him and given to former Manchester United team-mate Fernandes.

Cameras panned on the 37-year-old as Fernandes was named as the goalscorer on the public address system and his bemused smile summed up most people's confusion. Who did score that goal? A question to which we might never really know the answer.

Ronaldo

However, goals like this one are usually referred to a Fifa panel, who will scrutinise it from every angle to establish who got the final touch and therefore to whom the goal should be attributed.

So, Ronaldo could still be retrospectively awarded the goal in the coming days.

Fernandes went on to score a second from the penalty spot as Portugal comfortably booked their place in the last 16.

"I don't believe it matters who touched the ball," said Fernandes after the game. "At the time, I thought Cristiano touched the ball and I was passing to him but all that is important is that we got through."

Before Qatar 2022 started, Ronaldo had stated his desire to beat Eusebio's World Cup record, and started with a goal in Portugal's opener against Ghana - a 3-2 win - to become the first player to score at five World Cups.

And, while Ronaldo seemed content enough for Fernandes to receive the plaudits at the final whistle, the debate raged on elsewhere.

Former West Ham defender Matthew Upson told BBC Radio 5 Live: "I think it's Bruno Fernandes' goal. The only evidence I've got is the replay that I can see in front of me and the ball doesn't change direction. You normally see the ball change its rotation or direction slightly if there is a glancing header.

"It won't go down as Ronaldo's goal on the scoresheet and that is what he is bothered about because he thrives off those records. But it is his goal in the sense that his presence and his run caused it."

While 5 Live commentator Ian Dennis added: "Good luck to the Fifa official who has to go into the changing room to tell Cristiano Ronaldo he hasn't scored that. Bruno Fernandes has been credited with it."

Davies scores Canada's first goa

IT was a moment that will go down in Canadian football history.

The country's star player Alphonso Davies leapt high into the Doha sky to meet Tajon Buchanan's perfect cross and powered in a header to become the first man to score for the Maple Leafs at a World Cup.

The opener against Croatia came just 68 seconds into the game and sent the North American side's supporters into raptures inside Khalifa International Stadium.

Boss John Herdman said afterwards: "It was a great start and a proud moment for the fans in the stadium and people back home. We got to celebrate something we have been waiting for for a long time."

But 2018 finalists Croatia did not read the script as they **hit back to win 4-1**, ending Canadian dreams by sending them out of the tournament following back-to-back defeats.

'He's incredible, Canada's

Davies

Gareth Bale'

Winger Davies' name will be etched forever in Canadian folklore as the man who scored their first World Cup goal in their fifth game - following 50 missed attempts.

His back story is one of incredible resilience which has seen the 22-year-old experience a meteoric rise.

Born in a refugee camp in Ghana in 2000, Davies' parents fled civil war in Liberia and moved to Canada as refugees when he was five.

But he now plays for Bayern Munich - one of Europe's biggest sides - after the Bundesliga champions paid a then-Major League Soccer record £9.84m to sign him from Vancouver Whitecaps as a 17-year-old in 2018.

THE Nigeria Standard

TRUTH EXALTS A NATION

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1972 WEDNESDAY, November 30, 2022 www.nigeriastandarddailynewspaper@yahoo.com

FRAGMENT

"The Electoral Act, 2022 like the previous Electoral Acts does not define electoral offences. However, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, sixth edition, defines "Offence" as 'an illegal act or a crime' and equally defines crime as 'activity that involves breaking the Law' or illegal act or activity that can be punished by law. Any conduct, action or inaction which is prohibited by the Electoral Act and a breach of which attracts punishment, is called an electoral offence. Examples of such offences are Impersonation and voting when not qualified, Disorderly conducts at Elections, Snatching and destroying of election materials on Election Day; and Dereliction of duty by Electoral officials."

POLYCARP DAMA DATAU, Esq

Guest writer

Polycarp Dama Datau, Esq.

Notes on electoral offences in Electoral Act, 2022

Journalists were part of seminar participants on election coverage recently held in Jos

LAWS provide order and regulate all aspects of human lives. The electoral process is no exception. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 as amended, the Electoral Act 2022, and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Rules and Regulations constitute the legal framework which regulate the electoral process. Provisions of these deal with the right to associate, voters' rights, right to form political parties, registration of voters, Election Day procedures, dispute resolution mechanism, etc.

The Electoral Act, 2022 like the previous Electoral Acts does not define electoral offences. However, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, sixth edition, defines "Offence" as 'an illegal act or a crime' and equally defines crime as 'activity that involves breaking the Law' or illegal act or activity that can be punished by law. Any conduct, action or inaction which is prohibited by the Electoral Act and a breach of which attracts punishment, is called an electoral offence. Examples of such offences are Impersonation and voting when not qualified, Disorderly conducts at Elections, Snatching and destroying of election materials on Election Day; and Dereliction of duty by Electoral officials.

The perpetrators of these offences, through acts of commission and/or omission have been, unfortunately, all critical stakeholders in the electoral process. Over the years, electoral offences have been committed by Electoral Officers and staff of electoral commissions, Security personnel, Political Parties and their officials, Candidates, Election Observers, Journalists/Media Houses, voters and the general public.

ELECTORAL OFFENCES

Whilst the Criminal and Penal codes may take precedents over most of criminal offences across the country, sections 114 to 129 of the Electoral Act, 2022 provide for what constitute the gamut of electoral offences in the country. They include offences relating to registration, the nomination of candidates, disorderly behaviour at political meetings, improper use of voter cards, improper use of vehicles, impersonation, voting when not qualified, dereliction of duty by electoral officers or polling agents of political parties, bribery and conspiracy and violation of the requirement for secrecy in voting.

These offences and punishments are captured thus:

Sections 114 (Offences in relation to registration); 115 (Offences in Relation to Nomination); 116 (Disorderly Behaviour at Political Meetings); 117 (Improper Use of Voters Cards); 118 (Improper Use of Vehicles); 119 (Impersonation and Voting when not Qualified); 120 (Dereliction of Duty); 121 (bribery and conspiracy); 122 (requirement of secrecy in voting); 123 (Wrongful Voting and False Statements); 124 (Voting by Unregistered Person); 125 (Disorderly Conduct at Elections); 126 (Offences on Election Day); 127 (Undue Influence); and 128 (Threatening Violence). The offences carry prison terms of 1million naira or 2 years in prison; or 500, 000.00 (five hundred thousand naira) or one year while some carry prison term of 6 months or 200, 000.00 (two hundred thousand naira) or even 100, 000.00 (one hundred thousand naira) depending on the nature. An interesting provision worthy of note is section 126 (4) which pins a prison term of 24 months for any person who tampers with electoral materials or devices. There is no provision for an option of fine if this offence is committed. It provides viz:

(4) Any person who snatches or destroys any election material or any election device, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of 24 months.

This is intended to serve as a deterrent to ballot box snatchers or those who violently snatch and destroy electoral materials during elections. Similarly, section 121 (6) provides thus:

(6) For the purpose of this Act, a candidate shall be deemed to have committed an offence if it was committed with his or her knowledge and consent.

The clear and apparent consequence is that if a candidate for an election sponsors a person who commits an offence such as bribery or undue influence or violence, the candidate will be legally responsible and liable.

Correspondingly, it is also noteworthy to highlight offences that pertain to political party campaigns as well as media coverage even though they are not captured under the sections of electoral offences by the drafters of the Electoral Act. It may be easy to miss them out yet breaches of these provisions carry severe penalties and sentence upon conviction. Section 78 (contravention of section 227 of the 1999 Constitution - Section 227 of the 1999 Constitution is on the prohibition of quasi-military organisations); section 85 (offences in relation to finance of a political party); section 83 (monitoring of political parties); sections 86 and 87 (annual statements and remittance of contributions); sections 88 and 89 (limitation on election expenses); section 92 (prohibition of certain conduct at political campaigns);

It is important to copiously reproduce section 92(1) of the Electoral Act, 2022, for its significance to campaigns and media coverage in view of the milieu and recent turn events across the country. It read thus:

A political campaign or slogan shall not be tainted with abusive language directly or indirectly likely to injure religious, ethnic, tribal or sectional feelings.

(2) Abusive, intemperate, slanderous or base language or insinuations or innuendoes designed or likely to provoke violent reaction or emotions shall not be employed or used in political campaigns.

(3) Places designated for religious worship, police station, and public offices shall not be used

(a) for political campaigns, rallies and processions; or

(b) to promote, propagate or attack political parties, candidates or their programmes or ideologies.

(4) Masquerades shall not be employed or used by any political party, aspirant or candidate during political campaigns or for any other political purpose.

(5) A political party, aspirant or candidate of a political party shall not retain, organise, train or equip any person or group of persons for the purpose of enabling them to be employed for the use or display of physical force or coercion in promoting any political objective or interests, or in such manner as to arouse reasonable apprehension that they are organised, trained or equipped for that purpose.

(6) A political party, aspirant or candidate shall not keep or use armed private security organisation, vanguard or any other group or individual by whatever name called for the purpose of providing security, assisting or aiding the political party or candidate in whatever manner during campaigns, rallies, processions or elections.

(7) A political party, aspirant or candidate who contravenes any of the provisions of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction –

(a) in the case of an aspirant or candidate, to a maximum fine of N1,000,000 or imprisonment for a term of 12 months; and

(b) in the case of a political party, to a fine of N2,000,000 in the first instance, and N1,000,000 for any subsequent offence.

(8) Any person or group of persons who aids or abets a political party, an aspirant or a candidate in contravening the provisions of subsection (5), commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of N500,000 or imprisonment for a term of three years or both.

Others are section 93 (prohibition of the use of force or violence during campaign); section 94 (limitation on political broadcast and campaign by political parties); section 96 (prohibition of broadcast, 24 hours proceeding or on polling date); section 95 (campaign for election); it reads thus:

95 (1) A candidate and his or her party shall campaign for the elections in accordance with such rules and regulations as may be determined by the Commission.

(2) State apparatus including the media shall not be employed to the advantage or disadvantage of any political party or candidate at any election.

To be continued

Printed and published by Plateau Publishing Corporation (PPC), No. 5 Joseph Gomwalk Road, P.M.B. 2112, Jos. Telephone: 08035929564. EDITOR: PAUL JATAU.
LAGOS OFFICE: Plot 1234, Ahmadu Bello Way, Victoria Island, Lagos. ABUJA OFFICE: Lantana Crescent, Karu Nyanya Federal Housing Estate. Advert Contacts: 08039795356, 08036164465. All correspondence to P.M.B. 2112, Jos. (ISSN 0795-6988). *E-mail-nigeriastandarddailynewspaper@yahoo.com*