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 to deal
 decisively
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Politicians buying PVCs, inducing voters -INEC

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has accused politicians of buying Permanent Voters Cards (PVCs) and financially inducing voters to harvest their Voter Identification Numbers (VIN).

Speaking during the launch of the #YourVoteMatters project by NESSACTION, an election observer group, Acting Chairman and National Commissioner overseeing the FCT, Kaduna and Plateau States, Mohammed

persons have been recently convicted for illegal possession of PVCs in Sokoto and Kano States. Haruna warned the alleged politician to desist or face the full rot of the law.

He said, "We are aware some politicians are more

you collect the PVC and then you sell it out or allow someone else to have it, you are aiding illegal possession of the PVC, which is an offence in our Electoral Act.

"Some of you are aware that only recently, INEC managed to convict two

guilty of illegal possession of PVCs in Kano and Sokoto. So, I urge people to connect their PVCs, keep them safely, and make sure that on election day, you go out and cast your votes because, of course, without your PVC you cannot vote."

NESSACTION, Eniola Cole, said that the project scheduled for implementation in the FCT, Nasarawa, and Plateau states, would provide logistics and give incentives to communities with low PVCs collection rates.

She said it aims to assist INEC in increasing the number of PVCs collected ahead of the 2023 general elections as well as the voters mobilized on

The Executive Director of

Continued on page 1

FG suspends all COVID-19 restrictions

THE Federal Government, on Monday, confirmed THEWILL's earlier report, published last Friday, that President Muhammadu Buhari has approved the suspension of all COVID-19 restrictions.

Following the approval, the Presidential Steering Committee on Covid-19 (PSC), has directed the suspension of all pre-arrival or post-arrival COVID tests for air travellers in Nigeria.

The development was announced in a letter by the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), dated December 12, 2022, and addressed to airline operators.

The letter, signed by Captain Musa S. Nuhu, Director General of Civil Aviation, also makes the wearing of face masks optional for passengers onboard aircraft.

The statement read: "The prevalence of the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria and most parts of the world has remained at a low level for a Sustained period.

"The Presidential Steering Committee on CoVID-19 (PSC) has, therefore, revised the COVID-19/Public Health guidelines as follows:

(A) Domestic Operations
 1. Mask Mandate:

a. The wearing of face masks inside Airport terminal buildings and onboard aircraft by airport workers, passengers, and crew members is no longer mandatory. Wearing face masks by passengers onboard aircraft or inside Airport terminal buildings is discretionary, but recommended.

b. Persons aged 60 years and above, immunocompromised (e.g. due to organ

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Boko Haram: Atiku should query PDP, not Buhari -FG

THE Minister of Information and Culture Lai Mohammed has faulted ex-Vice President Atiku Abubakar for blaming Boko Haram insurgency on the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari.

He said Atiku should join issues with the Peoples

Democratic Party (PDP), not Buhari.

He said those who live in glass houses should not throw stones.

Mohammed took swipes at Atiku at the 11th edition of the 'PMB Administration Scorecard Series (2015-2023)' in Abuja.

He said: "Let me quickly

react to the statement credited to His Excellency, former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, who has reportedly expressed surprise at the

"The former Vice President was quoted as saying he could not honestly understand the Boko Haram

phenomenon, and wondered why Boko Haram continues to operate.

"Well, I think His Excellency didn't need to look far to get the answers to his questions. He should simply ask his party, the PDP, under whose watch the Boko Haram

insurgency started in 2009.

"For six years until 2015, when our administration assumed office and inherited Boko Haram, the PDP more or less nurtured the insurgents to the monster they later became.

"Alhaji Atiku should ask

Continued on page 2

News

Politicians buying PVCs, inducing voters -INEC



Mamood

Continued from page 1

election day.

"We implore the general public to take advantage of the timeframe set by INEC for PVC collection at the Commission's LGA offices nationwide from December 12, 2022, to January 5, 2023, and at the 8809 Registration Areas from January 6, 2023, to January 22, 2023,

including Saturdays and Sundays.

"The public can, through dedicated channels, inform us of their location in order to receive support including the PVC collection buses and community outreach activities to be conducted at the local level in each state by our community mobilization officers",

FG suspends all COVID-19 restrictions

Continued from page 1

transplant, cancer, etc), those with comorbidities (e.g. Heart disease, Diabetes Mellitus, Hypertension, etc), are advised to use facemasks, wash their hands with water and soap, Use hand alcohol-based sanitisers, and avoid large gatherings.

2. Disinfection of bags at the entrance of terminal buildings is no longer required.

3. Airlines are, therefore, required to resume serving catering (meals and drinks) onboard aircraft.

4. Maintaining social distancing at airport terminal buildings is no longer mandatory.

5. Facilities and conveyances are advised to maintain good environmental hygiene, good ventilation, and encourage good hand and respiratory hygiene.

6. The use of alcohol-based sanitisers by passengers and airport workers is recommended.

7. Boarding and disembarkation protocols are to be maintained.

(B) International Operations:

1. All requirements in 'A' above shall apply.

2. COVID-19 Travel Testing: Pre-departure and Post-arrival COVID-19 PCR tests are no longer required for all passengers irrespective of vaccination

status. PCR tests required for all passengers who are partial/not fully vaccinated have been suspended.

3. Health Declaration form. Permission to travel QR code is no longer required. A simplified Health NCA A Questionnaire form (non-COVID-19 specific) shall be completed by all passengers travelling to Nigeria preferably pre-departure on the Nigerian International Travel Portal (NITP). Passengers who fail to fill the health questionnaire on the NITP pre-departure will be required to fill the health questionnaire either onboard the aircraft prior to landing or at the Airport terminal building upon arrival.

4. All other Covid-19 quarantine/travel requirements are hereby made optional.

This AOL supersedes previous AOLs issued on COVID-19 for domestic and international operations.

All Aviation Service Providers are hereby required to comply with the above requirements.

Non-compliance by any Aviation Service provider with this AOL shall attract appropriate sanctions.

This AOL shall be effective immediately.

Continued from page 1

his party why it allowed Boko Haram to operate freely, bombing cities, motor parks, schools and other soft targets unrestrained.

"Alhaji Atiku, who was then residing in Abuja before porting to his new abode in Dubai, should ask his party, the PDP, while it allowed Boko Haram to bomb the police headquarters, the UN Complex, a shopping mall and motor parks in Abuja with so much ease."

Mohammed said contrary to the assumption of Atiku, the nation's military has curtailed Boko Haram insurgents.

Nigeria embassy welcomes man who rode bicycle to S/Arabia

NIGERIAN Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Yahaya Lawal, has welcomed Aliyu Bala, the Nigerian who rode a bicycle from Jos in Plateau State to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

A statement from the embassy in Jeddah made available to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) said that Bala had been granted all the needed consular assistance and encouragement.

Bala, who left Jos in February 2022 to perform the Umrah in Makkah and visit the Holy Prophet's Mosque in Madinah, arrived in the Kingdom on December 8.

After meeting the Consular General, who represented the Ambassador, he proceeded to Makkah where he performed Umrah and will spend a few days for worship at the Ka'abah, Islam's holiest site.

Bala, who is the first to

Boko Haram: Atiku should query PDP, not Buhari -FG

He added: "His Excellency may want to know that today, thanks to our patriotic troops, military objectives have almost been achieved in the North East, the home region of Boko Haram, thereby creating conditions for Stabilization Operations to take place.

"Despite the very large Boko Haram Terrorists have been cleared from most of their strongholds while remnants are being restricted to the Tumbus/island around the Lake Chad that are difficult to access.

"The former Vice President may want to know that both kinetic and non-kinetic activities employed by the military have seen the terrorists surrendering in droves, thereby freeing large spaces for normal socio economic life to resume.

The good news this year is that a bumper agricultural harvest is assured, as farmers were able to carry out extensive farming, which has not been possible since the beginning of insurgency/terrorism in the North East.

"While on the campaign



Buhari

trail and throwing political jabs, we advise His Excellency Alhaji Atiku to note the popular idiom that people who live in glass houses should.

undertake such a journey from Nigeria in modern times, is expected to continue his 450-kilometer journey to Madinah where the embassy has also arranged a reception for him.

Since his arrival in the Kingdom, Bala has been in high spirits for surviving numerous obstacles and

dangers on his perilous journey and ultimately realizing his life ambition.

He passed through Niger, Chad, and Sudan before arriving in Saudi Arabia.

Bala said he encountered many challenges during the journey, including overcoming threats from Boko Haram insurgents, kidnappers,

bandits, and wild animals.

He said that the Boko Haram members he encountered asked him to pray for them, while the bandits he met took away his mobile phone.

However on arrival at a small town in Sudan and narrated his ordeal with the criminals, he was assisted by the people he met, who procured a new phone for him.

He added that he slept in bushes on many occasions and had to push the bicycle for kilometres when he had a problem with the tyres.

Bala added that he was given a hero's welcome in all the cities and towns he passed through, as well as donations and encouragement.

The bicycle pilgrim is expected to begin his home-bound journey after completing the religious rites of lesser Hajj and visit to Prophet Muhammad's mosque in Madinah.



Onyeama

Senate defers debate on CBN

THE Senate has deferred its debate on the cash withdrawal policy by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to today, Wednesday, December 14, 2022.

The lawmakers had, last week, fixed Tuesday to debate the cash withdrawal limit announced by the apex bank.

According to the policy, which takes effect from January 9, 2023, over-the-counter cash withdrawals by individuals and corporate entities will not exceed N100, 000 and N500, 000, respectively, per week. It also directed that only N200 and lower denominations be loaded into banks' ATMs.

It said the maximum cash withdrawal per week via ATM should be N100,000 subject to a maximum of N20,000 cash withdrawal per day.

The CBN had last week

Wednesday, directed its Committee on Banking and Finance, to interrogate the Policy while screening the two Deputy Governors renominated by President Muhammadu Buhari, for confirmation by the lawmakers.

But at the resumption of Plenary on Tuesday, a member of the Committee, Senator

Olubunmi Adetumbi, told his colleagues that the report, which was to be presented at plenary had to be withheld because its chairman, Uba Sani, is attending the All Progressives Congress (APC) presidential rally in Kaduna

Adetumbi assured the Senate that the report of the Committee on the CBN

withdrawal policy is ready, noting that the Committee's chairman had to attend the APC Zonal rally in his capacity as the governorship candidate of Kaduna State.

Responding, Senate President Ahmad Lawan, appealed to lawmakers to be patient as the findings of the Committee will be unveiled within 24 hours.





Rolling away illegal e-waste shipments from Nigeria

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Marketers slam NNPC's import monopoly on fuel

OIL Marketers in Nigeria have criticised Nigeria's National Petroleum Company Limited's import monopoly, claiming that the situation has hurt the petrol market.

The General Manager, Operations, TotalEnergies Marketing Nigeria Limited, Abdulmutalib Rabi, called for an end to NNPC's petrol import monopoly during his presentation at a virtual press workshop themed, 'Deregulation: Understanding the Downstream Supply Chain' held in Lagos on Monday.

Rabi, who was represented by an independent consultant and former Group Executive Director, NNPC, Bello Rabi, TotalEnergies general manager said the Federal Government should allow healthy competition by granting licenses and access to foreign exchange to marketers willing to get into the products importation business.

He noted, "But so long as NNPC remains the sole importer of products importation, the amount spent on importation should be published for everyone to see because it is public fund that the company is using to bring in the products".

Chairman, Major Oil Marketers Association of Nigeria, Olumide Adeosun, said there were about 2.5bn litres of petroleum products onshore Lagos waters.

According to him, although the association was sure that there was sufficient products in-country, the only challenge was lack of investment in infrastructure to guarantee fast and smooth distribution of the products to eradicate the scarcity.

"As you can see, as of November, statistics showed that there was enough products onshore Lagos. However, tight daughter vessel availability is hampering efforts to discharge offshore Lagos, contributing to logistics constraints that have seen shortages spring up across the country.

"The dialogue with the Nigerian people needs to begin to identify, negotiate and agree these areas and begin implementation to save the downstream industry, which has been in freefall due to a lack of investment to maintain, renew and grow assets and facilities such as refineries,



Rabi

pipelines, depots, trucks, and modern filling stations."

Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, MOMAN, Clement Usong, while rounding off the session, said full deregulation of the petroleum downstream sector should be implemented in phases to cushion the effects of the sharp rise in Premium Motor Spirit prices.

"Having subsidised PMS for so long, Nigerian institutions now have a diminished capacity to deal with the current local energy crisis. A disruption in any part of the supply

chain causes ripple effects and results in queues at stations. As a country, we must begin the process of price deregulation to reduce this inefficient subsidy," he said.

The Federal Government has expressed concerns over the incessant conflict between farmers and herders in sub-Saharan Africa, stating that it was threatening food security in Nigeria.

It said that it was high time

THE Petroleum Products Retail Outlets Owners Association of Nigeria (PETROAN) has faulted the 48-hour ultimatum issued by the Department of State Services (DSS) that oil marketers make Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) also known as petrol available for Nigerians.

The Association said until the secret police and other security agencies go after the cartel operating among private depot owners who are hoarding the essential commodity, fuel scarcity and long queues will persist.

PETROAN Chairman, System 2E, Eastern Zone, Sunny Nkpe, made this known on Channels Television's Sunrise Daily programme on Monday.

"Let me make it categorically clear here: there is no amount of threat by DSS that is going to change anything. If it must change, they must start from the source; they should go to the private depot operators to find out where for now we are getting products from.

"Until the cartel or cabal in that area is handled or taken care of, we can never get any

'Fuel Scarcity: Stop issuing empty threats, go after cabals'



Nkpe

reduction or fairness in the distribution of the product," Nkpe said.

He also lamented that

there has not been a drop of petrol allocation to the Port Harcourt depot in the last six months.

Farmer-herder conflicts: Our food security under threat – FG

Save Nigeria from famine, food crisis - CBN

THE Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has expressed commitment towards national development, says its various finance interventions have improved food security in Nigeria.

The CBN Director, Development Finance Department, Yusuf Yila, stated this on Monday at the 2022 retreat for the department in Abuja.

Yila said although some people had raised concerns over the rising food inflation, the CBN interventions had saved the country from famine.

"The CBN has been at the forefront of ensuring Nigeria achieves food security in collaboration with other fiscal authorities, also stimulating growth in collaboration with ministry of industry," Yila said.

"Food security in Nigeria has received massive boost in the last five years since the CBN intervened in the sector to curb over-reliance on imported goods.

"We have traversed the length and breadth of Nigeria, empowering farmers and MSMEs in access to finance and agric-business and also using target credit facility. It became a comfort for households especially during the covid 19.

"For those looking at food inflation to discredit the work we have done in the development finance department, I just want to

tell them that Nigeria is part of a global system, and shocks from one facet of this system have a concomitant effect in the other parts. We are not alone because we are not aliens.

"While this is hardly any comfort over the rising prices of food, had we not intervened, we could have been facing a certain food crisis and severe famine of historical proportions.

Abuja at the Regions Summit on Human and Climate Security Challenges and Farmer-Herder Conflict Resolution in the Livestock Sector.

The summit was jointly organised by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the United Nations Development Programme and the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations. Its theme was, 'Promoting Peace and Climate Security in the Crop and Livestock Farming Sectors.'

In his address at the event, Abubakar said, "The summit became necessary as it provides the opportunity for dialogue and discourse on the way forward for achieving peaceful coexistence between crop farmers and livestock herders whose incessant conflict in the region is threatening food and national security in Nigeria.

"Farmer-herder conflict predates the existence of Nigeria as an independent, sovereign nation. It is a conflict that the previous and current generations of farmers and herders, especially rural dwellers have come to know and managed properly using traditional methods.

"However, the dimensions it has taken lately call for deep introspection into unravelling the causes of the heightened, unwarranted attacks by both actors in the conflict and more innovative ways of addressing it."



Yila



DSS ultimatum ends, petrol scarcity persists in states

DESPITE the Department of State Services (DSS) forty-eight hours ultimatum to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation Limited, Independent Petroleum Marketers Association of Nigeria (IPMAN) and other stakeholders in the oil sector to resolve and end the current fuel crisis, fuel queues have persisted in Plateau, Kaduna, Kogi, Kano states, and other parts of the country.

Recall, the secret service police vowed to go after them if queues did not disappear after 48 hours. DSS spokesman, Peter Afunanya, had announced the ultimatum in Abuja while addressing reporters after the Director-General of DSS, Yusuf Bichi, met with the stakeholders in the industry.

Economic Confidential report has indicated that long queues were yet to disappear in major cities, making black marketers have a field day, selling the commodity for as much as N350 per litre.

In earlier report, Economic Confidential had revealed that in Kano State, most filling stations did not dispense petrol and the few stations selling sold it for N310 a litre. While other stations in the state sold a litre for N280 to N290.

In Lokoja, Kogi State, motorists were seen on long queues at fuel stations; while in Kaduna and Jos, major fuel stations were not dispensing enabling black market to thrive.

Although Abuja and Lagos queues are dispersing but persisted in suburbs with prices ranging from N180, N200 to N220 a litre.

The chairman, Northern Independent Petroleum Marketers Forum, Musa Yahaya Maikifi, said the private depot price was above N200, prompting marketers to sell above the rate in Kano and other states.

He said, "Provided we're not refining the fuel in our country and the NNPC is using dollars to import the fuel, we cannot end the fuel crisis in Nigeria".

The chairman, Major Oil Marketers Association of Nigeria (MOMAN), Olumide Adeosun, urged the federal government to dialogue and negotiate with citizens on the implementation of price deregulation.

He said, "Having subsidized Premium Motor



Afunanya

Spirit (PMS) or petrol for so long, Nigerian institutions now have a diminished capacity to deal with the current local energy crisis. Disruption in any part of the supply chain causes ripple effects and results in queues at stations".

Meanwhile, The DSS in a

secrete response assured that they have commenced intelligence gathering called "overt and covert operations" to address the situation and will ensure that person(s) caught in discrepancies will pay dearly.

Nigerians Abroad with expired passports can return -NIS

THE Nigeria Immigration Service has assured that Nigerians with expired passports returning to the country will be accepted for re-entry.

This was contained in a memo addressed to all heads of missions, immigration attachés, airports comptroller and airlines.

According to the memo which was signed by the Special Assistant to the Comptroller General (Foreign Desk), DCI BM Lawal for the Comptroller-General of the Immigration Service, Muhammed Babandede, all airlines were requested to allow holders with expired Nigerian passport to board without any hindrance.

The memo reads, "I am directed to respectfully present the compliments of the Comptroller General of Nigeria Immigration Service and notify all relevant authorities that the Federal government of Nigeria has approved that Nigerians returning home can be admitted into the country with their expired Nigerian passports.

"Consequently, all Airlines are requested to allow holders of expired Nigerian passports to board without

any hindrance."

"In addition, all Nigerian Diplomatic Missions abroad are kindly

Manufacturers, others urged to repay N10tn loan

THE Central Bank of Nigeria has frowned at the incessant reluctant repayment of loans provided by the bank, noting that it might affect the sustainability of the bank's initiatives.

The Deputy Governor, Financial System Stability Directorate of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Aishah Ahmad, made this known while stating the importance of the interventions to the Nigerian economy during the 2022 Retreat for the Development Finance Department in Abuja on Monday.

She urged beneficiaries of the CBN loans to pay back to enable others to benefit from the interventions.

She said, "In recent years, the efforts and interventions of the CBN have ushered in a lot of growth and impact. It helped us combat extreme poverty, food insecurity and grow the agricultural sector and manufacturing base.

THE Comptroller General, Nigeria Agricultural Quarantine Service (NAQS), Dr. Vincent Isegbe, has said the country is expected to earn about \$3 billion annually from hibiscus exports to Mexico.

Both NAQS and its Mexican counterpart body, SENASICA, signed a phytosanitary protocol in November to stabilise and grow the export of Nigerian hibiscus flowers (zobo) to Mexico.

Speaking at the 4th CG's Summit and Management Retreat in Abuja, Isegbe, noted that the framework was designed to future-proof bilateral trade in hibiscus "between Nigeria and the largest importer of Nigerian hibiscus against avoidable disruptions."

He described hibiscus as a metaphor for the countless high-value exportable agro-commodities, which Nigeria underutilise and take for granted.

Isegbe pointed out that agro-export intensification will boost the country's overall agricultural productivity, generate sustainable wealth, and improve household incomes among the large swath of the

FG to earn \$3bn from Hibiscus export to Mexico yearly



Dr. Isegbe

70 per cent population that is engaged in agriculture and agro-allied industries.

He also said the service is currently working to democratise the involvement of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in agro-export activities under its Export Improvement Initiative and Export Certification Value Chains.

Isegbe said, "Our people toil, in the rain and in the sun, to cultivate crops and

rear animals. However, the majority of them reside in rural areas. They eke out their subsistence in the low returns of the local market.

"Many of them are unaware of their right to access the ECOWAS and African Continental Free Trade Area markets. Moreover, they know little or nothing about export standards. They don't consider themselves qualified to export because they presume that only the rich and the affluent can export.

"We are working to overcome this challenge of the 'last mile' by targeting grassroots farmers, off takers, and processors."

He said, "The urgent task that must be done is to reposition our food production system to straddle our local market and the export market like the one and only giant of the continent."

According to him, "NAQS is entrusted with the critical mandate to inspect and certify food and agricultural products for export and to facilitate international trade.

"The nature of our mandate puts us at the front of the federal government's drive to maximize its vast potential in non-oil exports.

"Our work is essential any day, any time – it is all the more so considering the dire need for the country to escalate national revenue earning, create jobs for the teeming unemployed and underemployed youths and lift millions of our citizens out of poverty."

forwarding the above for your information, please accept the assurances of the Comptroller General of Immigration Service".

The memo added, " While

– CBN

allocations, respectively.

In his address of welcome, the Director, Development Finance Department, Philip Yusuf, said that the CBN had been at the forefront of food security in the country.

He also said that although some people had raised concerns over the rising food inflation, the CBN interventions had said the country from famine.

He said, "For those looking at food inflation to discredit the work we have done in the development finance department, I just want to tell them that Nigeria is part of a global financial system and can be prone to global shocks.

"With the rising price of food, we would have faced severe famine if not for our interventions, and the agriculture value chain has witnessed tremendous progress because of our interventions which we believe has set Nigeria is on the part of sustainable food sufficiency."

CHANGE OF NAME

PHILIP

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

Politics

APC assembles artisans, technicians in support of Tinubu

From JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja

THE Presidential campaign council of the All Progressive Congress (APC) Presidential candidate has added to his milestone as it assembled 3.5 million artisans and technicians in Abuja in support of APC presidential candidate Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

The event which was organized by the National Director, Artisans and Technicians Mr Adeshina Akinyemu and National co-Director and Northwest zonal Director Artisans and Technicians Hon. Sanusi Garba was flagged off by the Director General of APC and Governor of Plateau state Simon Bako Lalong.

The event also feature the launching of "operation 3030 for Tinubu/Shettima 2023". A strategic voting pattern adopted by Nigerians artisans and Technicians for next year's presidential election.

Lalong who was represented by the former Governor of Nasarawa State and national coordinator Tinubu/Shettima grassroots indepened campaign



Lalong

council Mr Silas Agara said a lot of Nigerians belong to this class of artisans and Technicians and we are getting a sizable number of them to drive the Tinubu/Shettima campaign victory in 2023.

Earlier, the National Director, Artisans and Technician of the PCC, Adeshina Said the event was put up to show their

commitment and strength to the campaign and to assure that they can deliver at any time in the political process in Nigeria.

The artisans and Technicians, he said have mobilized 100,000 artisans and Technicians across Nigeria For this event and the message they will take back home.

GOMBE State Governor, Muhammad Inuwa Yahaya, has kick start his 2023 Governorship reelection campaign with loads of promises to consolidate on his achievements and to also execute more.

Top among his promises to the people of Balanga South State constituency where to construct more rural roads to link all villages.

The Governor's campaign team started with personal visits to five electoral wards of Talasse, Gelengu, Swa, Bangui and Degri in Balanga Local Government Area of the State which makes up Balanga South State constituency.

He promised the rural dwellers that their votes to him and all APC candidates is what will guarantee the fulfilment of the promises to better their lives having fulfilled his past promises adding that they must go out to obtain their PVC's.

He recounted that Balanga LGA has benefitted immensely from the Network 1100 Project of his administration where several roads were constructed including the important 21 kilometer road linking Balanga North and South worth more than 8 billion Naira.

"When we came here in 2019, we made promises, but today, we can beat our

Inuwa promises to woo Gombe voters for second tenure

From WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe

chest that most of these promises are successfully delivered.

"We are proud of what we did and I am sure people are satisfied with the achievements; I am also confident that APC will have a landslide victory in the forthcoming general elections", he added.

Earlier in his remarks before the commencement of the campaigns, the Bala Waja, Paramount traditional ruler in the Chiefdom, Alhaji Danjuma Muhammad, described the visit of the campaign team as "home-coming".

He appreciated the decision to select Balanga LGA as the first stopover of the campaign train as an honor

to the people of the chiefdom.

Also speaking at the palace of the Bala Waja, the Director General of the APC Campaign in Gombe State, Barrister Zubair Muhammad Umar, called on people of Balanga to choose wisely in the 2023 general elections, by voting for APC candidates at all levels.

He charged the district and village heads to mobilize their subjects on the development projects executed by the Inuwa Yahaya led APC administration.

"We did not ask you to campaign for us, it's not your duty, but tell your subjects the truth about our development projects and let them decide", he said.



Yahaya

Atiku, Tambuwal meet Ortom in Benue before Christmas

THE effort to achieve common ground between the feuding groups in the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) may intensify next week as there is the likelihood of its presidential flag bearer, Atiku Abubakar, traveling to Benue State to meet with Governor Samuel Ortom.

The source learned that this is part of the outcome of the meeting last weekend in Makurdi between the Benue governor, who is the Chairman of the G-5 governors, and his Sokoto State counterpart, Aminu Tambuwal.

Tambuwal was said to have advanced the idea that there is still hope for resolution of the protracted crisis before the elections.

However, Ortom advised Tambuwal, who is both the Chairman of the PDP Governors Forum and the Director-General of the PDP Presidential Campaign Council, to reach out to the other governors in the Integrity Group.

Findings showed that even though Ortom appreciated the visit to him, he informed his

guest that he alone cannot take a decision for the G-5. Despite being the chairman of the group, Wike is the leader of the Integrity Group with other members being Governors Seyi Makinde (Oyo), Okezie Ikpeazu (Abia) and Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi (Enugu).

Tambuwal came to seek reconciliation with Governor Ortom but Ortom told him that he cannot take any decision on his own, that he should meet with Wike and the other members of the G-5," a source privy to the discussion confided in the Nigerian Tribune.

The source, who craved for anonymity because of lack of authority to discuss the matter, also confirmed that arrangements would be made to receive the PDP flag bearer and Tambuwal in Makurdi before Christmas in continuation of the effort to achieve peace in the main opposition party.

This comes as both Atiku and his running mate, Okowa, stormed the Makurdi Airport on Monday without giving

Governor Ortom any prior notice. They transited there on their way to Lafia, Nasarawa State, for the presidential rally that took place there.

Meanwhile, there was mild drama at the airport in Makurdi, the Benue State capital during a brief encounter between the campaign train of the Peoples Democratic Party's Presidential Candidate, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, and the state governor, Samuel Ortom along with his colleague in Rivers State, Nyesom Wike, while Atiku was on his way to campaign in Nasarawa State, on Monday.

The short encounter came barely 24 hours after Atiku said he has met with Governor Nyesom Wike of Rivers State to resolve the lingering crisis within the party without any way forward.

Speaking on Sunday during the People's Town Hall, Atiku said: "I have met Wike two times in Port Harcourt, two times in Abuja, one time in London, personally. "It is not on my part; it is on the other side; I am waiting for him," he said, without revealing the details of his discussions with the Rivers governor. Atiku was on the programme alongside his running mate, Governor Ifeanyi Okowa.

Last week, Wike and four other governors that formed the Integrity Group, restated that the door for reconciliation remained open over the misunderstanding with PDP national leadership. According to the report, about 20 minutes before his arrival, Governor Ortom arrived at the airport and many thought he

was there to receive the PDP presidential candidate.

However, about five minutes later, the PDP vice-presidential candidate, Governor Ifeanyi Okowa of Delta State, landed at the airport, and he exchanged pleasantries with Ortom.

Politicians inducing voters with money, buying PVCs— INEC

THE Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, yesterday, raised the alarm that some politicians have been buying up Permanent Voter Cards, PVCs, and financially inducing unsuspecting voters to harvest their Voter Identification Numbers ahead of the 2023 general elections.

The revelation by INEC, however, elicited angry reactions from the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, Labour Party, LP, and regional bodies such as the Pan-Yoruba socio-political organisation, Afenifere, Pan Niger Delta Forum, PANDEF, Ohanaeze Ndigbo and the Middle Belt Forum, MBF.

Raising the alarm during the launch of #YourVoteMatters project by an election observer group, NESSACTION, in Abuja, the National Commissioner overseeing the FCT, Nasarawa, Kaduna and Plateau states, Mohammed Haruna, disclosed that two people were recently convicted for illegal possession of PVCs in Sokoto and Kano states.

The project, supported by the International Foundation for Electoral System, IFES, the United States Agency for

International Development, USAID, and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, FCDO, seeks to assist INEC in increasing the number of PVCs collected ahead of the 2023 general elections as well as the voters mobilised on Election Day.

Speaking, the INEC National Commissioner, said: "We are aware some politicians are more or less buying the PVCs. If you collect the PVC and then you sell it out or allow someone else to have it, you are aiding illegal possession of the PVC which is an offence in our Electoral Act.

"Some of you are aware that only recently, INEC managed to convict two people, who were found guilty of illegal possession of PVCs in Kano and Sokoto. So, I urge people to connect their PVCs, keep it safe, and make sure that on Election Day, you go out there and cast your votes because, of course, without your PVC you cannot vote."

In her remarks, Executive Director of NESSACTION, Ambassador Eniola Cole, explained that the project slated for implementation in the FCT, Nasarawa, and Plateau states will provide logistics that will generate

incentives in communities with low PVC collection rates.

Cole said: "We implore the general public to take advantage of the timeframe set by INEC for PVC collection at the Commission's LGA offices nationwide from December 12, 2022 to January 5, 2023, and at the 8809 Registration Areas from January 6-22, 2023 including Saturdays and Sundays.

"The public can, through dedicated channels, inform us of their location to receive support including the PVC collection buses and community outreach activities to be conducted at the local level in each state by our community mobilisation officers."

Reacting to the alarm, the PDP on Monday described the development as worrisome and a threat to democracy if found to be true.

National Publicity Secretary of the party, Mr Debo Ologunagba, in a chat with Vanguard, urged President Muhammadu Buhari and the security services to up their game by ensuring that the claim was thoroughly investigated and those found culpable in the ugly trade are apprehended and brought to justice.



Politics

Atiku pledge for constitutional review

From JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja

PRESIDENTIAL candidate of the People Democratic Party (PDP) Alhaji Atiku Abubakar has assured Abuja indigenes that his administration would give them their constitutional requirements if elected president next year.

Speaking at a campaign rally recently in Abuja the Presidential hopeful also promised Constitution review if the demands of the indigenes require such.

Alhaji Atiku Abubakar started that the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) as the seat of power suppose to feel the impact of government before any other part of the country but regretted the state of insecurity in the Nations capital.

"Currently we have challenges, can you imagine Abuja is not secured? Can you imagine Abuja as the Nation capital is not secured? We shall protect Abuja and secure it for your own safety". He stated.

The former vice president restated his pledge to restructure and unify every part of the country.

He further assured that no part of the country would be marginalized in his government adding that " we



Atiku

have pledged to restore security, it is very very essential that we give every body peace. It is only when there is peace that we can talk undertake our different aspirations.

"We have promised that education is key to youth development. We have the highest number of out of school children. We will make sure that these children go

back to school. We will make sure that our universities reopen forever and ever".

Also speaking, chairman of the PDP presidential campaign council (PCC) Governor Udom Emmanuel said Atiku would restore the lost glory of the country if elected.

He added that with Atiku Nigeria will occupy it's rightful place again in the comity of nations.

OHANAEZE Ndigbo has blamed INEC for any manipulations they are experiencing from politicians, saying that they left openings for such manipulations.

The apex Igbo socio-cultural body said it would be unfortunate if despite all the opportunity and funds provided for INEC could not provide water-tight security for its vital materials.

"They are supposed to be the regulator. They are supposed to regulate the electoral process, and the Commission that is supposed to regulate the election is now complaining. Where are we going?"

There should be a mechanism in place to ensure things work according.

INEC creating room for manipulation

— Ohanaeze

"We are supposed to complain to them but now they are the ones complaining to us.

"There must be opening, that is why some of these things are happening.

"If indeed there is electronic model they are trying to use, of course these things will not be happening.

"There is opening for people to begin manipulating the 2023 election. Their body language is indicating that maybe they are going away to what they presented to the public.

"They are part of the problems for not providing proper mechanisms to avoid all these irregularities.

That is exactly what they have been doing, what they in INEC for a very long time till now, and if with all the opportunity and money given to them, they have not been able to ensure a credible election and avoid irregularities; it is unfortunate", Ohanaeze Ndigbo National Publicity Secretary, Dr. Alex Chidozie Ogbonnia said.

Police officer, gunmen killed in attack on INEC office

A police officer was, on Monday, killed when gunmen attacked another office of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Owerri, Imo State, South-east Nigeria.

The attack occurred at about 2 a.m., PREMIUM TIMES learnt.

It comes about one week after gunmen attacked another INEC office in the Oru West Local Government Area of the same state, making it the eighth attack on the commission's facilities within



Alkali

the last four months across the country.

In the latest attack, the gunmen were said to have thrown an Improvised Explosive Device into the INEC facility, which destroyed several offices and vehicles parked on the premises.

However, some police operatives stationed at the commission's office were said to have engaged the hoodlums in a shoot-out, which resulted in the death of the police officer.

The police killed three of the gunmen in the attack.

The police spokesperson in the state, Michael Abattam, confirmed the attack to PREMIUM TIMES Monday morning.

"We lost one police officer in the attack, and one (another officer) was injured. But we neutralised three of the hoodlums," he said.

Mr Abattam, a chief superintendent of police, said two of the gunmen were arrested and that a few others might be arrested later.

As I speak with you, we have arrested two (gunmen). More are still coming because operatives are still combing the area to arrest other fleeing suspects," Mr Abattam added.

Three AK-47 rifles, three pump action rifles, three sticks of dynamite, and four petrol bombs were among the items recovered from the gunmen during the operation, according to the police.

Some photographs of the INEC facility showing some operational vehicles destroyed in the attack have been circulating on Facebook.

Also, a video clip showing one building with a destroyed roof has been circulating on Facebook.

INEC Chairman Mahmood Yakubu had, on 29 November, said the recent attacks on its facilities will not stop the commission from conducting

CLCN commends PMB, calls for implementation of electoral law

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Catholic Laity's Council of Nigeria (CLCN), has commended President Muhammadu Buhari, for signing the Electoral Act 2022 into law, but called for the full implementation of the law to ensure that ensure goodwill, transparency and equity that would elect credibility for gainful transformation of the nation.

This was part of the resolutions reached at the 49th Annual National Conference of the Catholic Laity's Council of Nigeria, held at Abbé Louis Bautain Retreat, Conference and Catechetical Centre, Itele Ijebu Ogun State signed by Hon. (Sir) Henry H. Yunkwap KSJI, JP, and Mrs. Anthonia Ogunbiyi as the National President and National Assistant Secretary-General respectively, made available to THE NIGERIA STANDARD in Jos, the Plateau State capital recently.

The communiqué stated that, "the Council commends the effort of President Buhari for signing the Electoral Act 2022 into law towards ensuring a smooth and credible transition. Nevertheless, the Council calls for holistic implementation of the Electoral law in line with goodwill, transparency and

equity to engender credible candidates that will gainfully transform the nation.

"In the same vein, Council commends Nigerians for coming out to register and encouraged them not to only collect PVC but utilize the rare opportunity to vote wisely and pray for God's choice for the nation and also prays for peaceful, free and fair elections in the forthcoming year 2023

"Council, however, decries the worsening security challenges in Nigeria and condemns in totality, the unchecked activities of

terrorists, kidnappers, rapists, bandits, armed robbers and herdsmen who constantly attack innocent citizens now that the elections are around the corner", it stated.

The President, said, the Council applauded the Academic Staff Union of the Universities (ASUU), for suspending their prolonged industrial action in sympathy of the innocent students saying, "the Council calls on the Federal Government to fulfil its part of the obligation in the agreement/memorandum of Understanding with ASUU to avoid another industrial action.

Politicians will be sentenced INEC

Ahead of the 2023 general elections, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has said it is aware that some politicians are engaged in buying up Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs) from "poverty-stricken Nigerians."

INEC warned that anyone caught selling his or her PVC violates the Electoral Act and would be dragged to court and face prosecution.

The body, which raised the alarm on Monday, also revealed that those desperate politicians were financially inducing unsuspecting voters to harvest their Voter Identification Numbers.

The electoral umpire

disclosed the absurdity during the launch of #YourVoteMatters project in Abuja.

INEC National Commissioner overseeing the FCT, Nasarawa, Kaduna and Plateau states, Mohammed Haruna, who raised the alarm revealed that two people had been convicted for illegal possession of PVCs in Sokoto and Kano states.

Haruna said: "We are aware some politicians are more or less buying the PVCs. If you collect the PVC and then you sell it out or allow someone else to have it, you are aiding illegal possession of the PVC which is an offence in our Electoral Act.

"Some of you are aware that only recently, INEC managed to convict two people, who were found guilty of illegal possession of PVCs in Kano and Sokoto. So, I urge people to collect their PVCs, keep it safe, and make sure that on Election Day, you go out there and cast your votes because, of course, without your PVC you cannot vote."

The project which is supported by the International Foundation for Electoral System, IFES, the United States Agency for International Development, USAID, and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, FCDO, seeks to assist INEC in



Yakubu

increasing the number of PVCs collected ahead of the 2023 general elections as well as the voters mobilised on Election Day.

IMAGES

LALONG COMMISSIONS PHC, ISSUES PLASCHEMA CARDS

Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (CON) last week commissioned Primary Healthcare Clinic and issued PLASCHEMA cards to less privileged in Hambiak, Shendam LGA



Governor Lalong cutting the tape to officially commission the Clinic, being flanked by other dignitaries



PHC Hambiak and Ambulance commissioned by the Governor



Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (CON) with the Commissioner of Health, Dr. Ninkong Ndam Lar



Secretary to Government of the State Prof. Danladi Abok Atu, representative of Chairman, Shendam, LGC and HRH Miskoom Thomas Yunkwap with others



Representative of PLHA Speaker, Rt. Hon. Saleh Shehu Yipmong (right) with the House Majority Leader, Hon. Naanlong Daniel



Cross section of members of the community on hand to welcome the Governor



Director General, PLASCHEMA, Dr. Jemchang Yildam Fabong (left) with the Executive Secretary, State Primary Healthcare Board, Dr. Livinus Miapkwap



Gamai dancers entertaining guests at the commissioning ceremony

Photos: DANLADI DUK

Politics

Presidential elections: Funding crisis rocks major parties

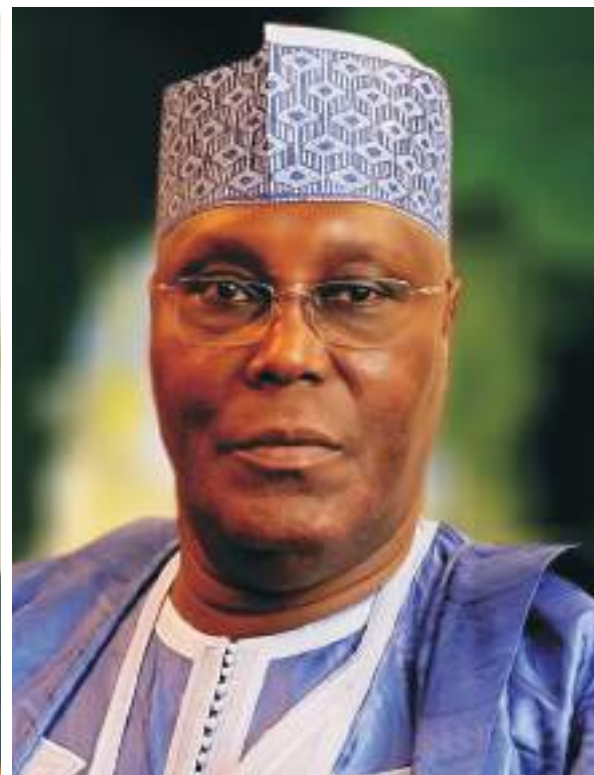
The expectation that the ongoing campaign for the 2023 general election would be one of the most expensive in Nigeria's chequered history may not be true in the long run, given the funding crisis presently rocking the major political parties ahead of the election.



Tinubu



Obi



Atiku

ELECTION funding can make or mar a party facing formidable rivals in the challenging contest for the prized office of President in a large, diverse and multi-ethnic country like Nigeria.

Steady mobilisation, promotions, advertisement, recruitment, deployment and the feel good atmosphere that money usually brings disappear when funding is unsteady or interrupted, thereby creating a sense of uncertainty. More so, when the source of major funding fails to keep up an earlier promise.

This is the current situation of things in the presidential campaign train of the three major parties contesting the 2023 presidential election, namely the All Progressives Congress (APC), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the Labour Party (LP), THEWILL has learnt.

The funding crisis within the Labour Party is not new to observers of political developments in the country as the crisis is currently threatening to tear the soul of the party apart. Most of the problems currently facing the party are related to funding as it does not have the financial wherewithal to properly prosecute the campaign of its widely popular presidential candidate, Mr. Peter Obi.

Although the APC Presidential Campaign Council is believed to have enough funds to take care of the Bola Ahmed Tinubu/ Kashim Shettima presidential campaign, the tight hold on the resources is becoming a source of worry for the members of the campaign council, whom THEWILL gathered, have been rendered redundant and frustrated.

Impeccable sources within the Tinubu/Shettima Presidential Campaign Council pointed accusing fingers at a powerful and influential family member of the APC presidential candidate, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, as holding tight to available funds and supervising the disbursement directly by himself, thus rendering those officially assigned to do so redundant.

"It is so frustrating. The young man is the one handling every spending

and supervising all the publicity and advertising spendings, as well as the youth engagement across the country. Some of us were brought back from what we were doing and now, we are not being funded," a leading member of the media team of the APC Presidential Campaign Council was quoted to have said as he complained bitterly of being rendered redundant.

Dependable sources within the PDP told our correspondents that the expectation that the party would not have any problem financing the campaign is losing ground.

THEWILL gathered that the party's campaign is not buoyant unlike the past elections. According to sources, Atiku, who is the presidential candidate, is perceived not to be as stupendously rich as he was in 2019 and that the party's primary held on May 30, 2022 at the Velodrome of the Moshood Abiola Stadium, Abuja, was majorly financed by Governor Ifeanyi Okowa, who had earlier done a deal with Atiku to be his running mate.

This was why Atiku insisted on Okowa as deputy despite a special committee's recommendation of Governor Nyesom Wike of Rivers State as its preferred choice.

However, it was gathered that Okowa, who had earlier pledged to fully finance the presidential campaign before and after he was picked as the vice presidential candidate, is now foot dragging.

This development, THEWILL gathered, is straining relations between Atiku and Okowa. This is because the latter has not released sufficient funds six months after he made the pledge.

One of the leaders of the PDP, who spoke on the issue on condition of anonymity, said, "Like other party leaders who

extended funding for the primaries, Dr Okowa was very helpful in the emergence of former Vice President Atiku Abubakar. But since his emergence as VP, things have taken a new turn with regards to funding.

"We don't know what went wrong. Okowa now appears to be foot-dragging in releasing enough money for the campaign. It was because Wike heard of the problem that he announced that the Federal Government paid the arrears of the ecological funds of all the South-South States recently.

"Wike was trying to cause problems by exposing that Okowa has enough money in hand but is just playing games with Atiku. The truth is that Okowa is shocked that Atiku really expects him to fully fund their campaign and this is a burden that Okowa is not willing to carry alone."

Another prominent source said the problem is that "as a major source of funding, Okowa is yet to deliver on his promise and this is causing some rift with his principal, Atiku Abubakar."

Can Okowa solely fund the presidential campaign of the Atiku/Okowa ticket? PDP stalwarts say it is a task too heavy for the Governor to handle. Yet, Atiku is banking on Okowa to foot a large chunk of the bill.

Investigation by THEWILL shows that Okowa's reluctance is influenced by Delta's Governorship election and the uncertainty surrounding his political future.

For a governor whose second term in office will end in five months, the question of retaining and maintaining leadership in a state in which he has loomed large has come to hit him in the face and he is said to be trying to be careful not to put all his eggs in one basket by throwing too much money into the presidential election, in the event that the party loses the presidency in the February 2023 election.

The recent revelation by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) that it is

preparing for a second ballot in case there is no clear winner in the presidential election in the first ballot, the threat of Peter Obi and the Labour Party's dominance in the South-East, as well as his entry into the South-South, the two regions, which were regarded as PDP stronghold, it was gathered, is making Okowa tread carefully with funds.

This was confirmed by a source who said: "The governor's reluctance to release the promised funding is also a direct response to the political threat posed by the Peter Obi/Datti candidacy, which has been gaining traction in the state recently.

"Delta state has a large Igbo population which is resonating with the South-East support for the Obi/Datti presidency since the major social-cultural group, Ohanaeze Ndigbo recently threw their weight behind the candidacy.

"Consequently, the "OBident movement" has waxed stronger in the state. The battle cry of another, 'Fulani replacing another Fulani' and 'power shift to south', has found a fertile ground to germinate fast, posing a threat to the firm control of the party in the state."

What this means is that for a state that has been under the control of the PDP since the dawn of the fourth republic in 1999, winning the governorship is more certain than winning the presidency, enabling leadership dominance and control in the state by the governor.

All this will require huge sums of money to service and maintain. Closely tied to this, according to a dependable source, is the uncertainty of victory at the centre, the anti-party activities of the governors of Rivers, Benue, Abia, Enugu and Oyo States, who are insisting on geo-political balance, and the problem they have created for the party. With less than 90 days to the general election, the crisis is still rocking the party, even as its officials continue with electioneering.

Also acting as a restraint on the governor's disposition to release significant funds is the complication caused by the unanticipated flooding of the state recently. The flood disaster, which started in September, through November 2022 and which is yet to fully abate, is said to have compounded the finances of the state.

The flooding had left many citizens in large parts of the state overwhelmed alongside those of other similar riverine states in the Niger Delta, such as Rivers and Bayelsa States.

Apart from Bayelsa, however, Delta State was the worst hit as many of its communities were submerged for many days, leaving farmlands damaged and hunger, poverty, disease and homelessness a real threat.

Even the National Sports Festival, which the state sponsored within the space of four years, was geared towards maintaining its leadership dominance in the region, said the source.

Although a government source told THEWILL that defeating the PDP in the governorship election in Delta State "is impossible", given its dominance, he could not say the same for the presidency.

The source confided in this newspaper that many leaders of the party in the state now have "double loyalty". "They are PDP in the day and 'OBident' or APC, in the night.

The reason for this, it was learnt, is because some key leaders who had become disenchanted with the way the party's governorship primary turned out, have fallen back on grievances over perceived neglect of their areas in the distribution of state capital projects as well as their personal interests as a way to fight back. They appear willing to undermine the Okowa/Atiku ticket but support the PDP in the governorship election.

News

Army told to deal decisively with criminals

From ANENE AIKE,
Sokoto

THE Chief of Army Staff Lt. Gen Faruk Yahaya has ordered the Nigerian Army to deal decisively with criminal elements that are threatening to truncate the forthcoming 2023 general elections.

The COAS gave the order while making his remarks at the closing ceremony of the Annual Chief of Army Staff conference held at the International Conference Centre, Kasarawa in Sokoto where he also directed the Nigeria Army to specifically deal with those who may desire to cause trouble in their domains.

He also told officers and men to sustain the tempo of operations in their various commands while disclosing that the conference was meant to assess the army's readiness to support the civil authority in the conduct of next year's elections.

He went on to state that the Nigerian Army formations and units have developed robust contingency plans to assist the civil authority in the provision of an enabling environment for the conduct of the elections.

Saying that the reviewed Rules of Engagement and Code of Conduct recently issued to troops were extensively discussed and commanders are now better informed on their



Gen. Yahaya

responsibilities as well as the obligations of their personnel.

He opined that the lessons learnt during the security support for the elections held in Anambra, Ekiti and Osun states were also deliberated upon with sound conclusions reached to enhance its security duties in the upcoming elections.

Assuring all the people that personnel of the Nigerian Army are well positioned to discharge their constitutional duty of providing peaceful atmosphere before, during and after the 2023 electioneering period.

He went further to state that he has set a strong and realisable target for commanders to deliver as he reiterated some of the targets which they will all

need to focus on as they return to their bases.

"You are to sustain the tempo of operations and deal decisively with all criminals in doing so; All formations and units must maximally utilise the equipment at their disposal and neutralise the criminals, particularly in their hideouts."

He also stated that "stringent measures must also be emplaced to ensure the proper safeguard of armouries and account of all arms, ammunition and other equipment even as the welfare of men should continue to be accorded premium attention while also ensuring their professional conduct through effective supervision and monitoring".

IN a bid to ensure total compliance by participants on the nationwide graduates attachment programme, the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), at the weekend, flagged off the scheme in Kogi state.

The programme is put in place by the NDE for graduates who must have completed their NYSC and were attached to corporate, public and private organisations on internship for 3 to 6 months during which they would have been exposed to various skills acquisition that can develop their talents for job opportunities.

The Director General of NDE, Mallam Abubakar Nuhu Fikpo while speaking during the orientation programme, said that the major target of the scheme is to address youth unemployment.

"The Scheme is out to improve upon the employability of the participants as well as closing the skills gap that could build a competent workforce".

The Director General who was represented by the Kogi State Coordinator of NDE, Mallam Abubakar Zakari disclosed that one of the strategies adopted by the Directorate in its job creation drive is the introduction of transient jobs designed to absorb the teeming unemployed graduates roaming the streets.

The Director General appealed to the participants to take advantage of the programme and avail themselves of the rare

Graduate attachment programme flags off

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja



Fikpo

privilege noting that the lucky ones among them could be retained by their employers.

The Director of Special Public Works, Mrs Roseline Olaomi who was represented by Mallam Idris Haruna came from NDE headquarters, Abuja to conduct the compliance spot check in order to ensure that the graduates on attachment strictly adhere to the implementation of the programme in Kogi.

Each of the 42 beneficiaries got the sum of one hundred thousand naira.

The loan is to cover four schemes under the Directorate's Rural Employment Promotion Programme, namely; Agricultural Enhancement, Sustainable Agricultural

Development, Community-Based Agricultural Empowerment and Graduate Agricultural Empowerment.

The Director General of NDE, Mallam Abubakar Nuhu Fikpo who was represented by the Kogi State Coordinator of the Directorate, Mallam Abubakar Zakari while speaking at the disbursement ceremony, said that the gesture is aimed at making the beneficiaries become self-reliant.

The Director General reiterated federal government's commitment towards eradication of poverty, assuring that Buhari administration remains determined to lift over 100 million Nigerians out of hunger and disease.

According to him, agriculture is the mainstream of the nation's economy as well as the only sector that will help tackle the alarming unemployment situation in Nigeria.

The facilitator of the programme, Mrs Beatrice Oruoyehu, a Deputy Director from NDE headquarters, Abuja, while presenting letters of offer of the loans to the beneficiaries, charged them to see the grant as a seed that would enable them grow in their businesses if invested well and managed wisely.

"Plant this money into any agribusiness of your choice and it will germinate and blossom" She maintained.

In his welcome address, the Head of Department of Rural Employment Promotion, Mallam Shaibu Omeiza reminded the beneficiaries of their responsibility to repay the loan with just 9% interest, 6 months moratorium period and 3 years duration.

WAEC derecognises 61 Kogi schools

From AMEDU JOSEPH,
Lokoja

THE West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) has announced derecognition of 61 Secondary Schools in Kogi state on account of exam malpractices in the 2022 West Africa School Certificate Examinations.

The State's Commissioner for Education, Science and Technology, Hon. Wemi Jones, FCIB, who disclosed this at the inauguration of distribution of free Chemistry and Physics textbooks to 95 public school students in Kogi West Senatorial, warned that any school or principal involved in examination malpractices would be heavily sanctioned.

According to him, similar complain was tendered by the examination body in 2019, where 51 secondary schools were involved,

noting that things got better in 2020 and 2021 when the numbers of derecognised schools were reduced drastically from 51 to only one.

This, he said was as a result of serious warning by the ministry of education to principals of schools coupled with the commitment and determination of the state government to halt examination malpractices in the state.

The Commissioner lamented that just on Thursday, WAEC officials forwarded a letter to his office intimating the ministry that 61 secondary schools were grossly involved in examination malpractices in the 2022 examination.

"This, I am not going to let it go. We are going to sanction any principal found wanting in this unwholesome behaviour trying to tarnish the good



Adamu

image and reputation we have built in the conduct of examination in the state.

"The ministry of education will set up a committee that will investigate the involvement of principals in this disgraceful act before we sanction appropriately to serve as deterrent to others.

"The state government

cannot be investing hugely in the education sector then somebody somewhere will be sabotaging our efforts "We are aware that WAEC charges a registration fee of N23,000, but principals charge over N40,000 "logistic" so as to indulge in examination malpractices.

"We are not unaware, we

will curb the situation by sanctioning whoever is found wanting in the act according to the 2020 Kogi State Educational Law. "We will kill 'miracles centers' in Kogi, we will halt all forms of examination malpractices, and some erring schools would be closed down," the commissioners warned.

He, therefore warned all schools' principals in the state against involvement in any form of examination malpractices, saying defaulters would face heavy sanctions according to the state's education law.

Jones also frowned at the existence of illegal private tertiary institutions in the state, and assured that very soon the ministry would clampdown on them.

The commissioner enjoined the affected tertiary institutions to put their house in order by doing the needful.

News

Lalong leads APC presidential candidate for North-West rally

By PALANG KASMI

THE Director General of the All Progressives Congress (APC) Presidential Campaign Council and Governor of Plateau State, Simon Bako Lalong has led the campaign team of his party to its Abuja North-West Presidential Campaign Mega rally.

The rally which took place Tuesday December 13, 2022 at the Ahmadu Bello Stadium Kaduna, was also organised by the party to flag off gubernatorial, senatorial, House of Representatives and state Houses of Assembly campaigns.

In his remarks at the rally, Lalong said he is happy to lead the campaign team to the North West Zone Kaduna rally to canvass for votes for Asiwaju Bola Tinubu and his running mate Kashim Shettima.

He assured that if given the mandate, the APC candidates will lead the country to greater heights.

National Chairman of the APC, Senator Abdullahi in his remarks while chanting the party slogan called on Nigerians to come out and vote the APC.

He said the APC had recorded a lot of successes in different spheres that have resulted to infrastructural, economic development of the country.

Kaduna governorship candidate, Uba sani urged party faithfuls to vote the APC presidential candidate Tinubu because as an economic and development strategist, he had transformed Lagos State during his reign as governor.



Lalong

He assured the people that he has no doubt that Tinubu will replicate the same policies and structures in the whole country if voted.

The vice presidential candidate, Kashim Shettima in his remarks while speaking on the podium appreciated the overwhelming support of Kaduna people.

The APC presidential candidate, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu while speaking at the mega rally appreciated the overwhelming turn out of the Northwest.

'Your hope is here' he chanted as he pointed out the laudable plans he has for Nigerians as spelt out in his manifesto: "Renewed Hope".

Speaking earlier, Chief Host of the rally and Kaduna Governor, Nasir El-Rufai expressed happiness with the overwhelming crowd and turn-out, urging people from North West, and all Nigerians to give

the APC their votes to enable the party produce the next president of the country.

Earlier on Monday, a day ahead of the rally, Lalong had led the APC flag bearer, Tinubu, alongside Governors of Kano, Abdulkahi Ganduje, Kebbi, Atiku Bagudu Jigawa, Abubakar Badaru, and other party leaders and candidates to meetings with key stakeholders in Kaduna, and visited communities in Birnin Gwari Local Government Area of Kaduna State to commiserate with victims of series of bandits attacks that occurred in the area.

The NIGERIA STANDARD reports that the traditional ruler of the town, His Royal Highness Zubair Megwari II had in appreciation of the visit conferred the traditional title "Dakari Birnin Gwari" which means fearless warrior to Tinubu for being the first presidential candidate to visit the area.

Plateau State Civil servants embark on warning strike

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

CIVIL Servants in Plateau State, have embarked on a 5-day Sit-At-Home warning strike commencing 12 midnight Sunday 11 December 2022 following government's inability to meet their demands of nonpayment of 3 months salaries and non-release of third party deductions among others.

Addressing journalists at the conference hall of the State Labour House in Jos, the state capital Monday, the Chairman of Joint National Public Service Negotiating Council (JNPSNC), Comrade Titus L. Malau, said it was as a result of failure of government to meet their agreement.

He said, "this became imperative in view of the fact that Government reneged in fulfilling our demands and particularly, the agreement reached on November 11, 2022 with the intervention of the Secretary to the Government of the State (SGS).

"The demands of the JNPSNC are as follows: Nonpayment of salaries for 3 months from September

2022 to date; lack of release of salary structure to guide salary computation; non-release of third party deduction from August 2022 to date and non-release of promotion and annual increment with its arrears in full respectively.

"Others include: Nonpayment of January and February 2022 annual increment arrears; Inability of government to properly constitute and inaugurate the Joint National Service Negotiating Council in the state among others", Malau highlighted.

However, the Joint Council also frowned and faulted the White Paper Report of the high powered Staff Audit Committee headed by Nde John Gobak, for failing to upgrade staff who were due for promotions and unduly stagnated, placing it as one of their demands accordingly.

They equally disagreed with disciplinary measures meted on the victims of this audit report without a corresponding discipline on the authorities that falsely promoted the victims. They

added that, "the Unions demand that staff due for upgrading must be equally

upgraded for a fair report".

On his part, the Plateau State Chairman of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), Comrade Eugene Manji, said, "We expected them to have fulfilled the agreement on or before November 14, 2022 and August salary was supposed to be paid in full and September/October salaries also were to be paid on or before the end of November, but here we are in December.

"Automatically, of all we have discussed and agreed on, nothing has been done. That goes to say that they disrespected our agreement since even the August salary dropped in half. So, we can start counting from August, September, October, November and ideally, we are equally qualified for December salary by now", he disclosed.

Also, the Vice Chairman of Trade Union Council (TUC), Chundung Alamba said, "Government earlier promised to pay salaries as at when due and it has been tryin, but recently, it is trying to go the other way round and as a matter fact, our

members are suffering and are not happy, hence the need for government to keep their promise to the letter".



Fielding your best eleven

CURRENTLY, the World Cup is going on in Qatar, a rich small Middle East country that has distinguished itself in all that it does. This desert country has been turned into a Mecca of sort by men of ideas, where the rich and mighty are struggling to outdo each other by investing in the development of the once barren country. Years back when oil was discovered in commercial quantity, the leadership of the country thought outside of the box and today, the country has become the point of convergence for the rich. The country boast of world class infrastructure and it is currently the tourism capital of the world.

For Qatar to be granted the opportunity to host the World Cup speaks volumes about how far it has been able to turn its fortunes around for the good of its own citizenry. That it has seduced the egg heads of world football to grant it hosting right for the round leather game is a testimony to the country's ability to field its best eleven to represent it in all spheres of endeavour. The game of football is a game that demands patience. Patience to be able to build your game from nothing to something. It is this patience that have earned the biggest world economies the edge over other smaller ones.

These big economies have been able to develop workable blue prints that have been methodically pursued to help give verve to their economies and lift them to enviable heights. These economies did not just happen, they are products of planning, perseverance and hard work. They never came about through wishful thinking nor did their leaders pursued self-interest to the detriment of their citizens. It is this difference that have given these developed countries that edge over others.

Qatar, has distinguished itself amongst its peers. It stands as an example of hard work and resilience. Just like the game of football, it has been able to show that the age-old adage of practice makes perfect is sacrosanct in all we do. Brazil, Spain, Germany, France and a host of other countries

have distinguished themselves and have become world powers in football. Some of them like Brazil and Spain have been touted as the architects of the *tiki taka* brand of football that has brought them fame and glory. But this did not just happen. The brand was developed patiently over time. It was worked on in such a manner that it paid off eventually when introduced to the world.

Because of this brand, Brazil and Spain have been able to win the World Cup between them six times. They have been able to dominate world football so much so that other countries have copied from them and have tried to be better than them at it. Even though England has been able to win the World Cup just once, it has been able to run the most profitable league in the world. The English league is touted as the best organized and most profitable. This has attracted the best footballers to the English league thereby boosting their economy by attracting huge investments in their football clubs from all over the world.

Nigeria, the self-acclaimed giant of Africa is visibly not present at the world fiesta currently going on in Qatar where the best in world football are showcasing

Nigeria discovered oil and gas at about the same time Qatar did. But Nigeria has nothing to show for it. Qatar is light years ahead of Nigeria because it has been able to plan and effectively utilized proceeds from the sales of oil and gas for the benefits of its own people. It has been able to train and put forward its first eleven. It has also been able to maximize its opportunities because it has realized that oil will finish someday. It has invested heavily in artificial intelligence and it is paying off. It has attracted to its clime some of the best brains and everyone is falling over themselves to have presence in that tiny country.

Touted as one of the best in churning out skillful and talented young people, Nigeria had in the past produced some of the best footballers in the world. The Nwankwo Kanus, Austin Jay Jay Okocha, Dan Amokachi, and a host of others bear testament to this. They have played at the highest levels and in some of the biggest leagues and teams in world football. They have also won all of the laurels that there is to win in football yet our football at best could be described as shambolic.

But why has it been like this? It all boils down to the question of attitude. Are we putting out our first eleven? No. Are we trying in any way to ensure that the best is given the chance to express and realise their potentials. Answer is still capital no. Ours is a country that thrives in mediocrity in the guise of connection. You have to know somebody who knows someone for you to get a plum job. Even getting admission, you need connection. You are not likely to get a good job if your father is a nobody. How can a country grow like that?

Nigeria discovered oil and gas at about the same time Qatar did. But Nigeria has nothing to show for it. Qatar is light years ahead of Nigeria because it has been able to plan and effective utilized proceeds from the sales of oil and gas for the benefits of its own people. It has been able to train and put forward its first eleven. It has also been able to maximize its opportunities because it has realized that oil will finish someday. It has invested heavily in artificial intelligence and it is paying off. It has attracted to its clime some of the best brains and everyone is falling over themselves to have presence in that tiny country.

Why then can we not recreate the same thing here given that we have been adequately and extremely favoured by nature? All we have to do is put forward our first eleven. And, like all the other developed countries we will be able to hold our own in the committee of nations.

News

2023: Karu LG Chairman meets with IDPs

THE Executive Chairman of Karu Local Government Council, Hon James Thomas, has a fruitful deliberation with the leadership of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Karu LGA branch.

The Chairman who addressed the leaders, expressed his happiness that despite migrants coming all the way from the North Eastern part of the country, they should

cohabit peacefully with the inhabitants and go about their legitimate businesses without any negative act capable of jeopardizing the peaceful coexistence of the area.

He said that " It is our believe that we will continue to live in peace with one another. Within the scope of one year in office, we have in our little way sunk a borehole in your main camp, appointed one

of your sons as PA on IDPs, and recently, I went to the embassy of Qatar to lobby for improved standards of living for those of you in Karu LGA.

"It is on this basis that we seek for your maximum support and cooperation especially as the elections draw nearer, your votes will go a long way in reciprocating our gesture," he stated.

THE Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has reiterated its position to resist any attempt to remove subsidy on Premium Motor Spirit (PMS), without full restoration of the refineries in the country.

It also insisted on mobilising workers ahead of the 2023 general election to vote for candidates ready to implement economic and social policies that would promote members' welfare.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the 18th edition of NLC Harmattan School, held at the Michael Imodu National Institute For Labour Studies (MINILS) in Ilorin, Michael Kwara state, NKC President, Ayuba Wabba, said the Union's opposition to fuel subsidy removal is an age-long struggle. "What do you even call subsidy? Subsidy is inefficiency, our inefficiency or inability to refine products. That is what we call subsidy. If we are refining, we should not be talking about subsidies and why can't we refine?" he said.

Wabba said although there was nothing bad about subsidy, but in Nigeria's case, it is shrouded in secrecy and not a transparent process.

He argued that the consumption of PMS and all details about it are shrouded in secrecy, typical behaviour

Our position on subsidy removal hasn't changed

- NLC



Wabba

of all capitalist economies; These are the very important questions that we need to interrogate. And this is what Labour has been interrogating", he said.

Giving an example of the deregulation of diesel supply in the country, Wabba said the cost of diesel had gone up astronomically since the policy was implemented.

"Is it the same example you want to set? All Nigerians should reflect on it. What they call subsidy removal is just increasing the price which has happened in the case of subsidies on kerosene and diesel.

"Is that the same thing we want to apply to PMS? How many people can afford it? headed.

Fulani youths charged to be self reliant

From ABBAS
GUNGURA, Bauchi

PROFESSOR Abubakar Abba Tahir has called on Fulani youths to ensure that they are fully engaged in useful ventures in order to become self-reliant and purposeful.

He made the call during the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Fulbe Development and Cultural Organisation (FUDCO) held in Bauchi recently. He further urged the Fulani youths to disassociate themselves from all forms of criminalities to enable them have a better future and acceptance from the general public.

Professor Abubakar Abba Tahir, as Chairman of the AGM, lamented that the Fulani community have been left behind in terms of development, hence the need for them to refocus towards meeting the global challenges.

The guest speaker at the meeting, Ambassador Hassan Jika Ardo, informed the gathering that statistics show that almost sixty to eighty million population of Fulani community in African countries are facing numerous challenges of insecurity among others.

He also urged parents among the Fulanis to encourage their wards to seek for both Islamic and modern knowledge and support the move that would enhance the lives of Fulani communities.

In his remarks at the virtual AGM meeting, the National Chairman of Fulbe Development and Cultural Organization, Alhaji Salim Sadu Nana, explained that the organisation has fully trained youths in various skill acquisitions, offered scholarships and humanitarian services to the younger ones.

While enumerating some of the challenges confronting the

organization, the chairman called on all chapters to always collaborate with the national body to actualize the set goals.

On his part, the Bauchi State Chapter Chairman of FUDCO, Engr. A.U Sambo noted that the organization is into creation of awareness to its members at the grassroots on

national issues, among other services that would impact positively on the lives of Fulani community.

He gave the assurance that they will do everything humanly possible to regain their good name and image that was bastardized by some few amongst them.



Mohammed

APC youth accuse former governor of anti party

From ABBAS
GUNGURA, Bauchi

THE All Progressives Congress (APC) youths in Bauchi State have expressed their disappointment with the former Governor Mohammad Abdullahi Abubakar (SAN), for his new 'relationship' with the incumbent, Bala Mohammed who is seeking re-election as a governor.

The group called Air Marshal Youth Vanguard while addressing journalists on Sunday, accused Abubakar of engaging in anti-party activities by honoring his successor's invitation to a dinner organized for him.

Recall Governor Bala had last week organized a

special dinner for his predecessor on his attainment of Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN).

M.A. Abubakar is said to be the fourth citizen of the state to get the rank. While speaking at the event, Abubakar who governed the state under APC commended his PDP successor for recording "so many successes in various sectors".

He added that "I must commend him (the Governor) for the giant strides he has achieved in various sectors of the economy of the state.

"Since the aim is to develop the state, I'm in full support of the developmental strides he has succeeded in achieving and I'm very

happy because I don't have any other state than Bauchi."

However, the group, led by Ismail Musa, condemned the ex-governor for honoring and delivering "his speech where he eulogized the PDP controlled Bauchi State Government, and even called for his re-election. What a double standard."

Musa accused the former Governor of failing APC as a sitting governor and cannot be trusted by the party. He said " M. A. Abubakar and his wife have been paying ostrich and it is now evident that they are not with the Progressives. The leopard cannot change its color by a mere deep in the sea," he said.

He said it is shameful and

EFCC auctions forfeited vehicles in Abuja

THE Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), on Tuesday, in Abuja, commenced the sales of forfeited vehicles in its custody to members of the public.

The exercise followed an order of final forfeitures

secured by the anti-graft agency from the courts.

According to Channels TV, prospective buyers trooped into the EFCC office in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) on Tuesday, where the cars were displayed for auction.

EFCC Deputy Director, Department of Proceeds of Crime Management, Umma Sulaiman, said there are 35 cars for grabs in the exercise and the proceeds will be deposited in a special account of the Federal Government at the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN).

The EFCC also held a similar exercise last week in Lagos, where over 400 were auctioned.

According to the agency's spokesman, the auctioning exercise for forfeited assets would take place across its commands.

He explained that the cars are subjects of final forfeiture orders of the court in Lagos, adding that the exercise was in line with the EFCC (Establishment) Act 2004; Public Procurement Act 2007 and the Proceeds of Crimes (Recovery and Management) Act 2022.



Bawa

Foreign Commentary

Ramaphosa: Facing tough questions for South Africa's leader

A damning report from a panel of legal experts into accusations that President Cyril Ramaphosa covered up the theft of \$4m (£3.3m) in cash from his farm in 2020 has raised uncomfortable questions for South Africa's leader. Writes Pumza Fihlani.

THE panel - headed by a former chief justice - described some of his explanations as "improbable".

Mr Ramaphosa has a case to answer, not just to parliament but to all South Africans, critics say.

Judging by the fervent reaction from opposition parties, some of whom are calling for him to step down immediately, this scandal has the potential to cost him his job.

In a 138-page submission made to the panel, President Ramaphosa denied that there was anything untoward about the money stolen on his private farm, saying it was from the proceeds of buffalo sold for \$580,000 in cash to a Sudanese national, Mustafa Mohamed Ibrahim Hazim, in late 2019.

However, Mr Hazim has not appeared in public and little is known about him.

The panel questioned why the invoice presented to them didn't contain any details that would make him identifiable. There was only his name, no business address or ID number.

"I respectfully submit that all of the 'charges' I have been called to answer are without any merit," Mr Ramaphosa wrote, adding that many of the allegations were based on "hearsay". He requested that the matter not be taken any further.

But it has not gone away and there is pressure on the president to resign or face impeachment proceedings.

It is hard to miss the irony of the claims and the quagmire the president finds himself in.

This is after all the man whose political image and rise to the presidency was built on fighting corruption, which dogged both the governing African National Congress (ANC) and the country as a whole under his predecessor President Jacob Zuma.

What then is to be made of Mr Ramaphosa's handling of "Farmgate"?

His party is feverishly debating how the president should handle the report, party sources have told the BBC.

While some want him to adopt a wait-and-see approach, others, presumably from an opposing ANC faction, want him gone to prevent further damage to the party, they said.

Officially, the president's office has said he will address the report once he has finished studying it.

Mr Ramaphosa enjoyed some grace when he assumed power not only from the public but business and civil society - even local media in some ways.

He made grand promises of a new dawn for South Africa under his leadership and implored citizens to believe that he could turn things around, that the days of corruption



Some ANC members have been calling for Mr Ramaphosa to resign

scandals would be a thing of the past. But that grace is now lost.

The country's main opposition says that based on this report, the president has been found wanting.

The Democratic Alliance announced that it will use parliament's sitting next week to put forward a motion calling for early elections - saying the damning allegations against Mr Ramaphosa show that the ANC must be removed from power.

"The report is clear and unambiguous. President Ramaphosa most likely did breach a number of Constitutional provisions and has a case to answer. Impeachment proceedings into his conduct must go ahead, and he will have to offer far better,

more comprehensive explanations than we have been given so far," the party said in a statement.

The report - made up of three volumes - raises questions around Mr Ramaphosa's written submission:

-Why did the president have some \$580,000 stored inside a sofa?

-Why was the theft of that money not reported to the police two years ago?

-Why do the buffalo he says were sold remain on the farm?

In Mr Ramaphosa's explanation, a lodge manager at the farm first stored the money in a safe, but later moved it to a sofa in a spare bedroom "inside my private residence, because he thought it was the safest place, as he

believed nobody would break into the president's house".

The panel believed that explanation needs further scrutiny.

The judges' scope was limited to recommending that parliament take action.

If MPs decide that an impeachment committee should investigate further and they find the president guilty of serious misconduct that would set in motion the process for an impeachment vote.

Ultimately it will come down to a vote - the motion to impeach needs a two-thirds majority in parliament to pass.

While the ANC has the numbers to prevent that from happening, the party is also hugely divided. Those against him may see this as an

opportunity to vote with opposition parties to remove him.

We are some way from such a vote but in the court of public opinion what has already been established has been damaging.

Local radio stations and social media have been abuzz with mixed views from South Africans - some believe he's being targeted by his political foes, while others have expressed disappointment and want him gone.

"This is very bad for the ANC," political analyst Oscar Van Heerden told Newzroom Afrika.

"No organisation wants a leader who is being questioned in this manner. The ANC has to think about political considerations. Is it in our best interest to get rid of our leader at this time? The ANC has to make a call that will stand them in good stead for the 2024 elections."

At best this debacle puts Mr Ramaphosa's moral standing into question. At worst it suggests an abuse of power and perhaps the constitution - the same constitution he helped draft in the early 1990s.

His party, which has defended its leaders through many a scandal in the past, is only compelled to sack him if he is the subject of criminal charges - and he is not.

Still, these developments, ahead of an ANC conference this month, where Mr Ramaphosa had seemed to be a shoe-in to be re-elected as party leader, have placed the veteran politician and game farmer in a rather precarious situation.

Source: BBC News Africa



Ramaphosa

News

US says Iran now Russia's top military backer

RUSSIA and Iran's relationship has warmed to a fully fledged defence partnership, the US has said.

Russia is giving an unprecedented level of military support, says US national security council spokesman John Kirby.

The US has seen reports that the two countries are considering joint production of lethal drones, he adds.

It comes after Ukraine accused Iran of supplying Russia with "kamikaze" drones used in deadly attacks on 17 October, which Tehran initially denied.

The Middle Eastern country later admitted sending Moscow a limited number of drones, "many months" before the war.

In response, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said this was a lie and that many more Iranian drones were being used.

The Ukrainian air force said it downed 10 of 15 such drones used to attack southern regions in the early hours of Saturday.

The strikes left more than 1.5 million people without power in Odesa, Mr Zelensky said in his evening address, adding it could take days for electricity to be restored.

Earlier, Australia announced it was sanctioning three Iranians and one Iranian business for supplying Russia with drones to use against Ukraine.

Speaking on Friday, Mr Kirby said that a partnership between Iran and Russia to produce drones would be harmful to Ukraine, Iran's neighbours and the international community.



US says Iran now Russia's top military backer

"Russia is seeking to collaborate with Iran in areas like weapons development, training," he said, adding that the US fears that Russia intended to "provide Iran with advanced military components" including helicopters and air defence systems.

"Iran has become Russia's top military backer..." he said. "Russia's been using Iranian drones to strike energy infrastructure, depriving millions of Ukrainians of power, heat, critical services. People in Ukraine today are actually dying as a result of Iran's actions."

In response to Mr Kirby's comments, UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly said that Iran had become one of Russia's main military supporters and that the relationship between them was threatening global security.

The "sordid deals" between the two countries have seen Iran send hundreds of drones to Russia, he said.

"In return, Russia is offering

military and technical support to the Iranian regime, which will increase the risk it poses to our partners in the Middle East and to international security," he added.

He said the UK agreed with the US that Iranian support for the Russian military would grow in the coming months as Russia tried to get hold of more weapons, including hundreds of ballistic missiles.

On Saturday, Penny Wong, Australia's foreign minister, said in a statement: "The supply of drones to Russia is evidence of the role Iran plays in destabilising global security. This listing highlights that those who provide material support to Russia will face consequences."

She also announced measures against 19 other people and two entities, including Iran's Morality Police, for the brutal treatment of anti-government protesters following the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in custody earlier this year.

ISRAEL says its forces appear to have unintentionally killed a 16-year-old Palestinian girl amid a gun battle with militants in the occupied West Bank.

The body of Jana Zakarneh was found on the roof of her house in Jenin after the firefight on Sunday night.

Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh accused Israel of killing the teenager "in cold blood".

Zakarneh is one of the youngest Palestinians killed this year - the deadliest in the West Bank since 2005.

The incident happened during an Israeli raid to arrest wanted militants.

Residents said they saw Israeli snipers positioned on a nearby building - one apparently shot the girl, the Palestinian health ministry said.

Zakarneh's uncle, Yasser,

Israel kills Palestinian girl in error

It said 18 wanted people, including three "suspected of terrorist activity", were arrested in the operation.

Jana Zakarneh's death is the latest in a spiralling toll of Palestinian fatalities this year. In the West Bank, more than 150 -

civilians, militant gunmen and armed attackers - have been killed, nearly all by Israeli forces.

The IDF has been carrying out near-nightly raids in the West Bank as part of an operation against militants which began in March after a wave of attacks in Israel by Palestinians and Israeli Arabs left 17 Israelis and two Ukrainians dead.

The spree of killings was the deadliest Israel had seen since 2015, leaving the country in shock.

The IDF has said that a total of 31 Israelis have been killed in attacks this year.

World-record nonuplets return to Mali from Morocco



Only two other sets of nonuplets have ever been recorded in history, but none of them survived past a few days

THE world's only nonuplets - nine babies born at the same time - have safely returned home to Mali after spending the first 19 months of their

lives in Morocco.

The babies broke the Guinness World Record for the most children delivered in a single birth to survive.

Ahead of the birth in May 2021, the mother Halima Cissé, now 27, was flown to Morocco for specialist care.

Before returning they had been living with medical support in Casablanca.

The babies - five girls and four boys - were born by Caesarean section at 30 weeks, according to the Malian authorities last year.

The girls - named Kadidia, Fatouma, Hawa, Adama and Oumou - and the boys - named Mohammed VI, Oumar, Elhadji and Bah -

weighed between 500g and 1kg (1.1lb and 2.2lb) at birth, Prof Youssef Alaoui, medical director of the clinic where they were born, told the AFP

news agency.

There were risks that they could have developed health problems due to their premature birth and they spent the first months of their lives in hospital.

They were then moved to an apartment where they received round-the-clock care from the Ain Borja clinic.

Earlier this year, on their first birthday, their father Abdelkader Arby said that each one has a unique personality.

"They all have different characters. Some are quiet, while other make more noise and cry a lot. Some want to be picked up all the time. They are all very different, which is entirely normal."

Mr Arby also said that they had become famous in Mali and people were "very keen to see the babies with their own eyes".

European parliament charged four suspects in bribery scandal

FOUR people have been charged in an investigation into suspected bribery at the European Parliament by a Gulf state.

Greek MEP and European Parliament Vice President Eva Kaili was among those previously arrested in the case.

Prosecutors suspect the Gulf state tried to influence parliament decisions with donations of money or gifts.

Local media have reported that the accused country is Qatar, which the Qatari government has denied.

Watchdogs and opposition MEPs have said it could be one of the biggest corruption scandals the European Parliament has ever seen.

Ms Kaili has been suspended from her duties as one of 14 vice-presidents, and from the parliament's Socialists and Democrats Group. She has also been expelled from the Greek centre-left Pasok party.

President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola flew from her native Malta to Brussels on Saturday evening to witness the searching of an MEP's house - as is required by the Belgian constitution.

A spokesman for Ms Metsola said she had "decided to suspend with immediate effect all powers, duties and tasks that were delegated to Eva Kaili". The spokesman added that the European Parliament "stands firmly against corruption" and is "fully cooperating" with

investigators.

Cash worth about €600,000 (\$632,000; £515,000) was seized by Belgian police in 16 searches in Brussels on Friday. Computers and mobile phones were also taken in order to examine their contents.

A total of six people were detained for questioning, two of whom have been released.

The prosecutor said investigators had suspected that a Gulf state had been influencing economic and political decisions of the parliament for several months, especially by targeting aides.

Qatar has previously been accused of corruption, including in its bid to host the 2022 football World Cup. The country denied the allegations and was cleared of corruption by Fifa.

India, China troops clash at border

INDIA says its forces have clashed with Chinese troops in a disputed area along the border, the first such flare-up in more than a year.

The nations had been working to de-escalate tensions since a major clash killed at least 24 troops in 2020.

But on Monday, the Indian army said there had been a clash in the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh state last Friday, the eastern tip of India.

Both sides were involved with a few soldiers suffering minor injuries.

Reuters reported an Indian

army source saying at least six Indian troops were injured.

"Both sides immediately disengaged from the area," the Indian army said.

It added that commanders from both sides had held a meeting immediately after "to restore peace and tranquility".

India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who addressed lawmakers in Parliament on Tuesday, said the encounter started when Chinese troops "encroached into Indian territory" and "unilaterally tried to change the status quo" along the disputed border near the

Yangtse area.

He said the Indian soldiers responded with firmness and prevented the Chinese army from "transgressing into our territory", and forced them to return to their posts.

Mr Singh said that some soldiers from both sides had been injured in the skirmish but no Indian soldiers had been "hurt or seriously injured" in the clash.

He said that local military commanders met on Sunday to discuss the dispute, adding that the incident has been taken up with the Chinese side "through diplomatic channels".

China's foreign ministry gave no details on the incident but said that according to their knowledge, the situation on the border with India was "generally stable".

China and India share a disputed 3,440km (2,100 mile) long de facto border - called the Line of Actual Control, or LAC - which is poorly demarcated. The presence of rivers, lakes and snowcaps means the line can shift. The soldiers on either side - representing two of the world's largest armies - come face to face at many points.

Tensions sometimes escalate into skirmishes. However both sides have been trying to de-escalate since a major battle in June 2020 in the Galwan Valley in the Ladakh region much further to the west - where 20



Modi

Feature

Media and the realities of future generations

'Generations are a lens through which to understand societal change, rather than a label with which to oversimplify differences between groups,' Michael Dimock, president, Pew Research Centre. Marshall McLuhan in his book 'Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man' asserts that media, beyond the message it carries, shapes society mainly by its unique characteristics. He identified anything that aids or extends human acts or abilities as media. It can therefore be inferred from Marshall's assertion that the media began with or perhaps preceded the creation of humans. TOLU OLAGUNJU writes.

By implication, everything originating from human creativity is an extension of the human person, and of course, a medium, or a means to another end. This includes languages, art and culture, religion, ideologies, cities and states, civilizations, wars, technologies, and soon.

Interestingly, while humans create these mediums, they are in return re-created by them. In fact, every generation of media has recreated humans and history in one form or another.

Human history has seen several civilizations, each with its unique attributes from the Pre-Neolithic to the emerging future of hyper-connectivity and singularity that is bringing an unprecedented transformation to the human race. It is therefore important we have an idea of the unique attributes of the past, and the influencing media while envisioning the yet-to-be-properly deciphered future.

This will not only aid in managing the existential threat common to media novelties but also improve intergenerational communication and positioning. It is, however, important to note that while the different attributes as identified by various scholars provide the lens for understanding generational differences, they are in no way a basis for hasty generalization. Nonetheless, the media in whatever guise remains the core of every civilization and most certainly will continue to have a huge influence on the human race.

Limiting ourselves to the 20th to early 21st-century generations, we will look at media in terms of technologies, art and culture, languages, religious beliefs, socio-political viewpoints, economic realities and peculiar events in each generation, how they are connected and have influenced, or influencing the realities of the past, present, and future.

For clarity, recent researches classify these generations as the Greatest Generation, i.e., those born between the years 1901-1924; the Silent Generation i.e., those born between the years 1925-1945; the Baby Boomers i.e., those born between the years 1946-1964; Generation X i.e., those born between the years 1965-1979; Generation Y i.e., those born between the years 1980-1996; the Generation Z i.e., those born between the years 2000-2009; and the still emerging Alpha Generation i.e., those born and still being born between the years 2010-2024.

Every generation indeed reflects the attributes of its influencing media. For instance, the World Wars and the great depression are the key influencers of the early 20th century, those who were born and survived this period (1901-1924) are regarded as the greatest generation for the same reason.

While they are generally believed to have experienced much hardship as a result of the wars, they are, however, identified as self-driven and motivated, ethical, patriotic, loyal, and team players.

The print media that has become fully mature during this period played a key role, particularly in the more literate world. Literature, arts, music, and cinema culture also thrived greatly during this period. It was during this era that nations like Nigeria (in its current form) were formed.

Right behind the greatest generation was the silent generation,



i.e., those born between the years 1925 and 1945. This was the generation that grew into the consciousness of freedom and eventually the civil rights and anti-colonialism movements.

While most of the civil rights and anti-colonialist movement leaders came of age in this era, it is also widely held to consist of a silent majority who believed it was unwise to speak out or be expressive due to the experience of their predecessor.

This generation like their immediate predecessor experienced a significant level of childhood hardship mostly due to the wars and economic downturn. The era witnessed the fall of Nazism and the rise to global significance of the Soviet Union and the United States.

They were greatly influenced by the innovation of the prior generation (particularly the radio), they are in fact regarded as the 'radio babies' having grown up in the golden age of radio. Nevertheless, they were mostly traditional and conservative in their approach to life, less risk-takers but yet loyal, patriotic, selfless, ethical, and highly productive.

The League of Nations evolved into the United Nations towards the end of this period with most colonies starting to demand self-determination and independence. The foremost Nigerian nationalists came of age during this era.

The boomers or the baby boomers closely followed the silent generation, this is the era of those born between the years 1946-1964 during the post-World War II baby boom. This era saw a great improvement in human capital, particularly in education and healthcare with a noticeable influence on the global birth rate.

It was an era of global ideological confrontations majorly between communism, socialism, and capitalism. It was characterized by political instability and counter-

culture activities like the sexual revolution, women empowerment, and feminist movements among others that gained prominence during this period.

Those born within the era are goal-centric, self-assured, resourceful, and value relationships; they currently make up some of the most influential people in almost every aspect of life all over the world.

The era basically saw the emergence of capitalism, consumerism, democracy, and Americanism as global phenomena. They were relatively comfortable with access to opportunities and a level of social security. Most colonies gained independence and were tending towards prosperity, Nigeria for instance gained independence and discovered a huge deposit of oil with great potential for prosperity during this era.

It, however, ushered in military interference in the governance of Nigeria as in most of the former colonies. Those born in this era are perhaps the oldest digital immigrants with a significant presence on digital media platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn.

Generation X also regarded as the 'middle child' generation follows the baby boomer generation and precedes the millennial generation, they are those born between the years 1965-1979. The generation is also known as the "latchkey generation," because it is widely held that they have mostly grown up with no significant adult supervision with most parents prioritizing personal rights and economic survival over familial responsibilities.

They find alternatives to traditional family time in movies, music, and other pop cultures of that time. Reproductive and abortion rights, divorce, and the decline in birth rate particularly in the West gained a level of prominence during this period.

Those born within this period are believed to be generally self-confident and optimistic, entrepreneurial, and market-oriented.

The era saw the rise of individualism, globalization, Hip-hop music, high tech, the internet, and the beginning of media decentralization, democratization, and audience empowerment. It also saw the eventual fall of communism and the dissolution of the USSR.

In Nigeria, the era witnessed the civil war. Labour and students' union struggles such as the famous 'Ali must go' were of this period. Indigenization, industrialization, and promotion of national unity though with little success were prioritized during this period particularly, with the creation of relevant regional research institutions, initiatives like the NYSC, Unity Schools, and the like. The era experienced three military coups and an aborted coup. Those born during this era are probably currently the most active digital migrants, particularly on Facebook.

The years 1980 to 1996 ushered in the Millennials with Generation Y or Gen Y, i.e., those who became adults at the turn of the new millennium. Their era saw a great global technological change, digital creativity, and economic and political disruption particularly, in their early years with global events like the fall of communism, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the global triumph of democracy. The millennials are highly globalized and hyper-connected, especially through social media platforms, mobile devices, and the internet with possibilities of access to globally relevant knowledge, skills, and markets.

They also experienced a fair share of hardship mostly due to a series of global economic instability and recessions and most recently the COVID-19 pandemic. They are majorly having a relatively late arrival to adult responsibilities and seem to prefer smaller family units. They also seem to prefer access and sharing over ownership, thereby responsible for the emergence of the sharing economy.

In Nigeria, the early years of this generation experienced three military coups, one attempted coup, and an eventual transition to democratic rule. They also witnessed a series of economic, political, and social instability especially due to the structural adjustment program (SAP) with its stories of hardship.

Their young adult years are, however, witnessing a bit of stability in government, the emergence of Nigerian digital tech entrepreneurs and unicorns, and the rise of the Nigerian creative industry. They were the major instigators of the popular #EndSARS movement and currently make up the largest population on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.

Even though they grew up during an economic recession, Gen Zers are far more optimistic about the future than millennials. They are, however, showing signs of anxiety and radical disposition towards ethnic, racial, climate, gender, alternative energy, and other contemporary issues. Although majorly born into a democratic Nigeria, they have also witnessed an unprecedented rate of corruption, terrorism, massacre, kidnapping, epidemic and pandemic outbreaks, flooding, and other climatic issues. They are mostly present on social media platforms

like Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Tiktok, and Snapchat.

The Alpha is the youngest and the emerging generation of those born and still being born between the years 2010 and 2024, they are mostly the children of Gen Y (millennials) and younger Gen X. They are the typical 21st-century babies with countries like India, China, and Nigeria at the top of their birthplace. The greatest impacts on their childhood are probably the COVID-19 pandemic which was described by UNICEF as the greatest threat to children in seventy-five years, and the rapid evolution of digital media and technologies.

Having been born to parents who spent most of their time and exposed to every event of their lives on social media, they might end up not having a contrary sense of privacy. While the actual picture of Generation Alpha is still very blurry because they are still emerging, it is predicted that they will be vastly educated, ever learning mostly through screens, live streaming, and various immersive technologies like the virtual, artificial, and other extended realities. They have also been described as the Metaverse babies, digital citizens that see little or no distinction between entertainment, information, and education.

They will find more relevance in the knowledge of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), social and emotional competencies, and entrepreneurial skills. Others include strength and coordination skills, financial and digital literacy, innovation, creativity, and resourcefulness. The currently emerging sharing economy will likely evolve into a sense of collective ownership in their time. The main challenging issue of this era will be energy, climate, and environment-related. It has, in fact, been said that they will likely experience 2-7 times as many extreme weather events as ever before, particularly heat waves, flooding, drought, and deforestation among others.

Big data that is massively being generated on social media (the internet of human and social interactions), and the internet of things (IoT) will allow highly volatile, flexible, decentralized, and automated creativity like never before. Virtual existence will, in fact, be as real as the physical world with businesses, sports and entertainment, education, medicine, and almost every human activity including crimes, insecurity, and war being conducted digitally.

Nations in their attempts to tackle insecurity and defend their virtual territorial integrity are in fact setting up the fifth domain of warfare after land, sea, air, and space in cyberspace known as the cyber command. Nigeria, for instance, has taken a lead in Africa by launching its cyber command in year 2019.

There is no doubt that the dynamism of digital media and technologies is at the core of emerging civilization. With the few attributes and available facts, imagining the possibilities and positioning for the emerging world of overall connectivity and singularity has become very essential for individuals, groups, and nations. The possibilities are indeed vast but in two directions: good and evil alike.

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EVIE'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Living

7 handy tips to maintain peace of mind

Maintaining your peace of mind is the most important thing right now. Image courtesy: Shutterstock

The inability to sleep can be caused by the lack of productivity. No one can be a happy soul; if they do not do things that utilise their energy. That's why to [stay at peace](#), limit mindless scrolling.

Move your body

It is a proven fact that exercising helps in boosting the happy hormones in your body. So, take some time out. If that's not possible, try to take breaks between work, and move around rather than just lying down or sitting all day.

Start focusing on things that are in your control

There are a lot of things that are not in your control, therefore, there is no point in wasting your time on those. But more than that, there are things that are totally in your control, so you must focus all your energy towards those things. This will make you more productive, and who knows, you might achieve your peace of mind?

Be very conscious while doing that self-talk

Self-talk can have both a positive and negative impact on you. That's why be very conscious to keep negative comments aside, and attune your brain to talk optimistically. In case you are unable to do that, the best thing is to keep yourself occupied.

Be kind to yourself because negative self-talk is not good for your mental health. Image courtesy: Shutterstock

Maintain some personal boundaries

The biggest problem with some



of us is that we forget that every relation has a boundary. The moment that's crossed, your [peace of mind](#) goes for a toss. That's because at times, these boundaries limit you to do what you actually want to, and that can impact you emotionally.

Don't choke your to-do list



Only your boss can like a long to-do list. But in doing so, you forget that you only have four to five productive hours to accomplish that. If your to-do list is not prepared properly, basically, without prioritising, then it will exhaust you both mentally and physically. And in

the end, you will be left all stressed out. So, segregate your tasks on the basis of priority, and divide them accordingly.

Make realistic goals. Image courtesy: Shutterstock

Live in the present

We are all hell bent on thinking

about the future that we forget to think about our present. If you are organized and happy in your present, only then will you be able to plan for a beautiful future. Well, these tips are not as daunting as you might have imagined them to be. Isn't it? So, how about trying them out?

EVER'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Parenting

Discipline children the right way

By **BETH ROYBAL**

HOW can you provide discipline to your child so that they can function well at home and in public? Every parent wants their children to be happy, respectful, respected by others, and able to find their place in the world as well-behaved adults. Nobody wants to be accused of raising a spoiled brat.

Discipline is the process of teaching your child what type of behavior is acceptable and what type is not acceptable. In other words, discipline teaches a child to follow rules. Effective discipline uses many different tools, like positive reinforcement, modeling, and a loving and supportive family. Sometimes, punishments are also an effective tool-but that doesn't mean that good discipline is mostly about punishments.

Parents run up against barriers when trying to teach good behavior. Your responsibility as a parent is to help your child become self-reliant, respectful, and self-controlled. Relatives, schools, churches, therapists, health care professionals, and others can help. But the primary responsibility for discipline rests with parents.

An authoritative parent has clear expectations and consequences and is affectionate toward their child. The authoritative parent allows for flexibility and collaborative problem solving with the child when dealing with behavioral challenges. This is the most effective form of parenting.

Discipline techniques

What you choose may depend on the type of inappropriate behavior your child displays, your child's age, temperament, and your parenting style.

Reward good behavior

Acknowledging good behavior is the best way to encourage your child to continue it. In other words, "Catch him being good."



Compliment your child when they show the behavior you've been seeking.

Natural consequences: Your child does something wrong, and you let the child experience the result of that behavior. There's no need for you to "lecture." The child can't blame you for what happened.

Logical consequences: This technique is similar to natural consequences but involves describing to your child what the consequences will be for unacceptable behavior. The

consequence is directly linked to the behavior.

Taking away privileges: Sometimes there isn't a logical or natural consequence for a bad behavior -- or you don't have time to think it through. In this case, the consequence for unacceptable behavior may be taking away a privilege. For example, if a middle schooler doesn't complete their homework on time, you may choose to take away television privileges for the evening. This discipline technique works best if the privilege is related in some way to the behavior

- Something the child values
- taken away as soon as possible after the inappropriate behavior (especially for young children)

Time outs: Time outs work if you know exactly what the child did wrong or if you need a break from the child's behavior. Be sure you have a time-out location established ahead of time.

Time outs often work best with younger kids for whom the separation from the parent is truly seen as a deprivation.

Corporal (physical) punishment, such as spanking, isn't recommended.

Tips for Maintaining discipline

Guide your discipline techniques to fit well with your child's temperament. The key to effective discipline is to understand who your child is, especially their temperamental style, and use your discipline to help them achieve their potential given those talents

and tendencies. But your goal should not be to turn them into someone they are not.

Communicate your discipline plan: Discipline techniques shouldn't come "out of the blue," especially if you're trying something new. To children who are old enough to understand, during a planned discussion (not in the heat of the moment) explain the technique, why you are using it, and what you hope it will accomplish. Older children may be included in choosing which rewards and consequences would be appropriate.

Be respectful of your child: If you show your child respect even when disciplining your child your child is more likely to respect you, other family members, and other people in their life. If you "lose it" or overreact with disrespect, apologize. Behave the way you want your child to behave.

Be consistent: Any technique will fail if you don't follow through or enforce consequences consistently. If you say, for example, that toys will be off limits for a week, then take them away if the offending behavior continues.

Don't break your discipline rules by giving in during public exhibitions of bad behavior, such as a child throwing a tantrum while shopping. If you give in to the child's demands, the tantrums will continue.

Try to keep your goals and your techniques consistent over time.

If more than one adult is responsible for the child's discipline, be sure you agree about the approaches you will use.

When it's done, it's done. After the consequence is over or the time has been served, don't ask for apologies or continue to lecture about the behavior. Help your child return to an appropriate activity.

Look for the "why" behind behaviors: If you notice a pattern of inappropriate behavior, part of the solution is to look for "whys." For example, perhaps your child is upset about something else, such as a friend moving away. Maybe your child had a bad day at school. Perhaps your child feels stressed about family problems. Maybe they are tired or hungry.

These explanations don't excuse the behavior, but trying to understand why it happens can help you and your child find ways to prevent it from happening again and again.

Know When and Where to Go for Help

Give yourself a break. Even if you have the best discipline techniques and parenting style, there are some days when nothing seems to work. Or perhaps you've had a bad day, too. Developing skills for positive discipline takes a lot of practice and a lot of time. If you feel you have made a mistake, be honest. Apologize to your child and explain how you plan to change your response the next time.





Editorial

Making presidential debates compulsory

PRESIDENTIAL debates often occur between the main candidates of in an election, and are usually held before and after the primary elections of the various political parties. Most times it is broadcast live via radio and television, and in more recent times a whole lot of others follow online, via their favoured social media channels.

IN Nigeria, we have a couple of organizations, groups and entities that are involved in staging these national debates. Among them we have some major players like the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG) and the Nigerian Elections Debate Group (NEDG). These two focus more on the economic policy thrust of the presidential candidates, and have demonstrated that they are capable of handling the task.

ONE of such presidential debates was billed for Tuesday, November 15, 2022. but due to prevailing circumstances, they opted to postpone the debate. However, a new date has not yet been officially communicated. Because of the postponement, the Chief Executive Officer of the Nigerian Elections Debate Group (NESG) Laoye Jaiyeola, said they remained committed to providing platforms for such engagements in the interest of the nation.

THERE is no doubting the fact that debates are essential to the electoral process. It is now regarded as tradition and somehow paves the way for a healthy democracy. The citizens need to be involved in the process of making leadership choices. The process cannot be left to the whims and fancy of our politicians. These debates are designed to accord candidates a unique platform and opportunity to discuss their economic agenda in an environment of civil discourse.

IT is expected that they should always rush to seize the opportunity. We are at a point where we cannot afford to leave things to chance anymore. It is a critical time in our history where we know how important it is for Nigerians to be better informed about the voting choices they make, having adequate knowledge and understanding of what are at stake. To be able to see if those vying can be able to steer Nigeria towards our shared economic prosperity in a safe and secure environment.

IN order for these debates to have the desired impact and reach, a lot has to be put in place, which always includes financial and material resources. In addition, a lot of collaborative efforts have to come into play. It is understood that the NESG and NEDG has been collaborating with the Broadcasting Organizations of Nigeria (BON), the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Nigeria Guild of Editors (NGE), Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development (CJID), Enough is Enough (EiE), BudgIT, and Radio, Television, Theatre and Arts Workers Union (RATTAWU). These collaborative efforts ensure broad based handling and execution.

ALREADY, there is a trend that has unfolded in the recent past whereby candidates fail to show up for the debates. We have seen that play out again this time around when the major candidates failed to participate. The organizers are non-partisan. They are only seeking to engage directly with candidates on

CRITICAL issues that relate to offices they are vying for. The populace see these debates as integral parts of the electoral process.

IN other climes, candidates are eager to engage with citizens in discussions about their mandate and the like. For instance, in the United States of America, the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) was established in 1987 by a joint sponsorship of the Republican and Democratic political parties, and it sponsors and produces debates for US presidential and vice presidential candidates. it also undertakes research and educational activities relating to the debates, and has run all the presidential debates held since 1988. That is what we envisage for Nigeria. Candidates need to freely engage citizens in discussions about their abilities, knowledge, experience, and competence for positions they seek.

THIS no doubt is in the national interest. We therefore, call on the National Assembly to make these debates a part of our laws so as to give people the opportunity to engage these candidates.

POLITICAL violence is becoming a global phenomenon which many nations try to contend with within their political system. This can be in form of crises in the society particularly during elections where most politically related violence are always attributed to the teeming youths that are supposed to be the backbone of every society.

Due to idleness, lack of education, unemployment, poor orientation and greed of the political class our youth are becoming vulnerable in our society.

Another factor which reinforces violence in African political system is the desperate attitude of African politicians, the desperation to win election and occupy political offices by all means is a major cause of political violence.

In some cases, it is the contestants who in their quest for political powers organize some youths and provide arms that will be used to enforce fear during election and it is said that "when two elephants fight only the grass suffer". It is simply the youths who are at the middle of those desperate fellows aspiring that are being used against each other and even to the civilians who are peacefully exercising their rights to vote for a representative with pure intention and hoping to choose a credible candidate that will protect their interests.

During campaigns, the money and offer of some materials to the voters have become the order of the day across African

nations. It is also a factor responsible for continued spread of political violence. The level of poverty on the continent is such an intimidation where the innocent youths may be recruited for violence which is done just to survive. The politician

Nigerian youth must shun political violence

use of huge amount of money during electoral campaigns in form of gift to the poor especially those in the rural areas just to win peoples votes is not good for the people and democracy. Who would then be on ground during election to snatch ballot boxes and cause confusion, specifically, the youths are targeted as instruments of

perpetuating violence and their hearts are poisoned with money and other items which can make them participate and not be concerned of the danger involved in executing such acts.

For this phenomenon to discontinue, there must be a favourable, peaceful atmosphere for citizens to participate in the country's democracy and be able to elect their

representatives peacefully without any molestation. The youths should therefore be cautioned on accepting any gift from politicians or be used as violent instruments to disrupt any peaceful election process in the country.

Gloria Jared is an IT student from Kwararafa University, Wukari.

Kindly intensify security patrol in Rayfield

RESIDENTS of Rayfield in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State are concerned about the surge in kidnapping and other crimes particularly around Atiku Street, Rayfield

The issue of kidnapping, cultism and other violent crimes in Rayfield is now a source of worry to the residents who now sleep with their eyes wide open.

Lately, there were reported incidence of kidnappings for instance, that of a woman who was kidnapped in front of the Plateau Radio Television Corporation (PTVC) Station, Rayfield.

Considering these kind of ugly situation which has become a daily occurrence, there is need for the Nigeria Police

Force to intensify patrol around the neighbourhood.

While on the other hand, the residents of the area should complement the security agencies through the setting up of vigilante or neighbourhood watch to forestall any security breach in this area also.

It is also commendable that the Plateau State government had passed the Bill on Anti-kidnapping and robber, cultism, violence and other related matters which was recently passed by the state House of Assembly.

However, Rayfield which is supposed to be the most secured environment, because it also accommodates the Government House, unfortunately the area is now experiencing serious

security threats.

Recently, there was a reported case of kidnapping around NTA College which is just adjacent the old Government House. The area is also threatened by cases of robbery mostly at the ATM machines in front of the school gate.

Also, was the case of Adonai Boarding school few minutes drive from Atiku Hostel in Rayfield, where residents witnessed sporadic shootings by the hoodlums at night making households to run for dear life.

I wish to appeal to the government of Plateau State in collaboration with the security agencies to provide the necessary protection for the Rayfield community.

David Zando Hoku is an It student of



STANDARD CARTOON

Congratulations and jubilation to APC, Plateau State for clearing 17 LGC chairmanship.

(What next LG Autonomy)



Opinion

By KENNETH AMAESHI

Good leaders are usually wise!

SOCIETIES do not exist in bits and pieces. They are complete systems. Following many years of looking at societal leadership in different contexts and circumstances, I have come to the view that successful societies usually have leaders and followers who are WISE (Wholesome, Innovative, Selfless, and Entrepreneurial) in approach and outlook. And here are my reasons.

First, wholesome leadership from a societal perspective entails the ability of a leader to see and appreciate a society as an entity made up of many complementary parts. It is an inclusive form of leadership and requires system thinking capability to be effectively actualised. The opposite is a leader who sees and treats a part as something bigger than the whole. The preponderance of ethnic and religious cleavages and propensities in our leaders and leadership, for example, is a clear manifestation of the lack of wholesome leadership, which has produced a lot of anomalies in our society. To overcome these entrenched dichotomies and their attendant anomalies requires a significant dose of innovation.

As such, wise leaders are equally innovative. Innovation here entails the ability to drive change in both tried and untried ways. Innovative leaders do not necessarily and completely rely on the status quo. The status quo is assessed on its merit. If it is still relevant, fine. Otherwise, it must change to fit with the new direction of travel. Although change is the only constant, this is where many leaders struggle. The weight of the status quo – i.e., entrenched interests – can

either make or mar any leader. So, it requires a lot of wisdom and innovation to navigate.

For instance, many Nigerians always complain about the mono-product economy, which is heavily dependent on oil and gas. However, different successive governments have been unable to deal with the issue of diversifying the economy away from oil. The other issue, which has continued to plague the country, is the inefficient power sector. Each government throws huge sums of money at it but with very inconsequential results. Both examples are believed to be the engine room of corruption in Nigeria, which will take a lot of institutional innovation as well as selflessness to maneuver.

It is particularly difficult to resist corruption in the face of weak institutions if one is not selfless. A wise leader applies his/her entire self in the act and is consumed by the act. Through this process, the self is emptied in the service of others. This is exactly what it means to be selfless. Selflessness does not prioritise self-interest. It is not about what I gain from society, but what I gain through the gains of others. Selfless leaders succeed when those they serve succeed. In that sense, selflessness is the ability to assist others to be even better than we are.

In some traditions and cultures, many parents exhibit this sense of selfless leadership in relation to their children. The opposite is where leaders simply go for self-interests. It is either they win, or nobody wins. Imagine a situation where a

governor or president interferes in a commercial contract bidding process because he/she does not want a member of his/her society to get the job for fear of empowering the wrong person, even if this person has the best solution at hand.

As banal as this might sound, it looks like a regular occurrence and often manifests when there are economic gains to be exploited. Selfless leadership is not scared of such if the people served are willing to reciprocate the goodwill. In many successful societies, the reciprocal goodwill is institutionalized through the denigration and curtailing of the influence of money in politics. Instead, ideas, ideologies, and the ability to positively influence others are favoured through the process and apparatus of democracy. This ability to positively influence is an act of entrepreneurship.

Leadership in successful societies requires a lot of entrepreneurial efforts to remain effective. Beyond the ability to positively influence others, it is the role of societal leadership to create enabling environments for the entrepreneurial potentials of societies to be unleashed. The notion of “the entrepreneurial state” captures this elegantly. It is a recognition that governance and leadership are not exclusive to the government. They can be both collaborative and inclusive with other non-State actors such as the private sector and the civil society. That is why private sector development, has become an integral part of many

successful societies.

In this case, the private sector is not merely seen as an inferior part of society, but a credible and legitimate development partner. The opposite of this approach is a situation where the private sector is often hounded with all sorts of aggressive and non-conducive policies. To avoid this ugly and anti-development scenario, positive entrepreneurship is a capability anyone aspiring to lead a society should have. It is not an optional competence.

As Nigerians prepare for the polls, it is important to bear these characteristics of leaders and leadership in mind. The tough question is who amongst the major contestants is closest to these ideals or is the ideal president still a far-fetched expectation? This is a question we cannot escape from. Therefore, let us think through and rethink our options carefully. And when we make our choices, we should learn to ensure we do everything possible to hold our chosen leaders to account. Without accountability and transparency, good governance will remain elusive.

The best presidential aspirant should be WISE. It is always easy to fall into the trap of doing the same thing repeatedly and expecting change. If we do not change this approach, our disappointments shall have no end, irrespective of how genuine our expectations are. To be forewarned, is to be forearmed, as they say. And the rest is usually history!

By
TOPE SUNDAY

Mixed feelings as harmattan season approaches

THE rains are letting up and expectation is the harmattan season will set in soon. Though the season has its up sides many people have mixed feelings as it approaches.

In Nigeria, the harmattan season is the last season in the year and the first in the succeeding year. The season, which occurs between November and March, comes with noticeable dry and dusty weather with bursts of cold air in the mornings and nights, however, the temperature is unexpectedly high during the day. Wikipedia defines the season harmattan, from Twi word haramata, originated from the dry and dusty harmattan trade winds which blow from the Sahara desert over West Africa.

For weather and climate.com, the climate of Nigeria is tropical; however, there are wide climatic variations in different regions of the country.

Near the coast, temperatures rarely exceed 32 degrees Celsius (90 degrees Fahrenheit), but humidity is very high and nights are very hot. Inland there are two different seasons.

The wet season is from April to October, with lower monthly temperatures and the wettest month being June.

Also, the dry season is from November to March, with midday temperatures that rise above 38° Celsius (100° Fahrenheit) but

relatively cool nights, dropping as low as 12° Celsius (54° Fahrenheit).

The site added that an average rainfall along the coast varies from about 180 cm (70 in) in the west to about 430 cm (170 inch) in certain parts of the east. Inland, it decreases to around 130 cm (50 inch) over most of central Nigeria and only 50 cm (20 inch) in the extreme North.

Mixed feelings over harmattan

The season, according to findings by Blueprint Weekend, brings mixed feelings. While some Nigerians believe that it is a blessing as it herald the end of the rainy season especially with havoc caused in some parts of the country, others see it as harsh and unfriendly to the skin and respiratory tract.

Speaking with this medium, an Abuja resident, Mr. Benjamin Christopher, said he liked the season because it allowed him the opportunity to appreciate nature. He said it gives room for improved power supply and increases affection among lovers.

Christopher said despite the goodness and usefulness of the season, people tend to engage in some destructive acts like bush burning.

He cited his experience 2015 when he lost an hectare of cassava farm to bush burning.

According to him, “I Like harmattan season because during the period I will not sweat a lot. It

helps me to understand nature, unlike the dry season.

During harmattan there is always steady power supply, however, one of its disadvantages is that people, especially farmers, tend to engage in bush burning. This destroys farm lands, and at times other private property are also destroyed.

“In 2015, my hectare of cassava farm was destroyed by those who were burnt bushes. I lost an hectare of cassava farm to the incident.

“Also, during the period, you have to take the extra care of your children because the weather is too cold and might be unfriendly to them. No parent would be happy to treat their children for pneumonia.

“However, despite all these during the season many women get pregnant because of the cold weather at night that binds couples.”

For Mr. Stephen Johnson, a painter, who plies his trade in Abuja, the season is the best for his work because it dries off his painting works quickly, adding that harmattan period makes him and his colleagues to work faster, and with a lot of ease.

He said: “As a painter, this is the best season for my work because it dries off painting on time.” During this period, both internal and external paintings quickly get

dried off. So, for me and my colleagues, this is the best time for us.”

On his part, Okesoto Samuel, another resident of the city, said he preferred the season to the dry and the rainy seasons because the harmattan season makes him to sleep comfortably at night.

“Harmattan is the best season for me because it makes me sleep at night comfortably because during the season there is nothing like heat, and misquotes usually disappear. The weather allows me to sleep very well at night,” he told our Reporter.

Speaking on the issue, Akeem Musa, said there is nothing special about the harmattan season having grown up in the North.

He said: “I grew up in the North, so for me there is nothing special about the harmattan season. When we were growing up in the North, we thought that the weather was the same. It is only the raining season that is special because of the rains. So, for me there is nothing special about the harmattan season.”

However, another resident, Christie Timothy, told our reporter that she detested the season because of its dryness.

Christy decried the fact that she often experienced cold and catarrh during the period, which makes her uncomfortable.

“During the harmattan season, I

usually experience cold and catarrh. And in most cases, my throat is dehydrated.

“Also, my looks during the period is not usually good because my skin will be dried, while my body will be dirty because of the dust caused by the weather. The season is not too friendly to me.

“Also, the weather could be too harsh and dry during the daytime and too cold in the evening. I makes me not too uncomfortable,” she said.

Corroborating her views Abdullahi Obaje told this medium that the only good thing about the season was that it reminded him of the end of the year.

He said aside from that, it was not too friendly, just as he added that the season was synonymous with disasters like bush burning and accidents.

“Anytime harmattan starts, it reminds one that the year is gradually coming to an end. This makes us happy.

“However, on the other side, the season is not friendly to me, and some other people I know. It is synonymous to disaster and accidents. Like we have had in the past, a lot of burning activities during the season had resulted in wanton loss of property, and lives in some cases.

“Also, accidents occur more during the period because of the cloudy early morning weather,” he said.

Feature

Japa-ing Nigerian doctors cry over exploitation

By MICHAEL JIMOH

THEY spend eight long years in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria for their MBBS degrees more than any other class of professionals. With the worsening insecurity and downturn in the economy, it is no surprise some doctors are now leaving Nigeria to take up appointments in Europe – the UK especially. But as some of them have now found out, the exploitative work condition is far from what they expect. Here are some recent cases of the griping medics against their employers.

Before Dr. Augustine Enekwechi, a Nigerian medic, arrived the UK some time ago to take up appointment at Nuffield Hospital Leeds, he hoped all would be well. Though with a medical degree from his home country, Enekwechi still had to sit for Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board to be recruited. He did. Overseen by the General Medical Council in London, PLAB is the first of a series of recruitment tests for foreign doctors to secure a license in the UK as required by the British medical authorities.

Enekwechi had done his PLAB 1 successfully. He was in the second phase when NES Healthcare got in touch with him, with “visa sponsorship and a potential job.” He accepted. Then things began to go the way he never expected. Like a plough horse, he worked round the clock for his employer, all through the day, week to week and so on. The result was only too predictable. He was exhausted. He broke down.

Quoting the Nigerian medic in a recent BBC publication, Enekwechi said “his hours were extreme; on-call 24 hours a day for a week at a time,” adding that “he’s unable to leave the hospital premises which feels like being in a prison.”

Possibly abiding by the Hippocratic oath, doctors do their best to not cause any harm to patients under their care. Even so, there is a limit to how long the human body can function. Like other professionals in the line of duty, doctors need time for rest, to relax their mind and body for optimal performance. It was clearly not so in Enekwechi’s case. Since he was constantly on his feet, moving from hospital bed to another, performing this or that surgery and generally attending to patients 24/7, the good doctor himself felt he couldn’t function properly. “I knew that working tired puts the patients at risk and puts myself also at risk...I felt powerless... helpless, you know, constant stress and thinking something could go wrong.”

Another Nigerian medic Dr. Femi Johnson may also have been recruited the same way his compatriot was. He had a similar fate with Enekwechi though not in the same hospital. By his own admission, he said he was “expected to work 14 to 16-hour



Ehanire

days and then be on call overnight. I was burnt out. I was tired, I needed sleep. It’s not humanly possible to do that every day for seven days.”

Unable to follow the punishing schedule and to retain his sanity, Johnson took some time off. His employers, NES, promptly deducted from his salary, insisting it will “cover the cost of finding a replacement doctor,” prompting Johnson to conclude that doctors like him hired by NES are “in a terrible dilemma.” Continuing, the Nigerian doctor said such frustrating situations made him reevaluate his current job status. “In situations like that, I always make that internal discussion with my inner self, ‘Femi are you doing right by yourself and are you doing right by the patient?’ Unfortunately, I haven’t always been able to answer that question.”

No one seems to find an answer yet to the complaint by the Nigerian doctors even though the British Medical Association has called the action of the private hospitals “shocking.” To stop the practice of overworking medics, especially those from Third World countries, BMA is insisting that the private sector “needs to be brought in line with the NHS working practices.”

But Nuffield Health has defended its actions, saying “its doctors are offered regular breaks, time off between shifts, and the ability to swap shifts if needed,” adding that “the health and wellbeing of patients and hospital team members is its priority.”

If so, why are doctors Enekwechi, Johnson and many

others from Nigeria complaining? NES Healthcare, according to BBC investigations, “specializes in employing doctors from overseas, many of them from Nigeria, and using them as Resident Medical Officers, or RMOs – live-in doctors found mainly in the private sector.”

Enekwechi himself has said that when NES Healthcare got in touch and apprised him of a possible job offer with a private hospital, he was so excited “that he barely looked at the NES contract. In fact it opted him out of legislation that protects UK workers from excessive working hours, the Working Time Directive, and left him vulnerable to a range of punishing salary deductions.”

Faced with such humiliating working conditions in private hospitals in the UK, especially for those in a privileged profession (doctors are the first to see an individual at birth and the last to see him when he dies) why are they still flocking to work outside Nigeria?

Follow the money

The attraction is nothing but money and better working conditions, as some of those the Beeb spoke with admitted. “The

Nigerian doctors who spoke to the news agency, said they were attracted by the potential of higher salaries and better working conditions.”

Though the World Health Organisation long ago warned against poaching medical personnel from Third World countries where their services are needed most in red-list countries like Bangladesh, Ghana, Pakistan and Sudan, private health institutions in the UK have continued to make overtures to doctors from these nations.

In a Punch report of June 2021, for instance, 200 fresh Nigerian doctors swelled the number in the UK to 8,384. The numbers are still rising. In an interview with Dr. Seun Yusuf, president of the Nigerian Doctors in the UK, she noted that “the number of Nigerian doctors migrating would continue to increase as long as doctors were not well paid and hospitals lacked equipment,” insisting that “in the last three years, more than 6,000 doctors would have left Nigeria to different places but because the UK is the easiest place, the pathway becomes very easy so the UK gets a higher percentage

of Nigerian doctors migrating. Some people are still in the UK writing their exams and they are not included in these statistics.”

According to her, poor pay and incentives were possible causes of the exodus. Hear her: “The doctors who finish school struggle to get house job placement and they don’t get paid. Imagine attending school for eight years and you don’t get a job on time and when you get it, they don’t pay you.

“You finish from school and go to NYSC and after eight years of medical school, one year of houseman-ship during NYSC, someone pays you N80,000 when you know you can earn better with that certificate in another country. If Nigeria had enough incentive, work/ life balance, people would not leave.”

One major consequence of the mass exodus of Nigerian doctors to foreign countries is depriving their own countrymen and women much needed services. The WHO warning against poaching doctors from developing countries is not for nothing. In a report published by International Centre for Investigative Reporting, last March, Marcus Fatunmole wrote that there are four Nigerian doctors to 10,000 Nigerian citizens. “Only four doctors could attend to 10,000 people living in Nigeria, and the trend has been so in the past two decades.”

With the recent outflow of medics from Nigeria, the ratio is bound to get higher. It also means that many of them are likely to end up like the Enekwechis and Johnsons in foreign hospitals. Even so, a medical doctor in Edo state told THEWILL in a phone interview late last Friday that cases of exploitation are not peculiar to doctors working in the UK. Overworking doctors also happens here, he said.

In his view, private hospitals in Nigeria, unlike government-owned hospitals, are profit-oriented businesses. The proprietors of such health facilities, he contends, make bricks of cash at the expense of those they employ, including doctors. They also put them to work, he went on, like galley slaves. The difference between doctors working in private hospitals in foreign countries and their equivalent here is that such exploitative tendencies are barely talked about, let alone make the headlines as Enekwechi and Johnson’s case.

“Possibly abiding by the Hippocratic oath, doctors do their best to not cause any harm to patients under their care. Even so, there is a limit to how long the human body can function. Like other professionals in the line of duty, doctors need time for rest, to relax their mind and body for optimal performance. It was clearly not so in Enekwechi’s case. Since he was constantly on his feet, moving from hospital bed to another, performing this or that surgery and generally attending to patients 24/7, the good doctor himself felt he couldn’t function properly. “I knew that working tired puts the patients at risk and puts myself also at risk...I felt powerless... helpless, you know, constant stress and thinking something could go wrong.”

News

Nigeria mining sector witnesses boost - NNPP stalwart

From
DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja

THE Nigeria mining and metal sector is set to witness increased interest from foreign investors as a result of the successes recorded by the Segilola Resources Operating Limited (SROL) in gold production.

This was contained in a statement signed by IdowuJokpeyibo, Director P&PR of the Ministry of Solid Mineral Development.

The statement said thatAdegbite made this known at the weekend during a facility tour of SROL in Iperindo area of Osun State, South Western Nigeria.

The Minister also disclosed that an Australian company has commenced operation in Baba Tsauni area of Gwagwalada in the Federal Capital Territory carrying out an advanced exploration and mining project for gold, silver and lead. "An Australian company came into Nigeria in 2021, brought some investment in and others are about starting operation while another company who has also made imprints in Nigeria is acquiring equities right now. So many other companies like that have come into Nigeria, some are at the explorative stages while some have even gone beyond that," he further explained.

He attributed the sudden foreign interests in the Nigeria mining sector to the success story from SROL operations in Nigeria adding that Nigeria needs more of Segilola to return to the world mining map. In his words, "we need more of Segilola in Nigeria, you are the pioneer and we are happy that it is a success story because when I started going to the mining calendar events and invite them to invest in the sector, they were hesitant as they saw Nigeria as a shark infested water and wanted to see who dived in and came out first. They wanted to see how Thor exploration will fair, your success story is out there now and everybody wants to be the next Segilola"

According to him, the success story of Segilola has opened a new vista of opportunity for Nigeria and for Nigerians. He noted, "I was in Australia, Saudi Arabia, London, Canada, even the United States of America, everybody wants to come to Nigeria to do mining because of what Segilola has done, a lot of news out there is negative about Nigeria, but we have your story to tell as a company that came from outside and is able to survive in Nigeria."

Adegbite disclosed that the SROL has paid about 1.1 billion Naira in royalties to the Federal Government, since they started production in 2021, expressing government's willingness to welcome more investors like Segilola Resources Operating Limited so as to have more royalties for the government creating more employmentopportunities for Nigerians.

He encouraged communities to be receptive to mining companies so as to accelerate development in their communities, provide job opportunities for their teaming



Adegbite

youth and create wealth. He appealed for continuous cooperation between the mining companies and the host communities as he said SROL has employed a lot of people; skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled from the neighborhood. "They employed a lot of people, the communities are benefiting, they have gone beyond the Community Development Agreement (CDA) which is compulsory and now doing a lot under Community Social Responsibility (CSR), this should be an encouragement," he added.

The Minister ascribed earlier hesitation of foreign interest in the sector to the notion that Nigeria was seen as an oil and gas country. This perception, was however, changed with accelerated investment in exploration through the National Integrated Mining Exploration Project (NIMEP) and its generated data.

He called on more foreign mining companies to invest in Nigeria and take advantage of the abundant mineral resources not just gold but also other minerals spread all over different parts of the country such as Lithium, Coal, Nickel

and Cobalts, among others.

Earlier in his remarks, the Chief Executive Officer, Segilola Resources Operating Limited, Segun Lawson appreciated the support and motivation received from the Federal Government which he believes is responsible for the success so far recorded.

Lawson said the company is not only running commercial operation as they have made a lot of social impact to the communities around them. He reiterated that his company has fulfilled all the promises made in the CDA signed with the host communities and has gone ahead into CSR which includes, building of markets, schools, construction of bridges, provision of scholarships, portable water, among others.

He highlighted the challenges faced by the company to include the issue of illegal mining in his domain as he appealed for the continuous support of the Ministry and other government agencies to overcome such challenges, adding that plans are underway to expand exploration and production of gold to other states and diversify away from gold production.

From
VICTOR GAI, Jalingo

A New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) chieftain in Taraba and House of Assembly candidate for Karim 1 constituency, Stephen Othaniel, has claimed that the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) have created for themselves crises that would swallow them up. According to him, as far as he was concerned the two parties have no governorship candidates in Taraba.

Speaking with The Nigeria Standard in an exclusive interview, the one-time State Secretary of the APC stated that the crises in the parties were self-inflicted and therefore both parties might end up without a candidate in the forthcoming elections.

According to him, the two parties have violated the electoral law in conducting their primary elections which is now haunting them with the legal battle taking place in the parties.

He also added that both parties have violated the rotation system by fielding candidates from the southern zone of the state whereas it was the turn of the northern zone to produce a governor.

"The crises you are talking about in both the APC and the PDP is a 'manufactured crisis' and that problem is about to swallow them up. That is the naked truth. All the candidates have a claim to the party because there was no election. I am from the APC and served as State Secretary of the party. I served as a Zonal Secretary of the PDP in Taraba State. So I can tell you a lot about those parties. They manufactured these problems and it is eating them up."

"In terms of the traditional power sharing, the APC and PDP have gotten it wrong. We had the traditional rotation system in Taraba. We see no reason why the south would come in at this critical time. The south is not supposed to be in the race based on the agreement we have," Othaniel stated.

APC, PDP have no governorship candidate in Taraba

He regretted the fact that Tarabans are easily influenced by religion and ethnicity which is why the state has remained the way it is today. Othaniel however made a case for his party, the NNPP and the governorship candidate promising that they are the ones to salvage the state from its present state.

"Religion has eaten deep into the heart of Tarabans which is why we are suffering. People vote based on religion and ethnicity. Would you come now in the name of religion and expect to scale through? The answer is no!

So as far as I am concerned, those people rooting for APC and PDP are just wasting their time. APC has no candidate because there was no election, likewise PDP, with the way things are going. You are the chairman of the party, you sell the form to me, you screen me and at the dying minute, you are coming in as a governorship candidate. How possible is that? That is why I said, it is a manufactured problem,anintentionalact."

The New Nigeria Peoples Party is the party that has come to stay. It is a party that has a manifesto. It is a party that is ready to serve humanity and I can tell you that the governorship candidate has a track record. So, when we give him the

opportunity, he would make Taraba a new Dubai, not what this 'passerby' did. I call him passerby. Ishaku came and has nothing to show. He came empty handed and he is going empty handed.

So now, they are bringing another passerby, why? So I am calling on Tarabans to look beyond what has happened in the past and look at the reality. Voting Professor Sani Yahaya is voting for education, agriculture, infrastructure and security. So keep religion aside. By the grace of God, the New Nigeria Peoples Party would take over," he concluded.

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.



Mahmood

NHRC concerned over poverty, rights of women, children

From
ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

aside by the United Nations for the introspection on values of human life, dignity,



Ojukwu

equality and freedom of human beings regardless of any peculiar circumstances.

The Executive Secretary, who was represented at the occasion by Bauchi State

Coordinator of the NHRC, Madam Yahcit Suzan Dala, disclosed that the day was preceded by a series of activities to mark the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence against women and children from 25th November to 10th December. It included advocacy visit to traditional and religious leaders, visit to schools, CSOs, Speaker of the House of Assembly, NBA/FIDA among others.

She further said her office partnered with major stakeholders, the Bauchi State government to create awareness of the dangers of SGBV. She added that most survivors are afraid to speak because perpetrators are known to them.

"For NHRC as a national institution established for the promotion and protection of human rights in Nigeria, this year's celebration amplifies the plight of over a 133million Nigerians living in

multidimensional poverty, the millions of out-of-school children (highest in the world), the millions of our brothers and sisters internally displaced by conflicts and floods across the country, the thousands of women and children, survivors of gender-based violence. These challenges require collective solutions by all.

"One of the main factors of SGBV is the misunderstanding of women and girls. It is a collective efforts, nobody can do it alone. We work in collaboration with key stakeholders; medical personnel, the judiciary, law enforcement, and CSOs.

"The effort is to sensitize people about the menace, to advocate for the passage of some laws about the menace and not just the passage but to make sure that there is the implementation of such laws to logical conclusion", the Secretary of the Commission said.

Feature



Go-Green turning the tide against climate change

A new initiative known as Go-Green Project aims at fostering green consciousness and empowering the younger generation on environmental conservation to fight deforestation and other elements of climate change in Sokoto State, TUNDE OMOLEHIN writes.

SOKOTO is one of the frontline states in Nigeria threatened by an encroaching Sahara Desert. The state is exposed to at least three ecological problems: Deforestation, drought and desertification.

A recent report from the Sokoto State Ministry of Environment says that desertification is the biggest ecological challenge facing the state with a population estimated to be more than 5 million.

Further reports indicate that the increase in human and livestock population pressure has resulted in a significant depletion of Sokoto's land mass of about 15,000 square kilometres of forest, which is composed of trees, shrubs, grasses and wildlife.

The degradation of forest is not limited to excessive felling of trees to satisfy the people's need for wood, while 90 percent of the livestock is being threatened by other ecological factors.

It would be recalled that the Federal Government and non-governmental organisations adopted various approaches in providing sustainable solutions that aimed to push back deforestation.

For instance, the National Tree Planting Campaign, Arid Zone Afforestation, Forestry II, State Afforestation, Gum Arabic Integration, Jatropha curcas Biofuel projects, as well as forest guards that bolster forest protection are some of the interventions deployed to tackle climate change in the state.

But a new initiative 'Go-Green Project' is trying something different with the launching of its tree planting campaign in Sokoto State.

With the catchphrase 'Plant to

Save Lives,' promoters of the Go-Green project, including Eco-Africa Climate Change Foundation, Shehu Maikoli Foundation and the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Sokoto Chapter want to create environmental awareness schools through tree planting across the state.

"We place emphasis on multipurpose trees and species, especially economic trees for nutrition in areas that are vulnerable to climate change in the state," says Project Manager and Eco-Africa Climate Change Foundation representative, Aliyu Abubakar Shehu.

According to an expert, climate change is real and fighting it requires massive effort. "There are many gaps that we need to fill and they are social gaps. There is a need to strengthen efforts to educate people about environmental problems and ways to tackle them. This is what the Go-green project stands for," he says.

Stakeholders led by the Sultan of Sokoto, Sa'ad Abubakar, Governor Aminu Waziri Tambuwal of Sokoto State and other environmentalists have praised the initiators for coming up with the project during its official launching ceremony held in Sokoto.

The founder of Shehu Makoli Foundation, Alhaji Altine Shehu Kajiji, one of the project Kilgari, Dr Muhammad Jabbi collaborators, says that the project is aimed at establishing gardens in schools, carrying out roadside plantations, distribution and plantation of indigenous Moringa and environmental seeds to farmers across the state.

"Go-Green will foster green consciousness, educate and

empower younger generation actors of environmental conservation and protection by providing them a platform and practical opportunity through tree planting.

Our Young Forester Clubs in schools will connect pupils, students and youths to plant trees and foster environmental stewardship. This will increase students' interest in their local environment and help them to perform well academically," Kajiji says.

The clubs, he adds, are expected to engage in raising plantations and promoting community participation in addressing the menace of climate change, desertification, drought and poverty.

Kajiji says the flagship will see to the establishment of 20 gardens in each 10 Junior Secondary and Primary Schools in the state, distribution of economic trees' seeds to women as well as the inauguration of Young Forester Clubs in schools.

Kajiji recalls how his Foundation has donated no fewer than 2,000 moringa seedlings to the State Zakat and Waqf (Endowment) Commission to complement the Commission's efforts in the promotion of trees for the Waqf initiative in Nigeria's northern states and beyond.

The Sultan of Sokoto, who was represented by the District Head of Kilgari, Dr Muhammad Jabbi Kilgari, commended the project and assured that the Sultanate Council will partner with them in order to achieve the desired objectives.

He however advised the Initiators to engage community heads, health institutions, among others to ensure that they

participated in the projects.

On his part, Governor Tambuwal rated Go-Green as a noble initiative in the history of partnership for development in the state.

He reminded the gathering that the initiative is a global trend in which countries and non-governmental organisations partner to initiate programmes, actions, interventions and strategies for combating the problems of climate change, food insecurity, desertification and poverty.

"The Sokoto state Government has readily keyed into the partnership because the problems of climate change, desertification and drought are contemporary challenges for it being one of the eleven frontline states in Nigeria blighted by ecological problems.

Tambuwal said his administration, on its part, has sustained tree planting through the annual tree planting exercise and routine planting and tending of trees statewide which include the distribution of free seedlings, especially of economic trees, to communities and groups in the state.

The governor noted that the resuscitation and formal inauguration of the Young Foresters Club marks a very good beginning for the take-off of the project.

Chairman, Nigerian Union of Journalists in the State, Comrade Dalhatu Magori, at the signing of the project's Memorandum of Understanding underscores the benefits of tree planting are significant to the economy as it reduces the cost of managing the problems.

He said the recent Intergovernmental Panel on

Climate Change (IPCC) report, which warned about keeping global temperatures from rising by over 1.5 degrees centigrade, has reinforced the need for an initiative like the Go-Green project in the state.

He added that the promotion and development of forest products through community enterprises could help to improve the living conditions of the rural population; promote food security and conserve natural resources.

Magori also believes that through the establishment of tree planting and distribution, the project is capable of generating employment and promoting the development of forest products through community enterprises.

Prof Abubakar Gwaram of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, of his part described Go-Green as a veritable option that can strengthen the country's economy.

"If you notice, we have what we call a brown environment. Brown environments are very disastrous; the effort of this project is timely to address this brown environment and to convert it to a green environment."

An environmentalist and board member of the National Agency for Great Green Wall, Dr Ayuba Dan Asabe, called on governments to commit resources to alternatives to check the illegal logging of trees in the state.

Also, Sirajo Sifawa, a media executive and member of Go-green project, during the distribution of seedlings to some stakeholders advised Journalists on the need to focus on the issue of climate change in the state in their daily reports.



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

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



Jungle justice, not our way of reasoning

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

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

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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.

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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.

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 action 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 whom 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 Asiawaju Ahmed Bola Tinubu calling Vice President Yemi Osibanjo a traitor then forgetting what their principal did to former Lagos state Governor Akinyemi 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; "et tu 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 spearheaded 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 called Nigeria.

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

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

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

IPC empowers female journalists, Bloggers with digital skills



Participants in a group photograph

and the Nigerian Television Authority reporter Bauchi Office, Elizabeth Kah said she benefitted 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



NAWOJ President in company of paper presenters



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

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

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 endeavor to write stories that come from the heart", She said.



IMAGES

LALONG COMMISSIONS PHC, ISSUES PLASCHEMA CARDS

Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (CON) last week commissioned Primary Healthcare Clinic and issued PLASCHEMA cards to less privileged in Hambiak, Shendam LGA



Governor Lalong reading his speech at the Commissioning ceremony



Governor Lalong having a close look at the ambulance after the commissioning ceremony of the PHC, Hambiak, Shendam LGA



Chief of Staff to Director General, PCC, Hon. Yakubu Dati (right) flanked by other commissioners



D. G. PLASCHEMA, Dr. JemchangYildam Fabong, Governor Simon Bako Lalong (CON) presenting card to one of the beneficiaries



Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (CON) putting heads together with the Deputy Speaker, PLHA, Rt. Hon. Saleh Shehu Yipmong



Governor Lalong listening to explanation from Dr. Fabong



Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (CON) presenting PLASCHEMA Card to one of the aged persons



One of the PLWD receiving her PLASCHEMA card from Lalong and Dr. Jemchang Yildam Fabong

Photos: DANLADI DUK

Odd World

Neighbour slammed for calling police about dog pooing outside

A homeowner has been criticised on Reddit for calling law enforcement on their neighbours, who let their pet dog go to the bathroom on their own patio, with people angrily agreeing it's a 'waste of police resources'

A homeowner has been slammed online for "wasting police time" after calling law enforcement on their neighbour's dog who goes to the toilet outside.

Taking to Reddit, the person started a thread explaining that the couple next-door often let their dog go to the bathroom on the patio.

They wrote: "I have some neighbours, a young couple around their 20s. They've lived in the apartment next to mine for two years. They have a dog. A small one."

"I've always noticed them taking the dog on walks but for the past two months, I just see them putting some pads on their patio and letting the dog s**t and pee there."

"I've made complaints to them multiple times, I've called them lazy and told them to give up the dog if they can't care for it properly."

When confronted, the couple defended themselves, explaining that they clean up after their dog at least twice a day and walk it every night.

"The girl also said its none of my business on why she and her boyfriend don't take the dog out on walks and they don't have to answer to me," wrote the user.

"The next morning I called the police on them. Authorities came and inspected

and said that no laws are broken as long as the area is getting cleaned up daily."

When the person spoke to police, they were told that the "couple has their reasons" and it's not the neighbour's business to know.

Other members of the community explained to the homeowner that the couple are expecting a baby and the boyfriend takes the dog out late at night whilst his girlfriend is on bedrest.

"Everyone in the building is now hostile against me," the user finished.

Reddit users were quick to respond and slate the person for thinking it's acceptable to call the police.

"I can't even imagine why anyone would think this was not OK, let alone a police matter," someone said.

"You just made a building full of enemies all because you are nosy and intrusive," another person commented.

One Redditor simply said: "You're a neighbour from hell", whilst a second wrote: "What an absolute waste of police resources."

Many people defended the pregnant woman and suggested they apologise to the couple.

"There are many reasons why people can't walk their dog. The dog may have an injury that's healing, it may have developed arthritis and can't walk as much or as long without pain, or a slew of other reasons that are none of your business," a person slated.

Source: The Mirror



Sliding towards Nigeria's spring?

THE day ordinary citizens in Nigeria will gang-up and rebel against their corrupt, greedy and unpatriotic leaders, only God will be able to save this nation from this obvious pending calamity. Until the common man comes to the realization of the fact there is a serious deliberate intention of making this nation an elitist friendly nation state, the citizens would continuously be taken for granted in all ramifications. Though many may think that the complex heterogeneous society which we have found ourselves in is a significant hurdle refraining the citizens of this county from replicating the Arab Spring ideology, yours sincerely do know that anything can happen if Nigerians are pushed against the wall. By the way, as a reminder, the Arab Spring started in Tunisia after a law enforcement officer decided to impede on the fundamental human rights of a vulnerable citizen of the country Mohammed Bouaziz, a fruit and vegetable vendor. Corruption within the Police and among government officers was common in the country then. While the officer perhaps in his usual manner thought it was a minor issue he could get way with, the victim who concluded he had had enough of this acts of injustice unabatedly meted him went wild.

Though the unimaginable cruel decision he took by setting himself ablaze was morally wrong, this was all it took as a game changer to bringing down all cabals who held sway in the Arab world. As the protest for the proliferation of the demands for good governance and social justice enveloped these nations of the world, it subsequently became immanent that power indeed belongs to the people. Today, some African nations in the likes of Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt have set the pace that leaders of contemporary Africa no matter how tough can still be held accountable in their acts of governance. The successful massive protests which swept across the Middle East redefined the only option workable when the citizenry is intending to holding any official of a failed state in the continent to account.

A few days back, another excruciating episode happened in Iran after a citizen of the country allegedly died in police custody. As conservative as the nation was and still is due to obvious religious dogmatization, the citizens of the nation fed of the unacceptable acts of tyranny and unprincipled governance took to the streets demanding for key fundamental changes in the system.

Even though the Iranian government claimed that the protests were instigated and sponsored by the United States of America, many reputable scholars and social commentators have consistently opined that the country's government has refused to accept the reality of the fact that they have far derailed from their anticipated obligations and or responsibilities.

Sad enough, the past few days have been very excruciating for the entire citizens of Nigeria. For the first time in several months, the people of this country are beginning to get tired of the

existing humanly created sufferings in the country. Evidently, most of them are already fed-up over the intriguing but not result-oriented strategies so far employed by relevant authorities.

It is no longer news that the problem of fuel scarcity is eventually becoming a source of concern and anxiety to the entire citizenry. Consequently, the unbearable queues in many filling stations across the nation does not speak well of an oil producing nation like Nigeria. Basically, this unfortunate scenario does not project us as the giants of Africa from and or by any ramification at all.

As it is, the lingering fuel crisis has continued to affect all facades of human endeavors even as prices of essential commodities have soar beyond an unimaginable proportion. Today, the issue of fuel scarcity in Nigeria has eventually turned to something else.

In most cities and towns, the resultant effects of the absence of this essential commodity has continued to have rippling consequences on the polity. Aside the obvious; this soaring fuel price has led to eventual price increase on foodstuff, many people who cannot afford fueling their cars and vehicles have abandoned them back home.

This foodstuff price increase in the middle of an overwhelming harsh economic recession has greatly affected the citizens of this country. Despite this worsening economic times, our political leadership seem unperturbed about this unfortunate situation which is crippling gradually into every sectors of our economy.

For sometime now, various reasons have been attributed to this lingering issue of fuel scarcity by the incumbent government of the day. Amongst these were that the current problem was as a result of the inability of fuel trucks to have access to Lokoja roads due to persistent floods ravaging some states. Noticeably, the flood which has submerged routes and city roads have affected the distribution of these products across the nooks and crannies of the nation. Even though the Nigerian government has noted that it was on top of the situation, the difficulties facing the citizens are unabatedly increasing by the day.

The devastating flood menace across this nation coupled with issues of kidnappings, banditry ad or criminal activities are adding to many worries of the citizens of this country. Many are still left wondering whether Nigeria will overcome present challenges bedeviling our dear nation state.

Be that this as it may however, it is still not too late for our leaders to do the needful towards getting us back on track. The fact of the matter is that Nigerians are suffering from these problems due to some inherent lapses which can be rectified for the common good of all.

This however will demand for selfless service, sincerity of purpose and dedication to the principle of good governance. The reality is that the citizens of this nation are going through a lot and needs more pragmatic approach to dealing with some of these hurdles in the common good of all. Let's not allow our nation experience any form of Arab Spring to take place before the needful is done.

View Point

Gambari, Bogoro uplift Perfect Memorial Secondary School, Mwari

By **BULUS GAMBO, Bogoro**

SOMETIMES back, Chief of Staff to President Muhammadu Buhari, Prof. Ibrahim Gambari was allotted an opportunity to choose two secondary schools in Nigeria which lacked some basic Information Communications Technology, (ICT) gadgets to get the desired intervention from some concerned multi-international organizations for the benefit of its students. Basically, most secondary schools in Africa lack these contemporary devices which if efficiently provided can enhance the learning capacity of our prospective students in various schools in this country.

Mostly affected are vulnerable schools in rural areas where such facilities are needed beyond comprehension. Though the incumbent administration at the federal level has conspicuously left no stone unturned towards creating an enabling environment for advanced learning strategy suitable to global best practice, lack of efficient collaboration between the private and public sectors have degraded such anticipations making such strategic efforts become a total mirage.

Consequently, most secondary schools particularly in our rural areas today are still grabbling with some of these impediments which have continued to pull back our collective efforts towards changing these unpleasant narratives for the better.

Bearing this in mind, Prof. Gambari, a former diplomat at the United Nations decided to welcome the offer for a more pragmatic and systematic intervention in these two schools with open hands. As a globally acclaimed scholar and the first Professor to occupy the office of Chief of Staff to a President in Nigeria since it's independence in 1960, Gambari was and is still quite aware of how this special intervention would add to the educational value of these selected schools. Therefore, after giving the entire intervention offer a serious thought, the Chief of Staff immediately decided to have a rethink on which two lucky secondary schools should benefit from this laudable encompassing projects.

Since charity an adage says begin at home, Prof. Gambari decided to choose the first of the two schools which should be benefiting from the proposed projects to be within Ilorin axis. Knowing the scholar's equitable character, he decided also to pick the second benefiting school far away from his area.

While all was ongoing, not many knew that both the Chief of Staff to President Buhari, Prof. Ibrahim Gambari and the immediate past Executive Secretary of Tertiary Education Trust Fund, (TETFund), Prof. Suleiman Elias Bogoro had come a long way. Aside the glaring fact that both of them are reputable erudite scholars and gold fishes who have no hiding place, each and every thoughts of their is centered around societal and community educational improvement.

But again, aside these two men's significant global intellectual exposure, their desire and quest towards overcoming some of these educational challenges make them standout. In this regard and after scrutinizing the intellectual



Former TETFund Executive Secretary, Prof. Suleiman Bogoro Commissioning the PMSS facility in Mwari



Prof. Bogoro, Prof. Zuya and Mr. Gambo of the Nigeria Standard in a group photograph

contributions of Prof. Bogoro irrespective of religion, tribe and or creed in the country, Prof. Gambari was moved and did not hesitate giving the second slot to the former TETFund Executive Secretary.

But even at this point, Prof. Gambari wanted to make this gesture a complete surprise to his academic colleague. Consequently, Gambari put a call across to Bogoro inviting him to his house. It was after other issues were extensively discussed and done with that the Chief of Staff to the President disclosed his decision to offer one of the slot to him. In fact, Prof. Gambari was quoted to have categorically offered him the opportunity requesting him to choose any school of his choice in the country which would subsequently benefit from this kind gesture.

It was at this point that the choice of Perfect Memorial Secondary School, Mwari in Bogoro Local Government Area of Bauchi came to his mind. The secondary school established in 1993 by Provisional Church Council, (PCC) Tafawa

Balewa is intended to consolidate on government's quest to providing excellent but affordable education to rural communities of the area. Over the past few years, despite several hurdles, the school against all odds has continued to relentlessly achieve the unimaginable and set several records.

Last Tuesday, after months of consistent installation work at the ICT center, mammoth crowd gathered in the school to officially commission the project which has become an edifice cherished by the rural populace. The work was powered by Huawei Technologies Company Nigeria Limited and YouthHub Africa. These two international organizations ensured the installation of these needed equipment and its eventual official handing-over to the school as and when anticipated. Indeed, both Huawei and YouthHub Africa have in the past years been interested in similar interventions aimed at bettering the educational system in the country. Therefore, in the whole of Nigeria, Perfect Memorial

Secondary School Mwari in Bogoro Local Government Area of Bauchi State was the second to benefit from such a benevolent gesture.

Speaking in a welcoming remarks during the event, the Board Chairman of the school, Prof. Habila Elisha Zuya explained that Prof Suleiman Bogoro has continued to be a tremendous blessing to the entire people of the area adding that history will always remember him for putting smiles on the faces of many vulnerable people of the area.

According to Prof. Zuya, "Prof. Bogoro's immense contributions to putting the local government area on the map of global reckoning has projected the integrity of the people of the area who are accorded great respect wherever they happen to find themselves anywhere in the world.

Prof. Zuya thanked Prof. Ibrahim Gambari, Prof. Suleiman Bogoro, Huawei Technologies and YouthHub Africa for ensuring that the school benefitted from this significant project which will positively propel it attain further greatness in the nearest future.

In his speech, Chief of Staff to President Buhari, Prof. Ibrahim Gambari described the immediate past Executive Secretary of TETFund as a globally acclaimed scholar who has done a lot towards reviving tertiary education through incredible sacrifice and indept research approach to dealing with contemporary advancement hurdles.

The former United Nations diplomat also noted that Prof. Bogoro's intellectual prowess restored the integrity of TETFund as a globally acclaimed research enhancing organization intended to better the lot of humanity.

In his address, former Executive Secretary of TETFund, Prof. Suleiman Bogoro disclosed that Huawei and YouthHub Africa decided to equip the school following the opportunity the Chief of Staff to the President gave him to name any school of his choice which could eventually benefit from this facility provision.

Prof. Bogoro commended President Buhari for giving him the opportunity to serve at TETFund including the present Minister of Education, Adamu Adamu for supporting him throughout his tenure at the organization.

He also appreciated Prof. Gambari acknowledging that when the opportunity came for two schools to benefit from such a project in the country, it was the diplomat after choosing Ilorin as the first beneficiary called on him to give the name of the second school as the second beneficiary and Perfect Memorial Secondary school came to his mind.

In their key note addresses, the Executive Director YouthHub Africa, Rotimi Olawale and the Deputy Director, Huawei Technologies Company Limited, Kelvin Yang both disclosed their intentions to continue to impact rural communities in Nigeria for educational development. Rev. Lumi Daniel, the Chairman Provisional Church Council, Tafawa Balewa who is the proprietor of the school thanked all who contributed towards the educational upliftment of the school. It is also hopeful that the school will continue to enjoy more of these facilities as years roll by.



Lalong attends first graduation of COA Garkawa

AFTER 20 years of its existence, College of Agriculture Garkawa held its first graduation last week, December 9th, 2022 at the college premises.

The event broke the jinx for the inability of the college to hold such a convocation since it was established in 1988.

It attracted personalities, educational luminaries from different institutions and well-wishers including the Plateau State Governor, Simon Bako Lalong and some members of his cabinet.

The Provost of the institution, Dr. Ayuba Dasbak while speaking at the event expressed appreciation to the Governor for working to ensure accreditation of more courses in the institution and for making sure the graduation took place.

"To our graduating students whom we are proud of, we are encouraging you to continue to excell to actualise our motto "agriculture for life", said the Provost as he spoke excitedly to the graduands.

"Today's occasion will ginger you to remember your alma mater and our anthem which emphasises that you make Nigeria great through agriculture" he added.

The provost disclosed that presently the second set of graduating HND students are in NYSC camp and it is an encouragement to them, as they continue to churn out experts in various agricultural fields.

Governor Lalong expressed excitement that the college has lived up to its mandate and made a record of awarding ND and HND courses despite its challenges explaining that his administration has worked to ensure accreditation of courses of the institution in the fields of agriculture and mining.



Lalong said due to his commitment and support to the college in the areas of accreditation and in other forms, the Provost had put pressure on his head to ensure he holds a convocation before leaving office next year.

The Governor was optimistic that agricultural courses of the institution will continue to be relevant and encouraged the graduands to realise that even though white-collar jobs are not easily available, they can take up the challenge and go into farming or other forms of agribusinesses that are now the modern and fastest ways of economic empowerment.

He said the maiden convocation was very significant to his administration adding "The failure to carry out convocation in the past does not present a good picture of what an important academic institution such as this should do every year".

While calling educational institutions in the state to ensure they hold convocations yearly to prevent delays in preventing certificates to students, who have graduated, Lalong recalled the gesture he did at the Plateau Polytechnic during their own graduation, and how he bestowed gifts to the best students, alongside his Nassarawa State counterpart, Engr. Abdullahi Sule. He therefore, did the same gesture and offered each of the best 23 graduating students N300 thousand Naira.

More gifts followed for the entire college community as Lalong announced: "Today is my Christmas gift for your institution. You will provide the tree and I will provide the cows", He said as he donated three cows for Christmas and 10 bags of rice.

Earlier the Governor made a stop at Hambiak, Samiya in Shendam Local Government Area of Plateau State to commission a Model Primary Health care facility.

Speaking to the people who were excited to have such a facility sited in their domain in 'Gamai language', Lalong was impressed with the support given to the project by some distinguished sons and daughters.

"Let us always remember our roots and put in place structures like this to help alleviate the sufferings of people".

Lalong said the facility will provide quality health care and access to the rural people and also prevent health complications.

"People will get access to quality healthcare without spending much resources. This health facility will serve as a snake bite center" he said as he stressed his administration's commitment to reversing the poor health indices of Plateau especially in rural areas.

He commended the move to post youth corpsers to the hospital and said he had approved employment into the health sector to bridge the gap of dearth of staff.

The governor advised the community to be weary of traditional medicine and use the facility lamenting that the community had lost a lot of people due to lack of access to healthcare services.

Some distinguished sons and daughters of the community offered 100 vulnerable groups of people including aged people, women, children, and People With disabilities access to one year free health care services from the facility. They also purchased an ambulance to address mobility challenges.

The governor did a symbolic display and presented hospital cards to 12 out of the 100 beneficiaries of the free health care services.

News

Atiku promises Plateau peace if elected

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE presidential candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Alhaji Abubakar Atiku, has promised to bring back peace to Plateau State when elected so that the youth on the Plateau would develop themselves in various opportunities of job creation.

He made the promise yesterday while speaking at his presidential campaign in Jos, the Plateau State



Atiku

capital, held at the Rwang Pam Township Stadium Jos, where thousands supporters trooped in to support Atiku/Okowa and Mutfwang/Piyo campaign organisations.

The Atiku said, "My coming to Jos, the Plateau State capital is a home coming to me because I have lived in Jos for over twenty-eight years (28yrs). When elected as the President of this country, I will ensure that peace returns to Plateau State so that our youth would have job to do.

The Atiku said, "My coming to Jos, the Plateau State capital is a home coming to me because I have lived in Jos for over twenty-eight years (28yrs). When elected as the President of this country, I will ensure that peace returns to Plateau State so that our youth would have job to do.

"I will ensure that we explore avenues and given resources here on the Plateau to create products that would be exported to other countries. I will repair all the roads linking Plateau because it is my home. So, I want to

call on you to vote PDP from top down for us to send hunger that is in the land", he appealed.

On his part, the National Chairman of the PDP, Iyota Ayu, thanked the people of Plateau State for the massive turn out to receive the presidential candidate and his running mate. He said that it was an indication of fact that PDP was coming back to send hunger away and handle the security challenges in the country.

Also, the Chairman Campaign Council and Executive Governor of Akwa-Ibom State, His Excellency, Goodwill Emmanuel said, "PDP is coming back to make a better change and not like that of APC because their coming back is going to restore peace and make Plateau State exporter of its produce.

The PDP National Youth Leader, Hon. Suleiman Kediri, described Plateau people as consistent when it comes to politics and have an exceptional political calculation appealing to

Atiku/Okowa to give youth the 60% recognition they had promised them.

According to the National Coordinator of the Youth for Atiku/Okowa Campaign Organisation, Chief Kefas Wungak Topshak, has described former Vice President and the PDP Presidential candidate, Alhaji Abubakar Atiku as the most experienced, connected and business friendly candidate among the 18 presidential candidates and should be elected as president.

Earlier, while welcoming the presidential candidate and his team, the Plateau State Chairman of the PDP, Hon. Chris Hassan said, they have collapsed all the structures into one formidable force ready to deliver 5/5 because he has a mandate to deliver over two million votes for the party.

Meanwhile, the PDP gubernatorial candidate in Plateau State, Barr. Caleb Mutfwang, described the massive turn out as a sign that people were prepared to fight against hunger and it was an indication of victory for the PDP at the national and state levels.

Karu LGC hosts Commissioner of Police

From DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja

THE Executive Chairman are doing a wonderful job. of Karu Local Government Despite all the success we Council, Hon James recorded especially in Thomas, hosted the security sector, which can Commissioner of Police, be attributed to the Nasarawa State C.P proactive measure put in Maiyaki Muhammad Baba place by our Governor, His in his office on a courtesy Excellency Abdullahi Sule, call, Tuesday. we have some security

The Commissioner whose challenges recently in visit was for familiarization different areas in Karu to the Chairman, LGA.

"appealed for working I wish to appeal for the synergy with the local transfer of Panda, Gitata government council to and Uke Police Divisions to intensify security in Karu Area Command as Nasarawa and by they are places under my extension Nigeria." control but answerable to

Responding, the Karu LGA Chairman said "We

thank God for having you in my local government request for more personnel especially in Taka-lafiya (Karshi Development Area) Police Station for improved security in the area. The They have been wonderful insecurity rate in that axis and I must confess, they is high" he pointed out.

Sports

Qatar 2022: What's up next for African teams?

NONE of the five African teams at the World Cup won their first match in the group stage. Ghana lost, like Senegal and Cameroon, while Tunisia and Morocco drew their games. African teams are struggling even though each squad had its say and could have, with a bit of luck, or efficiency, pocketed the much coveted three points of victory.

Group A

Sadio Mané's absence on injury was felt by the Senegalese team. The Lions hit a brick wall on the Dutch defense. The trio Sarr-Dia-Diatta was too soft despite a successful first half. There is still room for hope, especially if on Friday (Nov. 25) they win and eliminate Qatar.

The host country fell very badly by losing 2-0 to Ecuador in the opening match, after a very weak performance. The Netherlands, supposedly the strongest nation in the group, already seem untouchable.

Senegal's last group-stage match will take place on November 29 against Ecuador.

Group D

The Tunisians, who have seriously upset Denmark 0-0, have kept all their chances to pass this first round. They will have to deliver against Australia (on November 26) and think about maintaining a goal difference which could be crucial when it comes to the final score. On November 30, they'll play France.

The reigning champions are burdened by injuries to their stars (Pogba, Kanté, Benzema, Kimpembe, Nkunku, Lucas



Hernandez). Still, they started with a convincing victory against the Soccerroos (4-1) and will qualify if they beat Denmark on Saturday (Nov. 26).

Group F

Morocco remain in the race for qualification after drawing 0-0 with Croatia, the 2018 World Cup finalists and still the logical

favourite to qualify. Walid Regragui's men are looking forward to the clash against Belgium on November 27. On their side, they count five Belgian born (Selim Amallah, Ilias Chair, Anass Zaroury, Bilal El Khannouss). They'll then play Canada on December 1st.

The Red Devils sit atop group F

ranking. Thanks to a narrow 1-0 victory against Canada. They can secure a ticket to the last eight if they beat Morocco on Sunday (Nov. 27).

Group G

Switzerland took three precious points against Cameroon (1-0), thanks to a goal of Breel Embolo, native of Yaoundé. On the Indomitable

Lions's part, the task already seems insurmountable.

Rigobert Song can have regrets when thinking about the beautiful first period of his men against the Nati.

They'll need to cool their heads and play against Serbia on November 28. Then will meet world-record holder Brazil on December 2nd.

Brazil started its World Cup campaign on a high note. The Seleção beating Serbia (2-0) Thursday (Nov. 24), thanks to a double by Richarlison. He executed a bicycle whirl from amid the box to score! That can undoubtedly be listed among the most beautiful goals since the beginning of the competition.

Group H

Andre Ayew and his partners worked hard during a thrilling opener. Most notably, they score the first two African goals of the World Cup. A close-range shot from Abedi Pele's eldest son and a nice goal from Osman Bukari.

Despite the efforts, they faced a strong Portuguese team who was carefully watched. Cristiano Ronaldo entered Thursday (Nov. 24) in the legend of the World Cup, becoming the only player to have scored at least one goal in five World Cups. Portugal proceeded to beat Ghana (3-2).

Since Uruguay and South Korea did not score (0-0), the round of 16 remains accessible for the Black Stars even though they sit for now at the last spot of group H. They'll play the Taeguk Warriors on November 28 and the Celeste on December 2.



Sports

FIRS wins CBN's 2022 Financial Institutions Football Competition

From
DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja

THE Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) Football Club (FC) have defeated Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) FC 1-0 to emerge champions of 2022 All Financial Institutions Football Competition (AFIFC).

The final match played at the Gombe Township Stadium in Gombe, was sponsored by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in collaboration with the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF).

The lone goal was scored by Leonard Pankyes of FIRS FC in the 20th minute of the game, and it was all that the FIRS team needed to clinch victory and pocket the N2 million prize in the 35th edition of the competition.

Earlier, in the Third-Place match played between Unity Bank FC and Bubayero Microfinance Bank FC, Unity Bank won by 1-0, to emerged as third runner up of the competition.

In a post-match conference, CBN Governor, Mr Godwin Emefiele, said the competition began in 1979.

Represented by Alhaji Shehu Goringo, CBN Branch Controller, mbe, Emefiele said CBN's commitment to making positive contributions to the promotion and development of football remained the major reason for sponsoring the competition annually, which is in line with the bank's Corporate Social Responsibility.

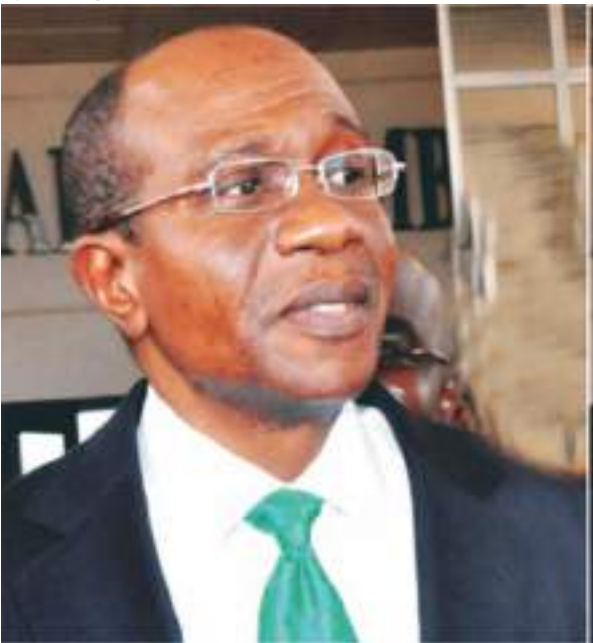
"The competition, over the years, has also served as a grooming ground for young football-playing bankers to become full professionals and national team players.

"It is on record that some of our decorated soccer heroes such as Kanu Nwankwo, Henry Nwosu, Uche Okeke, and blessed memory, participated

GIRONDINS Bordeaux forward Josh Maja has been named among the possible transfer targets for Birmingham City even as the English side continues to struggle with goals this term.

PThe season is not going according to plan for Birmingham City with the Blues stuck in 14th position on the Championship table.

Birmingham City have been



Emefiele

in this competition before representing Nigeria at several national and international competitions."

The CBN boss appreciated the Gombe State government for hosting the finals and "we thank our long-standing partner, the NFF, for its continued collaboration with CBN in organizing this tournament."

On his part, President of NFF, Ibrahim Gusau who was represented by Alhaji Babagana Kalli, the Chairman of Borno Football Association said the competition had made positive impact through the years.

Gusau commended the CBN for preserving the history of AFIFC by its continued sponsorship of the competition, "this is really commendable and good for football development."

Governor Muhammadu

Inuwa Yahaya of Gombe State who was represented by Dr Larry Daniel, the Executive Secretary of Gombe State Sports Commission, commended CBN and NFF for choosing to host the finals of the competition in the state.

Yahaya said the state remained committed to welcoming any interest that would bring development of any sector and improvement of the wellbeing of citizens.

About 20 teams comprised of regulators, deposit money banks and other financial institutions participated in the 2022 edition of the AFIFC.

By the outcome of the finals, second-runner up, SEC team will go home with N1.5 million, while the third-runner up, Unity Bank will receive N1 million and Bubayero Microfinance Bank, the fourth-placed team will pocket N500,000.

SLOVENIAN defender Jaka Bijol has confessed that Napoli striker Victor Osimhen is the worst nightmare he has had to live through in the Italian Serie A this season.

Osimhen and Bijol came face to face with each other for the first time when Napoli played host to Udinese at the Stadio Diego Armando Maradona on November 12.

Osimhen scored the game's first goal after just fifteen minutes to steer Napoli to a deserved 3-2 win over the visitors. In getting his goal, the Nigerian forward showed his increasing prowess at headers as he nodded expertly past Marco Silvestri in the Udinese goal with Bijol caught ball watching.

In a chat with Calling Himself Bomber, Bijol has admitted that it was a near-impossible task to keep a player of Osimhen's quality quiet for the entire duration of a game.

Bijol cited the Super Eagles striker's strength, pace and pitch management as the things that make him almost unstoppable.

When asked who was the toughest centre-forward he faced, the former CSKA Moscow star replied, "I had a difficult life in the last match against Napoli. Oshimen is a really strong striker. He is fast and knows how to move well."

Before the Italian Serie A went on a month-and-a-half-long World Cup break,

'Osimhen is the toughest centre-forward'



Osimhen

Osimhen had notched nine goals to sit as the league's top goalscorer.

Southgate considering England exit after World Cup elimination

Gareth Southgate

considering future after England were knocked out of the World Cup by holders France on Saturday; Southgate contracted to England until conclusion of Euro 2024

Naomi denied gold medal as NSF ends

From
ANDRE D. BISYIT, Asaba

PLATEAU contingent at the National Sports Festival in Asaba, were shocked when news filtered in that results involving Naomi Monday,



Naomi

in Chess, had been tampered with.

The news became reality when she was invited for medal presentation and was presented with a silver medal, when results clearly showed that she had won the gold. No concrete explanation was given for this injustice and Plateau was left to rue her misfortune.

As the unfortunate event was unfolding in chess, other athletes from Plateau were busy winning more medals for the state.

Six medals came in 4 from kung fu and 2 from weightlifting, on Thursday.

Samuel Emmanuel, who qualified for the finals in the kung -fu 85kg class, withdrew from the fight due to injury he sustained in the semi- finals. He relinquished the gold and automatically settled for silver medal.

The other results in kung -fu showed A b d u l l a s h e e d Abdullazeez won silver in +90kg class while Nkuma Obasi and Anthony Ejembi both carted bronze in the -75kg and- 8 5 k g c l a s s e s respectively.

In Weightlifting, Daniel Christopher completed the day's activity with 2 bronze in the 96kg snatch event.



The Nigeria international is experiencing a resurgence in the lower division in France and he could offer a different attacking dimension to the Blues' lineup

Is this Messi's moment?



Messi

THE most obvious semi-final subplot surrounds Lionel Messi and whether the **Argentina** superstar can win the World Cup for the first time.

Messi has had a glittering career, winning 10 Spanish league titles, another in France, four Champions Leagues, the 2021 Copa America and a record seven Ballon d'Or awards - given to

the world's best player each year.

But, unlike other all-time greats, such as Brazil's Pele or Argentina's Diego Maradona, the 35-year-old has not been able to win the sport's biggest prize.

It is 36 years since Argentina, runners-up in 2014 with Messi, were led by Maradona to their last World Cup win.

Could Messi repeat the feat - and in doing so perhaps secure his legacy as the greatest of them all?

Morocco have already made history. They are the first African team, and the first Arab side from a country with a Muslim majority, to reach a semi-final of a World Cup.

Despite having an experienced squad with a

number of high-profile players, such as Chelsea's Hakim Ziyech and Paris St-Germain's Achraf Hakimi, the Atlas Lions have defied expectation to reach this stage.

They topped a group including Croatia and Belgium, before beating Spain in the last 16 and Portugal in the quarter-finals.

Their success has been built around their steely defence and relentless work-rate. No opposition player has scored against Morocco so far in Qatar - they have conceded just once, an own goal against Canada.

They have also been one of the most passionately supported teams during the tournament.

Organisers have said this World Cup is not just about Qatar, but is for the Middle East region and Muslims as a whole. Could they have more to cheer on Tuesday?

But standing in Morocco's way are another of Europe's best sides, **France**.

Les Bleus are trying to do what no-one has managed since Brazil 60 years ago in 1962 - successfully defend the men's World Cup.

In fact, in recent years the holders have struggled. Italy, Spain and Germany have all exited early as reigning champions over the past 12 years, but France have

banished that curse.

Saturday's win over England meant they became the first defending champions since Brazil, in 1998, to reach the semi-finals.

Manager Didier Deschamps, though, is concentrating on Morocco.

"You're getting ahead of yourself," he said, when asked about the prospects of a second final in a row. Could Croatia do it again? We could yet have a repeat of the 2018 final, if France beat Morocco and **Croatia** can see off Argentina.

Croatia are back in the last four after another incredible show of resilience.

They beat Denmark and Russia on penalties en route to the final four years ago, and this year have come through shootouts against Japan and Brazil.

It is 24 years since they last won a World Cup knockout game in 90 minutes - a 3-0 win over Germany in the 1998 quarter-finals.

Croatia's efforts this year have been even more remarkable given their midfield maestro Luka Modric is now 37. Despite the extra minutes, he has looked as good as ever. Argentina, who lost 3-0 to Croatia in the 2018 World Cup group stage, will know not to underestimate them.



Quest



writer

Jane N. Eze

FRAGMENT

"Many of our farmers are small-scale operators in rural areas, lacking the technological know-how to expand their operations and maybe failing to comprehend the wider picture of how their operations impact the agricultural sector in general. For farmers to decide whether to use a piece of technology, they need to be aware of its advantages. Enlightening the farmers about the necessity and advantages of data driven agriculture is of great importance in enhancing our agriculture sector."

JANE N. EZE

Small scale farmers and data driven agriculture

NIGERIA is a global leader in the production of a variety of agricultural products, including sorghum, cocoa, pineapple, and palm oil. The nation ranked fourth in the production of palm oil and cocoa beans in 2018 and produced roughly 6,665,000 tonnes of sorghum, second only to the United States. The country exports a lot of goods to other countries in this industry. By 2050, the world's population is expected to expand by about 2.2 billion people, to 9.8 billion, according to the UN.

This implies that in order to meet the demands of the expanding population, we must greatly increase our crop production. With less land available for farming, there is a pressing need to produce more food to feed the world's expanding population. Technology factors like Internet of Things (IoT), Big data analytics, and Cloud computing are helping greatly in overcoming the stresses of rising food demand and climatic changes. IoT devices support the data collection stage of this procedure. Real-time data is gathered from the ground using sensors hooked into tractors, trucks, fields, soil, and plants.

Secondly, analysts combine the massive volumes of data acquired from farms with other data stored in the cloud such as weather data and pricing models in order to identify trends and patterns. Data-driven agriculture is the practise of using big data to support on-farm precision agriculture by using the appropriate farm data at the appropriate time and in the appropriate formats. Data-driven agriculture is a technological innovation that can help society's major issues. A data-driven



strategy makes a significant difference, particularly in regions where farming is a means of subsistence and people deal with environmental and climatic issues like crop loss.

In the current global market environment, the impact of data and its capacity to cross borders is crucial for the agriculture sector. Businesses in the agriculture sector can identify current concerns and also interact with a wider range of customers and increase profit by

using data. They can better understand customer requirements with data, and policymakers can make better choices thanks to the collection and analysis of these data. Although big data analysis offers farmers detailed information on many factors that contribute to successful outcomes, we first need to educate our farmers about the importance and impact of data and the need for these data collection.

Currently, there are some

measures that have been implemented for data collection. For instance, the Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) system developed through the Agricultural Market and Information System (AMIS) project for the collection of agricultural data in Nigeria. However, there is still a great need to enlighten farmers on the importance of this practice.

Many of our farmers are small-scale operators in rural areas, lacking the technological know-how to expand their operations and maybe failing to comprehend the wider picture of how their operations impact the agricultural sector in general. For farmers to decide whether to use a piece of technology, they need to be aware of its advantages. Enlightening the farmers about the necessity and advantages of data driven agriculture is of great importance in enhancing our agriculture sector.

Although it is challenging to connect with farmers individually, there may be a better method through a group of farmers, a cooperative, or through an organisation. Small-scale farmers can benefit greatly from data; even minor

adjustments to their practises can boost yields and profitability. One way to reach small-scale farmers is through creating the proper rules and procedures, offering incentives to farmers, and providing support systems.

Additionally, it is crucial to make sure that these farmer organisations have access to relevant data while also making sure that any information generated on their farms and shared with others won't be utilised in any way that would harm them or their businesses. Big data has the potential to fundamentally transform the Nigerian agricultural sector, even though there are still some challenges to overcome, including cost, adequate technical expertise and internet availability. Whilst it looks like this transformation would take some time, the rapid progress seen in other industries because of technology is proof that it might happen sooner than we anticipate. In the interim, we start at the bottom and work our way up, starting with the fundamentals.

Jane N. Eze is a United Kingdom based Data Analyst

