

PLSG to  
address  
PPC's  
predicament



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# Sunday Standard



TRUTH EXALTS A NATION

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1972

VOL. 13 NO. 786

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 2023

N250

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## Nigeria: 2022 in retrospect, 2023 in perspective

2022 has come and gone with the good, the bad being witnessed. 2023 is here with us. A general elections with the National Population Census also billed for the year VICTOR ALI looks retrospectively at some of the events of the last year and 2023 in perspective. Turn to pages 10, 31.



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## Concerns over scarcity of new naira notes

**WITH** just few weeks to the January 31, 2023, deadline given by the Central Bank of Nigeria [CBN], for the withdrawal of old naira notes across the country, Nigerians from various sections of the country have lamented the present scarcity of the new naira notes.

**DESPITE** the assurances by the CBN, the new N1,000, N500 and N200 denominations should have by now replaced the old notes while it is also expected that by now bank vaults of all commercial banks in all nooks and crannies of the country would have been stashed with the new currencies for their onward transactions.

**UNFORTUNATELY**, most Nigerians are complaining about the unavailability of the new notes as most banks and galleries with Automated Teller Machines [ATMs] are still dispensing the old denominations as it is also evident that many banks are still issuing the old notes even over the banking counters.

**PERHAPS**, the way and manner the apex bank of the country announced the measures relating to the redesigning of the new notes even at the height of objections from cross sections of the country suggests that there was a political undertone which hindered adequate consultations with key stakeholder and which sparked immediate reactions from the Federal Minister of Finance apart from the public outcry over the timing of the process.

**THE PUBLIC** outcry over the quality of the new notes apart from casting doubts on the integrity of the Governor of the CBN, is eliciting suspicious and clandestine motives behind the redesigning of the currencies which has either by its design or inactions now placed the apex bank in bad light and in a dicey situation because of the confusion already created.

**WORRISOME** also is, the fact that there are reported cases of the fake denominations of the printed notes already in circulation which if not swiftly investigated by the CBN in collaboration with relevant security agencies, may cause severe shocks to the nation's economy that is struggling to get out of the woods defeating the aim of the redesigning of the new notes.

**WHILE** we welcome the introduction of the new naira denominations, we also berate in the strongest terms the culture of poor handling of our currencies by the citizenry particularly when our naira notes are mutilated or rough handled at social and religious gatherings despite laws already put in place prohibiting such. And, let this be another clarion call for all citizens to heed to the voice of reason and respect by resorting to the usage of wallets and other decent forms of handling our nation's currencies

**We** doubt the feasibility of the CBN's stipulated January 31, 2023 dateline for the introduction of new notes and withdrawal of old notes. And, considering the challenges the commercial banks are faced with taking delivery of the new notes from the CBN, and the fact that individuals and other organizations have barely less than two weeks to revert to the new legal tenders, we call for a review of the policy. Indeed, more time needs to be extended if achieving the desired objective of changing the currency is to be met.

**THEREFORE**, it is our stand that the CBN should extend the January 31, 2023 dateline to a more convenient period, while on its part the apex bank must go back to the drawing board to appraise the various hiccups already experienced with the take-off of the new policy with very concrete strategies put in place to making each of the legal tenders available to Nigerians.

## UN warns of acute malnutrition in Nigeria, 14 others

**T**he United Nations agencies have called for urgent action to protect the most vulnerable children in 15 countries, hardest hit by an unprecedented food and nutrition crisis.

The call was made in a statement issued by five UN agencies.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the UN had listed some countries that are hardest hit by the unprecedented food and nutrition crises.

According to the statement, conflicts, climate shocks, the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and rising costs of living are leaving increasing numbers of children acutely malnourished.

"This is happening when key health nutrition and other life-saving services are becoming less accessible.

"Currently, more than 30 million children in the 15 worst-affected countries suffer from wasting or acute malnutrition and eight million of these children are severely wasted, the deadliest form of undernutrition.

This is a major threat to children's lives and to their long-term health and development, the impacts of which are felt by individuals, their communities and their countries," it said.

It said the five UN agencies are: Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Food Programme (WFP) and **World Health Organisation (WHO)**.

The statement said that they called for accelerated progress on the Global Action Plan on Child Wasting.

"This is aimed to prevent, detect and treat acute malnutrition among children in the worst-affected countries, which are Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Chad and Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Others are Ethiopia, Haiti, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan and Yemen.

It said that the Global Action Plan addressed the need for a multi-sectoral approach and highlighted

priority actions across maternal and child nutrition through the food, health, water and sanitation, and social protection systems.

According to the statement, in response to increasing needs, the UN agencies identified five priority actions that will be effective in addressing acute malnutrition in countries affected by conflict and natural disasters and in humanitarian emergencies.

It says scaling up these actions as a coordinated package will be critical for preventing and treating acute malnutrition in children, and averting a tragic loss of life.

"The UN agencies call for decisive and timely action to prevent this crisis from becoming a tragedy for the world's most vulnerable children.

All agencies urge for greater investment in support of a coordinated UN response that will meet the unprecedented needs of this growing crisis, before it is too late," it said.

"Mr QU Dongyu, Director-General of the FAO, said that the situation is likely to deteriorate even further in 2023.

"We must ensure availability, affordability and accessibility of healthy diets for young children, girls, and pregnant and lactating women.

"We need urgent action now to save lives, and to tackle the root causes of acute malnutrition, working together across all sectors," Qu said.

Filippo Grandi, High Commissioner, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said that the UN system was responding as one to the crisis.

According to him, the UN Global Action Plan on Child Wasting is our joint effort to prevent, detect and treat wasting globally.

Grandi said that at UNHCR they are working hard to improve analysis and targeting to ensure that they reach children who are most at risk, including internally-displaced and refugee populations.

The Executive Director of UNICEF, Catherine Russell, said that cascading crises are leaving millions of children wasted and have made it harder for them to access key



services.

Ms Russell says casting is painful for the child, and in severe cases, can lead to death or permanent damage to children's growth and development.

She said that they can and must turn the nutrition crisis around through proven solutions to prevent, detect, and treat child wasting early.

The Executive Director of WFP, David Beasley, said that more than 30 million children are acutely malnourished across the 15 worst-affected countries, so they must act now and must act together.

Mr Beasley said that it is critical that they collaborate to strengthen social safety nets and food assistance to ensure that Specialized Nutritious Foods are available to women and children who need them the most.

The Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros Ghebreyesus, said that "the global food crisis is also a health crisis, and a vicious cycle, malnutrition leads to disease, and disease leads to malnutrition."

He said that urgent support is needed now in the hardest-hit countries to protect children's lives and health, including ensuring critical access to healthy foods and nutrition services, especially for women and children.

## Nigerians want child marriage abolished, criminalised

**N**o fewer than 473,565 Nigerians have signed for the ban and criminalisation of child marriage in the country.

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) 2022 report revealed that 22 million girls between 13 and 17 years already married in Nigeria, making the country the highest number of child brides in West and Central Africa.

This number according to the report represents 40% of all child brides in the two regions.

According to Save The Child International, child marriage is common in northern Nigeria, where 78% of girls marry before they turn 18. In most parts of northern Nigeria, the practice of Islamic law recognises child marriage.

The West and Central Africa regions are home to six of the ten countries with the highest prevalence of child marriage globally - 41% of all global incidences, UNICEF said.

However, a petition, which started on the global change website, change.org, by a civil society group, Never Your Fault, run by three teenage girls, has gained traction online with 473,429 Nigerians already signed up for criminalisation of child marriage in the country.

The girls; Susan Ubogu, Kudirat Abiola and Temitayo Asuni, in the petition they co-signed, noted that the Child Rights Act of 2003 which criminalised marriage contracts involving girls under 18 years contradicted the Nigerian Constitution (1999 as amended) which states that, 'any woman who is married shall be deemed to be of full age.'

"Due to the fact that this law is not clearly stated, many Nigerians have got away with marrying young girls at any age," part of the petition read.

The group, therefore, called on lawmakers in the National Assembly to amend the contradicting section of the law and make the constitution clearer on

child marriage in Nigeria.


They noted that UNICEF latest report on child marriage put Nigeria as the 11th highest in the world, adding that about 44 per cent of the female Nigerian population got married off before their 18th birthday.

The petition reads, "That is 40 million people. Imagine if we had 40 million more people working towards solving the issues of our country. Child marriage also leads to a number of illnesses for the girl child, ranging from vesicovaginal fistula, sexually transmitted infection, high blood pressure and postpartum depression, amongst others.


"A child as young as 11 can be married off; this leads to numerous complications not only for the child but also for the economy as a whole.

"Sign this petition to ban child marriage in Nigeria and make the constitution clearer and ensure that the law is enforced all over the country. I guarantee you it will change a life."





With  
Katdapba  
Y. Gobum  
On Sunday



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***"This is why many suspect that sabotage is highly involved, if not, pray say what could be responsible for the development? Nigerians have heard and read in the media explanations concerning the scarcity that do not hot water. The explanations give us cause not to trust government about national assets that save us in our hour of need".***

**I**f you are a Nigerian and living, you must be aware of what the country is going through. Traveling in almost parts of the country is a major problem as a result of the persistent fuel scarcity.

Nothing can be more traumatic than for a country that prides itself as a major oil producer to face this horrible experience on the streets. Many Nigerians have wondered how we got to this stage; so long as no one is willing to offer any explanation to us.

There may be no state of the federation that long queues are not being experienced or rather, have become the order of the day. Motorists virtually sleep at fuel stations so that they can afford to procure the commodity that is if it is available for those who can afford to.

Those that are not lucky return home despondent and or are forced to buy from roadside vendors at very exorbitant rates. Some are forced to go to roadside fuel stations that are not sure of what they sell. So, either way, we are all at risk.

If you get the product in the last two places, you must be grateful to God if you are not buying adulterated fuel. Many car owners have stories to relate to their experiences in the last few weeks. Some motorists, as soon as they leave the fuel station, their vehicles begin to develop problems and have had to spend fortunes before they fix them.

But the availability of the product should not be the problem. The major concern has always been the lack of money to buy it. The economic circumstance is telling on families, how much more of spending huge sums of money to purchase Premium Motor Spirit; however at their risk as stated above. But for how long will the country continue with this? Something has to give way, so that we can save ourselves.

Few fuel stations are operating at full capacity that sells at the regulated price. Every marketer has set sight on how much profit they would make from the sales of the product.

Nigerians are aware that the price of the product has not been increased nor is the government contemplating any change in the price regime. That being said, I am, like many are thinking, the rate of sabotage thanks to high heavens. The questions to ask are: Could the government not act even in the face of the difficulties Nigerians are going through? If it is sabotage as it is being alleged, couldn't a mechanism be activated so that filling stations across the country be free of the long queues?

Nigeria appears to be a country where the absurd is daily permitted to be witnessed. Marketers are always at liberty to fix the prices of any commodity

## Do leaders care if Nigerians suffer?



Sylva

without the thought that it will affect others in the process. And once it is fixed, it is always difficult to bring it down; knowing that what is experienced on that account is harrowing.

The case of the premium motor spirit is a typical example. Today, several fuel stations are selling a liter at 300 naira or slightly less. How annoying could that be? And since no one is saying anything about it, it has continued unabated; and affecting virtually almost all Nigerians.

In Jos, a few years ago, some officials of the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) were seen going around on a monitoring exercise. It is not clear if they are always out on the exercise. But, while their actions may be appreciated, I am tempted to think that the marketers are always steps ahead of the department. That is why it should be taken that sabotage may not be ruled out in what is happening in the industry.

The Plateau State government has set a task force to ensure that the product gets to the users. They know what should be done; otherwise, the operators can beat them to it by circumventing what they know could bring stability in the process of making available PMS all over the state.

The NCSDC in Plateau has gone ahead to make arrest of young men, whose stock in trade is to stand at street corners and sell the product. How they get the product in large quantity is questionable. Fuel stations which get involved and sell to them have questions to answer.

They have mapped out strategies to circumvent the department work in sanitizing the industry to the point that whatever is being done; the ordinary man is affected the most. The brunt of the hardships is transferred from up to the ordinary man of the street. It goes on like this in several other sectors; perhaps that is the reason why a lot of things which work in other climes don't function the way they should here.

On account of our perceived passiveness, everything, whether good or bad; is allowed to go on here. It is high time; we thought how some of these things can be corrected, the better for all of us. If we continue this way, it is likely that we can wake up and find that nothing works for us again.

It is little wonder how prices of commodities in our markets are what they are today. Traveling from one point to another is tasking and frustrating, as everything is tied to the fuel scarcity. And as stated above, people and communities can determine the prices of goods and services and not the market forces that should enable us get those things done. To say the least, that can be frustrating.

Nigerians always enjoy feeding on all situations maximally. They seem not to be bothered if suffering becomes a middle name for all of us. And it does appear that those in government are fully aware that Nigerians are docile; always accepting anything happening to them, without a modicum of strength to question such things.

This sad commentary leaves us

with a lot to chew given this circumstance. Indeed it has a telling tendency to keep Nigerians weakened not to complain about the treatment meted on them. The effect is that, and it appears that whatever happens, Nigerians are persuaded to remain not bothered about certain developments going on in the country.

The painful aspect of the scarcity is that it came to many with damages to several vehicles. Many recall that the whole saga started with the importation of adulterated fuel; the source we are not aware of; and no one is willing to offer any understandable explanation for that.

Recall that in 2021 through 2022, several millions of adulterated fuel was shipped into Nigeria unaware to the authorities and before we knew what has hit us, several trailer-load of the commodity found its way into some states. Since then, long fuel queues returned; this time with ferocious consistency and intensity.

Trust Nigerian fuel marketers, it was as if they were waiting for the development; they appear to know when some of these misfortunes will take place. They cashed in on it, selling the commodity to gullible Nigerians and made stupendous profit from the naivety of their countrymen and women.

Since the adulterated fuel entered the Nigerian market, some of the stations where it is dispensed have been destroyed in some states occasioned by the rowdy nature of the buyers, which resulted in fire outbreak. For many motorists, they have had their vehicles destroyed after they bought and used the commodity.

What are witnessed daily are fuel stations that have petroleum products but are kept as if nothing is available. They are waiting for an announcement for the increase in the price of the product. Secondly, they are awaiting the order from their 'union' on how the product can be exhausted at one station before they turn to another.

In some states, motorists queue for days believing that they will be given the product; and not knowing that the stations don't have it. Always after a long wait on the queue, they are appealed to go home and return the next day. Most businesses have continued to suffer as many do not make any transaction for days. Transportation fees have continued to increase on a daily basis and pains are inflicted on several Nigerians who depend on the availability of the product for

their activities.

There are stations which have remained without petroleum products for over a year, however, in the last few days they are back in business. They are back and customers are falling heels over each other buying the product at 300 hundred naira per liter. They have reason to return to business: There is money to be made if the product is sold there.

They are smiling to their banks having made so much from the sweat of Nigerians. And they even want more if left alone. However hard things turn out to be, we have to think of a way out of the situation. We must go in search of a solution which can save Nigerians from experiencing more hardships.

The capacity to change things still lies in us. I believe strongly that the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation may not have done well. We are given daily figures of what has been sent into the Nigerian market, yet, on a daily basis, they queues have remained as they started. If as they tell us, several millions of gallons have been released into the Nigerian market on a daily basis, what we expect is that by now, no queue would have been expected in any station.

This is why many suspect that sabotage is highly involved, if not, pray say what could be responsible for the development? Nigerians have heard and read in the media explanations concerning the scarcity that do not hot water. The explanations give us cause not to trust government about national assets that save us in our hour of need.

In the days that are ahead of us as a people, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation must have to wake up to do more. Those who monitor how the product is distributed (Department of Petroleum Resources) have a greater responsibility to ensure that the right things are done. They must monitor and punish erring fuel stations that hoard and sell at exorbitant price regimes not regulated by government.

Apart from the NNPC taking a stand, the government has a responsibility to act and save us from this embarrassment. Those who are presently profiting from the development are certainly Nigerians who desire that they gain while their country men and women suffer untold hardships.

To think that we have suffered far too long should be reason for government to work out ways through which the sufferings of Nigerians would stop forthwith. In an election year and age that we do have now, such a thing should not be mentioned amongst civilized people.





## Living in glass house

**I**T is a common advice in Nigeria to tell one, 'do as I say not as I do'. We know we pay lip service in almost every sphere of our life. And in truth, if you really want to get it right, do as you are told not what you see being done.

Mrs X became a member of a church due to pressing needs that only a pentecostal Church was ready to help her out with. She had a spiritual problem that was so serious that her orthodox Church suspected her of being a witch. But a friend introduced her to a deliverance pastor. Thanks to him, the issue was addressed.

However, shortly afterwards, her pastor turned her to his ATM. He would call at just any time and demand for cash. If at all she was koboless, his tone would register displeasure and disappointment. Unconsciously, she would go out of her way to get him what he was demanding. She continued like that until she came upon the Scripture that says "owe no man nothing but the gift of love". It gave her the boldness to say no when she had no money or had just enough for herself. Unfortunately, pastor is not taking it well.

These 2 ladies, sisters in law went to see a man who claimed to be a man of God for prayers. Both of them suffered dehumanising treatment in his hands when they entered one after the other to see him. Pretending to pray for them, he raped them.

On their way home, they were silent due to shame and shock. It was the sister to the husband of the other woman that boldly asked when she could bear it no more: "What happened in there?"

They both realised the fake man of God had had his way with both of them all the while shouting some prayer points. For the sake of their reputation, they swore to secrecy. But that lasted as long as their conscience allowed them. Today the fake man of God is at large.

Alhaji's children noticed that their father used to enjoy some videos on his phone to the point of forgetting himself and shouting with excitement. So, one night his kids decided to find out what video in his phone used to have that effect on him. They had enough time because he had gone to sleep. To their greatest surprise, they came upon a sex video of their father and house maid doing some ungodly things. It was really out of place because their father was very strict.

A young lady who gave birth out of wedlock, counted herself lucky when a young promising man came for her hand in marriage. She could not believe her good fortune. Added to that, the man was a complete gentleman who was always encouraging her to be a good girl and stay away from sexual immorality.

However, after months of courtship and no attempt whatsoever to caress her or steal a kiss, her family and friends started raising eyebrows. She always had his back and would tell them that he is born again and is waiting until they got married.

One day she paid him an unscheduled visit in his house. His car was parked outside, so she knew that he was at home. She knocked to no avail. On second thoughts, she decided to go round the house to see if everything was OK. As she approached his room window, she heard groaning like that of people in ecstasy. Curious, she climbed up the window.

What she saw almost gave her heart attack. She saw two men entangled together, stark naked with eyes only for each other. She must have made a sound because they both turned to look at her at the same time. And lo and behold, her fiancé was the one on top a strange man.

The lady dismounted and headed home. Shortly, afterwards, the bisexual, now dressed, caught up with her begging her to forgive and still give him a chance as her husband. She simply warned him to leave her alone or she would start announcing loudly what she just witnessed. That did the magic. He was horrified and retraced his steps.

Of recent, a lady came upon her husband and his best friend making out in their guest room. Her husband had told her that his best friend needed a place to stay for the time being. Seeing no harm there, she agreed. She didn't know it was her rival. She never suspected that her husband was bisexual and that his best friend was in fact his lover.

The lady in question wants to leave the marriage and I don't blame her. This is betrayal of trust. Her husband has played her for a fool.

The number of people living double lives is outrageous. Most of them occupy very high positions in church or the society. They deviate from the normal way of life to satisfy the flesh. We forget that our bodies are God's temple. How long do you have to live? Our days are few and futile.

May God help us to number our days so that we can apply our hearts to wisdom. Amen.

## NEWS

### NASS will collaborate with executive on security challenges - Lawan



Lawan

**P**RESIDENT of the Senate, Ahmad Lawan says the National Assembly will continue to collaborate with the Executive toward tackling Nigeria's security challenge.

He stated this at a ceremony marking his 64th birthday in Abuja.

"We still have some new challenges. The new challenges are, when we came in 2015, that was the 8th Senate, the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari had the security challenge to be predominantly in the North-east, the Boko Haram insurgency.

"Haven't dealt with that, and then some new security challenges started to prop up in the North-west and North-central.

"The government accepted the fact that these are challenges.

"We have been doing everything possible to tackle the menace. The situation is improving," Lawan said.

He said: "Our hope is that we continue to work with the executive arm between now and May 29 when the executive would have finished its tenure to improve further, the security situation of the

country.

"One other challenge is lack of sufficient revenues for government to undertake its numerous laudable and noble national development projects across the country.

"Most of what we do in terms of national development is to borrow funds for us to execute those projects.

"I think we have to work hard to improve our revenue generation and collection.

"This is because it is not looking too sustainable that we tolerate people and some agencies of government, to misapply or not even declare the revenues they collect. We can't continue with that." (NAN)

### Qua'an-Pan Chair presents budget of hope, transformation

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

**T**HE Executive Chairman of Qua'an-Pan Local Government Council of Plateau State, Hon. Ernest Abner Da'a, has presented a budget proposal of four billion, two hundred and thirty-six million, ninety-seven thousand, seven hundred and sixty-six naira (N4,236,097,766.00) only, for the 2023 fiscal year to the Legislative arm.

This came in a press statement signed by the Media Aides to the Executive Chairman of the local government council, Hon. Mathias Yengoet Dajan and Hon. Daniel Useini and made available to SUNDAY STANDARD in Jos, the Plateau State capital Thursday.

Presenting the Appropriation Bill which was christened: "Budget of Hope and Transformation Phase II" at the Legislative Chambers of the LG, reminded the honourable house that the total summary of last year's 2022 budget was two billion, nine hundred and eighty-three million, five hundred and sixty-four thousand, five hundred and thirty-two naira (N2,983,564,532.00) only.

He explained that there was an increase when compared to last year's budget and it was necessitated by fair consideration of some basic needs of the people and other variables. "The opening balance in this year's budget is three hundred and sixty-eight million, five hundred and thirty thousand, four hundred and nine naira (N368,530,409.00) only".

"The recurrent expenditures which comprise of salaries and wages stand at eight hundred million, nine hundred and fifty-eight thousand, six hundred and one naira, (N800,958,601.00) only, representing 19%, putting over-head cost at four hundred and sixty-one million, two hundred thousand naira

(N461,200,000.00) only, representing 11%.

"The Consolidated Revenue Fund Charges, makes up 38% of the budget, stand at one billion, six hundred and twenty-four million, two hundred and sixty thousand, six hundred naira (N1,624,260,600.00) only. Adding that transfer to other government entities will take ninety-nine million, two hundred and seventy-eight thousand, three hundred and sixty-five naira (N99,278,365.00) only", he highlighted.

According to the chairman, "the capital expenditure is expected to gulp the sum of one billion, two hundred and fifty million, four hundred thousand naira, (N1,250,400,000.00) only, which represents 30% of the total budget size. The break down of the expected sources for financing this year's budget, include the Statutory Allocation projected of two billion, seven hundred and seventy-five million, seven hundred and fifty-eight thousand, fifty-seven naira (N2,775,758,057.00) only.

"One billion, Four million, naira (N1,004,000,000.00) only is expected from Value Added Tax (VAT) allocation; tax revenue is to bring in ten million, naira (N10,000,000.00) only, while Non-Tax Revenue is expected to generate thirty-three million, eight hundred and nine thousand, three hundred naira (N33,809,300.00) only", he explained.

Da'a stated that the Investment Income will generate the sum of twenty-two million naira (N22,000,000.00), while aids and grants would bring in the sum of twenty million naira (N20,000,000.00) and the interest earned would provide

two million naira (N2,000,000.00) respectively.

He further submitted that the budget for the 2022 fiscal year was meticulously implemented within the ambit of the council's resources with vigorous efforts at rejuvenating the Internally Generated Revenue and that efforts have been made to resuscitate some fleets of vehicles in the commercial transport sector.

The Chairman, however, enumerated achievements in executing some critical projects like the construction of a Police Station at Namu, Primary Health-Care Clinic at Kurgwi, a bridge at Lankaku, purchase of official vehicle for the Deputy Chairman and rehabilitation of the V.I.P. Stand at Baap Mini Stadium, among many other on-going projects.

"Let me further assure us that we shall leave no stone unturned as we will continue to build a strong, vibrant and resilient system undergirded by good governance and people centric programmes. We are also mindful of the fact that reducing government spending in many ways will greatly guarantee more social and financial security in stabilizing proper implementation of critical programmes to support more vulnerable segments in our societies.

Speaking on behalf of the legislative members, House Leader, Hon. Jonah Yaksun Damar, appreciated the Council Chairman for paying attention to the areas that affect the well-being of the citizens in the budget and expressed hope that the programmes and policies of the administration will be pacesetting in the entire Plateau State.



## POLITICS

## Okun people demand zoning to Western Senatorial District

**T**HE people of Okunland in the Western Senatorial district of Kogi, have expressed their strongest desire to produce the next Governor of the state in the November 2023 governorship election. The people under the aegis of Okun4Governor Strategy Committee, made the call in a statement made available to Journalists in Lokoja on Friday.

The statement which was jointly signed by Committee Chairman, Rt. Hon. Clarence Olafemi; Co-Chairman, Amb. Sola Enikanlola; and Secretary, Barr. Tunde Bello, was presented by Prof Mike Ikupolati.

The group said that there agitation was based on spirit of equity and fairness which are virtues to be promoted to deepen democracy and promote inclusiveness.

According to them, the right to rule is a combination of attitudes and abilities that lead people to set goals for themselves and to take the initiative to reach these goals.

"The quest for an Okun person to become Governor has become the strongest wish of Okun people in recent times.

"It is therefore pertinent



**Bello**

to inform the good people of Kogi State that we are designing and putting in place effective strategies to actualize this goal.

"We shall remain resolute on this agitation until our quest receives the attention it richly deserves especially by leaders of the state from all persuasions - political, religious, community and opinion leaders.

"It is imperative to put into perspective that the Igalas of the Eastern flank of Kogi State has held on to power for about 16 years with Late Prince Abubakar Audi, Alhaji Ibrahim Idris (Ibro) and Capt. Idris Wada as Governors of the State

while Alhaji Yahaya Adoza Bello is presently occupying Lugard House in his second term.

## Insecurity may undermine election - CDD

**Willie Attah, Gombe**

**W**ITH few weeks to the commencement of the 2023 general elections, the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) has called on the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to ensure more registered voters collect their Permanent Voters Cards (PVCs) in readiness for the polls.

Director, CDD, Idayat Hassan, in press statement also joins other well-meaning stakeholders in calling on registered voters to pick up their PVCs, especially now that the cards are being distributed at ward levels.

While commending the ongoing efforts to take the PVC collection process closer to voters at the grassroots, CDD expressed its utmost concern that the preparations for the elections may be undermined if the growing insecurity across the country is not urgently addressed.

It said, "It is disconcerting that despite the directive of President Muhammadu Buhari mandating the security agencies to secure volatile parts of the country by December, unending waves of attacks by elements contesting the authority of the Nigerian State have not abated

According to CDD, Biafra separatist agitations in the South East continue to undermine the peace as they attack government buildings, while threatening to visit mayhem on voters who dare to show up at their polling units on election day.

It noted also that in the South West, pockets of agitations led by Yoruba nation separatists have similarly disrupted public order and peace, while news of the recent abduction of 31 passengers at the train station in Igbene, Edo State, in the South-South is also worrisome.

"Ongoing issues ranging from banditry, kidnapping and acts of terrorism in the North makes it apparent that no part of the country can be deemed a safe haven in the face of the challenge of insecurity", it decreed.

CDD has, for several months, been monitoring the conflict situation across the country in order to inform election stakeholders on possible mitigation strategies.

Through the Nigeria Election Violence Tracker, CDD in collaboration with the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) Project, has been generating troves of data to shape policy decisions in the build up to the 2023 general elections.

For the weeks of November 28 to December 12, the tracker documented the increase in violence targeting the facilities of INEC. Also, CDD's SWOT analysis of 2023 elections released last year provided an

## Taraba NNPP kick as Kwankwaso endorses candidate

**From VICTOR GAI, Jalingo**

for Taraba North.

"The issue is that Liman contested in APC. He even went to court and finally someone is holding the ticket. He is still alive. He is Mr. HarunaBako.

"The issue of who receives the flag is different from who receives the ticket. You have the flag and somebody has the ticket. They are two different things. If you go to INEC now, you will see HarunaBako. So for me, it is an exercise that doesn't have a meaning," he stated.

He disclosed that both Liman and Bako were in Bauchi for the event and wondered why Kwankwaso had to do what he did. He however expressed

confidence in Kwankwaso resolving the issue even as he said Bako will approach the court for redress.

"The presidential candidate is not greater than the law of the land... somebody with a good reputation like Kwankwaso needs to go back and look at the whole thing before taking a critical decision because I know Kwankwaso is a straight forward person. He would not allow his party to lose out," he added.

Meanwhile, the NNPP would have to contend with formidable forces in the PDP and APC for the Taraba North Senatorial ticket. They are: incumbent senator, Senator Shuaibu Lau of the PDP and former acting governor, Sani AbubakarDanladi of the APC.

## We'll be committed to ending insecurity ... Kwankwaso

**Willie Attah, Gombe**

**P**RESIDENTIAL candidate of the New Nigeria Peoples Party NNPP, EngRabiu Musa Kwankwaso has promised that his administration will be committed to ending insecurity challenges, insecurity in the country if given the presidential mandate.

Kwankwaso made the promise in Bauchi during his party's Northeast rally where all its governorship candidates in the zone including Ahmed KhamisuMailantarki of Gombe State were presented with the party's flags.

Others also presented with the flags are: Mohammed Saad Tahir for Adamawa, HalliruDaudaJika for Bauchi, Dr. Umar Alkali for Borno, Prof. Sani Yahaya, AlhajiGarba Umar for Taraba and Yobe states respectively. Kwankwaso said, ending insecurity challenges, creation of jobs to the teaming youths, and revamping the country's economy will top his administration's priority.

"NNPP will surely address issues of insecurity which is the policy thrust of the party as it stands for peace, unity, stability and development of Nigeria", he added.

Kwankwaso therefore,

urged the candidates, stakeholders and party members to keep convincing eligible voters across all ethnic groups and religions to vote for NNPP in the 2023 general elections.

He commended the people for coming outen-mass to welcome him, especially women and youths.

He said, "This is a moment of change for our youths and women. Change for our economy and change for the nation. Nigeria is a potentially great nation. What we need is purposeful and committed leadership."

Earlier speaking, the NNPP National Chairman, Prof. Rufai Ahmad Alkali, said the party has a determination to administer itself and lead the nation out of the current mess.

He promised that the candidates would do their best to provide good governance if elected in their various states.

He said, "We will do our best to bring food and security to the masses of this country. We will also create enabling environment that will make it easy for investors to stay here and help us prosper as a nation.

"Those are the things we believe in that will bring about good governance in all the states", he stressed.



**Alkali**

overview of the extent of the security challenges confronting Nigeria as it heads into the elections.

This research informs the CDD's concern that the required level of public order to support the smooth conduct of elections in several parts of the country has not been attained.

While CDD calls on Nigerian voters to remain ready and resolute to participate in the polls, it said, "it is imperative to call on the agencies charged with securing the country to intensify efforts and do more to make the entire electoral terrain safe for voters, candidates, election observers, media and poll workers".

The statement also reads, "Ultimately, the work of ensuring a peaceful and rancor-free election process is not limited to security agencies.

"Political actors and stakeholders have a part to play, and must do so by ceasing their quick resort to violence, spreading of fake news, hate speech and the making of unguarded utterances capable of undermining public peace and harmony.

"CDD is disturbed about the fact that the build-up to the election has been marked by irresponsible rhetorics and name-calling, primarily by the presidential candidates, despite repeated calls for the political actors to engage in issue-based campaigning.

"Such trends do more harm to

a nascent democracy going into its seventh general elections, at its fourth attempt at engendering a democratic form of governance.

"To reverse this trend, law enforcement agencies should now hold political actors to account, especially those whose utterances cause the disruption of public order.

"This will help discourage campaigns that are not sufficiently focused on programmes and policies aimed at transforming the lives of the people at the grassroots.

"Section 92(1) of the Electoral Act 2022 is unequivocal that: a political campaign or slogan shall not be tainted with abusive language directly or indirectly likely to injure religious, ethnic, tribal or sectional feelings.

"Similarly, Section 91 (2) clearly states that: abusive, intemperate, slanderous or base language or insinuations or innuendoes designed or likely to provoke violent reaction or emotions shall not be employed or used in political campaigns.

"So far, most campaigns have ignored these provisions of the law, thereby causing tension, and inciting violence across the country.

"There is still enough time before the election to ensure those who deliberately undermine public peace and order are stopped in their tracks and held accountable", CDD warned.



**Eng Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, NNPP presidential candidate with the party's Governorship candidates in the Northeast during their rally in Bauchi.**



## POLITICS

# Forces of darkness against PDP have failed

From  
**TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi**

**B**ENUE State Governor, Samuel Ortom has expressed delight that the forces of darkness which had planned to scuttle the Governorship ambition of Engr. Titus Uba have been stopped by God.

A visibly elated Governor Ortom bared his mind recently while addressing a mammoth crowd that turned up to welcome the PDP governorship candidate to the State after his medical vacation.

According to Governor Ortom, "the return of our governorship candidate was a clear sign that the forces of darkness over PDP, over Engr. Uba and over Benue have failed. All principalities of powers, spiritual wickedness in high places, and rulers of the darkness of this world have been crushed by our Lord Jesus Christ".

"Nobody knew that Titus Uba would be on his feet the day he was leaving Makurdi to Abuja and then Germany. The doctors can treat but it is God that heals," he stressed.

Governor Ortom said, the people of the state appreciate God almighty for his wonders and we are grateful for the fact that our candidate who could not walk and could not speak well, today he is walking without support."

The Governor assured that no amount of distraction would make the PDP lose this year's election while also expressing optimism that Engineer Uba would take from where he stopped in providing quality service to the people.

Governorship candidate of the PDP, Engr. Uba in his brief remarks amidst shouts of excitement from party supporters said he was back and set to continue from where he stopped before his medical vacation.

Uba who was flanked by his



**Ortom**

wife Pauline, his deputy Sir John Ngbede and other party leaders thanked Governor Ortom and people of the State for supporting him in prayers which made his recovery quick and total.

He said his healing was "Evidence of answered prayers from God. All the people you see here were on their knees praying to God for my quick recovery and today I stand before you. I want every one of you to join me to thank the Governor who is a father to everyone".

Uba also thanked his running mate, Sir John Ngbede for standing in the gap in his absence and the assembly members for passing all bills before them in record time while he was away.

The PDP governorship candidate had earlier arrived Makurdi and was received at the Agan Toll Gate along Makurdi-Abuja highway by State PDP Campaign

Management Committee led by Dr. Cletus Tyokyaa as well as thousands of PDP supporters who came in across the state.

Engr. Uba was later driven round Makurdi metropolis in a motorcade and taken to Benue People's House where he was received by Governor Ortom and members of the State executive and security council.

The State Acting Chairman of the PDP, Hon. Isaac Mffo and the Director, State PDP Campaign Management Team, Dr. Tyokyaa in their separate remarks expressed delight that Uba was back.

They both assured that party leadership would work together to deliver the state for the party.

Others who spoke included the Benue Deputy Governor Engineer Benson Abounu, Senator Orker Jev and Chief David Amo all attributed the healing of Uba to God and pointed out that with his return, nothing will stand in the way of PDP sweeping the polls.

- Gov Ortom

## 'Credible election not our responsibility alone'

From **WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe**

opposing parties, among others were recorded in the State since the commencement of campaigns.

"I call on you to abide by laws governing political campaigns as enshrined in sections 91 to 97 of the Electoral Act 2022.

"Arrangements are underway for the signing of a Peace Accord to enable peaceful conduct before,

during and after the elections by political parties and candidates", the REC appealed.

He commended the efforts of members of the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in sustaining the peaceful atmosphere in the State and ensuring that all its activities go on unhindered and expressed confidence of the committee's capacity to ensure peaceful polls in Gombe State.



**Mahmood**

## Daduut optimistic Tinubu will win presidency

From  
**JIDAUNNA YANUNG Abuja**

**T**HE Senator representing Plateau south Senatorial district in the National Assembly (Prof) Nora Daduut had disclosed that Bola Tinubu, presidential candidate of the All Progressives congress (APC) will win the presidential election to become the next elected president in February and take over in May 29 from president Buhari.

To this end, she called on Nigerians to vote for him massively and renew their contract with the ruling party.

She particularly called on

Plateau people to vote for Tinubu and APC for the interest of the state, adding that Plateau cannot be in opposition and not connected to the central government.

Senator Daduut noted that Tinubu's manifesto of "Renew Hope" for Nigerians will be effectively and efficiently implemented for the betterment of the country.

She emphasized that the presidential candidate, Bola Tinubu and the vice presidential

candidate, Kashim Shetimma are two patriotic Nigerians who have proven their respective leadership prowess, competence and capability in governance in Lagos and Borno states respectively. Nigerians should give the duo the opportunity to govern and contribute to the growth of Nigeria.

Senator Daduut particularly urged women in the country to take advantage of the opportunity and vote Tinubu because his administration will always take care of them and Tinubu is some one who is attuned to the needs of women based on his relationship with them through his late mother.

She described Tinubu as a builder of men, gender sensitive and a transformer who had shown his capability in Lagos.

"He is one of the first Governor in the country who picked a woman as his deputy, he said.



**Daduut**

## Tambuwal charges women not to mortgage PVCs

**G**OVERNOR Aminu Waziri Tambuwal has called on the Women folks not to mortgage their Permanent Voters' Cards ahead of February, and March general

From **ANENE AIKE, Sokoto**

elections. He made the remarks while addressing Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) supporters in Rabah and Wurno local

government areas where the Party's Gubernatorial campaign train visited the two areas.

Tambuwal said he is highly appreciative of the large turnout of women in the two local government areas, adding that women constitute a significant percentage in any election conducted in Nigeria.

Gov Rt. Hon. Aminu Waziri Tambuwal said PDP is fully aware that some opposition politicians in the state are making frantic efforts to collect women's PVCs in the rural areas in exchange for money to deprive them of voting in the forthcoming general elections.

He also stated that the APC-controlled federal government has lost focus, with nothing to show in the last eight years, not excluding high-level insecurity, Banditry, and kidnapping ravaging the entire country, Nigeria.

He said they should use their votes to free themselves from the shackles of poverty, hunger, and insecurity imposed by the

APC-led federal government.

That the incoming President to be, Atiku Abubakar, is the answer to the present economic predicaments facing the country adding that with Ubandoma as Governor and other elected members of national and State Assemblies, good governance is assured.

According to him, PDP will create an atmosphere where foreign investors will be guaranteed of their investment and proceeds.

Earlier in his address during the gathering, the State Party Chairman, Alhaji Bello Aliyu Goronyo commended the leadership of the PDP in Rabah and Wurno for the large turnout of party supporters at the campaign venues.

He said PDP would continue to provide excellent and purposeful leadership to the people of Sokoto state devoid of corruption and nepotism.

The campaign rallies however witnessed the presentation of flags to candidates standing for

election under the platform of the PDP in the two Local Govt Areas.

Also in his remarks, Alhaji Hassan Rabah, PDP House of Representatives candidate called on the people of Rabah and Wurno federal constituency to massively vote for PDP and its candidates in the forthcoming general elections.

He said APC has nothing to show aside hardship and poverty that's ravaged the entire country.

The House of Representatives hopeful emphasized that voting PDP in the forthcoming general elections is saying goodbye to insecurity, economic squander mania, and abject poverty that's threatening the corporate existence of Nigeria as a nation.

He also added that, the party presidential flag bearer Alhaji Atiku Abubakar is security conscious and that he is optimistic the issue will be his utmost priority if given the mandate to lead the country as President," Rabah averred.



**Tambuwal**



## SUNDAY POLITICS

## As APC dismisses speculated rift with guber candidate

**Plateau State Chapter of the All Progressive Congress (APC) has unequivocally dismissed the speculations making the rounds on social media that the State Working Committee (SWC) of the party and its gubernatorial candidate as well as the Presidential Campaign Committee (PCC) were at logger heads describing it as figment of imagination by confused people. EZEKIEL DONTINNA writes.**

A press statement signed by the State APC Publicity Secretary, Hon. Sylvanus Namang, and made available to **SUNDAY STANDARD** in reaction to the publication made recently stated that, "the attention of the All Progressives Congress in Plateau State has been drawn to an unsigned publication trending in some social media space centering on rift between the party's gubernatorial candidate, Dr Nentawe Yilwatda and the party's State Working Committee, SWC and the Presidential Campaign Council, PCC in the state.

"According to the cowardly and carefully crafted statement, the APC candidate has abandoned and frustrated the party machinery and even went to the ridiculous extent of accusing him of addressing the state Chairman as incompetent during his different consultations!

"The All Progressives Congress in the state hereby unequivocally and in no uncertain terms dismisses the allegations as figment of imagination which exist only in the realms of its propagators who are clear agents of disunity and hatred for the APC", it stated.

The APC, however, said it was not surprised about this development because the incontrovertible emergence of Dr Nentawe Goshwe as the party's gubernatorial candidate since June last year has unsettled the opposition and those who believe that Plateau state begins and ends with them.

"It also alleged that Dr Nentawe has turned the party in the state into a one-man-show and has promised to dissolve the legally elected Local Government Councils and the State Working Committee of the party when elected among sundry other weird allegations.

"His revolutionary, captivating and apt choice of Generation Next and the ACEES programme which bother on the future of the youth and a new Plateau State has created great discomfort for people who believe in the old ways of doing things. This explains why several efforts have been made to scuttle his candidacy with multiple court cases which have collapsed like a



Bature

pack of cards.

These orchestrated and ridiculous challenges have gone to the extreme of resurrecting a court case by some willing agents and stooges of these disgruntled elements more than a year after a duly agreed out of court settlement which the complainants on their own volition withdrew the case in court but have now surprisingly gone on to the Appeal Court which is a clear distraction", Namang enthused.

According to him, the APC in the state was fully aware of the insidious plans by the opposition and those who do not wish the APC and Plateau State well to destabilise the candidate and the party up to the general elections saying, "let us assure all and sundry that there is no

stopping the youthful winning team of Dr Nentawe Yilwatda and Hon. Pam Bot Mang by God's grace.

"The APC in Plateau state wants to inform, assure and reiterate that the party is solidly confident and stands by its gubernatorial candidate whose chance of winning the March 11 2023 elections is as bright as the morning star. Dr Nentawe is a humble and loyal product of party in whom we are all proud of.

"There exists no rift of any sort between him and the party Chairman, the State Working Committee and all other party structures.

There is no activity he embarks upon without the tacit approval of the party's leadership in the state. As an obedient and loyal party member, he intimates and visits



Yilwatda

the party's secretariat often for consultations and approval of his itinerary", Namang highlighted.

He added that, the party has carefully designed its programme to fit into the electoral time table by INEC and Dr Nentawe Yilwatda has first embarked on a one-on-one reconciliation visit to all the gubernatorial aspirants he contested with to pacify and solicit them to key into his campaign programme.

The Publicity Secretary, disclosed that "the workaholic, diligent and composed gubernatorial candidate who is more than prepared for the job, because he has met with the leadership of all the indigenous groups on the Plateau known as PIDAN and all other ethnic nationalities residing in Plateau state to solicit their support which has given the opposition parties in the state sleepless nights.

"His current Citizens Engagement with all strategic blocs in the state that began three weeks ago which would be concluded this weekend, has the full approval of the party in the state. In fact, the APC Chairman, Hon. Rufus Bature is fully involved in this strategic engagement. Why this is not treated as a full party affair is based on the selected audience for these interfaces.

This involves visiting traditional rulers at their various palaces across the state, interactive joint sessions with representatives of religious leaders, leaders of development associations along with their women and youth wings, strategic community stakeholders, Ardos, leaders of marketers association, among others", he explained.

The party also disclosed that, all the party structures including Local Government Executive Chairmen who serve as coordinators of the on-going engagement in their respective local governments were involved with all the 325 Councillors they have, leadership of the Legislative Arms, Ward, Local Government EXCOs and state excos from the various LGAs were part of this all involving engagement.

It, however, disclosed that from next week, the party would unfold its gubernatorial campaign council which would be all encompassing which would be followed by a none stop campaign dovetailing into the Presidential/ National Assembly elections on February 25th and the gubernatorial and House of Assembly elections on March 11th.

"Although the cowardly unsigned statement is of no consequence and effect on the fortunes of the APC in the state, our party believes that the statement is defeatist and acrimonious in nature mainly coming from the opposition. All these have the blessings of the leader of the party in the state, His Excellency Right Honourable Simon Bako Lalong, who is also Campaign DG of the APC Presidential Campaign Council",

"The APC would want to advise those who think they can stop the APC awesome winning machinery not to waste their time and energy and are advised to key into this winning team for a better, united, secured and prosperous Plateau State instead of these unhelpful and vain distraction", the party advised.

**"The APC in Plateau state wants to inform, assure and reiterate that the party is solidly confident and stands by its gubernatorial candidate whose chance of winning the March 11 2023 elections is as bright as the morning star. Dr Nentawe is a humble and loyal product of party in whom we are all proud of. "There exists no rift of any sort between him and the party Chairman, the State Working Committee and all other party structures. There is no activity he embarks upon without the tacit approval of the party's leadership in the state. As an obedient and loyal party member, he intimates and visits the party's secretariat often for consultations and approval of his itinerary", Namang highlighted".**



SUNDAY PEOPLE

LALONG, MAJE, NENTAWE, GAGDI, DAKUM AND OTHERS AT BIT GAMAI 2022

Plateau State, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (CON), Dep. Speaker, House of Reps., Rt. Hon. Ahmed Idris Maje, Hon. Yusuf Gagdi, APC Governorship Candidate, Dr. Nentawe Yilwatda, Labour Party Governorship Candidate, Dr. Patrick Dakum and others graced the 2022 Bit Gamai in Shendam, Shendam LGA



Governor Lalong, CON (left) being received by the Long Gamai, HRH Miskoom Martin Shaldas III, Long Kwo Chieftdom, HRH Miskoom Fidelis Attahiru Sule and the Long Jan of Namu Chieftdom, HRH Engr. Miskoom Safiyanu Suleman Allahnana



National President of GUDO, Barr. Miskoom Theodore Maiyaki taking the Governor and other dignitaries round the Gamai House of Unity in Shendam



HRH Long Gamai, Miskoom Martins Shaldas III (left) with Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong, CON



Governor Lalong (middle) in a photograph with Governorship Candidates of APC, Dr. Nentawe Yilwatda (left) and Labour Party, Dr. Patrick Dakum (right)



Cross section of masquerades at the Bit Gamai cultural festival



Director General, ITF Sir Joseph Ari and Lady Victoria Ari during their conferment of traditional titles by the Long Gamai



Sir Joseph Ari, Director General, Industrial Training Fund (middle) his wife, Lady Victoria Ari in a photograph with Long Jan, HRH Engr. Miskoom Safiyanu Suleman Allahnana, Long Kwo, HRH Miskoom Fidelis Attahiru Sule, Long Dero, HRH Engr. Miskoom David Isa Dongban



Plateau State Governor, Barr. Simon Bako Lalong with other dignitaries at the unveiling of books at Bit Gamai 2022



## ON the 2023 Appropriation Bill

The 2023 appropriation bill was passed by the state House of Assembly while the clean copy was also sent to His Excellency for assent, which has made it a legal document and law of Plateau State for the 2023 fiscal year. There was actually a robust engagement and discussion among members of the House as regards developments and certain issues affecting the state and its people. By and large, I will say that certain considerations were made concerning the 2023 appropriation bill. First and foremost, this government is about winding up, hence the need for it to meet up with certain deficits that had suffered for the past seven years.

In line with this, some of the issues and demands which have been on the table of His Excellency must be captured. Those demands are the ones directly affecting the people of Plateau State, particularly those that have to do with the completion of projects because there are so many projects lying down and desirous of completion. If you look properly, you will see that these projects are about ninety percent completion and it is our desire that if this budget is implemented to the latter, it will indeed address some of these challenges. Like the Lalong Legacy Projects for example, which has already been captured as work is ongoing. We also hope that the House Committee on Works and Housing will step up their oversight to ensure that everything that has been captured in the budget is fully implemented.

There are so many other issues aside projects, there are other social services that the people desire. For example, the state government workers are in dire need of the payment of their salaries. I am sure that this year 2023 is fully aware of the challenges ahead and that is why the House has insisted that the budget must reflect the capacity of the state to generate revenue. We've challenged most of the MDAs to focus their strength on how they can harness every potential revenue earning opportunity on the Plateau so that we can raise enough funds to fund the budget.

Also, I want to let you know that the House of Assembly under the leadership of Rt. Hon. Yakubu Yackson Sanda has been doing exceptionally well and we must not allow our political or personal differences to undermine that which is for the benefit of the people of Plateau State. You can see that we gave an accelerated attention to the appropriation bill, ensuring that every detail of the budget presented to us was thoroughly scrutinized to see that it reflects the wishes and yearnings of our people. I am very happy that His Excellency gave his assent on time immediately after receiving it.

**On the issue of non releases of funds approved to MDA which has always been the case year in year out**

If you look at the recommendations from the budget report by the House Committee on Appropriation, it

did highlight some of these issues. The House of Assembly is not quite happy with this situation and actually faulted why the governor will give approval for funds and the monies will not be released but again, let's not be quick to act on the basis of hearsay which is why we said in the report that the house committees must ensure they stepped up their oversight to ensure that every MDA that is supposed to get A and B should be given.

Of course we understand the present economic challenges but

## '2023 budget will be all encompassing'

***There is the law on land grabbing, cultism and many more. These are laws that have to do with the present realities that we are facing, wheThe 2023 budget has been passed no doubt, however there are concerns as to whether it will meet the yearnings and wishes of the Plateau people. Here, Plateau State House of Assembly Majority Leader, Hon. Naalong Gapyil Daniel who is also the Chairman House Committee on Information and the member representing Mikang constituency speaks on the budget and how the ninth assembly has fared, as it prepares to wind up.***



Daniel

if we want them to generate revenue, they cannot do that with empty hands they must be given the tools to do that. We are fully aware of this issue and are doing our best to give all MDAs our support, particularly the ones that have the capacity to generate revenue for the state.

**On what necessitated an increase in the budget size by the House of Assembly**

Whenever a budget is presented before the floor of the House, the House as mandated by law has the power to critically look into it and based on the fact that we know what our people want, have to step in and see where there needs to be either an addition or subtraction. There are critical projects, especially capital projects that we must not jettison no matter what happens. As realistic as we can interface with the budget, we must also not forget that tomorrow lies only in the hands of God. We might not be expecting much and tomorrow you see that there is a boom.

If we do not put into cognisance the fact that things can change for better or worse, we will eventually have ourselves to



the legislature you certainly have the majority and minorities.

When it comes to performance, the House has been very energetic and vibrant especially when it comes to debates. The ninth assembly has also done very well in the area of representation. Every member has been up and doing in representing his constituents by ensuring that whatever that is due his constituency is being given to her. I can also tell you that we have so many intellectually sound legislators in the ninth assembly. Many have contributed meaningfully, even before stepping into the House and are putting to bare their skills and experiences into the workings of the Plateau State House of Assembly. It will interest you to know that some committees after our inauguration had new chairmen and they were very fast in learning.

However, the ninth assembly has had its challenging moments too. Recall the drama that took place during the impeachment of the former speaker. Of course, we also lost some of our great men, Hon. Henry Longs and Hon. Eric Dakogol may their souls continue to rest in peace. They were part of us, part of the twenty four wise men on the Plateau within that calendar year. The year has also been quite interesting. No doubt some of the issues that we actually encountered in the ninth assembly can best be described as rather unfortunate. Some of them we celebrate while some we regret. The truth is you will always not have everything your way. You win some and lose some, but to be best of my knowledge, I will say that the ninth assembly in terms of representation, in terms of members reaching out to do their oversight, in terms of law making, you will discover that we cannot be compared to any other assembly.

I may be wrong but from the data available to me, I believe that we have come up with more motions than any other House you can talk of, more matters of urgent public importance based on the records available and we have passed more bills compared to any other

assembly. We have done our best in the legislative business and can only be compared to probably the tenth assembly, that is if they are able to step up and do close to or more than we have done. Most of the laws we have passed have direct bearings on the lives of the people of Plateau State. Look at the PLASCHEMA law passed that has to do with health insurance. It has gone a long way in affecting the lives of many, particularly the poor and most vulnerable people in our communities.

There is the law on land grabbing, cultism and many more. These are law that have to do with the present realities that we are facing, where people are being chased out of their ancestral homes. There must be a law that will hinder anybody who wants to make that attempt, and all we did was for the executive to implement such laws so that it can positively affect the people. Even the law on revenue consolidation, you can name them. For the purpose of records, we can give you all the necessary data and I can also categorically tell you that the ninth assembly has performed up to ninety percent out of a hundred of what is expected of a house of assembly. I can also tell you about what we are doing in regards to projects in our various constituencies. Some of us came in 2015, so we are part of both the eight and ninth assembly. For me, I have been able to lobby even at the federal level to get a road constructed for my people, water supply from the ministry of agriculture. We have built libraries, community homes, given free fertilizers, given scholarships to deserving students, paid JAMB, WAEC and SSCE fees, constructed boreholes, empowered people with grinding machines, sewing machines and even given out motorcycles and vehicles. We have given attention to our traditional rulers, I think these are some of the achievements that we are leaving behind and I know history will write our names in the sands of time. So by and large, we have done our best and it is left for our constituents to decide for themselves.

blame. So our desire to step up the budget size is in the best interest of the people. We identified certain priority needs and had to add it to the budget to make it a bit not too higher than what was presented on the floor of the House, which is expected of us as a legislature. It is our responsibility to do that and we did it in good fate.

**Looking at 2022 how has the ninth assembly fared generally, in terms of performance, relationship with one another and relationship with the public?**

The legislative business is such that can be likened to an institution of learning like the university for example, where you step into and you meet other colleagues. You're all for the same pursuit and as such of equal rights. The only difference is that in the House, whatever position you occupy whether as a speaker, deputy speaker or among the principal officers is just a privileged position or what we can say one among equals. But of course, we can't deny the fact that when there are two or more people coming together there are bound to be disagreements here and there. In



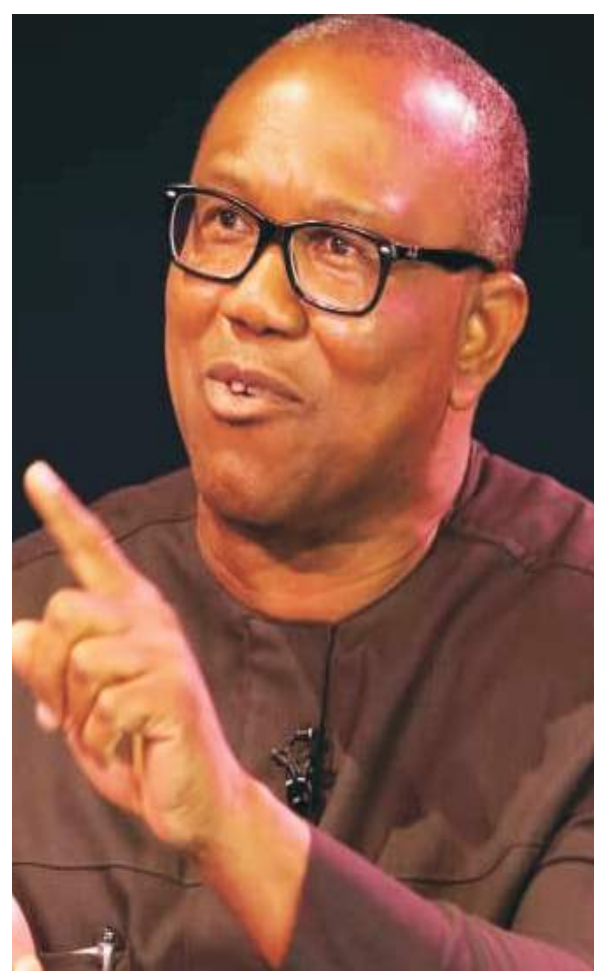
## SUNDAY MAGAZINE



Tinubu



Atiku



Obi

## Nigeria : 2022 in retrospect, 2023 in perspective

**2022 has come and gone with the good, the bad being witnessed. 2023 is here with us. A general elections with the National Population Census also billed for the year VICTOR ALI looks retrospectively at some of the events of last year and 2023 in perspective.**

**T**HE year 2022 has come and gone but the memory for good or bad will linger on for a very long time. Nigerians from all works of life witnessed the good, the bad and the ugly depending on which side of the divide one belongs to. In the aforementioned year, the unrelenting terrorist activities of the Islamic sect Boko Haram continued in spite of the efforts of the Nigeria military personnel, banditry too compounded the security challenges in the North East and North-west part of the country. The killer Fulani herdsmen continued with the satanic activities of killing innocent people and destroying farmlands and the agricultural products therein.

Though these may be termed as man-made or self-inflicted disasters, there are what can easily go for natural disaster-floodings and fire outbreaks in some states of the federation. Floodings in particular have swept large expanse of farmland across the country, displaced several people from their homes and even led to the death of several others.

Though dimmed as natural disaster, flooding, in particular has been seen as man-made in areas where people advertently or inadvertently build houses on waterways.

The combination of bandit's attacks, terrorist's activities and floodings have led to fear of food insecurity. Can Nigeria have food provisions for its teeming citizens? Apart from the skyrocketing prices of foodstuffs in the country, the United Nations agency, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) had warned recently that millions of Nigerians may face hunger as a result of food insecurity. While such postulation may be taken with a pinch of salt, looking at the precarious food situation in the country, it just may be correct. Nonetheless, the Federal Government had countered this prediction by allaying such fear.

To say the economy was bad in 2022 is an understatement. And like Peter Imoukhome wrote sometimes in November last year, "when economies grapple with a condescending inflationary

pressure marked attributable to signs and (causes like a diminished value of currency and sharp rise a contractionary monetary policy is advanced. To ensure a coordinated and impactful response to this challenge, the Central Bank of that economy will have in its arsenal a couple of tools."

He further averred that, "globally, nations are increasingly being faced by an existential threat of hunger, unaffordable, unsafe, and low-quality foods with millions of people across continents now exposed to greater levels of food shortages, malnutrition, deteriorating health conditions and death. Buoyed by three major factors-an adverse climate change effect which has exacerbated global warming, posing a threat to the ecosystem-the survival of plants and animals, Russia's invasion of Ukraine bringing on its wake a rising costs of foods and sharp rise in inflationary pressures and finally an energy crisis precipitating a value of currency erosion".

In Nigeria, according to reports, the National Bureau

of Statistics (NBS) announced that the inflation rate jumped to 20.52 percent in August. This was the highest in 11 months. This statistics is scary and unless and until some workable proactive measures are taken, the inflationary trend may still be on the increase. And this may spell doom for the Nigeria's economy with equally the huge debt overhang. Nigerians are reeling not to see the bad events of 2022, but is 2023 going to be different?

Welcome to 2023! This year is certainly Nigeria's moment of monumental decisions. With the general elections around the corner and the planned census exercise, Nigeria and Nigerians should endeavor to get it right. It is on this template that it would be recalled that on the 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2022 an eminent group of statesmen under the aegis of the National Peace Committee, brought together all the presidential candidates to sign a Peace Accord which represents an agreed Code of Conduct for the conduct of 2023 election.

Despite this noble move by

the eminent statesmen towards the conduct of a peaceful, free and fair elections, typical of the Leopard, Nigeria politicians don't seem to change. It has been accusation and counter-accusation amongst and between them with unsavory utterances belittling their status as leaders. Shameful so much so that they have thrown decorum to the dogs.

Recently, the Vice Presidential Candidate of Labour Party, Dr. Yusuf Datti Baba-Ahmed raised alarm over violation of the signed Peace Accord. He declared that orchestrated attempts by opponent to denigrate the candidacy of the presidential candidate of the party, Mr. Peter Obi using false claims and attacks on his supporters will fail. Datti-Ahmed who stated this at a press conference in Abuja recently expressed disappointment that despite signing a Peace Accord, presidential candidate of the All Progress Congress, (APC) Asiwaju Ahmed Bola Tinubu and his Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) counterpart, Atiku Abubakar had continued to

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## NEWS

## Court slams N10m on police over illegal detention

**A**N Anambra High Courtin Awka on Tuesday awarded N10 million as damages against the Nigeria Police Force and Assistant Inspector General AbutuYaro, in charge of Zone 13 of the Nigeria police.

The judgment was over the illegal detention of one ChukwuemekaEkwueme, a real estate developer.

Presiding Justice DA Onyefulu, a vacation judge, also awarded N200,000 as the cost of litigation in favour of the plaintiff.

Justice Onyefulu also issued a restraining order on the police from arresting, detaining, harassing or intimidating MrEkwueme on the same matter and ruled that the police should, instead prefer charges against him.

The judgment resulted from Suit No. A/Misc 461/2022

which MrEkwueme filed against the defendants to enforce his rights to freedom.

The counsel to MrEkwueme, Alex Ejiesieme, had earlier told the court that the police arrested and detained his client between 14 December and 28 December 2022, without taking him to court.

The arrest and detention, he added, were in relation to an attempt by MrEkwueme to develop a parcel of land at Oba International Airport in Idemili South Local Government Area of Anambra.

He argued that the police arrested his client based on a petition by the community and detained him without prosecuting him.

Other defendants in the suit were NkiruNwode, police spokesperson at Zone 13 of the Nigeria Police Force and Emmanuel Awah, an officer in the office of the



Alkali

spokesperson.

The same court ordered the immediate release of

MrEkwueme on 28 December 2022 following a bail application by his counsel.

## Federal High Court gets 9 new judges

**T**HE Federal High Court has announced the appointment of nine new judges for the court.

This was disclosed in a statement issued by Assistant Director of Information of the Court, Catherine Oby Christopher.

According to the statement, the Chief Judge (CJ) of the Court, Justice John TerhembaTsoho, made the appointment in the exercise of his

constitutional powers and consequent upon the approval by the Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN) and Chairman, National Judicial Council (NJC), Justice OlukayodeAriwoola.

It said the appointments are separate from the pending exercise for the appointment of the fifteen (15) Judges earlier approved.

The statement added that the exercise for the consideration of candidates

for possible appointment to the Bench of the Federal High Court with regards to Bayelsa, Ebonyi, Gombe, Ogun, and Oyo states would commence soon.

"In line with the NJC Guidelines and Procedural Rules for Appointment of Judicial Officers of Superior Courts, the Honourable Chief Judge, therefore, invites Your Lordships, the Hon. Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice and the President,

Nigerian Bar Association, to kindly nominate suitably qualified persons from the aforementioned states for appointment to the Federal High Court Bench.

"All recommendations are to reach the Chambers of the Chief Judge of the Federal High Court on or before 28 February 2023," the statement added.

## Commander urges sustained action against terrorists

**T**HE Force Commander, Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), Maj.-Gen. Abdul-Khalifah Ibrahim, has called for sustained efforts to end the activities of terrorist groups in the Lake Chad Basin region.

MNJTF Spokesman, Lt.-Col. KamarudeenAdegoke, in a statement on Saturday, said Ibrahim made the call during a ceremony to usher in activities for the Year 2023 in N'Djamena Chad. He commended the

troops and staff for working harmoniously towards ending the activities of the Boko Haram and Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP) terrorists in the region.

According to him, the successes recorded in 2022 were due to cooperation at all levels, driven by the need to collectively fight insecurity in the region.

The Force Commander expressed optimism that

the unwavering synergy between the military and strategic partners would defeat the menace of terrorism and insurgency in the region this year.

He also appreciated the Republic of Chad for providing environment conducive and safe for MNJTF to carry out its activities.

Ibrahim paid tribute to fallen colleagues who paid the supreme price in the quest for peace in the region and prayed for peace and stability in the Lake Chad basin countries.

He said the occasion was in a bid to further consolidate on the gains of MNJTF in the fight against terrorism.

Earlier, the Deputy Force Commander, Brig.-Gen. AssoualaiBlama thanked the Force Commander for his leadership style, which, he said, reflected in the numerous successes recorded by MNJTF during the past year.

Blama also assured the commander that the troops, staff and other components were ready to accomplish the mandate of MNJTF towards ensuring the total return of peace and security in the region.

According to him, the MNJTF is the product of the strong will of the Heads of State and Governments of the member countries of the Lake Chad Basin Countries who are faced with the common threat of the Boko Haram terrorists.

"They decided to provide a common response through the operationalisation of a unique joint force - MNJTF.

"As a team, the MNJTF will continue to work assiduously in tackling the activities of the Boko Haram/ISWAP until the fight against terrorism is brought to a favourable end," he said.

Bulama also thanked various partners for their tremendous support to the MNJTF and called for more.

He listed some achievements of the force to include successful operations such as Operation Lake Sanity and the return of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons to their ancestral homes and promised to do more this New Year.



Traho



## FG to reimburse Plateau over Federal Road intervention

PLATEAU State Government is soon to smile as the Federal Government took steps to reimburse the state over the Federal Government road interventions the state government has carried out over the years.

The good news came when the Federal Minister of Transport, Hon. Mu'azuJaji Sambo and the Permanent Secretary of Works and Housing visited the state on verification exercise to the state to ascertain the level of interventions on Federal Roads and infrastructure.

### Plateau State Police Command recovers stolen Toyota Highlander Jeep

The Plateau State Command of Nigerian Police Force (NPF), has recovered a stolen Toyota Highlander Jeep belonging to one Engr. Pam Dung Gyang 'M' of Hwolshe community in Jos-South Local Government Area of Plateau State through its efforts to deal with criminals in the state especially car snatchers.

This was contained in a press statement signed by the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Alfred Alabo, and made available to THE NIGERIA STANDARD in Jos, the state capital Thursday shortly after recovering the car on January 5, 2023 at about 0130hrs.

### \*\*Police nab pastor for self kidnapping

The Plateau State Command of the Nigerian Police Force, has uncovered the nefarious act by one pastor AlbarkaBitrusSukuya 'm' of JentaApata Jos, who has on several occasions staged his kidnap alongside his cohorts to collect ransom from sympathizing members of his congregation.

This came in a press statement signed by the Command's Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Alfred Alabo, on behalf of the state Commissioner of Police and made available to SUNDAY STANDARD in Jos, the state capital last Wednesday.

### \*\*NAF appoints Chiefs, Air Officers Commanding, Spokesperson, others

As part of routine exercise aimed at ensuring operational efficiency and effective service delivery, the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Marshal OladayoAmao has approved the appointment and redeployment of new Branch Chiefs, Air Officers Commanding (AOCs), Commandants of Tri-Service and Nigerian Air Force (NAF) Institutions including a new Spokesperson and other senior officers.

The newly appointed Branch Chiefs are Air Vice Marshal (AVM) Jackson Yusuf, formerly, Chief of Policy and Plans (COPP), Headquarters NAF (HQ NAF) who is now the Chief of Defence Policy and Plans (CDPP), Defence Headquarters (DHQ), Abuja, AVM Idi Lubo, erstwhile Commandant Armed Forces Resettlement Centre is now Chief of Policy and Plans (COPP) HQ NAF, AVM Mohammed Yakubu, immediate past Commandant Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) is now appointed Chief of Aircraft Engineering, HQ NAF, AVM AyoolaJolasinmi, former CDPP, DHQ is now the Chief of Defence Space Administration while the erstwhile Commandant Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Jaji, AVM Anthony Tuwase is now the Chief of Defence Transformation and Innovation (CDTI), DHQ.

### Qua'an-Pan Chair presents N4.2b budget of hope, transformation Phase II

The Executive Chairman of Qua'an-Pan Local Government Council of Plateau State, Hon. Ernest Abner Da'a, has presented a budget proposal of four billion, two hundred and thirty-six million, ninety-seven thousand, seven hundred and sixty-six naira (#4,236,097,766.00) only, for the 2023 fiscal year to the legislative arm.

This came in a press statement signed by the Media Aides to the Executive Chairman of the local government council,

Hon. MathiasYengoet Dajan and Hon. Daniel Useini and made available to SUNDAY STANDARD in Jos, the Plateau State capital Thursday.

### \*\*Plateau: PDP guber candidate to kick start campaign Tuesday

PLATEAU State chapter of People's Democratic Party (PDP) is set to kick start its campaign to the seventeen (17) Local Government Area of the state starting from Tomorrow Tuesday January 10 with the state gubernatorial candidate, Barr. Caleb Mutfwang, as the captain of the campaign.

The gubernatorial candidate who was on courtesy visit to the headquarters of the Nigeria Union of Journalists, Jos, disclosed this while speaking to the gentlemen of the press ahead of the campaign's kick off last Monday.

### \*\*Plateau APC debunks rumour of rift in party

PLATEAU State Chapter of the All Progressive Congress (APC), has unequivocally dismissed the speculations making the rounds on social media trending that the State Working Committee (SWO) of the party and its gubernatorial candidate as well as the Presidential Campaign Committee (PCC) were at loggerhead, describing it as figment of imagination by confused people.

This was contained in a press statement signed by the State Publicity Secretary, Hon. Sylvanus Namang, and made available to SUNDAY STANDARD in Jos, the Plateau State capital Thursday.

### \*\*Asiko emerges overall winner of Rhino Golf Tournament

One AksonAsiko has emerged the overall winner of the Rhino Golf and Country Club Median Amateur Golf Tournament by scoring 131 net over two days to beat the other contenders to go home with a new brand tricycle.

Compiled by EZEKIEL DONTINNA.



## SUNDAY FEATURE

# The fallacy of modernization

***The current world order which has been characterised by Great Power Competition has reignited the so-called new scramble for Africa. With various superpower states intensifying their long-held interests in the African continent to meet their needs, little attention has been given to the needs of the supposed benevolent giver – the African continent itself. ADEBAYO ADELEKE, writes.***

**G**IVEN the ever-increasing energy needs of the industrial world, sourcing for alternative energy supply in Africa has made the continent an attractive destination. African leaders also welcome this given that the majority of the states on the continent remain poor and continue to struggle in their quest for industrialisation considering their desire for the ultimate desire to become modernised.

Plagued by issues bothering insecurity because of the nefarious activities of violent extremist groups, to the recent spate of democratic backsliding which has swept across some states on the continent, particularly in West Africa, one can only imagine the prospects of attaining true modernisation amidst these lingering challenges.

Potential investors are also likely to establish manufacturing plants in countries where they are guaranteed the availability of electricity to power these factories

The dangers of the current situation have far-reaching consequences across various sectors of the continent. One of such is in the supply chain. Africa suffers from critical infrastructure deficits and requires significant amounts of financial resources to remedy its plight in this regard.

One report notes that a total of N36trn (\$81bn) is required over a period of 30 years to close Nigeria's – Africa's largest economy, critical infrastructure gaps.

The availability of energy is a crucial element in fostering manufacturing and production, both of which are essential to



Africa's economic growth and development. Potential investors are also likely to establish manufacturing plants in countries where they are guaranteed the availability of electricity to power these factories and more importantly a secure environment devoid of worries over the fear of their workers being kidnapped for ransom by violent extremists and insurgents.

During the recently concluded COP27 talks on climate change, world leaders reiterated their pledge and commitment to ensuring a habitable world amidst the threat posed by climate risks. In the past, such

pledges appear to have been marred by political intrigues leaving the most vulnerable and affected nations in Africa at the mercy of those who ought to be responsible and accountable for climate action.

The need to take decisive action in this regard has been recognised and acknowledged with countries such as the United States of America willing to provide African states with 300MW of nuclear energy to meet its growing industrialisation needs. While this has the potential of not only significantly addressing the energy shortages that have been associated with most African

states, it could also potentially aid the supply chain by improving and reducing the cost of production of goods, especially in a continent that is heavily reliant on the sale and export of primary communities.

However, a major stumbling block remains the threat posed by the activities of violent non-state actors as earlier alluded to. The implications for global peace and security of terrorist groups on the African continent laying their hands on nuclear materials and converting the same into weaponised dirty bombs could only at best be imagined.

African states must recognise that to get from where they are to where they desire to be in their journey to modernisation and industrialisation, certain critical steps must first be taken. The first of which is exerting the much-needed political will to act. Various studies have established that the rise and prevalence of violent extremism could be attributed to issues such as poor governance, endemic corruption, weak institutions, political marginalization, and fragile state-society relations, which breed distrust. There is a need for a conscious and deliberate effort by African leaders to address these underlying root causes of violent extremism which are mostly

within the realm of politics, in reversing the proliferation of insecurity across several parts of the continent.

Secondly, African states must also recognise and come to terms with the urgency of the need to diversify their economies. Where they have solely depended on a monolithic commodity such as oil, taking decisive steps towards ensuring that the overreliance on such products becomes a thing of the past is not only central to mitigating the effects of global shocks but also to reduce the prospects of vulnerability. As with the first point, this also requires a demonstration of political will in attaining the quest for modernisation and industrialisation.

As a third step, African states must be deliberate about investing heavily in science and technology in such a way that guarantees optimal returns. Having an edge in an increasingly competitive world requires that Africa must transition from indigenous solutions to technologically driven ones even as it seeks to close the gaps in its energy needs. Doing all of these sooner rather than later might be what determines whether or not its quest for modernization and industrialisation remains a dream or a reality.

**“African states must recognise that to get from where they are to where they desire to be in their journey to modernisation and industrialisation, certain critical steps must first be taken. The first of which is exerting the much-needed political will to act. Various studies have established that the rise and prevalence of violent extremism could be attributed to issues such as poor governance, endemic corruption, weak institutions, political marginalization, and fragile state-society relations, which breed distrust.”**



## SUNDAY FEATURE

# Armed Forces Remembrance and issues of welfare

**As Nigeria celebrates the 2023 Armed Forces Remembrance Day BENJAMIN SAMSON examines the plight of retired military personnel. BENJAMIN SAMSON writes.**

**T**HE Armed Forces Remembrance Day is celebrated on January 15 annually. It was formerly celebrated on November 11 of every year to coincide with the Remembrance Day (Poppy Day) for the World War 11 veterans in the British Commonwealth of Nations. It was, however, changed to January 15 in Nigeria in commemoration of the surrender of Biafran troops to the federal troops on January 15, 1970, thus bringing to an end the Nigerian Civil War.

Speaking with our reporter, Colonel Musa Maijika (rtd.) said the Armed Forces Remembrance Day celebration as an annual event organised to honour members of the Nigerian Armed Forces who fought for the nation, and those who served or are still serving in various peace support operations worldwide, as well as those who fought in the Nigerian civil war, was quite significant.

He said: "The day is mapped out to celebrate both the dead and the living heroes, including all those who suffered various deprivations as a result of wars."

"Annually, this national day celebrates military personnel including the Nigerian Army, the Nigerian Navy, the Nigerian Air Force and the Nigerian Legion."

"They all converge on different centres across the nation to celebrate the day and give honour to the fallen and living heroes who risked and continue to risk their lives for the territorial integrity of the nation."

"The event is held at the federal, state and local levels where either serving military officers reside or where living ex-service men occupy."

"In commemorating the day, several military traditions are strictly adhered to. Whether marked at the federal, state, or local level, some symbolisms are sacrosanct and they include the release of pigeons to symbolise peace, placing of wreaths, playing of the last post, Remembrance Day parade, shooting of guns."

"Besides the above listed, the event also witnesses religious services in both mosques and churches nationwide."

"At the parades, the military personnel are usually kitted in diverse colours typical of their services be it navy, air force, army or ex-service men."

A burning issue that the Armed Forces Remembrance Day usually throws up every year is the welfare of retired soldiers who put their lives on the line in defence of Nigeria's sovereignty and territorial integrity."

In a chat with Blueprint Weekend, a retired soldier, Sergeant Samaila Sambo, lamented the poor living condition of ex-servicemen."

He urged President Muhammadu Buhari to save them from hunger and poverty."

The veteran said some of his colleagues, who fought in the Nigeria Civil War between 1967 and 1970, serving for about 10 years and above, were still unpaid."

He said: "The situation of our men is very terrible, some are sick and cannot even afford to feed themselves."

"Some cannot afford a meal per day; some with health challenges don't have money to maintain their health challenges such as blindness, stroke and others homeless."

"On November 17, 2022, N134.7 billion was approved by President Buhari's administration to pay the pensions of Military Veterans who



fought in the Nigeria Civil War and won to take care of themselves and their families. However, since the money was approved by President Buhari, the money is yet to be paid to us."

"We humbly appeal to our President and those in charge to pay the veterans and put a smile on us as we commemorate the 2023 armed forces Remembrance Day this year."

Similarly, military pensioners had in November 2022 staged a protest march at the headquarters of Ministry of Defence, Abuja over non-payment of their Security Debarment Allowance (SDA) among other demands."

The military pensioners blocked the access road to the Ministry, Ship House, located in Area 10, Garki."

The pensioners, who staged the protest on the aegis of the Retired Members of Nigerian Armed Forces (RMNAF) and the Coalition of Concerned Veterans, accused the Minister of Defence, Major Gen. Bashir Magashi (Rtd) of insensitivity to their plights."

Addressing journalists during the protest, spokesman of the pensioners, Abiodun Durowaiye-Herberts, said the veterans were determined to remain at the ministry's entrance until their demands were met."

"We are here alongside our wives and children, and widows of late military personnel and veterans, who died in service, some of whom died fighting Boko Haram terrorists. We will be sleeping over at this place until the Minister of Defence, Magashi accedes to our demands," he said."

Speaking in the same vein, the National Secretary of RMNAF, Roy Okhidievbie, explained that the

demonstration was to demand the payment of their security debarment allowance owed by the federal government."

He wondered why the minister had refused to disburse the allowances despite approval by President Muhammadu Buhari."

"We have had meetings with the Defence Minister, Magashi, but he appears to be headstrong, heartless, and unperturbed concerning the grievances of retired military officers, as he never paid nor showed any interest or concern to pay these allowances, especially the security debarment allowance."

"Interestingly, President Buhari-led administration has approved the payment of this allowance, but Magashi have refused to make disbursements," he said."

Also speaking, Anna Nanven, whose husband, a Corporal, was killed by Boko Haram terrorists during an attack on a military barracks in Borno state in 2015, said she was yet to receive any allowance or entitlement since her husband's demise."

"My husband was a young man, a corporal that was killed by Boko Haram terrorists during an attack on the barracks where he worked."

"I now live with his parents, and I have five kids, three females and two males for him. The children are aged, 22, 20, 18, 15, and seven and the two eldest, both girls, that are done with high school but can't go to the university because I can't afford their school fees," she lamented."

"I am pleading that the president, the minister of defence, and Nigerian citizens to come to our aid. I and my five children are suffering and living in poverty because I can't afford starting a business, and I have no job," she added."

The retired military personnel had also protested at the Ministry of

Finance and the National Assembly to press home their demands."

However, the Military Pensions Board (MPB) said it has commenced payment of Security Debarment Allowances (SDA) to military retirees and next of kin's of deceased military retirees, who are entitled to the debarment allowances, with the qualified year for beneficiaries put in 2017."

Chairman, Military Pensions Board (MPB), Rear Admiral Saburi Lawal, who disclosed this in Abuja, noted that the commencement date for the payment was effective, January 5, 2023. He said the payment would cover the first and second tranches, which is for the first and second quarters in 2023."

Rear Admiral Lawal emphasized that the payment was in fulfilment of the presidential approval of the provisions of the reviewed Manual of Financial Administration, MAFA, 2017."

"The beneficiaries of these payments are: military retirees on the MPB database who retired before November 9, 2017, deceased military retirees who were alive when the MAFA was signed on November 9, 2017, and non-pensionable retirees who retired before November 9, 2017, but were only paid gratuities," he said."

The MPB statement read: "Sequel to the approval given by the President and C-In-C, President Muhammadu Buhari, for the payment of the SDA to military retirees who originally were not covered by the 9 November 2017 effective date and the agreement reached at the ensuing tripartite meetings of

the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Finance, and representatives of the veteran associations."

"The MPB wishes to inform our esteemed military retirees and the general public that the Board has commenced payment of the first and second tranches (that is, for 1st and 2nd Quarters 2023) of the SDA to eligible military retirees/Next of Kins (NOKs) of deceased military personnel."

"The payment, which is in fulfilment of the Presidential approval of the provisions of the reviewed Manual of Financial Administration (MAFA) 2017 will commence on Thursday, January 5, 2023."

"...However, our esteemed retirees are please requested to note that the SDA is calculated as a function of 10 per cent of the retiree's annual basic salary as at the time of retirement multiplied by the number of years served in the services."

Meanwhile, a security expert Hassan Shugaba, has advised the federal government to set up a standing welfare fund to cater for war veterans and families of fallen heroes."

Shugaba condemned the annual ritual of fundraising for the purpose, stating that it was not sustainable and should be discouraged."

He suggested that the federal government should set up a standing fund which would be replenished with the yearly budgetary allocation as it is done in countries that truly value the contributions of the security agencies."

According to him, the day set aside to launch the emblem should only be for remembrance purposes, reflecting on the sacrifices made by men and women of the armed forces in keeping Nigeria together and ensuring that peace prevails in the country."

He said, "I think that we are tired in this country with every year meeting to launch emblem to support families of the fallen heroes. What I thought, as is done in advanced countries, the day should be used for remembrance of their (veterans) efforts."

"That means, by now, as a country, we should have a standing fund that will take care of the families of the fallen heroes. That is what serious countries should be talking about."

Shugaba noted that when such fund is established, the call on individuals and corporate entities by legionnaires will not be the norm anymore."

He pointed out that it becomes a mockery when the day is spent in soliciting financial support as an enduring measure of sustenance for legionnaires."

"When you say you solicit for support of corporate bodies; they laugh at us and ask: what kind of country is this? People who have fought for you? People who have laid down their lives for you to be alive, to survive? And we are still talking about how do we support them," he queried."

He added that the seeming poor treatment of the veterans was the reason why officers of the nation's security agencies are not committed to professionalism in the discharge of their duties."

"They know when they die, all they will hear is launching of emblem to help their families. So, they are involved in so many things to take care of their families in case anything happens to them."

"That is why, the oil bunkering business seemed to have continued unabated even if it is economic sabotage, which is allegedly aided by the security agencies," he added."



Long time ago, when I was a young girl, my father gave me a beautiful watch. Cartier, if I can remember. He did not quite say why but I loved it and wore it with pride...and then I lent it to my best friend at the time, who took it home and brought it back in shreds. End of watch. I was in secondary school at the time. Then I graduated from secondary school and went to the university. Again, my Dad told me to open a bank account in the bank on campus. I went there, saw a huge crowd and never went back. When he found out that I had not opened the account, he scolded me. I did not understand why he was so upset about it. I did not have money to save in the account. I was a student and depending on my father. What he did not say was that he was going to teach me the saving culture.

What my father did for me was beautiful but he did not tell me the details. He did not tell me the correlation between time and money. He also did not tell me that I needed to have a bank account in order to learn how to save money. My father is a man of few words and he is not forceful with his children. He would often tell me that in life, the ball was in my court and I would be the first beneficiary of my actions. He taught me a sense of judgement and gave me a good education but he did averagely in the area of financial education. This may be because he was not a businessman but a career civil servant.

Many years later, I started working as a civil servant myself and I was actually clueless as to what to do with my salary. Of course, I would spend everything to the last dime. I was quite emotional about money. You could tell me that your goat had malaria fever and I would send you money. However, it was a bottomless pit that I could not fill up because many goats had malaria fever, money went out, and there was not creative use of money to create value or to grow more money. I made decent money but my saving culture was as poor as my investment culture. Somewhere along the line, I realized that I had to save something for the rainy day and stop going from pay check to pay check and so I started saving peanuts. At this point, I knew next to nothing about investment.

I got another job and moved to another town. There, I met this young fine Yoruba man and we started dating. I learnt a lot from him and the lessons I learnt were life changing. First, he was my friend. He would encourage me to learn new skills and develop myself. He would buy me books. He encouraged me to study a master's degree. Above all, he taught me many financial lessons. He taught me about stocks and shares. One day, he was going to see his stockbroker and asked if I wanted to come along. I did and it was a revelation. That was my first time of buying shares. Then he would tell me about his plans, how he would like to buy as many pieces of land and houses as possible and urged me to do same.

One day an opportunity came for me to take a mortgage to buy a small house. I was scared. I did not know how I was going to cope with deductions from my salary. He sat me down and told me that these type of opportunities does not come every day and that I should take the chance. He told me that the value of a house only goes up and in a couple of years, the value of the house I was going to buy would triple. He still went ahead to get a friend from a financial management firm to break it down for me. I took the chance and took the mortgage. I was receiving half of my salary for ten years but I manage to be financially disciplined except on certain occasion when I had to carry more than my own share of the burden and simply could not do so. If I was white and living in Europe, it would have been perfect, but of course, I am African and we are a people of plurality. I paid my mortgage monthly. In hindsight that was the best financial decision, I ever made because the house has increased in value. I am not yet a rich woman but I can afford me, which is very empowering.

This young Yoruba man trained me in the area of financial management and discipline. If our paths had not crossed, I may actually be dirt poor due to my saving culture and my lack of financial discipline. He also taught me about skills acquisition and self-development. He was the only one that does not show surprise when I updated him on my educational progress. Two and a half masters later, one Ph.D. on the way and I am still learning and we when I told him that I was learning coding, he told me that he was planning to start same with Harvard through Coursera. No shock, no surprise. Just learning to create multiple streams of income and that is the normal in our non-linguistic tribe.

I remember he was studying for two master's degree at the same time and when I asked him why, he said that he was making the best use of his youth while he still had it. He had two jobs. One that he created and the other, an international civil service job. I come from his school of thought on financial education and self-development and I thank him for taking the time to improve another human being, especially in the area of financial discipline and management. I only wished that I had met him earlier because I was young and lucky. I started making money as a national youth corps member on government assignments but alas, it is not the same today. If I knew about making money, saving and investing much early, I would be very wealthy today.

Today, we are living in a society where

## Financial education (1)



financial education and discipline is not taught early in schools and at home. In this case, financial education refers to financial and business education. Few parents know how to teach their children the value of hard work or the correlation between, discipline, time, value creation, money, wealth and riches. In business, time is money. One's ability to keep to time is a measure of one's self-discipline. The failure to teach our children financial discipline very early, has created a society that is massively illiterate in the area of financial management and discipline, which in turn has bred a great deal of dependency and a vicious circle of poverty once we earn money, we want to consume. Saving is the last thing we do. We want to solve every problem both real and imaginary before we save and invest. There is a need to solve problems but here is also a need to let the tree grow so that it is strong enough to provide shelter and solve more realistic problems.

"My goat has fever" is not a problem anyone with financial sense should bother solving. This is a metaphor for fabricated problems stemming from laziness and dependency. A complete lack of a desire to be financially independent because someone will put food on the table. We need to say to the owner of the goat: 'he who does not work should not be given food'. We should support only the poor but willing and hard working in our society and look for better ways to help them grow wealth by teaching them the ropes.

This year and often, I helped only those who told me what precisely, they wanted to do with their lives and my small salary. Those who had a plan. If they wanted to learn tailoring, to farm or go to school, I did the best that I could for them and I taught what I know. If they wanted to learn a skill and create visible value for yourself, I was on their side. If you want to be my dependent as a full-grown adult, I cannot help you. One orphan told me that he wanted to grow watermelons as a business with N30,000. I was elated. I will borrow to give this kid if I do not have because he has a financial direction. I have seen many with a sense of entitlement and no financial direction. How can we continue to chase our tails in today's economy, wasting hard earned resources by investing in zero? How can we continue to support adults who do not wish to work or learn to be financially independent considering the multiplier effects on our society?. I sell books as a passive stream of income and as a passion but I am a civil servant. I asked a relation to join me in my book business and she told me that she does not like the book business. She said that she would rather sell rice and tomatoes. I said ok. A few months



poverty and failure so that we continue to chase our tails. If we teach poultry as a skill, do we also teach book keeping along with it? Do we teach about shareholding and how that small poultry business can grow? Do we teach about backward and forward integration in business? Do we teach about reinvestment and expansion, do we teach about branding and marketing. It is not enough to teach poultry. It is imperative to also focus on the financial management of the profit margin in other to keep the business alive.

It is Christmas. Everybody or almost everybody will go home to the extended family. As is the very abnormal practice, a lot of 'dependents' within the extended family will not ask those whom they see as financially independent, to teach them how to be financially independent. Instead, they will expect to be given money as they see this as a birth-right. In their thinking and to their minds, if a cousin or a brother or sister is wealthy, then they do not have to struggle or hustle. They can just relax and call at the end of every month and the rich relation of theirs will send them their own "pay check" for being a relative. It is no wonder that we are where we are today considering the fact that we come from a predominantly civil service state. When the civil servant collects his or her salary, the sharing starts. Very few will say that they would like to try their hands at business or farming with their share of the civil servants salary. Since the civil servant cannot save, he also cannot invest so we all continue to chase our tail like the proverbial dog and the circle of poverty continues.

The creation of wealth can only happen when we build a culture of financial education wherein we can learn financial discipline and management. The first lesson for me in financial discipline is to stop being emotional about money. I do not gravitate towards emotions anymore. I look for people who want to be self-made and not dependent. I need people with business ideas. I told my brothers a long time ago, that I was not going to pet and pamper them but that I would give them my support in any area where they would like to do business or learn a skill. I told them that my salary would be for my maintenance and if I got any bulk money, I would give them fractions to start doing business and create value for themselves. We struck that deal. Today, when I ask them about their kids' school fees, they tell me "its sought out" and not "we do not have".

I have those who ask for food. Able bodied but lazy with absolutely no sense of independence or financial wisdom, hugging poverty like a coat in cold weather, refusing to learn or work. Imagine if these poverty mongers wanted to work, save and invest. Imagine that they just needed a push and some financial education. That would create value for them. However, they want to be carried and spoon-fed. This is why poverty will never leave some families and communities. Everybody needs to grow up and learn how to create wealth, learn financial discipline and discard dependency. Those who are wealthy do not have ten heads. We all need to learn what they know about money. This is the multiplier effect that we thoroughly need to get out of poverty.

Spreading this around a herculean task because others are still stuck in their dependency syndrome. If you come from a family of persons with dependency syndrome, poverty will never go away. If you come from a community of dependent persons, no matter how rich you think you are, it will never go round and you will eventually become poor. However, if financial education is an educational prerequisite like Maths and English, we will stem the tide of poverty.

Next week we will continue with the effect of Financial illiteracy in governance  
Have a very Merry Christmas.

A lack of early education in financial discipline and value creation can only lead to



**I**N the last installment we stated that the first reason for the coming of Jesus was to save and the we left off where we began to introduce the second benefit which is that Christ removed you from the authority of darkness; Satan has no right to afflict you. As you believe these things, they are activated in your life. Philemon 1:6 says, **"That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus"**. There is no more spiritual death for any man that is in Christ Jesus.

Today I want you to know that in this life, Satan has no right to cut short your life. I am not saying that anybody that is born again will live forever, but God will fulfill your days. He can preserve your life, and He will preserve your life until you are good and ready to go; until you have finished your assignment on this earth, then you will sleep in God when you are full of age and of good days. You will live life on this earth full of the blessings of the Lord and when you are ready to go to be with the Lord, you will not go on the devil's terms but on your own terms.

This means that sickness does not have to take you out. Accidents do not have to take you out. Satan's vices do not have to check you out of this earth. The anointing will preserve you if you learn to yield to it, and will keep you in a state of wholeness. The anointing will help you to discover and fulfill your life's assignments and you will not leave this earth until when you are good and done. This is good news to all believers in Christ Jesus!

That is God's plan for your life, dear ones, that as you are connected to this anointing and learn to walk with Jesus, He will instruct you, teach you, educate you, preserve you, protect you, provide for you all the days of your life. He will help you fight every battle of your life and you will win. He will move you into the fullness of your destiny, and safely guide you into glory.

Proverbs 12:28 says, **"In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death"**. When you become born again, you become the righteousness of God in Christ according to 2 Corinthians 5:21. God looks at you and credits all of Jesus' righteousness to your account, because you have accepted Jesus and the work of redemption which He has done

for you. Jesus stands as your righteousness. And in that place there is no death.

This anointing is there to preserve your life literally and spiritually; to cut you off from eternal damnation, spiritual death, and to cut you off from premature death and any other manifestation of death such as sickness in your body, poverty, and lack. All of these are manifestations of spiritual

**"Treasures and wickedness profit nothing; but righteousness delivereth from death"**. Then Proverbs 12:28, says, **"In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death,"** meaning it is a pathway of life. And I say to you, in the name of Jesus, there is no death in your path. Your eternal future is bright and your future in this world is bright because of

## In the way of righteousness is life



death.

The spirit of death has no right of dominion over your life. The blood sacrifice of Jesus has tamed the spirit of death. The Bible says, in the way of righteousness is life and in the pathway thereof, there is no death (Prov. 12:28). You will live out your days and fulfill your years. You will live out your life and then go to be with Jesus when your earthly work is done, free from sickness and disease.

You will sleep in Jesus, after having fulfilled God's great plan for your life. You will also pass this legacy of the anointing to your family; to your lineage and to your generations. This is God's plan for you and understanding how to walk with this anointing will guarantee that.

Proverbs 10:2 says,

that anointing. That anointing will preserve you. He will protect you; He will guide you; He will lead you; He will protect you.

We see another companion scripture in Proverbs 11:4, which says, **"Riches profits not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death."** When the Bible repeats certain things, it means that God wants us to take note of it very seriously. This part of knowing Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, and sharing, and partaking in the anointing He carries will preserve you in this life, and deliver you from eternal death, and from Satan cutting your life short on this earth, and manifesting anything that the spirit of death has to offer. You can live your life free from the mark and terror of spiritual death. That's the anointing that

Jesus carries. He redeems our life from destruction.

Open your mouth and boldly declare that, **"The Lord Jesus Christ redeems my life from destruction. I have no fear"**.

Now, the third benefit of the anointing that Jesus carries is that it delivers mankind from the curses of life. Galatians 3:13 says, **"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree,"** verse 14 adds, **"That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."**

We have to understand that the scripture teaches us that when Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, he brought a curse upon all mankind. God told Adam in Gen.2:17, **"...in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."** Now, Adam, did not physically die, but the death the Bible was talking about is that his nature was corrupted. Sin, which is spiritual death, came into him. And sin carries a curse.

The word "curse" means "to be empowered to fail", "to be energized to fail", just like the word "blessing" means "to be



**This anointing is there to preserve your life literally and spiritually; to cut you off from eternal damnation, spiritual death, and to cut you off from premature death and any other manifestation of death such as sickness in your body, poverty, and lack. All of these are manifestations of spiritual death. The spirit of death has no right of dominion over your life. The blood sacrifice of Jesus has tamed the spirit of death. The Bible says, in the way of righteousness is life and in the pathway thereof, there is no death (Prov. 12:28). You will live out your days and fulfill your years. You will live out your life and then go to be with Jesus when your earthly work is done, free from sickness and disease.**

empowered to prosper, succeed and do well in life, to make progress in life". Now, Jesus and the anointing He carries is the blessing- the blessing of righteousness, the blessing of eternal life. He carries that anointing to prosper men; to cause you to excel and succeed in life.

The curse which comes with sin is the empowerment to fail. But blessed be God, the Bible shows that Christ in His office as the Anointed One delivers us from the curse - the curse that came with man's sin. Christ, the anointed One and His anointing **has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. For it is written, cursed**(empowered to fail)**is everyone that hangeth on a tree**(Gal. 3:13). So Jesus fulfilled this scripture, on our behalf. He was put on a physical tree, which is, the cross. Remember that the cross was made out of wood. it came from a tree.

**The word "curse" means "to be empowered to fail", "to be energized to fail", just like the word "blessing" means "to be empowered to prosper, succeed and do well in life, to make progress in life".**

**Now, Jesus and the anointing He carries is the blessing- the blessing of righteousness, the blessing of eternal life. He carries that anointing to prosper men; to cause you to excel and succeed in life.**



## INTERNATIONAL

# Biden political future clouded by classified document probe

*His approval ratings were ticking up. Inflation was slowing. And as Democrats united behind his likely reelection campaign, Republicans were at war with themselves after a disappointing midterm season. STEVE PEOPLES and JILL COLVIN write.*

Biden's political outlook veered into more uncertain territory after Attorney General Merrick Garland appointed a special counsel to investigate the Democratic president's handling of classified documents.

Democrats publicly and privately conceded that the stunning development was at best an unwelcome distraction at an inopportune time that muddies the case against Donald Trump. The Republican former president is facing a special counsel of his own and is under federal criminal investigation for his handling of classified documents and other potential transgressions.

There are major differences between the two cases. Most notably, there is no suggestion that Biden purposefully tried to prevent the documents discovered at his home or office from being turned over or that he was even aware of their presence. Trump, who is being probed for potentially obstructing investigators, also had far more classified documents in his possession.

But Thursday's appointment of a special counsel nonetheless thrusts legal uncertainty over the sitting president and could revive debate among Democrats about the wisdom of him seeking a second term.

"No one's going to say this is helpful," veteran Democratic strategist James Carville said. "It's pretty evident that's not the case."

As Democrats recoiled into a defensive posture, Trump's would-be Republican rivals in 2024 acknowledged that the contours of the upcoming race had shifted.

Trump "is the luckiest man in American politics," said John Bolton, who served as national security adviser under Trump and is considering a Republican White House bid. "This ought to be disqualifying to both of them."

Thus begins a messy election season in which the current and former presidents of the United States are both under investigation by special counsels as they gear up for a potential rematch in 2024. Many voters in both parties were already calling for a new generation of leadership to emerge in the nascent presidential contest. Such calls are now growing louder.

"On many political fronts, Biden's touted 2024 campaign is potentially vulnerable," said Norman Soloman, a progressive Democrat who leads the so-called Don't Run Joe campaign, which is already running television ads against Biden in key states. "Democrats and the country as a whole would be much better off this year and next if he's not running for president."

The 80-year-old president has already indicated he plans to seek a second term, but he has yet to make a final decision. His allies believe he is likely to make a formal announcement after the end of March.

So far, at least, no high-profile Democrats appear willing to challenge Biden in a prospective presidential primary contest. Privately, however, some Democratic officials believe the new federal probe may help motivate an insurgent candidate.

One of Biden's potential challengers, Vermont Sen. Bernie



Biden

Sanders, recently told The Associated Press that he would make a decision about his 2024 intentions "at the appropriate time." Nina Turner, who chaired Sanders' 2020 presidential campaign, said after Thursday's announcement that she hopes a "freedom-fighting progressive" mounts a primary challenge against Biden in 2024.

"The American people certainly deserve better choices — Republicans and Democrats," Turner said, applauding the government's decision to review Biden's handling of classified documents in the same way it's investigating Trump. "We shouldn't have these men shoved down our throats."

Garland's appointment of a special counsel followed Biden's acknowledgement Thursday morning that documents with classified markings from his time as President Barack Obama's vice president were found in the garage of his Delaware home and in his personal library, in addition to documents already discovered in a locked closet at an office he used after leaving the White House.

Garland said Biden's lawyers informed the Justice Department on Thursday morning of the discovery of a classified document at Biden's

home, after FBI agents first retrieved other documents from the garage in December.

Speaking to reporters Thursday, Biden said he was cooperating "fully and completely with the Justice Department's review."

"People know I take classified documents and classified material seriously," Biden said. He added: "My Corvette's in a locked garage."

To be clear, there are stark differences between the cases, including the volume of documents

discovered and the gravity of the ongoing grand jury investigation into the matter at Mar-a-Lago, Trump's Palm Beach, Florida, home.

Roughly 300 records with classification markings were recovered from Mar-a-Lago, a private club that hosts constant events. The search of Trump's property was the culmination of months of back-and-forth between the government and Trump's representatives, who repeatedly resisted efforts to return the

missing documents. And the Justice Department says classified documents were "likely concealed and removed" from a storage room as part of what they allege was an effort to obstruct the federal investigation.

A warrant for the search showed the FBI was investigating crimes including the willful retention of national defense information and efforts to obstruct the federal probe.

Trump has nonetheless seized on the news, seeking to use it to undermine the investigation into his actions.

"It's over," Trump said in an interview with conservative talk radio host Mark Levin on Thursday evening. "When all of these documents started coming out and Biden had them, it really changed the complexion and the intensity that they were showing to me because, you know, what they did is — I don't say far worse, I did nothing wrong — what they did is not good. What they did is bad."

Some Democrats were hopeful, but not certain, that voters might distinguish between Biden's cooperative approach involving a small trove of documents he apparently possessed by mistake and what federal prosecutors described as Trump's willful obstruction of hundreds of government secrets.

"It's all the difference in the world between having something you don't know you have and having something you know you have and aren't supposed to have," Carville said. "Is that going to get lost among a third of the country? Probably so."

Bolton, a fierce Trump critic, predicted that the significant legal differences between the two cases would "get lost in the fog." Now, he finds it hard to believe that Trump can be prosecuted for the Mar-a-Lago documents, regardless of the circumstances.

"I don't see how a criminal case goes forward at this point," Bolton said. "I just think it's such a cloud over the prosecution."

While the ground may have shifted, Trump's legal challenges aren't going to disappear.

Two months ago, Garland appointed former Justice Department public corruption prosecutor Jack Smith to lead investigations into the classified documents discovered at Mar-a-Lago as well as key aspects of a separate probe involving the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection and efforts to undo the 2020 election.

Federal prosecutors have been especially focused on a scheme by Trump allies to elevate fake electors in key battleground states won by Biden as a way to subvert the vote. They issued subpoenas to multiple state Republican Party chairmen.

Democratic strategist Josh Schwerin described the latest development as "certainly not ideal."

"I think everyone would wish this hadn't happened, including the president," he said. "But it's important to keep all of this in context: Everyone views President Biden as a far more responsible figure than Donald Trump. And that cannot be forgotten."

Source: Associated Press.

**Thus begins a messy election season in which the current and former presidents of the United States are both under investigation by special counsels as they gear up for a potential rematch in 2024. Many voters in both parties were already calling for a new generation of leadership to emerge in the nascent presidential contest. Such calls are now growing louder. "On many political fronts, Biden's touted 2024 campaign is potentially vulnerable," said Norman Soloman, a progressive Democrat who leads the so-called Don't Run Joe campaign, which is already running television ads against Biden in key states. "Democrats and the country as a whole would be much better off this year and next if he's not running for president."**



## INTERNATIONAL

## Iran praises rapprochement between Syria and Turkey

**I**RAN has welcomed the possibility of a rapprochement between its ally Syria and Turkey, the main backer of the political and armed opposition to Damascus for more than a decade.

"We are happy with the dialogue taking place between Syria and Turkey, and we believe that it will reflect positively between the two countries," Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian said on Friday during a visit to Beirut.

He made the comments on the heels of a statement by Syria's president, Bashar al-Assad, that said a Moscow-brokered rapprochement with his foe Turkey should aim for the end of Ankara's "occupation" of areas along the Syrian-northwestern Syria, one of the few safe havens for the opposition.

He also said that Turkey had to halt support for "terrorism", an apparent reference to support for the rebels.

Al-Assad made the remarks on Thursday in a meeting in Damascus with the Russian presidential envoy for Syria, Alexander Lavrentiev. The comments followed a meeting between the Turkish and Syrian defence ministers in Moscow on December 28.

Moscow is supporting a rapprochement between Damascus and Ankara. The aim is to have meetings between the two countries' foreign ministers and eventually presidents.

Lavrentiev said Moscow viewed the defence ministers meeting "positively" and hoped to develop talks "to the level of foreign ministers", Syrian state news agency SANA reported.

The rapprochement, al-Assad said, "should be coordinated between Syria and Russia in advance in order to ... produce tangible results sought by Syria".

The comments were al-Assad's first publicly reported remarks on meetings between ministers from Ankara and Damascus after more than a decade of enmity between the two neighbours.

Turkey has been a major backer of the opposition to al-Assad since the start of the civil war 12 years ago and has sent its own troops into large parts of northern Syria.

But in late December, the defence ministers of Turkey and Syria held landmark negotiations in Moscow – the first such meeting since 2011.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Thursday that he could meet his Syrian counterpart, Faisal Mekdad, early in February.

Since 2016, Turkey has launched several incursions into northern Syria against the People's Protection Units (YPG), which it considers the Syrian branch of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

The PKK has fought a war against the Turkish state since 1984 and is a designated "terrorist" group in Turkey, the United States and the European Union.

The operations against the YPG, which makes up the bulk of



Hossein

the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces, has allowed Turkey to control areas along the Syrian-Turkish border.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who called al-Assad a "terrorist" in 2017, has opened up to the idea of meeting the Syrian leader, with whom he had good relations before 2011.

The mooted reconciliation has alarmed Syrian opposition leaders and

supporters, who reside mostly in parts of the war-torn country under Ankara's indirect control.

After the defence ministers meeting, hundreds of Syrians in Al-Bab, a town controlled by rebel factions long backed by Ankara, demonstrated in protest.

The US, Turkey's NATO ally, has made clear its opposition to improving relations with al-Assad, who Department of State spokesman Ned Price called "a brutal dictator".

## Putin ally says war critics to lose homes

**R**USSIANS who have gone abroad and criticised their country or its military should have their property confiscated, says parliament speaker Vyacheslav Volodin.

A long-time ally of President Vladimir Putin, he singled out citizens who found it "possible to insult Russia, its residents, soldiers and officers, to openly support the villains".

Hundreds of thousands of Russians have fled in response to the war in Ukraine.

Many left to avoid being called up.

Mr Volodin's comments come amid increasing anger among pro-Putin figures at statements made by high-profile critics of the war who have left Russia.

Days into Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine last February, a law was passed that criminalised discrediting Russia's armed forces or spreading "false information" about the war - which Moscow calls a "special military operation".

A number of dissidents have been jailed in Russia for speaking out against the war,

including prominent opposition figure Ilya Yashin last month.

One of President Putin's biggest cheerleaders, ex-president Dmitry Medvedev, who sits on the Russian security council, said in recent days that there were "special rules" in wartime for traitors who "wish their fatherland to perish".

His comments came after Russian actor Artur Smolyaninov told exiled newspaper Novaya Gazeta that if he had to take part in the war it would be on Ukraine's side - not Russia's.

Russian MPs called for Smolyaninov to be barred from state-funded films and Russia's investigative committee opened a criminal case into his remarks.

MPs were also infuriated when singer Valery Meladze appeared to wish glory to Ukrainians in a New Year concert in Dubai, prompting some calls for his citizenship to be rescinded.

Meladze said later that all he wished for was for the conflict to stop.

Mr Volodin has played an



Putin

**I**NDIA should stop Myanmar's warplanes from entering Indian airspace during operations by the military regime to bomb targets in areas near India's border, an international human rights group has said.

Fortify Rights claimed that Myanmar's air force had "dropped bombs on both sides of the Myanmar-India border" in deadly attacks on Tuesday and Wednesday against an ethnic-Chin rebel group.

Five Chin National Front (CNF) soldiers were killed, including two women, in the air raids which reportedly started on Tuesday when bombs were dropped on the ethnic armed group's Camp Victoria in Myanmar's Chin state, which abuts India's Mizoram state, the rights group said.

Two bombs dropped by the Myanmar air force also landed on the Indian side of the border, near the village of Farkawn in Mizoram's Champhai district, the rights group added, though no injuries were reported on the Indian side.

"New Delhi shouldn't tolerate the junta's incursions on its airspace, and Indian authorities should do everything in their power to ensure the security of civilians and border areas," Fortify Rights chief executive officer Matthew Smith said in a statement on Thursday.

## India urged to close airspace to Myanmar



Murmur

"India must not allow the junta to continue destabilizing the region by using Indian airspace in its attacks and should support efforts to hold the junta accountable for its crimes," he said.

Myanmar's warplanes have also violated the airspace of Thailand and Bangladesh in recent months, according to the rights organisation.

Salai Htet Ni, a spokesman for the CNF, which claims to represent the mainly Christian

Chin minority located in western Myanmar, said on Wednesday that seven bombs were dropped.

"Some of our houses were destroyed from their air strike ... One bomb landed on the Indian side," he told AFP news agency.

Media based in Chin state carried footage of what was claimed to be a Myanmar fighter jet and the damage inflicted on Camp Victoria and the site where a bomb landed inside India.

According to the French news agency, Indian police reported that the bombs had landed in a riverbed that demarcates the international boundary between India and Myanmar.

"Our initial investigation has revealed that there is no damage to any [Indian] life or property," Lalrinpuia Varte, police superintendent of Champhai district, told AFP.

According to AFP, the number of CNF's fighters has diminished in recent years and the group signed a ceasefire with Myanmar's military in 2015. However, the CNF has since signed an agreement with forces fighting against the military regime which grabbed power in Myanmar in February 2021.

## Bolsonaro supporters enabled riot - Lula

**B**RAZILIAN President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has accused ex-leader Jair Bolsonaro's allies of aiding an attack on the presidential.

Lula said he was convinced supporters of Mr Bolsonaro inside the palace had been complicit by allowing rioters to enter key state buildings.

And he vowed to carry out a thorough screening of palace employees in the wake of the attempted insurrection.

Some 1,500 people have already been detained in connection with the attack.

In the wake of the attack on Sunday, Lula accused local security officials - who were commanded by Mr Bolsonaro's former Justice Minister Anderson Torres - of incompetence or active involvement with the rioters.

And he doubled down on the allegations on Thursday, telling reporters that the presidential palace "was full of Bolsonaroistas and military officials and we want to try to correct this so we can appoint career civil servants - preferably civilian ones".

"Nobody who is suspected of being a hardcore Bolsonaroista can be allowed to remain in the palace," he went on. "How can I have someone at the door of my office who might shoot me?"

Arrest warrants have already been issued for a host of top officials accused of being "responsible for acts and omissions" that led to the riots.

Attention has been turned to the military, widely perceived as being full of supporters of Mr Bolsonaro - a former army captain during the last military dictatorship.

The army was forced to deny reports that some of its officers had prevented police from detaining protesters, after footage showing angry exchanges between security forces emerged in local media.

But Lula has insisted Defence Minister Jose Mucio will remain in his post, telling reporters "I trust him".

"If I had to fire a minister every time they made a mistake the turnaround would be enormous," he added.

A member of a right-wing party, Mr Mucio was viewed as a concession to the military upon his appointment. In November, Mr Bolsonaro's vice-president Hamilton Mourao welcomed reports of the appointment and said it would be "very well seen by the armed forces".

Meanwhile, Mr Torres has

denied he had anything to do with a draft decree allegedly found during a search of his house on Tuesday, which local media say was aimed at overturning October's election result.

Federal police official confirmed the reports, and said agents had found a document that proposed suspending the certification of the election.

But in a statement posted to Twitter, Mr Torres - who is believed to be in Orlando, Florida - said he had a "clear conscience" about his role as minister, and accused authorities of leaking stories out of context.

Despite the mass arrest of supporters of Mr Bolsonaro, authorities have expressed concern that more rallies could be organised by his hard-line allies.

According to a memo from federal prosecutors seen, pro-Bolsonaro groups have been calling for "mega" demonstrations to take place across Brazilian state capitals.

The government is also asking that social media platforms take steps to suspend accounts that have been involved in planning criminal behaviour.



Enter **t**ain-ment

  
With **BULUS GAMBO**

Enter **t**ain-ment



# My music is vibes

-Boylexxy



**B**ORN in Nigeria, Boylexxy had his primary in Lagos where he grew up in the neighborhood of Agege and Ogba with his father. He would be exposed to a rich collection of music that includes Highlife, Fuji, and Gospel which soundtracked his upbringing, He will also learn the music and the ways of the streets as he made his way through life as a boy.

Boylexxy's childhood was an interesting one as he had unique experiences from his early days at Ogba where he was raised by his dad after his mom left for America when he was young. He tells me he went to the same school with street-pop icon Terry G who he recalls to be a talented troublemaker.

**"I go school with Terry G back in Ogba"** Boylexxy says in Pidgin before switching to English in an American accent that carries a Nigerian spice to tell me how talented he found Terry G to be **"He was very talented. He was a wizard with the keyboard."**

These early exposures to a wide range of music that includes Highlife, Gospel, Fuji, and Street music will go on to shape Boylexxy's taste even after he left Nigeria for the US to continue his education.

**"I left Nigeria to go to middle school in the US. So I was a Naija boy in a new country and I was trying to fit in, especially with school."**

Boylexxy tells me he struggled to fit into the US

schooling system recalling how he used to skip classes, especially Speech Class. However, despite finding himself in a new country and being exposed to a new culture, he still carried his Nigerian traits with him and that comes with a certain taste in music.

**"I always loved Afrobeats so I became the go-to guy for what's popping in Naija. To be honest, I wasn't a fan of American Hip Hop music because the subject always borders on violence, guns, drugs, and the like so I wasn't connecting to it."**

Besides his disconnect with American Hip Hop music, Boylexxy's time in Nigeria meant he retained sufficient identity that made him less interested in becoming Americanized.

**"I wasn't keen on making an American out of myself like some Nigerians who move here. I wanted to be Alex who enjoys Afrobeats."**

While Boylexxy's journey into music started in Nigeria, his decision to make music started after he relocated to Atlanta and he met two individuals who played notable roles in helping build his confidence.

The first is a Togolese friend he made who made music and he sat around to listen. And it was an attempt to help this friend out with Nigeria's Pidgin language on his song that led to talks about him making music.

Continued on page 26

# Where do the richest Americans live?



L – R: Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg and Michael Bloomberg.

**Have you checked the newest "Forbes 400: The Full List of The Richest People in America" yet?**

**Surprise, Bill Gates, with a net worth of \$81 billion, is ranked No. 1 for the 23rd year running. Meanwhile, his friend Warren Buffett fell to third place for the first time in 15 years with a net worth of \$65.5 billion.**

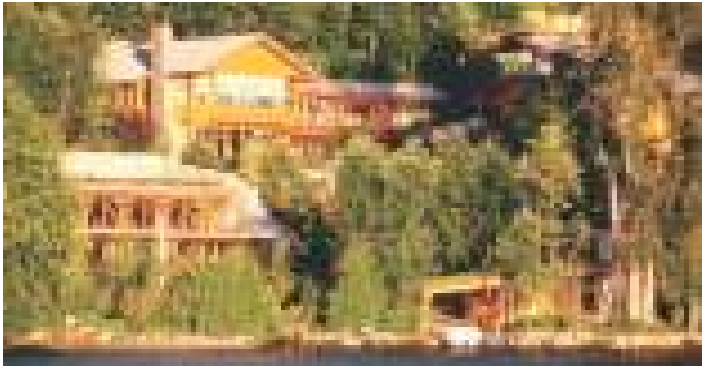
**Thanks to soaring stock prices of hot tech firms, CEOs at the helm of those companies seem to have been accumulating wealth at a much faster pace than others. Amazon.com CEO Jeff Bezos gained \$20 billion to boost his net worth to \$67 billion, making him the second-richest person in the U.S.**

**Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg jumped into fourth place, his highest rank ever, with a net worth of \$55.5 billion. However, Oracle founder Larry Ellison landed at No. 5 for the first time since 2007. His net worth is \$49.3 billion.**

**Standing on the No. 6 spot is former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, CEO of the eponymous firm Bloomberg L.P., who has a net worth of \$45 billion.**

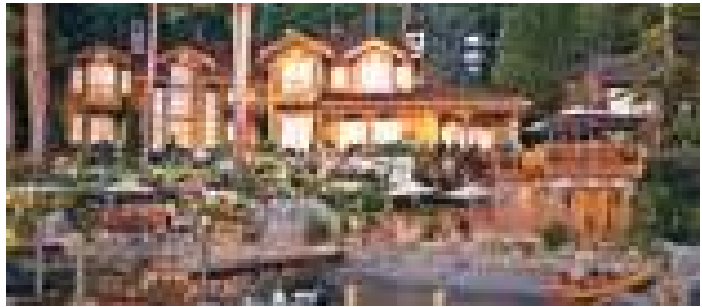
**These six richest multi-billionaires have a combined \$363.3 billion at their withdrawal, most of which is still held as stakes in the companies they founded. However, part of their fortune is vested in real estate. Mr. Gates, for one, owns a Washington mansion worth about \$170 million, several horse ranches across the U.S. and shares in some luxury hotel chains through his private investment firm, Cascade.**

**Here, take a look at the residences the six richest moguls call home:**



**Bill Gates**Worth: \$81 billion **Home:** Medina, Washington

Mr. Gates, 60, spends most of his time at his 66,000-square-foot Medina, Washington, mansion, nicknamed Xanadu 2.0 after the title character's estate in Citizen Kane. The mansion overlooks Lake Washington. It took Mr. Gates seven years and \$63.2 million to build this house, which is filled with lots of high-tech features. He purchased the lot for \$2 million in 1988, but it's now worth an estimated \$170 million, according to public records.



**Jeff Bezos**Worth: \$67 billion **Home:** Medina, Washington

Mr. Bezos, 52, in the process of building his e-commerce empire, scooped up a vast amount of real properties over the years,

Continued on page 25



# EYE'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

## Health

### Eat more watermelon to improve your health

**F**ILLED with sweet juice, watermelon is one of the best present from the nature. Although people go bananas over mango, watermelon is the real star in the heat. It is delicious, full of water, refreshing and contains calories every cup. There are many types of watermelon such as seedless, seeded, red and orange. This amazing fruit is loaded with vitamin A, vitamin C and other healthy compounds. It is a great source antioxidants. You can also eat watermelon seeds, which are rich in minerals like copper, zinc, iron and manganese.

#### Muscle soreness

Watermelon contains L-citrulline, which has been shown to relieve muscle soreness, enhance physical performance and promotes muscle relaxation. The compound L-citrullin also



and lowers the risk of myocardial infarction. Including watermelon in your diet will help you to reduce the chances of stroke and heart attack by decreasing the cholesterol levels and blood pressure.

#### Improves digestion

Watermelon is one of the best home remedies for constipation. As the fruit contains fiber and water, it improves the health of the digestive tract. So, instead of drinking just plain water, eat watermelon or drink watermelon juice to improve your digestion:

#### Lowers inflammation

Watermelon

Watermelon contains vitamin C and lycopene, which have anti-inflammatory properties. Eating the fruit may help lower the oxidative damage and inflammation. Lycopene may also be beneficial for the health of your brain.

#### Improves immunity

Watermelon can help improve your immunity as it contains high concentration of vitamin C. According to research, the concentration of vitamin C in body decline rapidly when you are under stress or have an infection. So, supplementing vitamin C will help your immune system by improving lymphocyte proliferation, natural killer cell activities and antimicrobial activities.

Source: Healthnews.com

is converted into arginine by the body. This arginine along with citrullin help nitric oxide production, Nitric oxide dilates and relaxes the blood vessels, lowering the blood pressure. Also, watermelon contains carotenoids, which help prevent the veins and arteries from hardening, helping lower the chances of atherosclerosis and blood clots

#### Good for your heart

Lycopene present in the watermelon has been shown to lower the cholesterol levels



protects against pain in the muscle. It is advisable to drink watermelon juice prior to your workout as it enhances the performance and intense training.

#### Reduces kidney disorders

Watermelon is a great source of potassium and calcium, which helps in flushing out the toxins from your body. Calcium helps in lowering the amount of uric acid in the blood, thereby lowering the chance of kidney diseases. Calcium also plays an important role in cell differentiation process, maintain cell structure and regulates cell functions. (ALSO).

#### Hydrates your body

Watermelon

Loaded with electrolyte and water, watermelon will help you to stay hydrated during the summer season. The fruit is 92 percent water and will make you feel full. Since the fruit is low in calories, you can eat a large amount of the fruit without feeling guilty.

#### Help prevent cancer

Watermelon can lower the risk of cancer as it is rich in antioxidants and vitamin C, which help fight the free radical formation in the body. Free radicals are known to cause cancer. Also, lycopene, which is present in watermelon, has been associated with lower risk

of prostate cancer. Lycopene seems to lower the risk of cancer by reducing insulin-growth factor (IGF), which is a protein involved in the division of cells. Higher concentration of IGF is associated with cancer

#### Help prevent asthma

Certain nutrients protect an individual against the risk of developing asthma and vitamin C is one of those nutrients. Eating watermelon will help prevent asthma as it is rich in vitamin C.

#### Lowers blood pressure

Watermelon

Watermelon contains citrullin, an amino acid, which





# 

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

## Health

# How to deal with a workaholic husband

By SYLVIA SMITH

**I**S your husband working all the time? Does he miss out on special events or family dinners?

Have you been researching ways on how to deal with a workaholic husband?

When you have a workaholic husband, this is something that might leave you feeling frustrated at times, but there are still things that you can do.

### Key signs of a workaholic husband

A person is not a workaholic simply because they work many hours a week, but there are a few characteristics you may notice in those that are workaholics.

.They are at work more often than not.

They are usually talking about work.

They don't have a lot of friends, because they don't have a lot of time for anything besides work.

They are distracted, even when they aren't at work.

They have trouble focusing and sleeping.

They are not interested in many things, other than what they do for work.

Possible reasons for your spouse's workaholic nature

If you feel like my husband works too much, there may be a good reason for that. There are several reasons why they might be exhibiting a workaholic nature.

### It's needed

Sometimes workaholic husbands have to work as much as possible to support their families. Your household



may need the money, and he might be the only breadwinner. If this is the case, you may want to cut your husband some slack since he is working hard to take care of his family.

### They must stay busy

Some people must stay busy as much as they can. This means when they can do work, this is precisely what they will do. You should consider if your husband works all the time because he has a hard time sitting down and relaxing. This may be the case.

### They are addicted to working

Some men are addicted to working. Not all workaholics are addicted to working, but it is known as work addiction if they are. There are many myths about work addiction,

but it is a real and troublesome problem.

It can be extremely challenging trying to figure out how to balance pushing for changes and accepting the circumstances.

### Here are some techniques you can use when you're wondering how to deal with a workaholic husband:

#### Enjoy the time you have together

One of the key ways to deal with a workaholic husband is to make the most of the time you are spending together. Don't spend that time fighting when you can be doing something as a family.

#### Tell them how you feel

Instead of yelling or accusing them of being a bad husband or parent, tell him this if your husband prioritizes work over family. Calmly explain to him how you are feeling, and you can decide together what can be done to fix this.

In some instances, he may not know how you feel or how he has affected his family, so you should make your opinion known when you can.

#### Don't make them feel worse

Even if you have workaholic relationship problems, you shouldn't fuss at your husband when he is at home. Criticizing them is unlikely to be effective in either keeping him at home with his family or causing him to work fewer hours.

If you push too much, it may just drive him away or back to work, which will not help your family.

#### Don't make it easier for them

When you know my husband is a workaholic, there are likely many things you have to do for your household, even stuff you may not want to do. However, you don't have to make your husband's life even easier for him, in terms of working too much.

In other words, you don't have to go out of your way to take all of his guilt away when he misses his kid's birthday party or when he stands you up for dinner again. He will need to make these things up to his family, in most cases.

#### Make home comfortable for them

Of course, this doesn't mean that you need to be rude to your husband in any way. One of the best ways on how to deal with a workaholic husband is to make sure that he is comfortable when he's at home.

Let him spend time watching the game or relaxing in his favorite chair. He may find that he likes this and do it more often, which would require him to be at home instead of at work.

#### Continue making memories

With a workaholic husband, how to deal with them effectively is to make memories without them

when you need to. Again, if they are missing important events that they knew about and for some reason were still unable to attend, you will have to do these things without them.

Sooner or later, they will probably notice that their life is moving forward without them in it, and in some instances, they might make changes to improve this.

#### Get professional help

If you don't know how to deal with a workaholic husband and it affects your marriage, you may need to seek help.

You can choose to get help for one person or as a couple, depending on what you think will do the most good and if your partner is willing to go to therapy with you.

#### Stop stressing

When you feel like your workaholic husband ruining marriage, this is something you have to work through. You should stop stressing so much about what isn't being done or what he is missing out on, and just keep doing you.

At some point, a workaholic may regret what they missed out on, but they may not.

#### Start a new routine

If you don't have enough time to spend as a family, do your best to institute new policies in your home, which everyone has to follow, including your workaholic husband. Perhaps there is a family game night every Friday, or you have brunch together on Sunday.

Whatever you choose, make sure that everyone knows that attendance is mandatory and that they will have fun. After all, spending time with your family can be something that is beneficial for the health and mental health of the entire family.

#### Celebrate small victories

Even if you have been at a loss on how to deal with a workaholic husband, it is okay to celebrate the small things. The small things can help you from

Perhaps your husband comes home for dinner once a week, unlike before. This is something to celebrate and thank him for. It shows that he cares and is willing to make an effort.







# Reality Bites

with Palang Kasmi  
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## Signs and ways of dealing with depression

**D**EPRESSION is a mental health challenge that can eventually eat you up if you don't keep personal trackers and checks to watch out the signs and parameters and assess yourself.

There are many causes ranging from loss of loved ones, tragedies, disasters, accidents, bankruptcy, financial and emotional challenges, disappointments, unfulfilled dreams and desires, among others.

The death of popular Nollywood actress Ada Ameh of the favourite Popular comedy sitcom 'The Johnsons' this week was so tragic to many because the actress had shared variously how she is battling with mental health issues after losing her only daughter Aladi in 2021 alongside seven of her family members.

According to the health experts, there are some signs that shows a person is having depression and there is a thin line between being unhappy and being depressed.

Healthline editorial team say "Being unhappy isn't the same as being depressed. Depression is a term often used loosely to describe how we feel after a bad week at work or when we're going through a breakup. But major depressive disorder — a type of depression — is much more complicated. There are specific symptoms that determine whether it's depression or the sadness we all sometimes experience in life".

However determining if persistent, unshakable dark feelings are a result of depression can be the first step toward healing and recovery.

They suggest you read these warning signs to see if it's time for you to see a mental health professional.

### 1. Hopeless outlook

Major depression is a mood disorder that affects the way you feel about life in general. Having a hopeless or helpless outlook on your life is the most common symptom of depression. Other feelings may be worthlessness, self-hate, or inappropriate guilt. Common, recurring thoughts of depression may be vocalized as, "It's all my fault," or "What's the point?"

### 2. Loss of interest.

Depression can take the pleasure or enjoyment out of the things you love. A loss of interest or withdrawal from activities that you once looked forward to — sports, hobbies, or going out with friends — is yet another telltale sign of major depression. Another area where you may lose interest is sex. Symptoms of major depression include a decreased sex drive and even impotence.

### 3. Increased fatigue and sleep problems

Part of the reason you might stop doing things you enjoy is because you feel very tired. Depression often comes with a lack of energy and an overwhelming feeling of fatigue, which can be among the most debilitating symptoms of depression. This could lead to excessive sleeping.

Depression is also linked with insomnia, as one might lead to the other and vice versa. They can also make each other worse. The lack of



quality, restful sleep can also lead to anxiety.

4. Anxiety. While depression hasn't been shown to cause anxiety, the two conditions often occur together. Symptoms of anxiety can include nervousness, restlessness, or feeling tense feelings of danger, panic, or dread rapid heart rate rapid breathing increased or heavy sweating trembling or muscle twitching trouble focusing or thinking clearly about anything other than the thing you're worried about

### 5. Irritability in men

Depression can affect the sexes differently. Research shows that men with depression may have symptoms such as irritability, escapist or risky behavior, substance abuse, or misplaced anger. Men are also less likely than women to recognize depression or seek treatment for it.

6. Changes in appetite and weight. Weight and appetite can fluctuate for people with depression. This experience may be different for each person. Some people will have an increased appetite and gain weight, while others won't be hungry and will lose weight.

### 7. Uncontrollable emotions

One minute it's an outburst of anger. The next you're crying uncontrollably. Nothing outside of you prompted the change, but your emotions are up and down at a moment's notice. Depression can cause mood swings.

### 8. Looking at death

Depression is sometimes connected with suicide. People who

die by suicide usually show symptoms first. Often people will talk about it or make a first attempt before succeeding in ending their life. If you think someone is at immediate risk of self-harm or hurting another person, get help for the person. If you have had some of the previously mentioned symptoms for more than two weeks, you might be suffering from major depression disorder. Recognizing that you're depressed is essential to getting the right help.

Depression affects millions of people, but there are varying treatments available, from lifestyle changes to medications. No matter the path of treatment you choose, asking for professional help is the first step to getting back to feeling like yourself again.

### How to overcome depression

Jabeen Begum in a piece on Webmb.com says being depressed can make you feel helpless but there's a lot you can do on your own to fight back. Changing your behavior -- your physical activity, lifestyle, and even your way of thinking -- are all natural depression treatments.

Get in a routine. If you're depressed, you need a routine, says Ian Cook, MD. He's a psychiatrist and director of the Depression Research and Clinic Program at UCLA because depression can strip away the structure from your life. One day melts into the next. Setting a gentle daily schedule can help you get back on track.

Set goals. When you're depressed, you may feel like you can't accomplish anything. That

makes you feel worse about yourself. To push back, set daily goals for yourself. "Start very small," Cook says. "Make your goal something that you can succeed at, like doing the dishes every other day."

Exercise. It temporarily boosts feel-good chemicals called endorphins. It may also have long-term benefits for people with depression. Regular exercise seems to encourage the brain to rewire itself in positive ways, Cook says.

Eat healthy. There is no magic diet that fixes depression. It's a good idea to watch what you eat, though. If depression tends to make you overeat, getting in control of your eating will help you feel better. Get enough sleep. Depression can make it hard to get enough shut-eye, and too little sleep can make depression worse.

Try not to nap. Take all the distractions out of your bedroom -- no computer and no TV. In time you may find your sleep improves. Take on responsibilities. When you're depressed, you may want to pull back from life and give up your responsibilities at home and at work. Don't. Staying involved and having daily responsibilities can help you maintain a lifestyle that can help counter depression. They ground you and give you a sense of accomplishment.

If you're not up to full-time school or work, that's fine. Think about part-time. If that seems like too much, consider volunteer work. Challenge negative thoughts. In your fight against depression, a lot of the work is mental -- changing

how you think. When you're depressed, you leap to the worst possible conclusions.

The next time you're feeling terrible about yourself, use logic as a natural depression treatment. You might feel like no one likes you, but is there real evidence for that? You might feel like the most worthless person on the planet, but is that really likely? It takes practice, but in time you can beat back those negative thoughts before they get out of control. Check with your doctor before using supplements. "There's promising evidence for certain supplements for depression," Cook says.

Do something new. When you're depressed, you're in a rut. Push yourself to do something different. Go to a museum. Pick up a used book and read it on a park bench. Volunteer at a soup kitchen. Take a language class.

"When we challenge ourselves to do something different, there are chemical changes in the brain," Cook says. Try to have fun. As strange as it might sound, you have to work at having fun. Plan things you used to enjoy, even if they feel like a chore. Keep going to the movies. Keep going out with friends for dinner, avoid alcohol and other drugs. Substance misuse is common in people who have depression. You may be more likely to turn to alcohol, marijuana, or other drugs to deal with the symptoms of your depression. It's unclear if drinking and using drugs causes depression. But long-term drug use could change the way your brain works and worsen or lead to mental health problems.



# EVE'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

## Relationship

# When space is good for relationship

By **NOAH WILLIAMS**

**I**F you've ever been in a relationship, you know something about having your partner nearby makes life feel more complete. But a part of us also wants our own space and time – especially when we're stressed out or dealing with an issue.

Space in a relationship can be a good thing. It allows you to take time out of your day, recharge, and focus on other things. Space is a tool that helps you let go of all the things that are taking up your time, energy, and emotions.

When one never learns how to give space in a relationship, however, it can strain the relationship. How do we give space in a relationship without feeling guilty? Read on to get more insights.

Why space is good in a relationship

Contrary to popular belief, one of the good things in a healthy relationship is space. Space plays an important role in any relationship; whether with family or friends, it builds trust and a sense of comfort. Learning how to create space in a relationship for ea

h other can help ensure that each member gets the attention they deserve.

Here are reasons why personal space in a relationship is essential.

**Space helps you figure out what you want**

When your partner is around, it's easy to get caught up in the day-to-day. Your partner may be your best friend, but they also have their own life and need time to do their own things.

Not only does relationship space give you time to figure out what you want, but it also gives you time to recharge. If you're constantly in each other's faces,



by all the energy that goes into keeping up with someone else's schedule.

**Space gives you a chance to take care of yourself**

Sometimes what we need is taking space good for a relationship. You are constantly reminded of your partner's presence when you're in a relationship. You're together 24/7, and every day reminds you of your partner's love and care for you.

However, it can also be difficult to focus on your personal needs when someone else is in the picture. It's easy to slip into a routine of doing things just because they need to get done and forget to take care of yourself.

This can lead to negative feelings like sadness or loneliness, making your relationship more difficult to sustain.

Spending time alone helps you

guilty about it.

It never hurts for couples to take time for themselves every once in a while, even if it means going on vacation! It may seem like a small thing, but taking breaks from each other can help keep the spark alive between two people and to remind you that space in relationships is healthy.

**Space helps you recharge**

You may not realize it, but your relationship with your partner is much like how you use your phone.

When you're using a phone, your attention is focused only on the screen and what's happening on that screen. You don't have to think about anything else.

But your attention can wander when you're talking to someone, even if they're right in front of you. That can be helpful for small talk, but it's not ideal for

relationship.

Space helps to boost intimacy. Intimacy means feeling understood and cared for by your partner. It makes you feel disconnected from your partner when you don't feel like you can talk about anything without judgment or criticism.

You start to question why they are with you and whether or not they like you.

Space in relationships helps to boost intimacy because it gives both people time to process their thoughts and feelings without being interrupted by each other's thoughts and feelings.

Taking space in a relationship allows each person to talk about their problems without feeling judged or criticized by their partner.

**Space makes time together more meaningful**

If you're with someone, it's not just about you and them. What does space mean in a relationship? The space between you and your partner gives the relationship depth and meaning.

When you're together, a shared experience brings each of you closer, but when you're apart, there's a sense of emptiness that can make or break the relationship.

If you see these signs, you might be needing space in your relationship

If you're in a relationship, it's normal to feel like things are going downhill sometimes. But it might be time for a change if your relationship has hit a new low or you've felt like you're not in sync with your partner. Here are signs that indicate the need for space.

You're fighting more than usual

your bickering becomes more than the occasional disagreement or minor dispute, it's time to check if there's something deeper going on. If you've been arguing about doing things together as a couple or over issues like money or chores, it might be time to take stock of where your relationship stands.

**You don't include them in your plans**

Suppose you only include each other in some aspects of your life, from setting up dinner dates and vacations to deciding what movies or TV shows you want to watch together.

In that case, the two of you aren't communicating enough about what makes each other happy and fulfilled. A lack of communication can make any relationship feel less stable, which can lead to all sorts of problems down the road.

**You don't feel at ease around your partner**

Your partner could be a great person, but they might also be someone who makes you uncomfortable with how open they are about their personal lives.

You may feel like they're too judgmental or only talk about one topic or field in their life. This person may make you feel like you don't belong in the conversation.

**Your sex life has taken a serious dip**

If you're having less sex than usual or your partner seems to be avoiding intimacy, that's probably a sign that something is up. One or both of you may be holding back, but if this happens often or unpredictably, then it may be time to get help from a professional therapist.

To be continue next week





## BUSINESS WORLD

## NASS sends business facilitation bill to Buhari

**T**HE Clerk to the 9th National Assembly has transmitted the new Business Facilitation (Miscellaneous Provision) Bill 2022, also known as the Omnibus Bill to President Muhammadu Buhari for his assent.

The Special Adviser to the President on Ease of Doing Business/ Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC), Dr Jumoke Oduwole, said this in a statement recently in Abuja.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) recalls that the Executive Bill was passed by the House of Representatives in October 2022 and by the Senate in December 2022.

According to Oduwole, the Business Facilitation Bill aims to codify Executive Order 001 (EO1) on Transparency and Efficiency in Public Service Delivery.

She said it would also amend select business facilitation laws identified as critical to the ease of doing business in Nigeria, and institutionalise business climate reforms.

"The bill is designed to strengthen ongoing reforms and consolidate legislative provisions that border on ease



Buhari

of doing business in Nigeria.

"The transmitted bill is a culmination of four years of collaboration of public and private sector stakeholders since 2018.

"This includes the Federal Ministry of Justice and the Section on Business Law of the Nigerian Bar Association through the participation of over 40 law firms and consulting firms.

"The Nigerian Economic

Summit Group (NESG) and the National Assembly Business Environment Roundtable (NASSBER) are also part of the critical stakeholders.

"The Omnibus bill is an intervention of PEBEC to consolidate and amend legislative provisions towards deepening PEBEC reforms and removing bottlenecks for Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in Nigeria," she said. (NAN)

**E**LECTRONIC payment transactions in Nigeria rose to N387 trillion in 2022, hitting an all-time high as more Nigerians embrace cashless payments.

According to the data released by the Nigeria Inter-Bank Settlement System (NIBSS), the value recorded on the NIBSS Instant Payment (NIP) represents a 42% increase over the N272 trillion recorded in 2021.

While the e-payment data showed a steady increase throughout the 12 months of the year, the highest value was recorded in December. Being a festive period with lots of spending activities, Nigerians spend a total of N42 trillion over electronic channels in December 2022. This came as the all-time high monthly record on the NIBSS electronic payment platform.

The volume of transactions processed by NIBSS for the year also jumped from 3.4 billion in 2021 to 5.1 billion in 2022. This represents a 50% increase year on year. While the cashless policy of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) is already gaining traction with many Nigerians getting used to mobile transfers, paying with PoS, and USSD, among others, the revised cashless policy, which is further limiting the amount of cash that can be withdrawn

## E-payment transactions in Nigeria rise by 42 per cent

by individuals and corporate organisations will further drive a surge in electronic transactions across the country.

According to the new policy which followed the redesigning of N1,000, N500, and N200 notes, effective from January 9, 2023, cash withdrawal by an individual will be limited to N500,000 a week, while corporate organisations have a N5 million withdrawal limit in a week.

The apex bank said it will also limit the amount of cash in circulation effective from January 31, when the current old notes will cease to be legal tender. This will force many

Nigerians to use electronic channels for payments. The NIBSS Instant Payments (NIP) is an account-number-based, online real-time Inter-Bank payment solution developed in the year 2011 by NIBSS. It is the Nigerian financial industry's preferred funds transfer platform that guarantees instant value to the beneficiary.

According to NIBSS, over the years, Nigerian banks have exposed NIP through their various channels, that is, internet banking, bank branch, Kiosks, mobile apps, Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD), POS, ATMs, etc. to their customers.



Emefiele

## Kerosene price increases by 146 per cent

**L**AATEST data from the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics for November has indicated that the price of household Kerosene, also known as cooking kerosene skyrocketed by over 100 per cent in one year.

The report showed an average retail price of kerosene per litre rose by about 146 per cent from N441 in November 2021 to N1,083/litre in the corresponding period last year.

Also it indicated that average retail price per litre was 4 per cent higher on a month-on-month basis in November 2022 compared to N1,041 recorded in October.

On state profile analysis, the highest average price per litre in November 2022 was recorded in Akwa Ibom with N1,417 followed by Cross

River with N1,367, and Abuja with N1,307.

On the other hand, the lowest price was recorded in Borno with N876 followed by Rivers with N910 and Nasarawa with N913.

In addition, analysis by zone showed that the South-East recorded the highest average retail price per litre, with N1,209, followed by the South-West with N1,163, while the

North-East recorded the lowest with N959.

While the average retail price per gallon paid by consumers in November 2022 was N3,594, showing an increase of 2 per cent from N3,517 in October 2022.

On a year-on-year basis, it increased by 133 per cent from N1,544 in November 2021.

On state profile analyses,

Kwara recorded the highest average retail price per gallon with N4,506 followed by Enugu with N4,302, and Abia with N4,238.

On the other hand, Gombe recorded the lowest price with N2,430, followed by Borno and Bauchi with N2,500 and N2,767 respectively.

Analysis by zone showed that the South-East recorded the highest average retail price per gallon of Household Kerosene with N4124 followed by the North Central with N3,811, while the North-East recorded the lowest with N2998.

The increasing price also affected cooking gas and diesel.

According to NBS, average retail price for refilling a 12.5kg cylinder of Liquefied Petroleum Gas increased by 1.3 per cent on a month-on-month basis from N10,050 in October 2022 to

N10,180 in November 2022. On a year-on-year basis, it rose by 39 per cent from N7308.06 in November 2021.

Analysis by zone showed that the South-West recorded the highest average retail price for refilling a 12.5kg cylinder with N10,561, followed by the South-South with N10,495, while the North-East recorded the lowest price with N9,600.

Prices, however, rose to about N11,000 per 12.5kg at independent marketers' outlets.

Due to scarcity which lingered into the festive period, prices of petrol increased from around N165/litre to currently selling at N250/litre at independent marketers' stations, N180/litre

at major marketer's outlets, and N169/litre at stations belonging to NNPC Retail.

## World Bank projects weaker economic growth for Nigeria

**N**IGERIA'S economy has once again been downgraded by the World Bank Group, largely due to a weak oil sector.

Citing that Nigeria's economy will further decelerate to 2.9 per cent in 2023 and is not expected to record any growth in 2024.

Specifically, the lender said Nigeria's growth weakened to 3.1 per cent in 2022 and would further decelerate to 2.9 per cent this year.

The Washington-based bank said growth momentum in the non-oil sector was likely to be restrained by continued weakness in the oil sector, which would negatively impact Nigeria's oil-based economy.

The Bank noted that a number of factors, such as low oil output, insecurity, petrol subsidies, forex scarcity, among others, hamper growth in the country.

The report read, "Growth in Nigeria—the region's largest economy—weakens to 3.1 per cent in 2022, a 0.3 percentage point downgrade from the June projection. Oil output dropped to 1 million barrels per day, down by over 40 per cent compared to its 2019 level, reflecting technical problems, insecurity, rising production costs, theft, lack of payment

discipline in joint ventures, and persistent underinvestment, partly because of the diversion of oil revenues to petrol subsidies, estimated at over 2 per cent of GDP in 2022 (NEITI 2022; World Bank 2022t).

"A strong recovery in non-oil sectors moderated in the second half of the year as floods and surging consumer prices (annual inflation surpassed 21 per cent for the first time in 17 years) disrupted activity and depressed consumer demand. Persistent fuel and foreign exchange shortages, with the naira depreciating by over 30 per cent last year in the parallel market, further dampened economic activity."

The bank further noted that the poor economic growth of 2.9 per cent in 2023, will be barely above population growth, which is often said to be around 2.5 per cent in previous reports.

The latest projection came barely three weeks after the bank lowered its economic projection for Nigeria's economic growth from 3.8 per cent to 3.1 per cent.

The report, which was prepared by the World Bank's Nigeria Development Update, had said that Nigeria's economy needs to grow faster

to reduce poverty.

The report noted that inflation had surged to 21.1 per cent in October 2022, pushing as many as five million more Nigerians into poverty since the start of 2022.

It further stated that despite higher oil export revenues, official reserves have fallen, and the currency market is severely distorted, undermining the business environment and investment.

It warned that the weaknesses in the macroeconomic policy framework are suppressing growth and making Nigeria more vulnerable to shocks.

"Nigeria has a choice to implement critical macroeconomic and structural reforms that can reduce crisis vulnerabilities and increase growth. Doing so will lift per-capita incomes, sustainably reduce poverty and deliver better life outcomes for many Nigerians.

Additionally, Shubham Chaudhuri, World Bank Country Director for Nigeria said, "Urgent business-unusual choices are needed to avoid a scenario in which up to 80 million working-age Nigerians do not have a full-time job by 2030 and up to 23 million more Nigerians could be living in extreme poverty".



Sylva



## BUSINESS WORLD

# Nigeria's export processing terminals will boost intra-African trade

**In November 2022, the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the Nigeria Port Authority (NPA), licensed five new Export Processing Terminals (EPTs) across the country to begin the operation of handling and processing export cargoes. Establishing and licensing these export processing terminals are critical to increasing Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings and boosting intra-African trade. The African Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) seeks to create a \$3.4 trillion economic bloc and end food insecurity in the continent, writes OLUWATOBI OJO.**

**T**HROUGH the EPTs, Nigeria could maximise this advantage by creating an agricultural value chain hinged on production, processing, and export. Also, in line with the current administration's commitment to diversifying the economy, EPTs are a timely innovation to boost exports in Nigeria.

The EPTs will also seek to address quality concerns over Nigeria's export through the timely processing of export and onward delivery to the port. In the past, exports from Nigeria arriving at destination ports were rejected because they either expired or halved their shelf-life because of longer waiting time accessing the port and longer time spent on sea-going vessels. Exporters lose about N700m worth of exports annually due to rejection.

The EPTs serve as a pre-gate, especially for Agro-exports, by sorting, processing, sealing, and certifying exports arriving at the terminals. The five export processing terminals licensed are Diamondstar Port & Terminals Ltd, Ijora; Esslibra Terminal, Ikorodu; Sundial Global Trade & Service Ltd, Kirikiri; Bellington Cargo Ltd, Okokomaiko; and Tenzki Energy Ltd., Kirikiri Lighter Terminal. Speaking at the inauguration of the DiamondStar terminal in Lagos, the managing director of NPA, Bello Koko, remarked that exports will now undergo sorting, processing, certification, and packaging at the EPTs. He reiterated the EPTs will "reduce the cost to the exporters, reduce the time that it takes to export these goods out, and then make the process faster and seamless, actually."

The overall effect of value addition will not only open access to new markets but also remove restrictions on some of Nigeria's agricultural products blacklisted in the international markets.

In November 2021, Nigeria ratified its membership in the AfCFTA, which aims to create a single continental market for goods and services. Establishing these EPTs will position Nigeria to benefit from intra-Africa free trade policies. As a major producer of agricultural produce, the EPTs will further improve Nigeria's export processing capacities and volume of exports. In the H1 of 2022, Nigeria recorded N343.4 Billion (without the EPTs) only from Agro-exports, which accounted for 4.92% of Nigeria's total foreign earnings within the same period. It is expected that the commencement of operations at the EPTs will further increase the



volume of (agro) export, estimated at \$250B in revenue yearly, thereby leading to an increase in foreign inflow.

Despite the global economic recession, Nigeria's non-oil export hit \$2.6b in the first half of 2022 alone. These impressive statistics show the EPTs will further enhance Nigeria's economic outlook and boost intra-African trade. The EPTs, through their improved logistic operations, will lead to an increase in export activities. As export activities increase, it creates more opportunities for foreign exchange earnings and foreign direct investment. Another dynamic effect on the host economy is adopting technology to ease export processes.

## Boost non-oil exports

According to the 2022 Q3 trade report by the National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria recorded a negative trade balance quarter-on-quarter. Exports declined by 19.8 per cent to 5.93 trillion in the third quarter of 2022 from N7.4 trillion in the second quarter. However, data from the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) reveals Nigeria's non-oil sector hit \$2.593 billion in the first half of 2022, representing a 62.37 percent increase from the \$1.59 billion

exported within the same period in 2021. These data show that non-oil export contribution to the economy is still less significant than oil export. However, with concerted efforts and a continuous improvement of the supply chain, non-oil exports will contribute significantly to Nigeria's economy soon.

The new EPTs will ensure value addition to export goods by processing raw exports into semi-finished products and sorting and certifying them to meet international standards. The overall effect of value addition will not only open access to new markets but also remove restrictions on some of Nigeria's agricultural products blacklisted in the international markets due to the proliferation of substandard products and residue of agrochemicals.

A commitment to value addition and standardisation of products by the government and relevant stakeholders will increase Agro-exports' contribution to the economy.

## Improve port's logistic bottleneck

Port congestion is a significant issue affecting Nigeria's maritime sector. Operations at the EPTs will



**Adebayo**

bridge the shortfall in logistics previously experienced in accessing the port and sea-going vessels. According to the operational procedure of the EPTs, the Nigeria Customs Service will only attend to export cargo coming from the EPTs to reduce the pressure on the Apapa and Tin-Can Island port terminals in Lagos. In the past, the Apapa and Tin-Can Island ports served double functions of processing centres and ports for export.

The operationalisation of the EPTs will boost the country's maritime profile and change its ratings on the global logistics performance index. An efficient port system will increase the confidence of both exporters, importers, and investors to continue to do business in/with Nigeria(n). Moreso, it will promote intra-African trade through export and help Nigeria optimise the benefits of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).

## Economic prosperity for all

One of the key agendas of the AfCFTA is lifting millions of Africans

from poverty. The EPTs create an immense value chain that offers various opportunities for all. Export activities at the EPTs will generate millions of naira for the government in export taxes and revenues, which will further enable the government to build capacities to enhance trade. The day-to-day running of the terminals will open up employment opportunities for people across different age groups. Its efficiency will increase trade activities for exporters and importers and their value chains.

Undoubtedly, many of the challenges facing export in Nigeria persist, mainly in terms of logistics, cargo clearance, and exorbitant demurrage fees. However, the establishment of export processing terminals is the first step in the right direction to address these challenges. Nigeria already boasts Africa's busiest port in the Apapa and Tin-Can Island port terminals in Lagos. Full operationalization of these terminals will further enhance the government to maximize these advantages for economic benefits.

**Source: Businessday**

**"The new EPTs will ensure value addition to export goods by processing raw exports into semi-finished products and sorting and certifying them to meet international standards. The overall effect of value addition will not only open access to new markets but also remove restrictions on some of Nigeria's agricultural products blacklisted in the international markets due to the proliferation of substandard products and residue of agrochemicals. A commitment to value addition and standardisation of products by the government and relevant stakeholders will increase Agro-exports' contribution to the economy".**



# ENTREPRENEUR WATCH

WITH CELESTINE D. ATTSAR

## Grit quotient and the entrepreneur's DNA

*Dear Entrepreneur/Founder, It's the beginning of a new year! Congratulations and welcome to 2023. For many business leaders a new year means Forecasting! Budgeting! Goal-Setting! Vision Boards! Performance Appraisals! Financial Audit and all the other shenanigans that make January such a roller coaster. TOSIN AJOSE writes.*

**E**VERYONE expects you to come into the New Year with so much purpose, power and passion. Enough to motivate your team and drive positive engagement within your organization. Sadly, business leaders sometimes come into the New Year exhausted, beat up from the disappointments of the previous year and some trepidation fueled by dire economic outlook from statisticians and economists who make headlines on all global media this time of year. In the case of Nigerian business leaders you may add; cost-of-doing business crisis, rising inflationary pressure and the anticipated slowdown and business disruption that typically precedes each election cycle; making it super difficult to drown the noise and hold a positive outlook for the new year.

To navigate this season, you need – Grit! Grit is a combination of purpose, conviction, commitment and Perseverance. Believe me, you need a healthy dose of each to thrive as a founder or an entrepreneur in this season.

### Be definite about your Purpose

As you navigate each layer of growth and each business cycle, let purpose be your guiding light. I like to define purpose as the “deeper why”. As a Founder, I am sure you established your “deeper why” before starting your business. The definiteness of purpose is necessary to fuel your passion in difficult times. It also makes it easy to submit to the lowliness and humility that some business seasons will demand of you.

### Conviction will keep you



### firmly rooted in the face of adversity

Conviction is the anchor that will keep you firmly rooted in the face of adversity; those times when you feel up and against the headwinds of life and business. Conviction will help you navigate negative predictions, naysayers, you cannot have depth in failures and temporary

setbacks with wisdom and tact. As I like to say, when conviction is loud it drowns the voice of opposition.

### Commitment will give you staying power to attain depth

Have you ever heard the saying: “Without commitment, anything”? Commitment is

staying power which is driven by purpose and conviction and the determination to give our absolute best to get the desired outcome. Commitment will demand that you continue to learn, re-learn and UN-learn, and that you remain humble enough to listen to divergent perspectives whilst acknowledging superior thinking and beliefs irrespective of its source.

### Persevere against all odds

Every Founder needs perseverance shots dispensed in single large doses every now and then. Without the capacity to self-motivate and to believe against all odds despite the realities of our actual circumstances, it is impossible to build anything viable or sustainable.

Life as a founder or entrepreneur is hardly the easiest path to tow. Having chosen the path, you must accept with equanimity; the curve balls that life and

business will throw your way and enjoy the process of navigating and overcoming the daily obstacles that come with the package. Grit, teaches us to stay positive whilst embracing the power of creativity and innovation in anchoring our focus on problem solving.

In a recent article I read, it was no surprise to find that psychologists have postulated now that Grit is a more accurate test for determining long term capacity to succeed in life, leadership and business – it is found to be more accurate than any of the highly regarded IQ (intelligence Quotient), EQ (Emotional Quotient) or SQ (Social Quotient).

As we advance into the New Year, remain committed to keeping your GQ (Grit Quotient) on 100% remembering that GQ must be abundant in any Entrepreneur's DNA.

**Source: Business day**

***“Without commitment, you cannot have depth in anything”?***

***Commitment is staying power which is driven by purpose and conviction and the determination to give our absolute best to get the desired outcome. Commitment will demand that you continue to learn, re-learn and UN-learn, and that you remain humble enough to listen to divergent perspectives whilst acknowledging superior thinking and beliefs irrespective of its source. Persevere against all odds. Every Founder needs perseverance shots dispensed in single large doses every now and then. Without the capacity to self-motivate and to believe against all odds despite the realities of our actual circumstances, it is impossible to build anything viable or sustainable.***





# My music is vibes

-Boylexxy

Continued from page 18

"So, I had this friend who lived with me and he was Togolese. He made music and I was always around listening. One day he asked me something in Pidgin and I helped him with it and that was how he started encouraging me to make music. I wasn't really interested then because I didn't like the way my voice sounded but that was how it started."

Boylexxy tells me the second was his Girlfriend he met in Atlanta who was an American Sierra Leonian. She was a big fan of Afrobeats and she encouraged him to come out of his shell and even perform his music.

Although he was making music in Atlanta, it took some time before Boylexxy became fully confident to share his music with a larger audience. He tells me he was friends with a couple of Nigerian artists who were curious about his music but to whom he was reluctant to share his music.

**"Before getting into the industry I was friends with Zlatan and Naira Marley and they asked me if I made music but I wasn't really at the point where I wanted to share my music. Then I also met Shizzy and we exchanged contact. Since then I have just kept going till I got to this stage."**

Boylexxy's decision to become a musician was inspired as much by those around him as it was by Nigerian megastars Wizkid and Davido. For Wizkid, he tells me he was naturally drawn to his sound and for Davido, he drew the inspiration that success was possible after seeing him move from Atlanta back to Nigeria.

**"I was naturally drawn to Wizkid and I really like his sound way back from Nigeria. I was also inspired by Davido because it was during the time I moved to America that he relocated to Nigeria and started making music. Davido was an Atlanta guy so it was an inspiration that it was possible to make music and be successful."**

Having been influenced by generations of artists and diverse classes of music, Boylexxy is an artist whose music can't be pigeonholed into one genre. He likens his type of music to a sound that can be felt and enjoyed by listeners irrespective of language and cultural barriers.

**"My music is Vibes,"** he says as he boldly describes his music. **"My sound can be enjoyed by everyone and it carries different**

**influences even though it's Afrobeats."**

As an emerging artist with a desire to connect with Nigerian listeners, Boylexxy tells me he tries to work with creatives who understand that music is an art and whose ego doesn't limit collaboration and growth.

**"Being an up-and-coming artist is not easy, especially as we are in an industry where there's a lot of egos and I also being General Lexxy can't bring myself down because I want to work with anybody,"** he says laughing. **"I try to surround myself with the right people and I'm grateful that I have people like my Girlfriend (Patricia), my mentor Shizzi, Phantom, and other great people around me."**

Boylexxy is looking to announce himself with his EP come 2023 and he tells me he has been working on the project for about 2 years.

Boylexxy tells me the name of the project which carries an element of his personality and he insisted I don't publish it. He also tells me there's no release date yet but he intends to be in Nigeria for the release.

**"There's no release date yet but I will definitely be in Nigeria when I drop the project because I want to connect with listeners and also put a face on the name."**

I ask him which artists he would love to work with and he tells me he loves Rema's sound and he would love to work with him. He also mentions Wizkid, Olamide, and Oxlade. In the international scene, Boylexxy is a big fan of Reggae and Dancehall and he will relish the chance to collaborate with Jamaicans **Skillibeng** and **Shensea**.

Boylexxy is an artist whose life and artistry are shaped by diverse realities which he combines for an interesting personality founded on originality. It's this originality and energy (Vibes) that he's seeking to convey to listeners across continents and cultures.

It has been a long time coming for the young man who grew up in the streets of Agege and Ogba and whose realities he took along to the United States. Having lived an interesting life soundtrack by a wide range of music, 2023 is the year he delivers the Vibes.

Source: Premium Time



# Where do the richest Americans live?

Continued from page 16

earning him the No. 26 spot on The Land Report's list of America's largest landowners last year. In terms of residences, he has a 165,000-acre ranch in West Texas, a waterfront house in Washington state, three linked apartments in Manhattan's Century Tower, and a 12,000-square-foot Beverly Hills estate that boasts Tom Cruise as a neighbor, according to Forbes.

His home at Medina, Washington, close to Amazon's headquarters, boasts 5.35 acres and about 29,000 square-foot of living space. Aside from the main home, there's also a caretaker's cottage and a 4,500-square-foot boathouse on Lake Washington.



**Warren Buffett**Worth: \$65.5 billion **Home:** Omaha, Nebraska

Although the shrewdest investor on earth holds multiple real estate investments, Mr. Buffett, 86, is known for living humbly.

His home sits on a corner in Omaha, Nebraska, which he bought in 1958 for \$31,500. Mr. Buffett has lived there ever since. The house, originally built in 1921, underwent several expansions to make it a cozy and comfortable 6,500-square-foot home for the man who has a net worth of over \$65.5 billion.



**Mark Zuckerberg**Worth: \$55.5 billion **Home:** Palo Alto, California

The youngest richest entrepreneur docks most of his wealth in schools, health and other philanthropies. His real estate portfolio include his home in Palo Alto and a 9.9-million pied-a-terre near Dolores Park in San Francisco.

Mr. Zuckerberg, 32, purchased his first Craftsman-style 5,000-square-foot home in Palo Alto in 2011 for \$7 million. He snapped up four of the houses surrounding his home in the following years for about \$43.8 million to better keep his privacy. But his plan to tear down and rebuild those four homes has been stalled.



**Larry Ellison**Worth: \$49.3 billion **Home:** Woodside, California

Oracle executive chairman Larry Ellison, 72, has an extensive real estate portfolio. He has bought up large parts of whole neighborhoods in Malibu and around Lake Tahoe. He owns a \$70-million Beechwood Mansion in Newport, Rhode Island; a garden villa in Kyoto, Japan; and 98% of the land of Lanai, Hawaii's sixth-largest island, which he purchased in 2012 for \$500 million, according to published reports.

His estate in Woodside, California, with an estimated value of \$110 million, is modeled after 16th-century Japanese architecture, complete with a man-made 2.3-acre lake.

Source: Mansion Global



# NEWS

## Governor explains why he wants second term

**A**DAMAWA State Governor Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri has in continuation of his political campaign told his supporters why he wants a second term in office.

On Thursday, the Governor was in Tola, Mayo Farrang and Mayo Belwa canvassing for votes. He assured the people of his resolve to provide them with basic social amenities.

He reminded the supporters how the administration has been fixing dilapidated hospitals and roads while the administration is doing well by helping to

*From GYANG  
PAM, Yola*

renovate schools. And pointed how they took over the payment of WAEC and NECO fees.

He assured the people that they will see more of him if he comes back a second time, adding that he plans to consolidate on his achievements in security, health, education, works and in other sectors.

Speaking at a well attended rally at Mayo Belwa town, Governor Fintiri told the crowd that already the award for the rehabilitation of the cottage hospital and

reconstruction of road is underway.

He also told the cheering crowd that arrangements have since been concluded for the construction of the road from Mararaban Tola to Binyeri constructed earlier by the regime of Late Abubakar Barde, a governor during the defunct Abubakar Barde regime in the former Gongola State.

Our correspondent reports that one of the highlights at the rally was the defection of supporters of former Governor Jibirilla Bindows to the PDP.

## Change of Name

AFINIKI	SAUKI	HARUNA
I, formerly known as <b>DANJUMA AFINIKI</b> , now wish to be known and addressed as <b>TURAKI AFINIKI BASIL</b> . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as <b>ANHURET SAUKI</b> , now wish to be known and addressed as <b>SAUKI ANWURET DARA</b> . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as <b>HARUNA LUKUMANU</b> , now wish to be known and addressed as <b>HARUNA LUKUMAN</b> . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.
AFINIKI	PANKSHIN	SPACE FOR SALE
I, formerly known as <b>PAULINA SHITTU</b> , now wish to be known and addressed as <b>PAULINA SHITTU GAUDE-JIWUL</b> . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as <b>PANSHIKA NENFOTMWA ELIZABETH</b> , now wish to be known and addressed as <b>PANKSHIN FOTMWA LOMSHAK</b> . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	



## KANAM LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL PLATEAU STATE

### INVITATION TO TENDER FOR EXECUTION OF VARIOUS PROJECTS IN KANAM LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

The Executive Chairman of Kanam Local Government Council, Hon. Dr. Dayyabu Garga on behalf of the executive, legislative councils and Tender Board of the council wishes to in line with the procurement Act of 2007, invite interested and reputable contractors or companies to submit for pre-qualification to tender for the executive of various projects indicated in the lots as follows:

- Kanam Local Government invites interested experience and reputable contractors to submit-Pre-qualification document for tender.
  - Renovation of GARGA PALACE
  - Renovation of RA'ANJHAR PALACE
  - Procurement of SOLAR LIGHT
  - Construction of Hydroform Prototype House
  - Construction of Civil Registration Centre
- Pre-qualification requirements
  - Evidence of registration with the Local Government
  - Evidence of registration with CAC
  - Evidence of successful execution of similar project
  - Evidence of value added Tax registration certificate any other information that will enhance the chance of the contractor.
- The submission of Pre-qualification and completed tender document should be returned on or before 7 days of the notice in spiral binding of three (3) copies address to the Executive Chairman Kanam Local Government Council.

**Note:** The Local Government reserves the right to reject any tender that does not meet its requirements.

**ADO B. ISHA  
DBPRS**

**For: Exe-Chairman,  
Kanam LGC.**



## KANKE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL PLATEAU STATE

### INVITATION TO TENDER FOR PROJECT CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLY

Kanke Local Government Council Chairman desires to undertake some projects in the area and hereby wishes to engaged the services of suitable qualified contractors for the following projects in the Local Government Area:

- Electrification of Nemel Community
- Remodeling of PHC Clinic Amper
- Remodeling of ICT Center at Kwal Kanke LGC
- Supply of vehicles
  - 5 no. of Sharon buses (model 2022)
  - Toyota Prado Jeep (full option) model 2020
- Landscaping of the LGC Secretariat Kanke at Kwal
- Earth work filling at Garram bridge
- Electrification of Chikan Community
- Electrification of Golten Community
- Supply and installation of transformer (33/415KVA) at Tiplik
- Construction of toilets for the school and market
- Construction of security outlet post
- Box culvert at Nenkong Community
- Box culvert at Kubut Community
- Equipping of medical facilities at PHC Tuwan
- Equipping of medical facilities at PHC Amper
- Equipping of medical facilities at PHC Garram

### Pre-qualification Requirements

- Evidence of Registration with the Corporate Affairs Commission
- Evidence of Tax clearance certificates for at least the last three (3) years
- Evidence of financial capability from a reputable commercial bank
- Evidence of technical know-how and good performances
- Value added Tax registration certificates
- Evidence of successful execution of similar project
- And any other information that will enhanced that chances of the contractor/company

### Collection of Tender

Since the pre-qualification and the lender stages are to run simultaneously, this and advertisement serves as a notification for both pre-qualification and tender interested contractors should apply and collection unpaid bills of qualifications and other details in respect the project from Kanke Local Government council. Department or Budget on payment of non- refundable fee of thirty thousand Naira (30,000) only.

Submission of pre-qualification and tender document submission of pre-qualification and complete tender document shall be returned or before seven (7) days from the date of this advertisement, sealed spiral bended three (3) copies addressed to the office of the Executive chairman, Kanke local Government Chairman Plateau state.

**Note:** Only short-listed contractors will be contacted

**Signed:**

**Mrs. Lami Dashe**

**Director Budget, Planning, Research and Statistics  
For: Executive Chairman Kanke LGC**



## NEWS

## PLSG to address PPC's predicament

By HOSEA NYAMLONG

**C**OMMISSIONER for Information and Communication, Plateau State, Hon. Dan Manjang has assured the Nigeria Union of Journalists, Plateau Publishing Corporation (NUJ PPC), of government's commitment to address the corporation's predicament.

Manjang stated this during a courtesy visit by the exco of the union in his office, J.D Gomwalk Secretariat last Thursday.

He commended the leadership of the corporation for sustaining the production of THE NIGERIA STANDARD and SUNDAY STANDARD through its hard copy and e-copy.

He added that despite the economic situation of the country, the corporation has broken even in informing the public.

According to him "the City Line Express Machine of the corporation is among the projects that would be commissioned before the expiration of the government. Manjang also disclosed that plans are underway to celebrate the



Manjang

50th anniversary of the corporation".

Earlier in a speech by the PPC NUJ Chairman, he solicited for government's intervention in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and partnership between the corporation and the Plateau Investment Property Company (PIPC).

He stressed that the corporation is lacking the manpower in its day to day

activities of the organization among others.

Lar pointed out that the union is planning for a press week activities within the year, which would involve veterans in the field of journalism, friends of the media. The goal is to tap their wealth of experience.

The chairman called on the government to look into their plight and find a lasting solution, in other to bring back the past glory of THE NIGERIA STANDARD.

From  
AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

**D**ANGOTE Cement Plc has graduated no fewer than 40 women in fashion design in Kogi State.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony of the skills acquisition programme recently, at Obajana, the Plant Director, of Dangote Cement Plc, Obajana, Mr. JV Gungune, said the skill acquisition scheme was meant to support the government in its job creation efforts.

Mr. Gungune said even though the job creation scheme aptly fits into the company's vision and mission, it cannot do it alone, nor can it employ everyone, added that the skill acquisition programme is another way of creating employment for the people of Kogi State.

The Plant Director said the beneficiaries should count themselves lucky to have been selected and trained in the programme, even as he urged them to ensure that the skills and the equipment provided by the company are put into proper use.

Speaking, the Head of Social Performance, Dangote Cement Plc, Mr. Wakeel Olayiwola, said the empowerment is one in the series of several other interventions among host

## Dangote Cement graduates 40 women in fashion design



Dangote

communities being executed by Dangote Cement Plc across Africa.

Mr. Olayiwola expressed optimism that the graduates will create a chain of other graduates under them through apprenticeship, therefore bolstering the job status of communities around Kogi state.

General Manager, of Special Duties, Mr. Ademola Adeyemi said 10 women were selected each from Oyo, Iwaa, Apata, and Obajana, which make up both the plant and the mining communities. Mr. Adeyemi said the skills programme was in partnership with the National Directorate of Employment (NDE). On his part, NDE's Kogi State Coordinator, Mr. Abubakar Zakari, said the participants received intensive training for three months, just as he congratulated the company

for sponsoring what he referred to as a laudable programme for women.

The traditional rulers of the various communities commended the company for what they described as a huge intervention.

His Royal Highness, the Olu-Apata, Oba Dr. Frederick D.O. Balogun, expressed appreciation and pledged his community's continuing support for the company.

The Bajana of Obajana Idowu Isenibi said the "joy of the community knows no bound while urging beneficiaries to make judicious use of the skills acquired from the programme.

Speaking on behalf of the beneficiaries, Mrs. Titilayo Onimola, 33, commended the President of the Dangote Group, Aliko Dangote, while praying for God to continue to support him and make his businesses

## Governor flags re-election campaign

From  
ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

**G**OVERNOR Bala Mohammed of Bauchi State has re-assured citizen of his commitment to consolidate on his achievements if given the mandate for the second term to serve as governor again.

Governor Bala was at Gamawa Local Government Area of Bauchi State where the whole town stood still on Thursday 12th January, 2023 when he flagged off his re-election campaign amidst a huge crowd of PDP party faithful that thronged Gamawa Event Square to witness the commencement of the event.

Governor Bala in a delightful mood said he was humbled by the demonstration of love exhibited by the people of Gamawa and his other supporters which he described as "good omen" to kick start the campaign.

The Governor said since assumption of office in 2019, his administration swung

into action towards provision of improved basic health care, education, water supply, sanitation and hygiene, infrastructural development and security to protect lives and property of the good people of Bauchi State.

"To the best of our ability, with the scarce resources available to us, we were able to achieve appreciable level of our campaign promises in the state".

According to Governor Bala "here i am again seeking for your support to elect us back in order to consolidate on what we have started".

He told the gathering that at the moment, his administration is focused on turning the fortunes of the state by creating enabling environment to make it an investment-friendly state through its people oriented

development.

The Governor also attributed the successes recorded to the tremendous support the administration is receiving from traditional institutions, religious and community leaders, groups and individuals.

In their separate remarks, the state PDP Chairman Alhaji Hamza Koshe Akuyam and the Director General of the Governor's 2023 Gubernatorial Campaign Council, Hon. Faruq Mustapha, X-rayed leadership qualities of the governor, calling on the

electorate to ensure that PDP emerges victorious during the election.

The Governor had earlier visited palaces of District Heads of Udubo and Gamawa to seek for their blessings and support.

## Mass Communication Dept holds first lecture series

From  
AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

**T**HE Department of Mass Communication, Prince Abubakar Audu University (PAAU) Anyigba, is set to hold its first public lecture series with Dr

Gabriel Alhassan Ottah, the Special Adviser to Kogi Governor on Information and Communications, as the Guest Lecturer.

A statement from the

Public Relations Unit of the university, indicates that the first public lecture series is scheduled to hold on Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at Prof. Francis Idachaba's Lecture Theatre I, by 10:00am prompt.

According to the statement "The Guest Lecturer, Dr Ottah, will be delivering the lecture with the topic: "Citizen Journalism and Fake News: Implications for Nigeria Democracy."

"The hosts are Prof. Steve Metiboba, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences; and Dr Chris Attah, the HOD and Chairman Public Lecture Series, Mass Communication Dept.; while the Chief host is Prof. Marietu Tenuche, the Vice Chancellor of PAAU.

"The general public is hereby invited to grace the all-important occasion", the statement concludes.

## JAMB commences form sales for 2023

**J**oint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) have commenced the sale of forms for the 2023 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) and Direct Entry (DE) for prospective applicants.

According to JAMB, prospective candidates for the 2023 UTME can now get their forms and begin registration from Saturday, January 14, 2023, and the board expects to close the sale of forms and registration of candidates on Tuesday, February 14.

Meanwhile, the umpire board has also commenced the sale of Direct Entry (DE) application documents in Nigeria and foreign centres.

Besides, direct entry applicants from polytechnics and colleges of education can obtain their forms also from

centres close to them.

Candidates applying for the entrance examination into the various tertiary institutions in Nigeria are admonished to keep in mind that PIN vending for the UTME examination will also end on Tuesday, February 14, while the registration portal will be shut down on Friday, February 17.

This process is also applicable to foreign students at the accredited JAMB registration centre.

Moreover, candidates have been admonished to open a new email or have a valid existing email account before starting the process as part of the requirements to sit for the examination.

For the general entry candidates seeking admission into the university, polytechnic and college of

education, are required to have at least five (5) credit grades in their O'level with English and Mathematics compulsory to qualify them to sit for the examination.

However, the direct entry candidates are to obtain a minimum of five (5) credit grades in their O'level with English and Mathematics compulsory as well as a distinction or upper credit in their polytechnic or college of education.

In the same vein, the general and direct entry candidates are allowed to use not more than two sittings of their Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) certificate to qualify them for the examination ahead of the 2023 academic session across all tertiary institutions in the country.



Bala



## NEWS

## Police nabs Pastor over self-kidnapping

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

**T**HE Plateau State Command of the Nigerian Police Force, has uncovered the nefarious act by one Pastor Albarka Bitrus Sukuya 'm' of Jenta Apata Jos, who has on several occasions staged his kidnap alongside his cohorts to collect ransom from sympathizing members of his congregation.

This came in a press statement signed by the Command's Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Alfred Alabo, on behalf of the State Commissioner of Police and made available to SUNDAY STANDARD in Jos, the state capital last Wednesday.

The statement said, "Sequel to his spurious kidnaps of 14/11/2022 and 30/11/2022 where the sum of four hundred thousand Naira (N400, 000) and two hundred thousand Naira (N200, 000) were respectively paid by his sympathizers as ransom for his release, the incidents triggered suspicion.

"Through credible intelligence, the clergyman was invited by the DPO Nassarawa Gwong Police Station, CSP Musa Hassan and investigation commenced immediately. In the course of investigation, it was established that the suspect has been conspiring with his gang to stage his kidnap and fraudulently collect ransom.

On interrogation, the suspect confessed to have committed the crime and mentioned the following persons as his accomplices: (1) Baruk Mailale, (2) Nathaniel Bitrus both males of Yelwan Zangam village of Jos-



Alkali

North and (3) Aye (surname yet to be known) 'male of Jalingo, Taraba State respectively', it stated.

According to the statement, the suspect further disclosed that on 04/01/2023, he set ablaze two motor vehicles (a Mercedes Benz and a Toyota) and a bicycle parked at ECWA Bishara 3 Jenta Apata premises belonging to his colleagues (his senior pastors) who he alleged one of them hates him.

However, the police of Nassarawa Gwong Division, Jos-north LGA has arrested two (2) of the suspects namely: Baruk Mailale and Nathaniel Bitrus, while efforts have been intensified to arrest Aye, the third suspect.

The Command, therefore, appealed to the members of the public to be watchful and report any suspicious happenings around them or within their area on time, as this would greatly help in arresting criminals as well as reduce and control crime and criminality in the state.

**T**HE Police Command in Nasarawa State has rescued 30 kidnapped victims in an operation in Toto Local Government Area (LGA) of the state.

DSP Ramhan Nansel, Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) in the state, disclosed this in a statement made available to newsmen on Friday in Lafia.

The PPRO said the victims were rescued after operatives responded to information that some people had been held hostage in a forest in the local government area.

"On Thursday Jan. 12, we received information that kidnappers were sighted at Sardauna Forest of Toto LGA, where they held some people hostage.

"In reaction to the unwholesome development, a joint operation was carried out by operatives of the Command in collaboration with Miyetti Allah Vigilante Group of Toto Local Government Area.

"The kidnappers were trailed to their enclave at Sardauna Forest. On sighting the operatives, the criminals dispersed in disarray deep into the forest.

"Consequently, 30

## Police rescue 30 kidnapped victims in Nasarawa



Sule

kidnapped victims, comprising 20 males and 10 females, were rescued unhurt and taken to the hospital for medical examination and shall be reunited with their family after debriefing," the police spokesperson.

Nansel further explained that Maiyaki Muhammed-Baba, Commissioner of Police (CP) in the state, had ordered continuous combing of the forest.

He also said that the CP had applauded the police

operatives of the command and Miyetti Allah Vigilante Group for a job well done.

Nansel said the CP assured members of the public that the operation would be sustained in order to sanitise the general area of criminal elements.

He, therefore, appealed to the public to volunteer information about criminals and criminal activities in their areas for prompt action. (NAN).

## Court restrain lawmaker from contesting

From  
GYANG PAM, YOLA

**A** High Court sitting in Yola the Adamawa State capital has stopped the member representing Adamawa Northern Senatorial district, Senator Ishaku Cliff Abbo from participating in the 2023 general

elections.

The court presided over by Justice Danladi Mohammed, said Senator Abbo Cliff is sacked

because he is not entitled to seek re-election since he had been expelled from his ward.

Justice Danladi, held that the embattled Senator and APC are bound by the resolution of Mubi

North LG Executive dated 7th October, 2022, which expelled him, saying that he is not entitled to enjoy any right or privilege accorded to APC members.

Our Correspondent recalled that Mubi North Local Government Executives of the party had on the 7th October, 2022, approved the expulsion of the Senator as recommended by the party's Disciplinary Committee.

Similarly, the court further restrained APC under which the Senator is seeking re-election from recognising him as its candidate, saying that he cannot validly be the candidate of the party in the forthcoming general election.

It further restrained Senator Abbo from parading himself as candidate of the party in the Northern Senatorial District in the forthcoming general election.

Justice Danladi, declared that the court is satisfied with the procedure of expelling him (Abbo) from the party, saying that the Senator was accorded opportunity to defend himself but deliberately refused to do so.

He said that the action of the plaintiffs in suing the Senator is not an internal affair of the party as claimed, and that they have locus standi to institute the action against him since they are registered members of the party.

It could be recalled that two APC members, Abdullahi Suleiman and Yusha'u Usman of Kolere and Sabon Layi Wards, Mubi North, respectively, sued the Senator and sought for an interpretation regarding his status in APC.

In his reaction, Counsel to the Plaintiffs, Barrister Abubakar Ali, appreciated the court, saying that the judgement will serve as deterrence to erring members of the party who claim to be above the party and the law.

However, counsel to the defendant, Barrister E. O.Odo promised to brief his client about the decision of the court, saying if he agrees, they will test the judgement".

## Taraba varsity crisis: Lecturer suspended, fees increased

From  
VICTOR GAI,  
Jalingo

**F**OR getting involved in Monday's demonstration, the management of Taraba State University has suspended a lecturer and announced increment in school fees.

In a letter addressed to the Dean Faculty of Arts and signed by registrar of the university, the lecturer was suspended for participating in the demonstration.

"The attention of management has been drawn to the fact that you participated in an unauthorized demonstration that disrupted the first semester examinations for the 2021/2022 academic session. This act is against the laid down rules and regulations of the university.

"In light of the above, management wishes to inform you that you are hereby placed on indefinite suspension without salary until the Staff Misconduct and Disciplinary Committee investigates your case and advised management appropriately. To this end you are to handover all university properties under your custody to the Dean, Faculty of Arts with immediate effect," the letter reads.

Meanwhile, students of the university have decided to sue the university for increasing school fees.

A memo signed by the Confidential Secretary to Registrar of the institution, Sebastian Anthony, indicated that indigenes from the Social and Management Sciences who hitherto pay 44, 000 naira per session will now pay 70,000 naira per session while

non indigenes who pay 68,000 naira per session will now pay 90,000 naira per session.

A 300 level student of the Taraba State University, Salisu Waziri who spoke to news men said the agrieved group of students in the institution will by next week file a public compliant suit against the school management and the Taraba state government for increasing the school fees without consulting the Students Union Government (SUG).

He said over two hundred students have signed the suit form seeking the court to stop the management Taraba State University from implementing the recent increase of school fees without justification and for the court to compel the Taraba State Government to pay the backlog of ten months salaries owed lecturers of the institution which the students believe is the reason for the sudden increase of the school fees.

"It would be recalled called that on Monday 9th January 2023, our students staged a peaceful demonstration to support our lecturers who have not been paid their ten months salary by the state government, which led to the extension of the first semester examination from 9th January to 30 January 2023. To our greatest dismay, two days after, we were greeted with a sudden hundred percent increment of our school fees without any justification as to why the school management is increasing the school fees.

"We do not need a prophet to interpret the handwriting on the wall, we believe that the state government have failed in its responsibilities and it is shifting it to the students to bear the pains by forcing the school management to increase the tuition fees. If the decision to increase the school fees is the outcome of the Council meeting held in the December 2022, why is the management releasing the the information just now after the students protested, and why will the school management make increment without consulting the Students Union Government (SUG)?

"Also, the payment of just 41percent of September 2022 salary to lecturers by the state government after the students protested indicate that the government of Taraba State can no longer manage the

running of the state university hence the decision to force the school management to increase the school fees without justification. We believe if the government had paid the ten months salaries they owed the lecturers, we would not have this increment, that is why we pray the court to compel the Taraba State Government to pay our lecturers their salary," he said.

Also, the Clerk of Students Union Assembly, Shedrack Gani said the Assembly did not receive any communication from the school management as regards to the increment of the school fees.

"As a legislator representing the students from Peace Conflict Department, the news of the increment of school fees came to us a surprise. As a Clerk of the 9th Assembly, we were not informed by the



Ishaku



## NEWS

## Court to deliver judgment challenging powers of KATROMA

From  
**AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja**

**J**USTICE Clement Kereke of Kogi High Court, Lokoja, on Friday fixed Jan. 27 to deliver judgment in a suit challenging the powers of the Kogi Traffic Management Authority (KATROMA).

Kereke fixed the date after taking the addresses of both the plaintiff and the defendants in the case filed before him on July 11, 2022.

The plaintiff, an Abuja-based Lawyer, Mr Martin Atojoko, had sued the state agency and joined the state House of Assembly, the Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice and the state government as second, third and fourth defendants in the matter.

Atojoko prayed the court to compel the defendants to pay him N10 million as general and exemplary damages for inter-alia the first defendant's unlawful and illegal action of detaining and impounding his car.

The plaintiff had told the court in his originating Summon that on June 22, 2022, he was stopped by officers of KOTRAMA over an expired driver's licence and his Toyota Corolla car was impounded.

"My lord, I only got my car back the next day, after paying a fine of N10,000, an action which is but a contravention of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) Law of 2007," he alleged. Atojoko prayed the court to issue an order declaring that the second defendant cannot make laws empowering the first defendant to exercise the powers of the Federal Road Safety Corps (Establishment) Act, 2007 in inspecting the driver's license of motorists, issued by the FRSC and codifying same in Kogi Road Traffic Administration and Vehicle Inspection Law, 2018."

"A declaration that all the provisions of the Kogi Road Traffic Administration and Vehicle Inspection Law, 2018, empowering the first defendant to exercise the powers of the FRSC in the inspection of the driver's license of motorists is invalid, illegal, unlawful, null and void ab initio.

"An order that the KOTRAMA cannot fine the plaintiff and impound his vehicle with registration No. 2T1BU4EE9AC312480, without first trying him and finding him guilty before a court of competent jurisdiction.

"An order that the act of the first defendant in impounding the vehicle and fining him without powers to do so is invalid, illegal, unlawful, unconstitutional, null and void, ab initio," he pleaded. Responding, in his final written address, Mr B.O. Obeneye, counsel to all the defendants, debunked the



**Bello**

claims of the plaintiff and said that the agency acted within the ambit of the law that established it. "My lord, the House of Assembly Law that established KOTRAMA is not a duplication of FRSC Law of 2007.

"The first defendant's main function is control and management of traffic and verify vehicles that move or carry goods within Kogi.

"In other words, they are stationed and carry out their duties on Kogi government roads, and not that of the

Federal Government.

"Even if the KOTRAMA Law of 2018 is in conflict with that of FRSC, the corps could have instituted an action to challenge the authority of KOTRAMA.

"We urge your lordship to so hold that the action off KOTRAMA has not contravened the Kogi Law or any other law, and the claimant was given a summary fine of N10,000, all in accordance with the Section 1(3) of the Law.

"In conclusion, we urge your lordship to dismiss the case for lack of merit," Obeneye

## Taraba NNPP kick as Kwankwaso endorses candidate

From **VICTOR GAI, Jalingo**

**T**HE New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) in Taraba State is in fresh crisis due to the endorsement of a multi-billionaire business mogul, A.A Liman as senatorial candidate for Taraba North in Bauchi on Thursday.

Reports have it that at the North-east zonal rally in Bauchi, the Presidential candidate of the NNPP, Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso handed over the flag to A.A Liman instead of Haruna Bako, who is said to be the legally recognized



**Kwankwaso**

senatorial candidate for Taraba North.

Speaking with **THE NIGERIA STANDARD**, an NNPP stalwart and House of Representatives candidate for Karim Lamido, Lau, Ardo Kola, Stephen Othaniel, said the endorsement of A.A Liman was an exercise in futility as Haruna Bako is the legally recognized candidate for Taraba North.

"The issue is that Liman contested in APC. He even went to court and finally someone is holding the ticket. He is still alive. He is Mr. Haruna Bako.

"The issue of who receives the flag is different from who receives the ticket. You have the flag and somebody has the ticket. They are two different things. If you go to INEC now, you will see Haruna Bako. So for me, it is an exercise that doesn't have a meaning," he stated.

He disclosed that both Liman and Bako were in Bauchi for the event and wondered why Kwankwaso had to do what he did. He however expressed confidence in Kwankwaso resolving the issue even as he said Bako will approach the court for redress.

"The presidential candidate is not greater than the law of the land... somebody with a good reputation like Kwankwaso needs to go back and look at the whole thing before taking a critical decision because I know Kwankwaso is a straight

From  
**JOHN FWAH, Kaduna**

**I**T was a sad weekend for the entire Kaduna Archdiocese Catholic community at the weekend just a week after the New Year with the celebration of feast of Epiphany when properties worth over N500 million was destroyed in a fire outbreak which occurred at Saint Peters Minor Seminary, Katari in Kagarko LGA of Kaduna State.

The rector of the school, Rev. Fr. Sati Edward disclosed this at the school premises while on-the-spot assessment tour of the facilities with newsmen. However, he said the school has not been in session for over two years due to insecurity.

"Around 12 midnight, I got a call that the hostels of the seminary were on fire. I immediately put a call to the Archbishop to let him know of the incident. At that time, I was in Kaduna town.

"Immediately I put off the call, I rushed to the seminary, at that time the youth of the area were already there trying to put off the fire but it was so serious that there was nothing they could do. The Archbishop later came, he said.

"For over two years, the students have not been there in the school because of insecurity. If they were there, perhaps it wouldn't have happened or it would've been

## Over N500m property gutted by fire at seminary



**El-Rufai**

put off by the students", he lamented.

He also said people that were living around the school environment have packed and moved to main town because they were told that the place was no longer safe. Adding that if they were around, the incident would've been prevented too.

According to him, a number of the blocks of the school buildings were seriously ravaged by the fire which sources were still unknown to them. "We lost four blocks, 2 hostels, the laboratory blocks

and host of others earlier estimated at N100 million but later discovered to be worth N500 million.

The Kaduna Archdiocese Education Secretary, Mr. John .Ewoye who was also in company of Fr. Edward described the incident as shocking.

"The entire diocese is still in shock. It is like from from frying pan to fire", he said. He explained that the diocese decided to relocate the students to other seminaries in order not to risk their lives because of insecurity only to hear about the fire incident.

forward person. He would not allow his party to lose out," he added.

Meanwhile, the NNPP would

have to contend with formidable forces in the PDP and APC for the Taraba North Senatorial ticket. They are:

incumbent senator, Senator Shuaibu Lau of the PDP and former acting governor, Sani Abubakar Danladi of the APC.

## Widows, vulnerable benefit from philanthropic gesture

From  
**ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi**

**A**BOUT 500 widows and vulnerable women in Bogoro Local Government Area of Bauchi State have benefitted from a philanthropic gesture of Bulus Iliya Foundation for Development.

The Foundation is the brainchild of a Bauchi-based philanthropist and a House of Assembly candidate to represent Bogoro constituency in the state House of Assembly under the umbrella of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Mr. Bulus Iliya.

Iliya recently distributed over 1,000 of 10kg bags of rice worth over N1.5million to the widows and other vulnerable women in addition to N1,000 as transportation fare.

Speaking during the distribution of the support items to the widows and other women in Bogoro, headquarters of Bogoro LGA of the state, Iliya said the Foundation was established not to acquire wealth for itself, but to give back to the society by caring for the less privileged persons in the society such as widows and other vulnerable women.

Iliya, who was an aide to the



**Bala**

immediate-past Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon Yakubu Dogara, said: "I have been doing this philanthropic gesture even before I came out to aspire for this position. So this is not something new."

According to him, "I am not doing this on the basis of my party, APC, because not all the widows and other women gathered here are in the APC; there are others in other political parties. And I don't discriminate on the basis of party."

"You will notice that I did not shout the APC slogan during the distribution of the items because I do not want any of

them who belong to other political parties to feel offended. This is a philanthropic gesture."

Iliya added that: "In the previous years, the Foundation distributed clothes but this time around, we changed based on the current situation in the country-the people are hungry and need food."

He charged the beneficiaries to make proper use of the items, feed their families for the little period it will last, saying: "Eat the rice and have strength to pray for peace in Bogoro, Bauchi State and Nigeria. Pray for peaceful conduct of the 2023 general



## SUNDAY MAGAZINE



## Nigeria : 2022 in retrospect, 2023 in perspective

*Continued from page 10*

use campaign events to spew invective and spread falsehoods about Obi.

Hear him: "Recently for example there was a false narrative being spread nationwide that Mr. Peter Obi is against the production of oil in the North, noting could be farther than the truth. Peter Obi has repeatedly stated at various local and international fora that, the greatest physical asset of Nigeria is the vast rich land in the North and declared his commitment as a visionary transformative leader to exploit same for the overwhelming benefit of the Nigerian people. To the architect of 'consumption to production', oil in the North means more revenue for development, more jobs and opportunities. Earlier attempts to discredit the Obi's candidacy through fabricated allegation of demolition of mosques, internal deportation of Northerners, issuance of ID cards to Northerners, and ethnic hostilities were all conclusively proven to be false and without basis". (**Vanguard** Friday,

December 2, 2022).

Needless to say, such mudslinging are also rearing their heads in the other major parties. Recently, Oshiomhole, Atiku/Okowa Campaign Organization were at war over the forthcoming presidential poll. Oshiomhole, who is a chieftain of the ruling All Progressives Congress, APC, had in an interview on Channels Television described the PDP presidential candidate as no match to the APC Presidential Candidate for the 2023 election.

Oshiomhole who is also the Deputy Director General of Tinubu/Shettima Presidential Campaign Organisation said the main opposition PDP was a house divided against itself, owing to the row between the party and five of its governors known as Integrity Group. Hear Oshiomhole: "PDP is a house divided against itself and the real damage being done to the reputation of the PDP candidate, Atiku Abubakar is that governors, not unknown qualities, who had never decamped from

PDP who could be called PDP indigenes, have spoken to the fact that you cannot trust the PDP candidate, Atiku Abubakar and therefore they withdrew from the Campaign Council."

In a swift reaction the Atiku/Okowa Presidential Campaign organization dismissed the Deputy Director-General of the Tinubu/Shettima Presidential Campaign organization, Mr. Adams Oshiomhole as an unstable and false-hearted character who should be disregarded by Nigerians. Spokespersons of Atiku/Okowa campaign, Kola Ologbonidiyan said the APC ex-National Chairman's remarks about Atiku were reckless and unbecoming.

With all these altercation from the major contenders in the 2023 presidential, they must apply caution in their utterances. Anything to the contrary is capable of raising tempers amongst supporters of the various political parties.

Should that happen, it will turn out to be a recruiting camp for political thugs and institutionalised thuggery

and political violence. Already, the National Security Adviser (NSA), Major General Babagana Monguno (Rtd) had raised alarm over political violence calling on politicians to rein in their thugs. He had also promised to deal with thugs and sponsors of thuggery. He said the government was not unaware of the unfortunate and despicable happenings.

And for the conduct of the National Population Census, needless to say, it is one important exercise in the life of every nation. Census is very pivotal as it gives direction in terms of general development and infrastructures and social amenities like roads, health facilities, schools etc. Since 1963 when Nigeria conducted its first Census after independence, the exercise has always been trailed by controversy, if not outright crisis.

Meanwhile, it is unacceptable that after over six decades since independence, Nigeria is yet to know the exact number of its citizens. Though pundits are quick to argue that no

country can say the exact number of its population, it is plausible to have a near accurate projection. Nigerian census has been enmeshed in controversy because of both religious and regional considerations. Where everybody seems to claim to be in the majority.

Whereas census is essential for planning, we in Nigeria have reduced it to project various sentiments. Indeed, no reasonable government can effectively plan without having the statistics of its people. It is more or less a *sin quo non*. Therefore we as a people must have a rethink and change of mind towards the exercise. Another opportunity has now presented its self in 2023. Can we have it right this time around? It is an opportunity that we must cease and make the best use of.

As we face this two important challenges amongst other several challenges carried over from 2022, we as a people must be wary of unpatriotic and unscrupulous politicians who always take Nigerians for a ride. Enough is enough!



## METRO-FOCUS

# When Christmas was celebrated low keyed

By HOSEA NYAMLONG,  
KWOOPNAAN WILSON BAKO  
and MICHAEL SHANE MANCHA

**C**HRISTMAS day is usually celebrated with fun fair as Christians relish the day, which they regard as the most important in the year. Some go as far as inviting friends and well-wishers to dinner while others visit places of interest after church services etc.

Most families that live in cities travel to the villages where their grandparents, older and younger relatives live. Others also hold community or family meetings since it is usually the time they can easily get everyone home. In Plateau State, most cultural festivals take place at this period. Festivals like Bit Goemai.

To a large extent, It is normally a period of huge festivities where neighbours, friends and family members share gift items, food and good wishes all in the spirit of Christmas.

However, the 2022 Christmas was different compared to other years, considering the prevailing economic situation of the country that dampened the joy of the season. This has denied many the usual colourful celebration.

METRO FOCUS observed that economically, most Nigerians are struggling with the cost of living. It has escalated to an unprecedented level just as the citizens purchasing power has continued to plummet day by day.

Notwithstanding, the recurring fuel scarcity, which has continued to push cost of transportation up and its attendant effect of further hiking the prices of goods and services in the country.

METRO Focus correspondents in their usual practice went round the city centre of Jos metropolis and



reported that citizens are indeed becoming more creative in managing situation. Findings revealed some cost-cutting measures and strategies most Nigerians are employing in ensuring that the harsh economy does not rob them of the fun in the celebration of the festivity and thereafter.

Among others that METRO FOCUS engaged in a conversation were Mr. Johnson Omoh, a business man who said that citizens should understand that Christmas celebration goes beyond eating rice and chicken but to always

remember to thank God for the gift of life.

Although living condition is tough no doubt, but citizens should learn to live within their means because there are other responsibilities to take care of after the festivities.

Mr. Bawa Tati recalled his previous Christmas celebration was fun and eventful. There were many exchange of cards, giveaway items, relaxation centres were filled up and Christmas packages were given to customers by many organizations through its end of year promo sales.

Unfortunately, last year's

Christmas, a lot of people couldn't afford to eat because of the harsh economy that contributed to high cost of goods and services in the market.

He lamented that he was not able to buy new clothes for his children, let alone to buy food stuff. In his estimation, the celebration was done in a low keyed manner, which is not bad.

One Mrs. Martha said she could not travel to her village due to the scarcity of fuel that has affected the transport fare unreasonably and beyond the reach of the common citizens.

A transporter who did not want his

name be in print said that many Nigerians who planned to travel during the festive period for Christmas and New Year could not, expressing doubts over the rising insecurity and the unsafe roads across the country.

In the South, most roads are bedevilled by kidnapping, armed robbery, and banditry, while in the North, abductions are added to terrorism.

Some commuters, who spoke with METRO FOCUS recounted their harrowing experiences plying Nigerian roads as well as their fears before and after the festive period. Many citizens wished to travel but for the fear of the unknown.

Citizens are no longer safe in their country. Some of these roads are Abuja-Kaduna road, Okene-Lokoja road, Benin-Ore road, Sokoto-Gusau road, Kano-Katsina road and Akure-Akoko road among other are death traps.

Similarly, following the suspension of the prolonged nationwide strike declared by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Nigerians whose children are in public universities in the country have extra cause to be worried about celebrating the Christmas with their families, with many still battling to meet the expenses associated with the reopening and resumption of schools etc.

To this extent, many Nigerians believed that citizens can still have a colourful and fun-filled yuletide in spite of the hardship in the country only when we learn to live within our means.

Early planning is the best option in other to have a better celebration in 2023. It will be wise to follow the advise that went viral on social media platforms. 'You don't have to travel to celebrate Christmas. Remember, Jesus was not born in your village'. And you don't have to kill cow to celebrate Christmas. The celebration must take place whether you eat cow or not.





SUNDAY PEOPLE

LALONG COMMISSIONS SHENDAM MARIOTTE HOTEL

Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (CON) last year commissioned the Shendam Mariotte Hotel, Shendam LGA



Governor Lalong in a handshake with the DG, ITF, Sir Joseph Ari with the MD, Efan Hospitality Group (left)



Governor Lalong, assisted by the MD, HRH Miskoom Martins Shaldas III and the Executive Chairman, Shendam LGC, Hon. Alex Miskoom Naantuam cutting the tape to open the Shendam Mariotte Hotel



Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong CON, shaking hands with Sir. Richard Adidi, Fr. Joseph Hoomsuk Ahmadu on arrival



MD, Efan Hospitality Group (middle) conducting the special guest and others round facilities during the commissioning ceremony



Sir Joseph Ari (left) putting heads together with Governor Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State



From left are, Governor Lalong, Executive Chairman of Shendam LGC, Hon. Alex Miskoom Naantuam and the Chief of Staff government House, Hon. Noel Dongjur



Sir Richard Adidi (left) and Lady Francisca Adidi, Sunday Editor of The Nigeria Standard and others at the ceremony



Chairman of Shendam LGC, Hon. Alex Miskoom Naantuam on arrival at the venue

Photos: DANLADI DUK





**Road Runner**  
 Michael Agada  
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 SAFER TOGETHER

## What you should note during night driving

Make sure your lights, indicators, reflectors and number plate lighting are clear and in good working order to enable you see clearly and be seen at all times. A clean windscreen is of equal importance when driving at night.

Drive at a speed that allows you to stop within the distance covered by your lights. Assuming good driving conditions on an unlit road, the headlights of a typical car let you see for about 100 metres. Dipped lights will let you see for about 30 metres and a car travelling at 100 km/h will cover this distance in approximately a second. Keep your headlights adjusted properly. If they are out of line they may dazzle oncoming traffic, even when dipped.

Even with the best headlights, you can see less at night than during the day. Pedestrians and unlit bicycles are extremely difficult to see in the dark, particularly if you have to deal with the glare of oncoming lights.

When to use headlights  
 If conditions require you to use headlights to drive safely, you **must** use them. Use dipped headlights at night or main beam headlights as appropriate. When in doubt turn on your full lights to see clearly and clear your doubts. Ensure that the red lights and the number plate lighting at the back of your vehicle are working properly.

Reflections may help you confirm if they are but the sure way is to turn them on, alight, go to the back and check for yourself. In the case of reverse and brake lights, you can get someone to help you check while you engage your reverse gear and press your brake pedal. That way you can be sure your rear lights are functional. As for your indicators if any of the sides blinks too rapidly it is an indication that either the rear or front indicator is not working.

Use dipped lights: just after the beginning (dusk) and before the end (dawn) of lighting up hours, as long as they are needed to let you see clearly, when stopped in traffic, in built-up areas where there is good street lighting, on continuously lit roads outside built-up areas, when following behind another vehicle,

where there is dense fog, falling snow or heavy rain, when daylight is fading, and generally, to avoid inconveniencing other traffic.

It is good practice to use dipped headlights or dim/dip lights, where fitted, instead of only sidelights (parking lights) in built-up areas where there is good street lighting. Use **main beam** headlights in situations, places and times outside of those listed above.

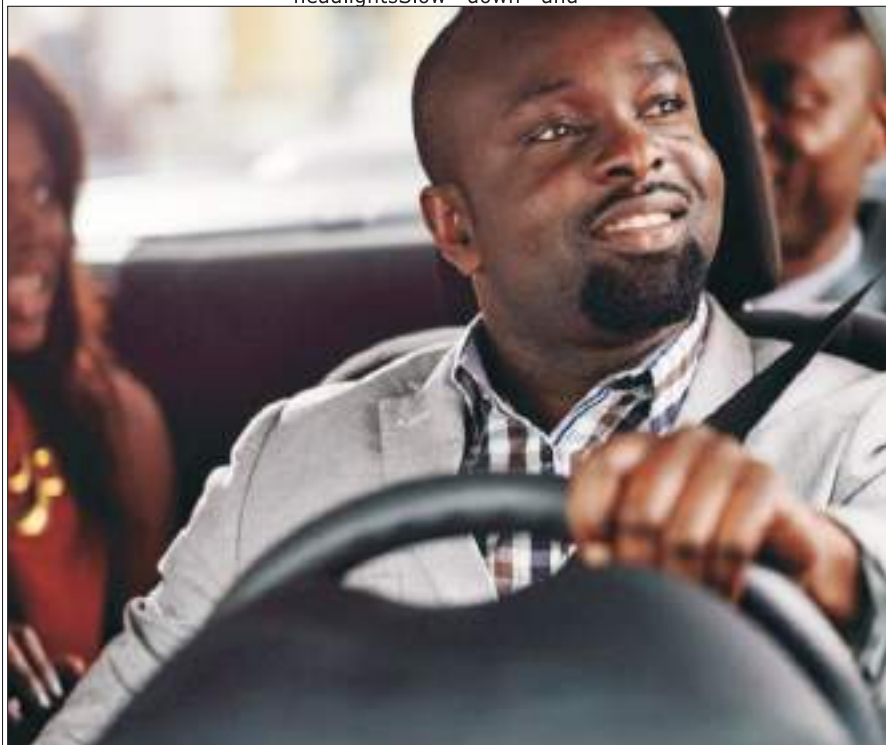
Use **fog lights** only during dense fog and falling snow. You **must** turn them off at all other times.

What to do if you are dazzled by another vehicle's headlights  
 Slow down and

stop if necessary. Always watch for pedestrians or cyclists on your side of the road. If the dazzle is from an oncoming vehicle, avoid it by looking towards the verge (edge of your side of the road) until the vehicle has passed. If on the other hand the dazzle is from a vehicle behind you and reflected in your mirror, operate the night-driving mode on the mirror.

At night, your peripheral vision is not as sharp as it could be and darkness makes it more difficult to gauge distance and movement. From safety perspective, it is important that lights are switched on as soon as dusk appears. That way you will see more and be seen sooner. Researches have shown that crashes are relatively low in areas with policies of driving on dimmed lights during daytime hours. If dazzled by oncoming vehicle's lights, do not be tempted to dazzle back as two wrongs do not make a right. Instead do the needful by heeding to the guide given earlier. You can reduce the glare by concentrating on your side of the road.

The condition of your vehicle is of great importance. If you notice a reduction in the strength of your lights or if they go dim, clean the outer glass. A film kilometres in muddy conditions dulls the lights more than you might imagine. It is also important to have lights properly focused and windscreen well cleaned. Cracks or scratches may mean you should consider replacing them.



## NEWS

### Nigeria, Spain deepen partnership on gas development, investments

Nigeria and Spain have expressed commitment to deepen bilateral relationship and partnership in investments and development of Nigerian gas resources for global energy market.

Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources made this known on Thursday in Abuja when he received Spanish Foreign Minister, Jose Alabrese, in the company of other top officials and investors from Spain.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the bilateral meeting between Nigeria and Spain dwelt on Spain's investment on Security, technology and development of Nigerian gas resources.

According to the minister, Spain has been a partner and customer of the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) company from inception.

Sylva, who describe Spain as one of the first countries to visit in 2023, said the visit could tell the importance of the relationship between the countries, adding that Nigeria required investments in the oil and gas sector, being the core of the economy.

He said the identified major investment companies and potential investors on the table, occasioned huge opportunities for Nigeria in view of the Nigeria Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) already pitched process of mini bid round.

"These are people that they would have ordinarily gone to meet in their country before any bid round, but in this case, the potential investors are here by themselves, so you can see why this meeting is very important."

"As a country, we need a lot of investments, we need Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Spain is one of the countries that we believe can give us a lot of that investment to help in development," he said.



Sylva

According to Sylva, Nigeria currently has proven gas reserves up to over 200 trillion cubic feet of gas, and with focus on the exploration for additional gas, Nigeria can increase these reserves to up to 600 TCF.

He further said that Europe also required gas currently, hence Nigerian energy transition programme should be more mindful of the development of gas as well, because there was the clamour from some sources to move so quickly to renewables.

"And as a country we felt that we are going to move on the transition train through the instrumentality of gas."

"Spain is in the position to also support us in this area of security because insecurity is one of the major problem facing the industry today. So we are going to be looking up to Spain."

"And then of course, Spain will also look up to us for further supply of gas. They are also interested in the pipeline that we are developing to Morocco. I believe that is going to settle the issue of vessel flight from Nigeria

to Europe.

Alabrese, earlier had commended Nigeria's ability and expressed Spain's interest to facilitate investment opportunities in oil and gas sector of the economy, adding that Nigeria was its first supplier of oil and gas.

The Spanish minister who was pleased with the revolution and opportunities in the sector as informed by Sylva, said the cooperation from the countries, especially from Spanish investors, would yield gains.

"Nigeria has been a strategic partner to Spain and has proven once again as a trusted partner in the complex setting of global energy market," he said.

The meeting had in attendance, the Group Chief Executive Officer, NNPC Limited, Mallam Mele Kyari; Authority Chief Executive, Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Regulatory Authority, Mr Ahmed Farouk; Commission Chief Executive, NUPRC, Mr Gbenga Komolafe; Managing Director, NLNG, Mr Philip Mshelbila, among others. (NAN)

### 2023 polls: IGP re-trains 79 squadron commanders

The Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Usman Alkali-Baba, has commenced a two-week fully residential refresher training for all 79 Squadron Commanders of the Nigeria Police Mobile Force, at the Police Mobile Force Training College, Ila-Orangun, Osun State, from January 9 to 23, 2023."

Force Public Relations Officer (FPRO), CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, who made the disclosure in a statement on Friday, said the exercise is in line with the police chief's mandate on training and human capacity development.

"The training programme is geared at strengthening the operational efficiency of the Squadron Commanders and for more effective tactical deployment of their personnel to ensure a secured and hitch-free environment before, during and after the 2023 General Elections to generally reduce crimes to their barest minimum in Nigeria."

"Some of the focus of the course includes the use of contemporary riot control gadgets for suppression of riots and other serious disturbances, crowd control techniques, ambush and counter-ambush, diplomatic protection, combating internal security challenges and insurgency, as well as gun safety and weapons handling."

"The IGP has charged officers and men of the Police Mobile Force



Alkali

(PMF), the punching arm of the Force, to effectively make use of the opportunities the training will offer them and improve on their crime control mechanisms and general safety strategies, especially towards having free, fair and credible 2023 General Elections.

"In the same vein, the IGP has met with representatives of the United Nations Office on Drugs and

Crime (UNODC) and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), on Thursday, 12th January, 2023, to discuss possible areas of partnership to strengthen the oversight and accountability mechanisms of the Nigeria Police Force including the Complaint Response Unit (CRU) and the Provost Department of the Force," he said.



## FEATURES

# Deconstructing beggars' witchcraft

**When you mirror through the world we live in, it is common to see those who have and those who have not. This dualism and inequality has created a situation where some ended up becoming beggars and others helping out as benefactors. The main thesis of the exposition is that in any functional society, it is natural to have individual needs but becoming beggars to meet such needs of life on daily basis is an unacceptable indictment on our collective humanity. Writes, AYUBA YILGAK'HA.**

**W**HOEVER has means of helping others but declined is stingy. However, those who need help but will not consider that those they seek help from can also lack are damn selfish. The latter hardly comes under public scrutiny and most often picked offence with those that might have helped out in the past but constrained in the present. Such unreasonable picking of offence is, to say the least, a form of witchcraft, one that seeks to compel someone to help out of duress and from nothing. What is your take folks when someone transfers anger of his unmet needs on an innocent former benefactor?

It was Mathew Arnold who stated that, "We are here on earth to do good to others. What the others are here for, I do not know." This means that to help is virtuous but to criticise others for not providing your needs even as adults is not and unacceptable. If you are within the active work age bracket, the right thing to do is to work to earn decent means of livelihood, that is, your meal ticket.

It is not a sin to be in need but a crime to blame your poor socioeconomic conditions on others. This is because God has given us all that we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). Availing equal time, equal intellect and opportunity to live healthy lives are primarily part of those provisions. Therefore, when anyone missappropriate his or hers, then, he/she should have himself to blame. We cannot afford to misused or misappropriated God's holistic resources and not take the blame ourselves except for system and leadership which is common in most developing economies like Nigeria.

Understood, some needs often genuine and come with unsettling pressures. However, we must not be irrational to think that our benefactors are self-sufficient and lacking nothing at all times in this life. Amaechi Nzekwe in his celebrated novel, "The Rich Also Cry" published in 1996 said it all about the possibility of the rich have issues and unmet needs like the poor also do but how many beggars believe this narrative?

Despite the huge resources the rich have, their needs and appetites might be as well big too. In practical terms, people hardly make concessions to the rich in any market transaction except for lobbying purposes which is very rare. On a normal day, what can be sold to the poor for N1,000.00 (One Thousand Naira) only could possibly be sold to the rich at



double the price. The mentality is that the latter have it all but that is not always the case. The rich also lack; the only difference is that they are credit worthy due to the collaterals they have at their disposal, in terms of the assets they have acquired over time.

There is another mentality that is also worrisome with poor beggars. Apart from picking offence for not getting help from benefactors, sometime the complain is that the support they got is small or too small and might even return it under the guise they are too big and so it is insulting to accept such intervention. This mentality is the main thrust of another Aminata Sow Fall's novel "Beggars' Strike" which was published in 1981.

The question here is: How can a man not be too big to ask but suddenly become so big to accept a free gesture(s)? It is important to know at this point that to be assisted is not a right but a privilege. The fact is that beggars have no choice but this hard fact does not exist in the dictionary of witchcrafting beggars.

For a fact, all benefactors deserve deep appreciation, if not for anything at least, for the audience they usually give those in need. Only ingrats will not appreciate those that had helped or are willing to help but constrained at sometimes. Unfortunately, the world is full of them who picked offence or made their anger visible when things do not go their way in the process of begging.

Experience have shown that most, if not all, ingrats are fantastically stingy people. They found it easy to beg when they have needs but get offended when blessed and

others come seeking their help. In other words, stingy people love support but cannot extend same to others when they are in the position to do so.

Beggars hardly realise there is getting in giving. This does not change the fact that there is blessing in giving, especially, when extended with sincerity of purpose and not the Greek type. In other words, to give genuinely and cheerfully is a kingdom recipe for personal blessings and rewards. That is why the scriptures say, 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.' It also assures whoever cares to know that when you give generously, you will find favour ahead (Ecclesiastes 11:1).

Suffice here to state categorically that there is no known gain in receiving not to talk of begging as a way of life. Therefore, there is need to deconstruct the culture of begging with the promptness it deserves and best way to do this and turn beggars into brokers of blessing is to teach the formally or informally to learn how to create wealth cultivate the art of giving themselves. Nobody becomes a benefactor by learning how to beg. The art of begging is a defeatist art and a profile in culture of dependency.

It should be understood that no one is self-sufficient and independent in this world. The world and its people are increasingly becoming interrelated and interdependent in this post-modern (present) world. This implies that no one is an isolated island and that even literal islands have neighbours - the water bodies that surrounds them. However, you do not come to a world so globalised

empty handed. The ideal thing is to have a need with something to offer from your end.

Human needs are basic not perpetually supplied to adults. Adulthood means the capacity to take personal responsibilities. Only toddlers need sustained interventions until they become adults themselves. This means that even the supply of needs of toddlers is not perpetual but limited by their subsequent graduation into adulthood over time.

As toddlers grow into teenage age, they ought to learn how to begin to contribute to the common wealth of nations from where their meal tickets or sources of livelihood come. This is because it is unacceptable liability when one grow to be a free rider in society. The fact is that responsible adults contribute to the wealth creation and there is no better trademark than this by which they are known!

The capacity of individuals, firms and government and their right to exist is dependent on how much they contribute to the well being and welfare of all in the world of value. This is why economic agents (individual, firms and governments) which cannot substantially contribute to the welfare index of their societies are despised and treated with disdain or disrespect.

It is an incontestable fact that one point or another, all humans beg but begging makes sense only when it is targetted at meeting shortfalls that occur in a time too short to make adjustments through personal effort. Therefore, begging is not and cannot be a profession.

In capitalist nations, beggars are the most miserable of all creatures. This is because in

such climes, it is believed there is no free lunch even in free town. That is why the Father of Economics, Adam Smith in his book "The nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations" which was published in 1776 succinctly observed that it is not the benovelence of capitalist oriented baker that brings food or bread to our tables but the pursuit of their self interest which is profit maximisation. In other words, food comes to your table when you have the capacity to produce or pay for it from your hard earnings. That is the reality in capitalist climes!

It is important to note that capitalists can extend help through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and charities but at their own convenience and timing not at the convenience of any beggar or needy persons. Therefore, to be angry with a capitalist for not helping at your beg and call is to be angry to death because your anger cannot change them one inch. What moves a capitalist is the opportunity to make profit not the need of a beggar.

There is nothing as demeaning as becoming a witchcraft in begging. As humans, we all need each other and if possible, no help should be withheld from those with genuine needs but certainly not 'professional' beggars. This is because professional begging is an artificial creation of lazy folks who are lacking in shame and doing nothing to redeem themselves from the shackles and dynasties of poverty.

Beggars have no right to be angry with those they need help from. Also, no helper is under any moral obligation to help those who perceived themselves as professional beggars. Whatever anybody gets in the form of help in this life is a privilege and not a right. May God forever bless all human benefactors and help those who want to be sources of blessing to others to have the means to do so. May God also change the witchcraft (anger) mentality of professional beggars into productive anger for our collective benefit.

In the world of valids, habitual begging is a postponed culture. Whoever picks a lazy adventure as demeaning as begging in this life will have a date with ridiculing and trauamatising experiences. No one should be so fated to think that his life is destined for begging as means for survival. With time and effort, the poor can be rich and with laxity and wild passion for pleasure, the rich can be poor. Do not conclude yet, as long as we are alive, there is no such thing as fate sealing in the journey of life!



## SUNDAY SPORTS

# Australian Open 2023: Djokovic, Nadal, Raducanu set for Melbourne

By JONATHAN JUREJKO

**N**OVAK Djokovic returns to the Australian Open a year on from his controversial deportation, again primed as the man to beat at the opening Grand Slam tournament of the 2023 season.

The 35-year-old Serb, aiming for a record-extending 10th title in Melbourne and a record-equalling 22nd men's major, has warmed up by winning an ATP title in Adelaide.

Spanish teenager Carlos Alcaraz, ranked the world's best men's player, has pulled out with a knee injury and is one of several high-profile names to miss out.

British women's number one Emma Raducanu suffered an ankle injury in the build-up, initially putting her participation in doubt but the 20-year-old is now seemingly winning her fitness battle.

Raducanu will be hoping to be one of seven Britons playing in the singles main draws, with 11th seed Cameron Norrie and Andy Murray headlining the men's interest.

This will also be the first Grand Slam event following the retirements of veteran superstars Serena Williams and Roger Federer.

With the tournament starting on Monday, BBC Sport runs through the major talking points.

The build-up to this year's tournament has been much quieter than 12 months ago - but Djokovic remains the centre of most of the attention.

After a cancelled visa, detention in an immigration centre, multiple court cases and eventual deportation - all as a consequence of him being unvaccinated against Covid-19 - Djokovic was unable to play in the 2022 edition of a tournament which he has long dominated.

On his return, the Serb will be glad to focus on the tennis and looks well placed to regain his stranglehold on the trophy.

The nine-time champion has won the title on his past three appearances and has lost only



**Novak Djokovic received a rapturous welcome on his return to the court in Australia at the Adelaide International last week**

three matches at Melbourne Park since 2011.

A limited schedule, partly down to not being allowed to enter the United States last year because of his vaccination status, means he is ranked fifth in the world but a strong end to last season, and confident start to this year, shows he still remains the man to beat.

Winning the Adelaide title last week came after triumphs in Tel Aviv, Astana and the ATP Tour Finals in 2022, with the only defeat in his past 25 matches inflicted by Holger Rune in the Paris Masters final.

Plus, one would imagine a player who has regularly thrived when he feels he has a point to prove will have extra fire in his belly after last year's chaos.

If he wins the title, Djokovic will also regain the world number one ranking.

Spain's Rafael Nadal was the main

beneficiary of Djokovic's absence last year, winning a record 21st major men's title and extending his overall tally with another victory at the French Open.

Nadal, 36, is one ahead of Djokovic, who reduced the gap at Wimbledon, in the race to finish with the most silverware which is regularly used to determine the greatest players of all time.

Like Djokovic, Nadal can never be underestimated and ruled out of contention at a major. The two-time champion will be the top seed following US Open winner Alcaraz's withdrawal.

But, after an abdominal injury ruined the second half of last season for him, and having started this season with two consecutive defeats at the United Cup, another Nadal triumph looks to be a long shot.

A tough draw - which begins with a

first-round match against rising British star Jack Draper - could also be problematic.

Norway's Casper Ruud will look to continue his upward trajectory following runs to the French Open and US Open finals last year, while Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas is also aiming to finally land his first major at a venue where he has a strong record.

Ruud and Tsitsipas also have the opportunity to become the world number one for the first time, guaranteed to replace Alcaraz if they win the title.

Wimbledon runner-up Nick Kyrgios will be the centre of attention for the home fans, Russia's Daniil Medvedev - who lost the 2022 final after a stunning fightback by Nadal - is aiming to recapture his best form, while Danish teenager Holger Rune aims to continue his swift ascent.

For the first time since Serena Williams was in her pomp almost a decade ago, the WTA season was completely dominated by a single player last year.

Iga Swiatek rose to the top of the world rankings when Australia's Ashleigh Barty announced her shock retirement in March, a time the 21-year-old from Poland was almost midway through a 37-match winning streak and on the way to winning the third of six titles in a row.

One of those triumphs came at the French Open - the second time she had won at Roland Garros - and she finished a productive season with another major trophy at the US Open.

The signs remain Swiatek will continue this year where she left off, although a defeat by American Jessica Pegula last week left the Pole in tears on the court and she subsequently pulled out of a tournament in Adelaide citing a shoulder injury.

Pegula, one of the most consistent players last season but still to land a major, also withdrew from the warm-up event after inspiring the US to victory at the inaugural United Cup.

The world number three is expected to challenge Swiatek at Melbourne Park, where a new champion will be crowned after Barty - who announced last week she is pregnant - ended

Australia's 44-year wait for a major singles champion.

Tunisia's second seed Ons Jabeur is aiming to finally land a major after defeats in the Wimbledon and US Open finals last year, France's Caroline Garcia and American teenager Coco Gauff will look to build further on impressive seasons, while China's Zheng Qinwen is another talented youngster with a burgeoning reputation.

Two-time champion Naomi Osaka withdrew before announcing she is pregnant and 42-year-old Venus Williams - given a wildcard by organisers - pulled out through injury.

When Raducanu curtailed her 2022 season and shortly after started a two-month training block to build up her body for the rigours of the tour, she was hoping to put her injury problems behind her.

Then came the ankle injury - suffered in her second match of the year, when she played Slovakia's Viktoria Kuzmova in Auckland - which Raducanu described as an "accident" she could not avoid.

The 2021 US Open champion's mobility during practice at Melbourne Park this week initially looked difficult and she said her recovery progress would be assessed "day by day".

By Thursday - [when the draw was made](#) - she was moving freely and looked in good enough shape to play.

Harriet Dart, ranked 96th, is Britain's only other representative in the women's singles.

British men's number one Norrie, 27, is aiming to maintain his stunning progress over the past couple of years, showing his intent with a career-best victory over Nadal at the recent United Cup.

Norrie vowed after a first-round exit in Melbourne last year to tailor his schedule to peak at the majors, going on to reach the Wimbledon semi-finals and now hopes to avoid falling at the first hurdle in Australia for the fourth time in five years.

Dan Evans is the only other British seed in the men's singles, with rising star Jack Draper and former world number one Murray ranked in the world's top 50 but just outside the seeds.

Kyle Edmund, a semi-finalist in 2018, returns to Melbourne Park using a protected ranking as he [continues his comeback after three knee operations](#).

In the men's doubles, world number one Neal Skupski and 2020 Australian Open champion Joe Salisbury lead the British hopes with their respective partners Wesley Koolhof and Rajeev Ram.

Lloyd Glasspool, Jamie Murray, plus all-British partnership Julian Cash and Henry Patten, are also in the draw, with Olivia Nicholls and Alicia Barnett - who made their breakthrough last year and starred for Britain at the Billie Jean King Cup Finals - in the women's doubles along with Heather Watson.

In the wheelchair event, 17-year-old Ben Bartram has been awarded a wildcard and joins Alfie Hewett, Gordon Reid, Lucy Shuker and Andy Lapthorne.



**Raducanu was tearful when she left the Auckland court after retiring with an ankle injury, but has been upbeat this week about her chances of playing the Australian Open**



## SUNDAY SPORTS

FIFA Best Awards 2022:  
Messi lead nominees

ENGLAND trio Leah Williamson, Beth Mead and Keira Walsh join Argentina's World Cup-winning captain Lionel Messi as nominees for the 2022 Fifa Best Awards.

**BBC SPORT** said that, Borussia Dortmund's England midfielder Jude Bellingham is also named on the men's shortlist, with Real Madrid pair Luka Modric and Karim Benzema.

Chelsea's Sam Kerr and Jessie Fleming are nominated for the women's award, as is last year's winner Alexia Putellas.

Sarina Wiegman, Emma Hayes and Pep Guardiola are up for best coach.

Arsenal forward Mead's nomination comes in a year in which she was named player of the tournament at Euro 2022, shortlisted for the Ballon d'Or and won BBC Sport's Personality of the Year.

Lionesses manager Wiegman, who led the team to their first major tournament trophy at Euro 2022, is joined on the women's coach list by Canada's English-born manager Beverly Priestman, as well as Chelsea's Hayes.

The Chelsea coach, who won the Fifa Best award last year, became the first manager to guide a side to three consecutive WSL titles in May.

Real Madrid's Carlo Ancelotti, France's Didier Deschamps and Argentina's World Cup-winning manager Lionel Scaloni are nominated for best men's coach.

Morocco's Walid Regragui also features on the shortlist after his side became the first African nation to reach a World Cup semi-final.

Manchester City's Erling Haaland, Kevin de Bruyne and Julian Alvarez are all nominated for best men's



Three of England's Euro 2022 winners - Beth Mead, Leah Williamson and Keira Walsh - feature in the women's shortlist

player, as is Liverpool's Mohamed Salah.

Liverpool's Alisson Becker, Manchester City's Ederson and Aston Villa and Argentina's Emiliano Martinez are up for the best men's goalkeeper award.

England and Manchester United number one Mary Earps is on the women's shortlist, alongside Chelsea's Ann-Katrin Berger.

Alessia Russo's backheeled

## AFCON '94 gold medalist salutes Osimhen

THE Super Eagles legend, Sunday Oliseh, has joined several icons to celebrate Victor Osimhen as he received his award for Global Soccer Award For The Power Horse Emerging Player



Osimhen

## "Mourinho rejected Portugal job offer"

JOSE Mourinho has rubbished suggestions that Roberto Martinez was first in line for the Portugal job, saying he was the "only choice" at one stage.

**Goal** said that, the Euro 2016 winners found themselves in the market for a new coach after severing ties with long-serving Fernandes Santos on the back of a disappointing quarter-final defeat to Morocco at the 2022

World Cup. Mourinho was immediately billed as the ideal candidate to fill a prominent post, with a job-share proposal rumoured for the current Roma boss, but he ultimately shunned interest from his homeland and paved the way for former Belgium coach Martinez to be appointed on a three-and-a-half-year contract.

Portuguese Football

Federation president Fernando Gomes said at Martinez's official unveiling: "What interested me from the first hour was defining the profile. We spoke, within this, with many people. The only concrete proposal we made to be a coach, was Roberto Martinez."

Mourinho has refuted those claims, telling reporters after seeing Roma through to the quarter-finals of the Coppa Italia: "Today I can talk to you and say something that maybe you are not very interested in, but I want to thank the president of the Portuguese Federation. What he said made me very proud, saying that I was not the first choice, but his only choice and that he would have done anything to get me home. He made me very happy. But I didn't go, I'm here and I'm giving my all."

Mourinho has also been mooted as a potential candidate to take charge of the Brazil national team, following the departure of Tite, but the ex-Chelsea, Real Madrid and Manchester United manager is tied to a contract at Roma through to 2024.



Mourinho

DUBAI Globe Soccer Awards honor international football player Victor Osimhen with the Power Horse Emerging Player of The Year award.

**Goal** said that, Naples, Italy, 11 January 2023: Earlier today, **Victor Osimhen**, the Nigerian striker currently playing for SSC Napoli and for the Nigeria National Team, received the **Power Horse Emerging Player of the Year** award for his outstanding performance during 2022.

The 13th edition of the Dubai Globe Soccer Awards, organized with the Dubai Sports Council, was held in Dubai on 17 November 2022. Stars of international football

Osimhen awarded Global Soccer  
Power Player of the Year

gathered with celebrities and guests to celebrate the annual event and recognize the winners in 21 categories.

The winner of the category was the Nigerian striker, Victor Osimhen, who had a fantastic season in Serie A and established himself as one of the rising stars in Italy and around the globe.

Victor was not able to attend the event in Dubai, therefore Globe Soccer and **POWER HORSE®** decided to hold the awarding ceremony in Naples, Victor's current hometown.

Salvatore Caizzone, CEO of Power Horse, was joined by Cristiano Giuntoli, Sporting Director of SSC Napoli, and Enrico Bendoni of Globe Soccer as they handed out the Award to the winner.

"We at Power Horse are delighted that Victor Osimhen is recognized as the winner of the Power Horse Emerging Player of the Year award, and wish him to become even more unstoppable in the future", said Salvatore Caizzone, CEO of Power Horse.

## Lookman nets brace in 8-0 friendly win

SUPER Eagles winger Ademola Lookman was twice on target as Atalanta completed an 8-0 demolition job on Mopella in a friendly match on Thursday afternoon.

**Newsnow** said that, Lookman netted a brace, Pašalić bagged a hat-trick, Boga scored twice while Mæhle also got himself on the scoresheet as the Nerazzurri



Lookman

earned a deserved honor, having recently become the first player to reach ten goals in the 2022-23 Italian Serie A.

It is, however, fair and safe to say that Osimhen, who has received loads of praise from many football legends this season, has been significant in Gli Azzurri's Serie A quest and, however, leading the league.

Osimhen, as earlier reported, acknowledged receiving the award and thanked those who have supported him so far.

The 1996 Olympic gold medallist and AFCON 1994 winner, however, joined several football legends to congratulate the attacker as he took to his Twitter to retweet Victor Osimhen's post of him receiving the award with the following caption:

The Nigerian star would face the Old lady when his team welcomed them Friday to the Diego Maradona Stadium.

Wolves close to completing signing of Paris  
St-Germain winger

Pablo Sarabia has made 18 appearances in all competitions for PSG this season

WOLVES are close to completing the signing of Spain winger Pablo Sarabia from Paris St-Germain.

The 30-year-old joined PSG from Sevilla in 2019 and has

since scored 11 goals in 35 Ligue 1 appearances.

Sarabia, who spent the 2021-22 season on loan at Sporting Lisbon, made one appearance for Spain at the

win at Bologna.

Koopmeiners and Højlund got the goals for the Goddess at the Stadio Renato Dall'Ara while Lookman - Atalanta's top scorer with seven Serie A goals - looked on from the bench.

Lookman will hope he has shown enough against Mopella, to convince manager Gian Piero Gasperini that he is battle ready for Atalanta's next league fixture.

Atalanta will host struggling Salernitana at the Gewiss Stadium on Sunday in a matchday 18 clash of the 2022-23 Italian Serie A season.

World Cup.

He is well known to Wolves boss Julen Lopetegui through his time in the national age group teams and their paths crossed briefly at Sevilla.

However, Sarabia never played a competitive game under then-Sevilla boss Lopetegui before joining PSG.

It is anticipated the transfer will be concluded early next week, with Sarabia becoming Wolves' third signing since Lopetegui was appointed as Bruno Lage's successor in November.

The club completed the signing of Gabon midfielder Mario Lemina from Nice on Friday, while in December they signed Brazil forward Matheus Cunha on an initial loan deal from Atletico Madrid.



## SUNDAY SPORTS

## Australian Open: Swiatek looking forward after successful season



Swiatek

**I**GASWIATEK plans to block out the outside noise and increased attention which comes with being the world number one and the woman to beat.

Or, as the 21-year-old from Poland put it more bluntly in a recent piece for The Players' Tribune,

remind herself not to "worry" about the opinions of others.

"When I don't care about what people think and what their expectations of me are, it's easier for me to succeed," Swiatek told BBC Sport in Melbourne, where the top seed is preparing for next week's Australian Open.

"That was what I tried my best to do in 2022.

"Although I'm proud of them, I'm not going to try to match my previous achievements because it would not be constructive.

"A season like that is something amazing and rare. Sure, I would love to do it again but it's not advantageous to live in the past."

Last season started with Swiatek still doubting whether she could consistently challenge at the very top and aspiring to reach the level of then-world number one Ashleigh Barty.

Swiatek ended the year with two Grand Slam titles - the French Open and US Open - and a tight grip on the top ranking.

Reaching the semi-finals in Melbourne laid the platform for even greater things and when Barty surprisingly announced her retirement in March, little over a month after winning the Australian Open title, Swiatek was already emerging as the leading force on the WTA Tour.

With the Doha and Indian Wells titles already in the bag, Swiatek won her next four tournaments - Miami, Stuttgart, Rome and Roland Garros - as part of a 37-match winning streak.

The run, which ended on her least favourite surface of grass at Wimbledon, is the joint-longest winning streak on tour since 1990.

As someone who describes herself as an introvert, Swiatek says it feels "strange and disorienting" to be recognised on the street, while seeing her face on a digital billboard in New York during the US Open was also an experience which seemed detached from reality.

"I do appreciate being recognised and I've found that people are kind to me," she said.

"Luckily, I can't think of any weird or difficult situations with fans. Of course, there is some hate on the internet, but the rude comments after losing a match happens to nearly every athlete these days.

"I don't read these comments or messages. That's basically the only downside for now.

"Right now, I am just cherishing every moment where I can be free and be fully myself. I think we all need that space."

In the past year Swiatek has started working with management company IMG - the agency which looks after British star Emma Raducanu and also represented former world number one Maria

Sharapova - to help manage her schedule on the tour and negotiate commercial deals.

The core tennis team which helped her to success last year - psychologist Daria Abramowicz, coach Tomasz Wiktorowski and physio Maciej Ryszczyk - remains in place.

"My team is always thinking about my health, my well-being and balancing my schedule of training and off-the-court obligations," said Swiatek.

"They really work to create plans that are not too intense for me - they limit my non-obligatory activities to make sure I'm not feeling drained or worn down.

"If I were to be involved in everything I'm offered, I would be tired all the time.

"For me, it's important to maintain balance while focusing on my sports performance. That's my main rule."

## Potter explains Aubameyang substitution snub



Aubameyang

**G**RAHAM Potter has explained why he snubbed Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang when making substitutions during Chelsea's derby defeat at Fulham.

Goal said that, the Blues, who are enduring a wretched run of form, hit a new low at Craven Cottage on Thursday when going down 2-1 to their west London neighbours. Debutant Joao Felix saw red in that contest, as his Premier League loan from Atletico Madrid got off to the worst possible start, but Potter opted not to introduce Aubameyang - who

is generating exit talk at Stamford Bridge - when looking to salvage something from a contest that has piled even more pressure onto his shoulders.

Quizzed on why Aubameyang remained on the bench against Fulham, Potter told reporters: "We had a back five and felt we should go to a 4-4-1 and keep Kai [Havertz] on because I felt he was leading the line and winning challenges and duels. We wanted to use Hakim [Ziyech] and Carney [Chukwuemeka] to break from wide and Conor [Gallagher] to break from the centre because

**B**BRITISH number one Cameron Norrie reached the final of the ASB Classic in Auckland as he bids to complete his Australian Open preparation with a first title of the season.

BBC SPORT said that, Norrie, the world number 12, will play France's Richard Gasquet on Saturday.

The 27-year-old Briton recorded a 6-3 6-4 semi-final win over American Jenson Brooksby.

Compatriot Jack Draper lost his Adelaide International 2 semi-final against South Korea's Kwon Soon-woo.

Rising star Draper, 21, who will face defending champion Rafael Nadal in the Australian Open first round on Monday, fell to a 7-6 (8-6) 6-7 (2-7) 6-3 defeat by the 25-year-old.

The Australian Open, the first Grand Slam tournament of the season, takes place at Melbourne Park between 16 and 29 January.

Norrie, raised in Auckland, has won all six matches he has played this year as he warms up for his Australian Open first-round meeting with French wildcard Luca van Assche.

With a victory over Nadal among his three victories at the United Cup earlier this month, Norrie maintained his fine start to the year with his first straight-set win in Auckland following victories

## Norrie continues Australian Open preparation



Cameron Norrie will compete to win his fifth tour-level title

over Marcos Giron and Jiri Lehecka.

He admitted a lack of concentration "made it tricky" against Giron as the American forced a deciding set, but Norrie was able to recover from falling 2-0 down in his second set against Brooksby and won six of the next eight games to close out the match.

Upcoming final opponent Gasquet, 36, was given a walkover against injured compatriot Constant Lestienne.

"I was serving well, hitting my spots well and winning a lot of the longer rallies," said Norrie. "He's really tricky, Jenson, he puts the ball in such awkward parts of the court but I was able to use my legs and

win some of the longer rallies."

Norrie added: "I was able to back up my little lapse in concentration and play a really tidy second set. I think I just played a little bit more of a complete match but I was hitting the ball just as well as the other days."

Kwon will play Australian Thanasi Kokkinakis or Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut in the Adelaide final after ending Draper's hopes of reaching his first ATP Tour final.

Having levelled the match in a must-win tie-break, Draper lost serve at the start of the deciding set and was unable to recover before Kwon, ranked 84th, broke again to clinch victory.

## Four-time Grand Slam champion announces pregnancy

**F**OUR-TIME Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka has announced she is pregnant.

BBC SPORT said that, the Japanese former world number one, 25, withdrew from the Australian Open

earlier this week, having not played since September.

"2023 will be a year that'll be full for lessons for me," said Osaka, adding that she hopes to return in 2024.

"One thing I am looking forward to is for my kid to watch one of my matches and tell someone, 'that's my mom'."

Osaka won the last of her four Grand Slams at the Australian Open in 2021.

However, she has spoken of the problems she has faced for granted, every day is a since that memorable title win.

In May 2021, after pulling out of the French Open, she revealed she had "suffered long bouts of depression" ever since winning her first major title, the US Open, in 2018.

In September 2021 she took a five-month break from the sport.

She lost in the third round of the Australian Open on her return, then the first round of the French Open, missed Wimbledon because of injury and lost in the opening round of the US Open.

Osaka played last at the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo in September and has dropped to

47 in the world rankings.

"The past few years have been interesting to say the least, but I find that it is the most challenging times in life that may be the most fun," added Osaka, announcing her pregnancy on social media.

"These few months away from the sport have really given me a new love and appreciation for the game I've dedicated my life to.

"I realise that life is so short and I don't take any moments for granted, every day is a new blessing and adventure.

"I know I have so much to look forward to in the future."

Germany's three-time Grand Slam champion Angelique Kerber revealed her pregnancy in August,

suggesting she will return after giving birth, while former world number three Elinavitolina is expected to make her comeback this year after giving birth last October.

Serena Williams took a break to give birth in 2017 and returned later the same year, continuing to play before retiring in 2022.



Osaka



SUNDAY SPORTS



2022: Seven disappointing moments in Nigerian sports

THOUGH there were some gains and moments that gladdened the hearts of sports enthusiasts, 2022 served a fair deal of disappointments and heartbreaks for all. The outgone Year 2022 is a mixed bag for Nigeria; especially in sports where there was the good, bad and ugly.

Like other years, the sports fraternity welcomed 2022 with a great deal of optimism for an improved fortune for sports in Nigeria.

Though there were some gains and moments that gladdened the hearts of sports enthusiasts, 2022 served a fair deal of disappointments and heartbreaks for all.

As PREMIUM TIMES continues its review of the year 2022, here are seven of the disappointing moments in Nigerian sports.

Super Eagles cannot fulfill bilateral relations with Qatar

Without a doubt, Nigeria's failure to qualify for the Qatar 2022 World Cup was the biggest disappointment of 2022.

Aside from missing out on the unquantifiable excitement of Africa's best performance ever at the Mundial, the huge loss in revenue to Nigeria's sports industry is massive.

The 'Morocco effect' affected all but the customary frenzy associated with World Cups was at its lowest ebb.

Brands that would normally splash the cash couldn't do so because the team's players and officials, as well as the NFF, had blown a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Eguavoen fooled us all by winning all three group games and fueled speculation that the Super Eagles could make it all the way to the final, where the prospect of an all-time grudge match against hosts Cameroon piqued many people's interest.

However, a 1-0 loss for the 10-man Eagles team against a Tunisia team that barely scrapped through the group stage marked the Eagles' first failure to reach the AFCON last eight since 1984.

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marked the Eagles' first failure to reach the AFCON last eight since 1984.

Super Falcons clipped in Morocco

The Nigeria national women's football team's influence in Africa has dwindled over the years, and it was completely eclipsed at the 2022 Women's Africa Cup of Nations in Morocco.

In the past, the Falcons easily defeated any opposition they faced on the continent, which explains why they have an incredible haul of titles to their name.

However, right from the start of the qualification series for the 2022 WAFCON, the Falcons had to work hard and dig deep to beat West African rivals Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire.

Though the Falcons achieved the target of qualifying for the World Cup in Morocco, the outing in North Africa was their worst. Three losses at the African championships, two of those consecutively, are the worst for any Super Falcons team.

Failure to win a medal in Morocco after being defeated by Zambia in the third-place match is tied for the Falcons' worst record at the tournament.

Randy Waldrum, who oversaw the nosedive, is still in charge and looks set to lead the Falcons to next year's World Cup in New Zealand and Australia, where many expect the girls to be super once

more.

Usman, Adesanya, and Joshua kiss the canvas

When the trio of Israel Adesanya, Kamaru Usman, and Anthony Joshua get in the ring for their fights, Nigeria often makes the headline.

Though the trio have adopted other countries, they overtly identify with Nigeria and their fan base in the country is quite impressive.

However, if there is a year this trio will want to erase from their career, it would most likely be 2022 going by the enormous setbacks and humbling defeats they suffered.

Adesanya in November lost his UFC Middleweight title after Brazilian Alex Pereira defeated him via a fifth-round TKO at UFC 281.

That was the first time Adesanya suffered defeat in the middleweight category, and the first time he was knocked out or pinned for submission in his MMA career.

Though pained by the defeat, Adesanya is confident of bouncing back.

The Nigerian Nightmare, as we often refer Kamaru Usman to, was also served 'breakfast' in 2022, losing his welterweight title to Briton Leon Edwards at the UFC 278.

It was the first time someone knocked Usman out in his career and it was brutally done by Edwards. Just like the Style Bender, Usman is also hopeful of bouncing back pretty soon.

However, the optimistic duo will have to learn from Anthony Joshua, who lost his title to the Ukrainian boxer Oleksandr Usyk in September 2021 and hoped to regain them in a rematch in 2022.

Though we widely agreed Joshua gave a better performance in his Usyk rematch, it wasn't enough for the Nigerian-born boxer to regain his titles.

Okagbare collects record doping ban

We feared the worst when the suspension of Blessing Okagbare was announced on the eve of the Women's 100m semi-final race at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Okagbare, who arguably is Nigeria's most-decorated athlete and holds the country's 100m and 200m women's records, tested positive for multiple prohibited substances.

For seven months, there was an agonising wait for the verdict by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU).

And when it came seven months after in February 2022, it was a rude shock for many. No one saw a 10-year ban coming for a first-time offender.

They banned Okagbare for five years for the presence and use of multiple prohibited substances and five years for her refusal to cooperate with the AIU's investigation into her case.

With an additional year added much later after fresh discoveries, it marked an inglorious end to an illustrious career of the poster girl of Nigeria and, indeed, African athletics.

Another miss CHAN tournament

When many argue for including more home-based players in the Super Eagles, one weapon the critics use is the inability of the same set of players to qualify for the African Nations Championship (CHAN).

CHAN is the AFCON version solely for home-based players, but Nigeria has only made three appearances in the seven editions since 2009.

For the first two editions, Nigeria was missing in action before the late Stephen Keshi made it in 2014 and led the country to win bronze.

In 2022, Nigeria failed to qualify and will miss back-to-back editions again, having failed to make it to the 2020 edition in Cameroon and the latest billed for Algeria.

Arch rivals Ghana stopped Nigeria on penalties from qualifying in their latest attempt.

D'Tigress unjustly denied World Cup participation

Watching D'Tigress qualify for the World Cup that was staged in Australia was a beauty to behold. The defining moment has to be the victory over the then number five team in the world, France.

With preparations well below par, D'Tigress showed they had come of age.

Then the unthinkable happened, the Federal Government, through the Sports Ministry, announced it had imposed a two-year self-ban from international basketball.

Though framed as a difficult but imperative move to save the country from an impending embarrassment, it was largely seen as a selfish and egoistic trip that ended up costing the hard-working D'Tigress their place at the World Cup.

FIBA replaced Nigeria with Mali on the World Cup roster and the rest, as they say, is history.

Source: PREMIUM TIMES







## Stunning comeback as Man U beat Man City



The Premier League champions looked in control following Grealish's goal after a shaky first half, only for United to turn the tables on them amid chaotic scenes late on.

City were bitterly disappointed at the loss and infuriated by the decision to allow Fernandes' equaliser.

Rashford was clearly offside as he chased Casemiro's pass, but did not touch the ball, leaving it for Fernandes to whip his finish beyond Ederson.

City's argument, with justification, was that Rashford was having a significant impact on the incident even without touching the ball because his presence clearly put him in a position where he had an effect on Nathan Ake and Manuel Akanji's ability to make a challenge.

Referee Stuart Attwell consulted his assistant and the goal was given, much to City's anger as their players confronted the official at the final whistle.

City, trying to recover from Wednesday's Carabao Cup quarter-final loss at Southampton, were not their usual fluent selves but their unhappiness at the result will be even more acute because of their discontent at the decision that went against them.

**Marcus Rashford (left) has scored at least one goal in his past seven games in all competitions**

**M**anchester United staged a stunning late turnaround to come from behind and beat Manchester City in a dramatic derby at Old Trafford.

City looked to be closing the gap on Premier League leaders Arsenal after substitute Jack Grealish headed them in front from Kevin de Bruyne's cross on the hour, only for United to send their fans into raptures with a superb recovery.

Erik ten Hag's side drew level in contentious fashion with 12 minutes left as Bruno Fernandes scored despite the presence of Marcus Rashford in an offside position, City's protests that he had interfered with play ignored despite the flag going up.

Rashford was the central figure again four minutes later when he swept in substitute Alejandro Garnacho's cross at the Stretford End to move United to within one point of City, who remain five points adrift of Arsenal.

United left Etihad Stadium in early October chastened and bruised following a 6-3 thrashing, a scoreline that actually flattered them - but Ten Hag insisted lessons had been learned.

And so they have. This win means United have lost only one of their past 19 games in all competitions and are now on City's heels in third place in the table,

barely credible after that derby beating and a dreadful start to the season that saw them lose at home to Brighton before being overwhelmed at Brentford.

The debate over Fernandes' equaliser will go on, but what is inescapable is the significant improvement under the disciplinarian and tactically

astute Ten Hag to the point where United are looking solid in the top four and may even be casting a glance at leaders Arsenal, who are six points ahead of them.

The sight of the diminutive Luke Shaw winning a series of headers in among Erling Haaland and others in stoppage time

and Raphael Varane fist-pumping and whipping up the fans at the final whistle was a sign of the renewed belief and confidence surging through United.

The reborn Rashford was not deterred by missing two first-half chances to pounce and turn Garnacho's cross past exposed City keeper

Ederson for the winner.

United's recovery has been slow but assured under Ten Hag and the scenes at the final whistle demonstrated that a giant that had lost its way is slowing finding itself again.

City's players were left with a mixture of emotions at the final whistle following this tumultuous defeat.

## Djokovic, Nadal, Raducanu, Murray set for Melbourne

**N**ovak Djokovic returns to the Australian Open a year on from his controversial deportation, again primed as the man to beat at the opening Grand Slam tournament of the 2023 season.

The 35-year-old Serb, aiming for a record-extending 10th title in Melbourne and a record-equalling 22nd men's major, has warmed up by winning an ATP title in Adelaide.

Spanish teenager Carlos Alcaraz, ranked the world's best men's player, has pulled out with a knee injury and is one of several high-profile names to miss out.

British women's number one Emma Raducanu suffered an ankle injury in the build-up, initially putting her participation in doubt but the 20-year-old says she is "ready to play".

Raducanu will be one of seven Britons playing in the singles main draws, with 11th seed Cameron Norrie and Andy Murray headlining the men's interest.

This will also be the first Grand Slam event following the retirements of veteran superstars Serena Williams

and Roger Federer.

With the tournament starting tomorrow, *BBC Sport* runs through the major talking points.

The build-up to this year's tournament has been much quieter than 12 months ago - but Djokovic remains the centre of most of the attention.

After a cancelled visa, detention in an immigration centre, multiple court cases and eventual deportation - all as a consequence of him being unvaccinated against Covid-19 - Djokovic was unable to play in the 2022 edition of a tournament which he has long dominated.

On his return, the Serb will be glad to focus on the tennis and looks well placed to regain his stranglehold on the trophy.

The nine-time champion has won the title on his past three appearances and has lost only three matches at Melbourne Park since 2011.

A limited schedule, partly down to not being allowed to enter the United States last year because of his vaccination status, means he is ranked fifth in the world but a strong end to last season, and confident start to this year, shows he still remains the man to beat.

Winning the Adelaide title last week came after triumphs in Tel Aviv, Astana and the ATP Tour Finals in 2022, with the only defeat in his past 25 matches inflicted by Holger Rune in the Paris Masters final.

Plus, one would imagine a player who has regularly thrived when he feels he has a point to prove will have extra fire in his belly after last year's chaos.

If he wins the title, Djokovic will also regain the world number one ranking.

Spain's Rafael Nadal was the main beneficiary of Djokovic's absence last year, winning a record 21st major men's title and extending his overall tally with another victory at the French Open.

Nadal, 36, is one ahead of Djokovic, who reduced the gap at Wimbledon, in the race to finish with the most silverware which is regularly used to determine the greatest players of all time.

Like Djokovic, Nadal can never be underestimated and ruled out of contention at a major. The two-time champion will be the top seed following US Open winner Alcaraz's withdrawal.

But, after an abdominal injury ruined the second half

of last season for him, and having started this season with two consecutive defeats at the United Cup, another Nadal triumph looks to be a long shot.

A tough draw - which begins with a first-round match against rising British star Jack Draper - could also be problematic.



Djokovic