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Nigeria 2023: The threat of severe hunger

THE begining of this year like any other was ushered in with prayers by Nigerians and with high hopes for better times ahead. Their expectations may just be due to the simple fact that a new Government is going to be put in Oplace and perhaps taking solace philosophically that, the years the locust have eaten would pave the way to that, the years the locust have eaten would pave the way to that of restoration Turn to pages 10, 31.

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Much ado about salary increase

The Federal government has proposed an increase in the salaries and allowances of civil servants which has continued to generate divergent reactions from members of the public. While some people described it as putting the cart before the horse, others say it is a step in the right direction as wage incentives are very important in raising the morale of civil servants.

Some have, however, dismissed the promise, describing it as empty, even as they noted that the promise made to police and teachers on salary increment did not see the light of the day, regretting that the latest one for the civil servants will also go the same way.

However, it is already a known fact that the economic realities in Nigeria occasioned by inflation is not friendly to civil servants who are doing everything possible to manage the situation. And, it is because of the economic hardship that the Federal Government has said it will soon make a pronouncement on salary increase for civil servants

The Minister of Labour and Productivity, Dr Chris Ngige recently hinted that the government would adjust workers' salaries to cushion the effects of rising costs of living in the country. Even though the Presidential Committee on Salaries had embarked on a review of salaries of workers in the country to help workers with the economic downturn in the country. According to him, the committee is expected to come up with salary adjustment in 2023.

According to the Minister, the Presidential Committee on Salaries is working hand-in-hand with the National Salaries Incomes and Wages Commission who is mandated by the Act establishing them to fix salaries, wages, and emoluments in not only the public service. They are working with the Presidential Committee on Salaries chaired by the finance ministry and co-chair by Dr Ngige to look at the demands of the workers.

On whether a time line has been fixed for implementation of new salary increase, Ngige said: "As we enter the New Year, government will make some pronouncements in that direction." Ngige described 2022 as a year of "industrial dispute". A year of industrial dispute starting from the February's Academic Staff Union of the Universities (ASUU) strike which was joined by other sister unions in the university system and even the people in the research institutes.

We are certain that a raise in salaries will help reduce some of the too many industrial actions by unions. And asking for wage increase can also be understandable because of what inflation had done in the economy and the attendant cost of living for people who are workers in the public sector.

According to the Minister, the Presidential Committee on Salaries is working hand-in-hand with the National Salaries Incomes and Wages Commission who is mandated by the Act establishing them to fix salaries, wages, and emoluments in not only the public service. They are working with the Presidential Committee on Salaries chaired by the finance ministry and co-chair by Dr Ngige to look at the demands of the workers.

It is our candid view that the spiraling inflation makes room for a raise in the salaries of public servants but that should not only be mouthed by those in position of authority but concrete measures be put in place to follow through with the process. We are, therefore, hopeful that the increase would help reduce some of the too many industrial actions by unions.

Why fuel scarcity persists across Nigeria -Marketers

The Major Oil Marketers Association of Nigeria, (MOMAN), has attributed the lingering fuel scarcity in the country to high costs of vessels and inadequate trucks to deliver petroleum products from depots to filling stations across Nigeria.

The marketers explained that these high logistics and exchange rate costs continue to put pressure on their operations with ripple effects on the pump price.

In a statement on Friday, the marketers said the fuel queues are caused by exceptionally high demand and bottlenecks in the fuel distribution chain.

"The major cause is the shortage and high (US Dollar) costs of daughter's vessels for ferrying product from mother vessels to depots along the coast," it said.

Nigerian Governors set committee on new Naira notes

The Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) has set up a six-member committee to engage the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to address anomalies in the country's monetary management and financial system, especially in the issuance of new Naira notes.

The forum disclosed this in a communique issued on yesterday at the end of its virtual meeting held with the CBN Governor, Godwin Emefiele, on Thursday night.

The committee, according to the communique signed by NGF Chairman, Aminu Tambuwal of Sokoto State, is chaired by Governor of Anambra State, Prof. Charles Soludo, with governors of Akwa Ibom, Ogun, Borno, Plateau and Jigawa states as members.

The governors said that while they were not opposed to the objectives of the Naira redesign policy, the apex bank should consider the peculiarities of households and states, especially pertaining to financial inclusion and under-served locations.

"We, the members of the NGF, received a briefing from the Governor of the CBN, Emefiele, on the Naira redesign, its economic and security implications including the new withdrawal policy.

Governors are not opposed to the objectives of the Naira redesign policy.

However, we observe that there are huge challenges that remain problematic to the Nigerian populace (concerning the new Naira notes).

In the circumstances, governors expressed the need for the CBN to consider the peculiarities of states especially as they pertained to financial inclusion and under-served locations."

The governors expressed resolve to work closely with the CBN leadership to ameliorate areas that required policy variation, particularly the poorest households, the vulnerable in society and several other Nigerians that were excluded.

The governors also resolved to collaborate with the CBN and the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) in advancing genuine objectives within the confines of the laws.

They, however, insisted that the recent NFIU Advisory and Guidelines on cash transactions were simply outside the NFIU's legal remit and mandate.

"Next is the inadequate number of trucks to meet the demand to deliver products from depots to filling stations nationwide."

MOMAN said it sympathises with Nigerians over the challenges they are facing in the purchase of petrol at filling stations across the country.

Over the past three months, it said its staff members have worked diligently at depots and filling stations to relieve the stress faced by Nigerians through the Christmas and New year periods.

"Our members have again agreed to extend depot loading hours as well as keep strategically situated service stations open for longer hours to ease access to fuels for our customers," the association said.

It noted that it shall continue to use its best endeavours to ensure that product is sold at the pump at prices currently approved by the regulatory authorities, despite

pressure on price by demand and costs in immediate operating environment.

"A final resolution to these challenges will be the full deregulation of the petroleum downstream sector to encourage liberalisation of supply and long-term investments in distribution assets. We urge the government to work towards this end goal," it said.

In recent months, especially since the government announced plans to remove fuel subsidies, Nigerians have had a hard time getting petroleum products at filling stations.

The scarcity has persisted despite the government's repeated claims it had enough petroleum products in stock. In many parts of the country, operators of filling stations sold at prices higher than the government's pump price.



INEC officials task on neutrality, youth to shun violence

The Nigerian Ethnic Nationalities Youth Leaders Council (NENYLC), has called on INEC officials to be apolitical, unbiased and remain neutral during the entire electioneering process in the country.

The group also called on Nigerian youth to shun any form of violence and all manners of electoral malpractices in the 2023 General Elections and beyond.

The President General of NENYLC, Mr Terry Obeih, made the call at a press conference on Friday in Abuja.

Obeih said that the Council, being the apex coalition body of more than 407 ethnic groups in Nigeria, is extremely concerned on the preparations of INEC to conduct free, fair and credible elections.

"As we move close to the Feb. 25 Presidential and National Assembly, and the Gubernatorial and State Houses of Assembly elections, respectively, we want to use this opportunity to call on INEC officials to remain apolitical, unbiased and neutral during the entire electioneering process.

"We equally call on the Nigerian youth to shun any form of violence and all manners of electoral malpractices, while admonishing all well-meaning Nigerians to stop all campaigns of calumnies predicated on ethnic bigotry and religious animosity capable of overheating the political atmosphere.

"We equally want to use the media to reassure all Nigerians that, as part of our noble mandate, we shall be organising a National Youth Discourse on Youth Agenda and Peaceful Co-existence Manifesto Presentation slated for Feb. 16 in Abuja.

All presidential candidates of political parties contesting for the presidency would be invited to present

their manifestos on youth development agenda," Obeih said.

The group further called on President Muhammadu Buhari to ensure absolute neutrality and guide the entire process, especially on national security and economic revival.

Obeih also demanded that all law-enforcement agents, security apparatus and institutional architecture should build common synergy and remain steadfast to ensure watertight security and management of the election.

Similarly, a member of the group and National President of Ohanaeze Ndigbo Youth Council Worldwide, Mr Okwu Nnabuike, said the group expects the security agencies to deal with criminal elements like bandits, unknown gunmen and others, so as to have a credible election.

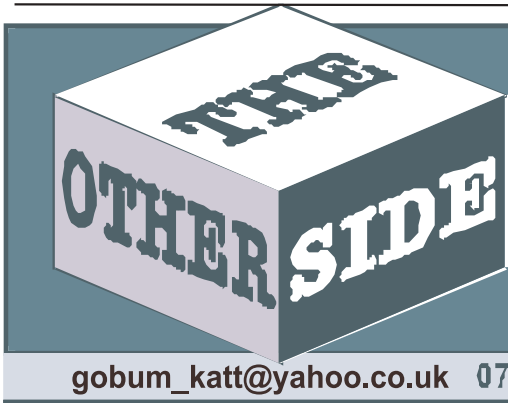
"However, we call on the youth to get their PVCs; we have the larger number. Stop complaining, get your PVCs and do the needful during the election.

"However, after hearing from the different presidential candidates, we will mobilise the youth to do the needful," Nnabuike said.

Speaking, the Leader of the Coalition of Northern youths and Vice President of NENYLC, Alhaji Balareba Rufai, said the unity and peaceful co-existence of Nigerians is paramount.


According to Rufai, the interest of the nation is bigger and better than that of any individual contesting for the election.

Meanwhile, the Secretary General of NENYLC, Mr Oladotun Hassan, said the conversation with the presidential candidates on Feb. 16 would determine the direction of the youth in the election.



With
**Katdapba
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On Sunday**

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"As a matter of fact, most of the parties hardly gave the women any room to operate and express themselves. But it was not reason enough to get that decimal outing they got. Several of them made their marks without the men's support. That is what the men wouldn't want to hear about."

Needed: A fight for Nigerian women

LET me make a confession right from the onset, and I won't hide under any guise: women the world over have come of age. They are everywhere proving their mettle. They have done a lot to be appreciated by the men. Those who think otherwise may not discard such views for a long time to come. The views are purely held on the basis of gender and for us, mark it; it is dangerous to our development as a people.

Like it or hate it, we can't deny the fact that women have changed the face of how things are done. We have examples to show; in fact even those who do not want to hear about the exploits of women, are quick to point to the fact that women have tremendously made their marks in Nigeria's development.

I have chosen a topic that several of Nigerians would prefer not to talk about. Each person you meet has a different version to the issue. Some of the reasons are spurious as they are laughable in content. The reasons don't reflect logic but are in the main chauvinistic in reason. Well, that is what the women don't want to hear, so also are some men.

Even as it is explosive, I would rather talk about it as perhaps just gloss over the issue. For how long would we ignore the issue? For how long would the men think that the women do not matter, so long as we think we are in a man's world? Who says that the women do not matter in these issues that we have always excluded them?

Several statistics have been provided on the level of acceptance of the quality of work and representation in the last couple of years. This is not to run away from the realities that in years pass, women were not considered to be 'good' enough to give quality representation. This is no doubt chauvinistic in orientation and thinking.

We know that the balance of power is tipped heavily greatly against the women. They don't just need appointment; they need to slug it out with the men during elections. The truth is that the women don't have the financial muscle to wrestle power from the men; hence they have to depend on the men for tickets to contest elective positions.

The women may be more in number, but it is always the men that are in command. One woman wrote: "sometimes I think that men are afraid of the speed with which we will achieve development if they gave power to women and so they hold on to it." We shall soon come to this point.

Below it has been considered why there are impediments in the way of women. I have reproduced the views so as to make a point in the area that even the men and women have continued to ignore. We need as a people to study what other countries have achieved in the area of balancing the negative stats against women. It is a different story altogether today. Consider this, and let me warn;



Tallen

these views are expressed by some Nigerians. Let us consider these:

In August 2003, women won 48.8% of the parliamentary seats. In the 2008 elections, women won 45 out of the 80 parliamentary seats, amounting to about 53.25% of the votes. Rwanda's post-genocide 2003 constitution reserves 30% of parliamentary seats for women. Perhaps as a result of genocide, the population of men in Rwanda today is 45% while that of women is 55%, so you could argue that the current representation in parliament is a fair reflection of current demographics. These women voted a new law granting women land inheritance rights, a thing which almost a heresy in our traditional African setting.

Within Africa, the average for women representation is 18.5%. Uganda and South Africa have an average of 44%. The post-Apartheid Constitution of South Africa has outlawed all forms of discrimination on the basis of race, gender or sexual orientation. And they enforce those rights with great relish.

The Nordic countries have traditionally had the best tradition of gender balance in parliamentary government. The average representation of women is 44%. Norway and Finland have produced remarkable women prime ministers. The average for North America is 23.1%, while that of Europe is 19.9% (not that far ahead of Africa)! The Arabs, predictably score the lowest world-wide (11.7%).

Nigeria is extremely far behind in women representation. The problem exists throughout the 3 tiers of government. So far, no woman has made to Governor's position. Of the 700+ local

governments, there until last year only 4 LG women Chairmen (funny, that one)! Obasanjo in his second coming did bring in a good number of women into the cabinet (although the murmurs of the 'Obasanjo women' being literally his were all the rage. And it was said that he dislodged the remarkable Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala because she did not understand what it meant to be "an Obasanjo woman". I am sure there were some who were totally above board, but one of them so ferociously defending his right to be philanderer got me rather suspicious of her and in fact of most of the "Obasanjo women".

Unfortunately, I have to also say that the type of women who make it in Nigerian politics are the types that none of us would like to identify with. Most are considered fair game for the after midnight dark complots by wheeler-dealer politicians. These women are seen as part of the national cake (excuse my French, ladies)! In Hausa land, all the women politicians were viewed as being only slightly better than whores (Gambo Sawaba and Laila Dogonyaro who passed away recently). I am sorry to say, one of them did not have an enviable reputation in Aso Villa when she was in the Cabinet. One of those types has made it to the Senate in my own Southern Kaduna. No decent woman would be prepared to do what some of these people are prepared to do to get where they are.

Where does that leave us? Politics is a murky business, but it is also a calling demanding the highest ideals in moral character. It is about our very lives and destiny -- and the life chances of millions of our citizens. Women must be part of it, because they are the bedrock of our society. We need to create a political culture that allows the right sort of women to make it into

politics and to be a pride not only to the womenfolk but to our society and nation. We need great women, noble women -- and I am sure they are there in our country, our communities and even in this Forum of ours. We must encourage them not only through progressive laws but through positive affirmation.

Patricia Etteh was removed for allegedly misusing 600 million naira. Her successor Bankole is in trouble for allegedly diverting a staggering 35 billion naira. Women, clearly, are better, if you truly look at it. Professor Adenike Grange was handcuffed for taking 10 million naira. Some of our men politicians are walking away literally with murder. Hassan Lawal, formerly of Works, had 25 billion in one account along. Let's allow the women to take over this country. Women are most reluctant to fight wars. They may be corrupt, but they seem more compassionate at the end of the day.

Again whether we like it or not out there, 'women are still struggling to be heard, of the 13 women that contested the governorship elections (in Nigeria), none was successful. 59 women contested as deputies, mainly in inconsequential parties except in Lagos State. 22 women contested the House of Representatives poll and only 15 were elected into the 360-member lower chamber. 7 women were elected into the 109 member senate out of the 97 that contested the election. In the 36 States Houses of Assembly, 517 women contested for seats and only 42 were elected. More so, only 1 contested the presidential election-Ebiti Ndok of UNPD, she did not win'.

Well I didn't expect her to make any impact. Even as a reporter I never read about her candidacy or given as much publicity as the others. Perhaps it could be attributed to her lack of financial muscles as the men who contested alongside with her. Nigerians are quick to point to the foray of Sarah Jubril, who since time immemorial has contested elections with the men. While it is a fact that she was not the only female delegate, she got only a vote during the presidential primaries at Eagle Square, Abuja.

While it was apparent, she may have voted for herself, the other female delegates chose to go

with the men. We do not know of any reason, but we do know that the women may have always stood against themselves and victory. She, like other women may have lost because they were not supported by the womenfolk. It has always been like that; as a result they hardly go far in such political contest.

We can count so many women who attempted or rather competed with the men but got wounded in the process. You don't need to go too far, remember, former NAFDAC and Minister of Information and Communication, Dora Akunyili. She resigned to contest for a Senatorial seat in Anambra. She almost (yes almost, that word again) got it, but got burnt on the way. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala also got burnt because the men wouldn't want the women to create any impact.

There was no doubt she put up a spirited fight like most women are wont to do. She no doubt lost gallantly. There are several women such as her. They got consumed by the political 'fire work' of their men counterparts. That does not mean they are inferior. They are not; it is only the imagination of the man; and indeed some the women who do not believe in their ability to conquer the world. This is the category that has stood between women and the realization of their enormous potentials.

As a matter of fact, most of the parties hardly gave the women any room to operate and express themselves. But it was not reason enough to get that decimal outing they got. Several of them made their marks without the men's support. That is what the men wouldn't want to hear about.

There is a national shortage of women politicians just as there is a shortage as engineers. But we know that some women have come out tops of the men in certain areas of human endeavour. There is so much to reap from the women. Their capacity for insisting on why things should be done rightly is awesome and can be appreciated in the final analysis.

That is what the country wants now. We have gone through so much and for negative reasons indeed. The time has come for the women to change the country's orientation in good governance and accountability. We are lacking in such regards, my instincts continuously tell me, and the women can provide that platform.

"There is a national shortage of women politicians just as there is a shortage as engineers. But we know that some women have come out tops of the men in certain areas of human endeavour. There is so much to reap from the women. Their capacity for insisting on why things should be done rightly is awesome and can be appreciated in the final analysis."



Jos fuel palaver, long overdue

For months now, the residents of Plateau State have been groaning under the burden of unreasonable hike in transport fare. At the peak of the rainy season, the exploration was that the flood that devastated some riverine states have submerged the roads, blocking the passage of fuel tankers laden with fuel for northern states and the North Central states.

It was a very difficult time but we endured it bearing in mind that it was caused by a natural disaster. It was no body's fault. However, not sooner than we accepted our fate, praying for respite that the Nigerian thing began to rear its head.

The hydra headed monster, corruption, took over. It was very disturbing that filling stations seldom had fuel but black marketers always had it in stock. Most filling stations became a shadow of their former selves. And they were a beehive of activity anytime there was fuel which was very rare.

Fuel became a very scarce commodity which was sold for as high as N350 per litre. You either buy it or leave it. The ripple effect was that transport fare doubled. Distance that used to attract N70, started charging N100. And distance that used to attract N100 skyrocketed to N150.

The government of Plateau State set up a committee to go round filling stations to make sure they were not hoarding fuel to sell to black marketers. There was a little respite because all of a sudden, fuel was available in filling stations. However, the price was still high.

It was understandable when the fuel scarcity and fuel price hike was all over the country. We understand that after the flood, the fuel tankers have had a

hitch free journey to their destination. Unfortunately, in Plateau State, the price of fuel is still high, transport fare has not gone down. Transporters are having a Field day at the expense of the common man.

It is so sad that in Abuja, Nassarawa and most states of the federation, one can drive into filling stations and buy fuel at less than N200 per litre but not in Plateau State. They have not experienced doubling of transport fare because there is no reason for that.

If one wishes to buy fuel for less than N200 per litre, then one needs to queue up for days at NNPC filling station situated at Dogon Karfe. Or bribe one of the workers to gain you entrance, a driver disclosed. All you need to part with is N1000 or N2000 if you are generous.

You don't need a sooth sayer to tell you that there is a very notorious and wicked cabal in Plateau State gaining from our misfortune. They have forgotten that the word of God says ill gotten money does not pay. It is the kind of money that opens door for illness, loss and a lot of pain and destruction.

Recently, we were discussing in the office about the lingering fuel palaver and unreasonable hike. Everyone started wondering why the committee saddled with the responsibility to ensure filling stations were selling fuel to the public not supplying black marketers did not continue their job. We need someone to find out why our case in Plateau State is different. Are we not in Nigeria. Those behind this wickedness should be made to pay for it.

The cry of the masses is going before God. They need to face the wrath of the law. Enough is enough!

It is so sad that in Abuja, Nassarawa and most states of the federation, one can drive into filling stations and buy fuel at less than N200 per litre but not in Plateau State. They have not experienced doubling of transport fare because there is no reason for that. If one wishes to buy fuel for less than N200 per litre, then one needs to queue up for days at NNPC filling station situated at Dogon Karfe. Or bribe one of the workers to gain you entrance, a driver disclosed. All you need to part with is N1000 or N2000 if you are generous.

NEWS

Armed herders attack Benue IDPs camp, beheads nine

From TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi

At least nine persons have been reportedly killed, many others beheaded and injured as suspected armed Fulani Herdsmen launched a surprise attack on a community hosting the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp Abagena, a suburb in Makurdi Local government area.

Addressing the visibly panicky mourners and members of the community, Executive Secretary, Benue State Emergency Management Agency, Dr. Emmanuel Shior described the attack as inhuman, barbaric and unacceptable.

He pointed out that there was no reason whatsoever to have warranted such a heinous attack on helpless people who have accepted their fate to stay in the IDP camps for safety.

He called on President Muhammadu Buhari to live up to his responsibility to safeguard lives and properties of Nigerians. "My heart breaks a thousand times at the rate things keep degenerating to an extent that you never can tell who will be the next victim."

While lamenting the failure of President Muhammadu Buhari to live up to his constitutional responsibility of defending the country against Fulani Herdsmen attacks, terrorism and other criminal attacks by criminal elements in the country, he said "whether civilian or law enforcement agent, you can fall victim."

Governorship hopeful vows to eliminate poverty

From GYANG PAM, Yola

The governorship candidate of the Action Alliance (AA) for 2023 in Adamawa State, Engineer Hussein Suleiman Tahir has vowed to eliminate poverty, ignorance and other social vices bedeviling the minerals rich state if elected.

He made the vow while addressing a large crowd recently during his declaration of intent and request for support of his governorship aspiration in Yola the Adamawa State capital.

Engr. Hussein emphasized more on Agro-based industries in the State and maintained that, "we need a purposeful government that shall empower our farmers, pastoralists, fishermen as well as poultry producers for the betterment of the citizens".

According to Hussein, "what we need to do is to "have the right people in governance, right policies so that we can harness these agricultural potentials for our teeming population".

He lamented that "the Country is dead due to poor administration, stressing that in a situation where someone can't afford two square meals a day, no water, no electricity, it is as good as he is dead, hence the need for the party to prevent such ugly situation".

On security challenges, the party flag bearer said the problem is more pronounced because our youths are neglected, and for them to survive they venture into various societal vices", he stressed.



Ortom

"It's a shame that the President who is the Chief Security Officer of the country wouldn't rise up to defend the people who entrust their mandate into his hands."

He however said the people should continue to support Governor Samuel Ortom for his stance against the invaders with the hope that the country will one day attend to the cries of Benue people and assured the panic IDPs to have faith in Governor Ortom's administration as security will be beefed up in the area to avoid future occurrence.

While commiserating with families of the decease, the SEMA boss prayed God to give them the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss.

Commissioner of Police, Benue State Command, Wale Abass also commiserated with families of the decease and promised to station policemen in the area for surveillance.

MueTer Ihyarev in Makurdi Local Government Area, Chief Simon Ajoh expressed disappointment over the frequent attacks on the community and called on Federal Government to intervene.

One of the victims Mr. Isaac who escaped death by whisksers said some of the IDPs on hearing gunshots ran into the bush to escape being killed.

Some of the IDPs and locals said the herders who stormed the community around 9: PM last night shot sporadically, killing 9 IDPs who were asleep.

He stated that "though tackling insecurity is paramount to the federal government but we as a people could assist in taking different dimensions on security matters without fear or favour from some quarters".

He called on those who confronted hardened criminals to be well equipped and rewarded accordingly to serve as a booster to other security personnel.

Engineer Hussein Sulaiman

'Turn up in your hundreds and vote for me'

From GYANG PAM, Mayo Belwa

IN continuation of her tour of Adamawa State to solicit votes in her quest to be elected Governor of the state, Senator Aishatu Dahiru Ahmed Binani was short of words and simply thanked

the large crowd for welcoming her to Mayo Belwa the Local Government Headquarters

Our correspondent reports that the Senator was emotional when she simply thanked the crowd and declared, "please turn up in your hundreds and vote for me and everyone else in APC".

Binani as she is called, had also visited Tola and Mayo Jereng where she was received by a tumultuous crowd singing her praises.

Earlier, former Governor of Adamawa State, Vice Admiral Murtala Nyako had declared to the crowd that the gubernatorial candidate deserved the votes because she can be trusted.

Says Nyako, "I am really happy to welcome the woman who shall rule us".

In his brief remarks, one-time state chairman of the PDP during Nyako's rein but now with the APC Alhaji Mijinyawa Kugama said, "Voting Aishatu is like voting Nyako to the applause of the crowd".

At Tola and the areas she visited she encouraged the large crowds to come out and vote for Tinubu and her humble self for the progress and development of Adamawa State.



Fintiri

POLITICS

'Keep an eye on every vote'

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Director General of Tinubu/Shettima Campaign Organisation and Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong, CON, has called on APC Polling Agents to put their eagle eyes on every vote cast to ensure Victory for the party Presidential level down to the State Houses of Assembly level.

He made the call recently while delivering a keynote remark at the Train-The Trainers Workshop for APC Polling Agents across the country held at Rainbow Event Marquee Garki Area 8 Abuja, Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

The DG said, "as part of the critical engagements, we met recently with all the APC candidates and discussed the challenges and opportunities for our party in the elections. A lot of their submissions bothered on the roles that you as Polling Agents are expected to play before, during and after the elections.

"The Nigerian electorate are dynamic and continuously getting sophisticated in their thinking, composition and actions based on evolving realities and issues of the day. Only recently, INEC told us that about 12.3 million new voters registered and are now eligible to vote for the first time. This means that we have to take them into consideration as we plan to canvass for their votes and ensure that they choose the APC on election day.

"Besides, the 2022 Electoral Act which will be used for the elections is not the same as what was used in the 2019 general elections. Therefore, we cannot assume that what we knew about election four years ago will be sufficient for us to properly maximize our potentials in the forthcoming elections. Apart from getting familiar with the BIVAS technology, you have to also be well-informed on the new guidelines that relate to transmission of results among others.

"That is why we have convened this Train-the-Trainer exercise which gives us an opportunity to first appreciate you as our Polling Agents for the roles you have been playing in mobilizing for the party across the country and also defending the interests of our candidates.

"While you get this knowledge from the trainers today, I want you to know that you are the foot soldiers of the party on election day and will be required to keep an eye on every vote and also ensure that the APC and all of its candidates are not shortchanged. We shall be relying on you to be on ground and ensure that every guideline is followed during the exercise", he enthused.

Lalong further explained that it was difficult for them to bring all their agents for this training at once. That was why they had selected them so that they could get the knowledge and cascade it



Lalong

down to the grassroots when they return home preparatory to general elections.

He therefore, appealed to members of party to remain steadfast and shun any action that would draw back the fortunes of the party saying, "already, we have received overwhelming support from Nigerians in all the states we have visited and others we are yet to visit.

"Asiwaju and Shettima as

Kogi rally: APC mocks

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE Kogi State All Progressives Congress presidential campaign council has mocked the Presidential candidate of PDP, Abubakar Atiku over what it alleged was a hired crowd to deceive the people worldwide during his campaign in Kogi recently.

The APC Campaign Council described last Saturday's presidential campaign rally of the People's Democratic Party, PDP as an assemblage of "expired politicians and lecture theatre crowd" that would not win the state for the party.

Director of Media and Publicity, Kogi State APC Campaign Council, Mr Kingsley Fanwo who stated this on behalf of the campaign council said that the presidential campaign train of PDP and that of the Labour Party had misjudged their appeals to Nigerian citizens.

"The umbrella circus did not need anyone to tell them that Kogi people have rejected them".

Fanwo said that the confluence stadium, venue of the rally was populated by expired politicians whom the people of the state have rejected.

"Even though they brought in supporters from outside the state to beef up appearances, the modest crowd was eloquent enough. Crafty camera angles could not hide yawning gaps in the stands and it was painfully obvious that the former ruling party had been fittingly reduced to a shadow of itself in Kogi State over the last 7 years.

"What they said would be an overflow rally that would bring our city to a standstill for the day, barely registered on the radar of hardworking Kogites. The innocents who did turn out for them in the vain hope of

well as our candidates for Governors, Senate, House of Representatives and State Assemblies are clearly on the lead. We have to push to the end. I want to assure you that the PCC and the party leadership is doing everything possible to ensure that you are adequately mobilised and enabled to carry out this sensitive assignment without difficulties".

hearing anything which might persuade them to reevaluate their poor opinion of the PDP left reinforced in their disdain for people whose stint in government brought their state, nay, country, to their knees.

"Even their diehard members who came in expectations of the usual largesse associated with the party in her heydays became dispirited when the lies started. The rest of our people went about their normal businesses, utterly disinterested in the hollow antics of a party that once wasted 13 precious years for them".

"Dismayed by the poor turnout, the PDP resorted to theatrics. It rolled out expired individuals who had been expunged from the ranks of the APC for their unsavoury deeds and characters and proceeded to canonise them. The rally turned into a farce when people like the former Deputy Governor of the State, Elder Simeon Achuba and the former speaker of the state Assembly, Rt Hon. Alfa Imam was repackaged for Atiku as Kogi APC stalwarts who were decamping to the PDP at the rally", he said.

"What Atiku and his entourage might not have known is that this is the same Achuba who was impeached from office with ignominy by the state Assembly for gross misconduct during the first term of the administration. He rejoined his former bedmates in the PDP ahead of the 2019 general elections and failed to deliver even his own ward in that year's presidential, legislative and gubernatorial elections.

"Rt Hon. Alfa Imam is another has-been whose poor leadership pitched him in a running battle with his colleagues when he was

A group under the auspices of Coalition of Political Parties Support in Kogi Central Senatorial District has made a clarion call on the former Minister of State, Labour and Productivity, Professor Stephen Ocheni to run for the governorship seat in Kogi.

Chairman of the group, Alhaji Isah Ibrahim, at a press conference held in Lokoja, affirmed that Professor Stephen Ocheni has all it takes to win overwhelmingly during the forthcoming November governorship election in the state if given the chance.

"We solicit support for the former minister to be given the opportunity as number one citizen of Kogi in view of his track record of service and experience in the public and academic sectors of human

Group asks ex-minister to join guber race

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

endeavour.

"Aside his track record of service both in the public and academic circle, Professor Ocheni has also touched positively the lives of the poor, needy, vulnerable and even the rich.

"We also need to set aside tribal, religious and political affiliations in our choice of who should govern Kogi and base our preference on credibility and ability to deliver as it relates to provision of democracy dividends to citizens.

Highpoint of the conference was the conferment of Award of Excellence on Professor

Stephen Ocheni as a boost to enable him render more services for humanity.

Comrade Ali Atabor, former Chairman of Kogi State Council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) and Personal Aide to Professor Stephen Ocheni while receiving the award on behalf of his boss, said that he will convey their clarion call to his boss for consideration.

He appreciated the group for according his boss recognition of good performance during his services at both public and academic sectors.

He assured that the honour bestowed on his boss will spur him to continue to do more in service delivery when given the opportunity.

PDP candidate promises to turn around Benue economy

By WUESE ORSHI

PEOPLES Democratic Party, PDP, governorship candidate in Benue State, Rt Hon Titus Uba has stated that if voted as governor his administration would use the huge agricultural potentials of the state to turn around her economy.

Engr. Uba who stated this

recently in Gwer-west and Makurdi Local Government Areas in separate campaign rallies added that the strategy would not only create jobs for the teeming youth but also ensure food security.

The PDP guber candidate noted that Benue as an agrarian state has potentials

of becoming the economic nerve center of the nation. He stressed that his administration will explore the comparative advantage of the state in agriculture to make farming attractive and create wealth for the state.

He averred that his administration would also strengthen the anti -open grazing law of the state with a view to protecting the seizure of Benue land from their rightful owners and called on Benue people to vote for him and all other PDP candidates.

The state number one lawmaker also used the occasion to inform the people that he was back on his feet and thanked them for their prayers.

In his remarks, leader of the party in the state, Governor Samuel Ortom said Benue has suffered too long from the ills of the Buhari led federal government and enjoined the people to vote him as Senator, Engr. Uba as governor and all other PDP candidates to consolidate on the gains of his administration.

He emphasized that Engr. Uba had learnt the act of governance long enough for him to assume leadership of the state and assured the people of good governance if Uba succeeds him.

Other speakers including the acting state Chairman of PDP, Hon. Isaac Mfo, Director - General PDP State Campaign Council, Dr Cletus Tyokyaa, Senator Orker Jev and many others all encouraged the people to vote PDP in the February 25th 2023 general elections.

The traditional councils of Tyoshin and Makurdi received Engr. Titus Uba and gave their blessings to his candidature.

The occasion also witnessed the defection of thousands of APC members and other opposition parties into the PDP in Gwer West and Makurdi Local Government Areas.



Adamu

Speaker of the State House of Assembly. At the cusp of being impeached, he pleaded to be allowed to resign. He was obliged and he too left office and our party in 2019. Shortly after he decamped to the SDP, another rickety platform in Kogi State where his presence was as ineffectual as his departure was unfelt in the APC. We won the 2019 landslide without them. Since then, the two men have failed in their political self-delusions and have continued to fail.

"It soon became clear that the political jesters in Kogi PDP had deliberately lied to their Dubai-based presidential candidate and his hangers-on that all projects in Kogi State were done by them. So, the poor man spent his time on the podium attributing the massive projects constructed by Yahaya Bello, either to a man who left office over one

decade before construction started on them or to the PDP administration in which he used to be number two.

"Even the pitiable sight of the immediate past PDP Governor of Kogi State craving for some level of attention did not dissuade the PDP from treating his tenure as if it never happened. Indeed, there may have been a method to their madness, for in reality, if one were to judge dispassionately, his tenure, like the one before it, cannot boast of any visible contribution to the wellbeing of the people, so it might as well never have happened."

The APC thereby urged Kogites to ignore Atiku's promise of revamping Ajaokuta Steel, said the former Vice President was instrumental to the bizarre manner the steel company was privatized leading to its comatose.

POLITICS

Nentawe suspends campaign in honour of accident victims

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Generation Next Campaign Council Captain and gubernatorial candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Dr. Nentawe Yilwatda Goshwe, has suspended his campaign tour for three days in the state in honour of some supporters of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), who died in an auto-crash along Panyam-Pankshin road.

This was contained in a press statement signed by spokesman of Generation Next Campaign Council, Shittu Bamaiyi, and made available to **SUNDAY STANDARD** in Jos, the Plateau State capital recently.

According to the statement, Dr. Nentawe on receipt of the news of the accident, immediately cut short his citizen engagement tour of the southern part of the state. He explained that, "the suspension became necessary to allow me and members of our party join the PDP, its governorship candidate and



Nentawe

the families of the deceased in mourning the accident victims".

The APC gubernatorial candidate in company of members of his campaign council visited the accident victims at the Jos University Teaching Hospital where he sympathized with them as he

was taken round the wards by one of the Medical Doctors, Peter Onumiyin and prayed and wished them a quick recovery.

Dr. Nentawe, thereafter, took time to sympathise with families of those who lost their loved ones and prayed against the reoccurrence of such a painful tragedy.

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

NIGERIAN Deputy Head of Mission to the Republic of Germany, Ambassador Regina Ocheni has solicited complementary roles of the youths across the country in ensuring the conduct of credible elections. She admonished Nigerian youths to embrace good behaviour and refrain from acts capable of derailing the free and fair conduct of the coming general elections.

Ambassador Regina Ocheni gave the advice at her country home in Ajaka while hosting a youth group, Igalamela Renaissance Ajaka.

Ambassador Ocheni said the peaceful conduct of the coming general elections was necessary for the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria.

She called on the youth group to join hands with other stakeholders in sensitizing the voting population to obtain their Permanent Voters Card to enable them exercise their franchise.

Ambassador Regina Ocheni who is the Grand Matron of the Group, hailed the interactive

Ambassador tasks youths on conduct of credible elections



Yakubu

session which she said was aimed at intimating her with the progress of the body, describing the group as a vital segment that the society cannot do without.

She expressed satisfaction with the general conduct of members of the Renaissance Group, urging them to embrace continued self development through skills acquisition for sustainable future.

Earlier, the husband of the Grand Matron of the group, Professor Stephen Ocheni commended the body for their enthusiasm towards the development of their community.

Professor Ocheni who was a former Minister assured them of his unwavering support to the realisation of their goals, advising the youth to shun any form of political thuggery.

The former Minister further

called on the youth to be disciplined, hardworking and focused and also said this is necessary to overcome obstacles that will derail their growth.

The President of Igalamela Renaissance Group Ajaka, Mr Nasir Ali thanked Ambassador Regina Ocheni for giving hope and succour to the less privileged and the vulnerable in the society through job opportunities and different forms of empowerments.

Mr Nasir described the diplomat as a shining example of a successful housewife and accomplished public servant.

Some of the beneficiaries of the philanthropic gesture of Ambassador Regina Ocheni in their appreciation message, expressed gratitude to her for her benevolence and kindness, and wish her greater success in her diplomatic service.

Obi/Datti to turn vast lands to agric centres

From JOHN FWAH, Kaduna

PETER Obi and Senator Datti Ahmed who flagged off Presidential campaign in Kaduna, recently promised to bring back a new Nigeria where every citizen will be proud to belong.

The presidential candidate of the Labour Party, LP, in this year's elections, Mr Peter Obi, has said that all vast lands in the North will be centres of agriculture while Kaduna State, North West Nigeria will become a processing centre again.

He said "Datti and I will change this country from a consumption to production country because of the high prices of things. All the vast lands in the north will be centres of agriculture. Kaduna State again will become a processing centre. The Bank of Agriculture, (BoA) will finance food production in Nigeria and all the support groups, youth, women and all Nigerians, their labour for the party will not go in vain."

He lamented that presently,

Nigerians are ashamed to identify themselves as Nigerians because of the many challenges the country is faced with.

Obi said: "Kaduna was the capital of Northern Nigeria where every Nigerian was proud to belong, hence we started the campaign here in Kaduna. We are about to bring back that Nigeria where everybody was happy to belong. Kaduna State represented productivity in the North. It represented what was good in Nigeria. And that is what we want to bring back. We are tired of hearing stories."

According to him, Kaduna State hosts the best military formations in the country, it is supposed to be more secure than any part of the country.

"But there are so many security challenges in the state. We will secure and unite Nigeria. Security will come back again."

He noted that insecurity in the country is not because the bandits are more formidable than the government, but

because of bad leadership.

"That is why the bandits are everywhere and operating almost freely, killing and causing unimaginable destruction of valuables," he stated.

Obi assured: "We will restructure the security architecture. Security personnel will be well taken care of. We will ensure their lives are taken care of so that their families are taken care of in the event of death."

In the coming elections, he explained that nobody should tell one another about tribe, religion or section, stressing that things are not sold in Nigeria based on religion, tribe or section, but all are suffering from the bad leadership of the country.

Senator Datti Baba-Ahmed, the Labour Party presidential running mate stated that those looking for peace, unity, desiring that things work fine in Nigeria should cast their votes in the coming elections in order to ensure the emergence of a new Nigeria.

He assured: "Nigeria has never gotten the calibre of presidential candidates as it is presently. Kaduna is the centre of good things in the country and hopes the people of the state will come out en masse to change the narrative of this country through their votes by electing Labour Party to power for the good of every Nigerian."

"We are people that say and do exactly what we promised to do. We are serious in ensuring the betterment of Nigeria and ensure equality in all aspects of life for all Nigerians. We promised to wipe away the tears of the common man and give them a sense of belonging. It is only Peter Obi that is saying that Nigerians should vote for him

because of his credibility."

The gubernatorial candidate of the party in Kaduna State, Jonathan Asake thanked the youths for being a great engine room of the party as well as women and the support groups, saying, "there will be inclusiveness in all spheres of life to enhance the living standards of all Nigerians because the party means well for Nigerians and Nigeria."

I'm confident Titus Uba will do well as governor -Ortom

From TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi

BENUE State Governor, Samuel Ortom has expressed confidence that the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP governorship candidate in the state, Engr Titus Uba will do well when elected governor of the state on March 11th this year.

Governor Ortom stated this recently in his remarks during the unveiling of the blueprint of the PDP Governorship candidate christened, "Soil as Our Oil" at the party's state Secretariat in Makurdi.

He pointed out that the unveiled blueprint was encompassing in its contents, stressing that it captures all areas of human needs for socio-economic development, including those his government was not able to capture.

In his words, "We are here today to unveil the blueprint of our party's governorship candidate, Titus Uba titled, "Soil as Our Oil." I want to say that this is a sincere commitment as we go to the 23 Local Government Areas beginning from tomorrow.

"I am happy that this

blueprint is being unveiled today. It has captured even areas that my government was not able to capture and I believe that by the grace of God on May 29th, this year, Titus Uba and John Ngbede will be sworn-in as Governor and Deputy Governor."

Governor Ortom stressed that Engr Uba who is the current Speaker of the Benue State House of Assembly and his running mate, Sir Ngbede were experienced hands and not novices in the business of governance.

He said the duo will hit the ground running once they come into office, adding that "They will not need to be taken on induction to begin work as Governor and Deputy Governor."

The PDP gubernatorial candidate, Engr Uba in his address while presenting his blueprint explained that the document titled "Soil as Our Oil" had two cardinal pillars of security and agriculture.

He emphasised that the main focus of the blueprint was on security while the economic drive was premised on agriculture. He noted that "agriculture which is our natural endowment will be used to develop the state."



Obi

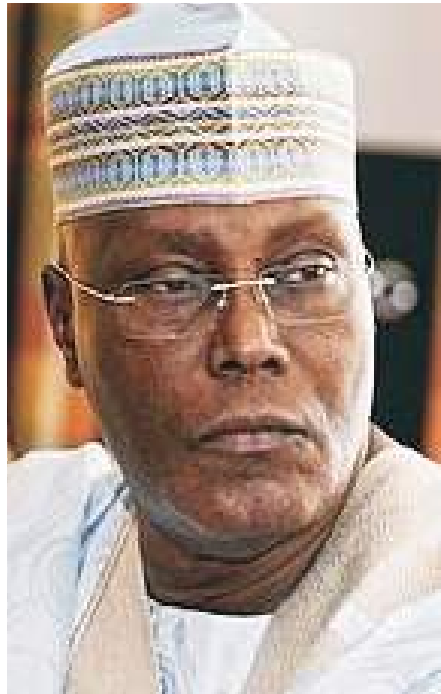
SUNDAY POLITICS

2022: Political activities in perspective

The year 2022 may have come and gone and the much talked about and anticipated 2023 is here, but both are years that will have so much significance and determine a lot about Nigeria's future, LUCY CHINDABA writes.



Tinubu



Atiku



Obi



Kwankwaso

THE year 2023, another year in the political cycle of Nigeria is a year that will play a major role in the lives of Nigerians both the old and the young, men and women alike as they go to the polls to elect officials that will man the country for the next four years. As a prelude to that, the year 2022 witnessed a lot of political activities as a build up to 2023 with a lot of surprises as well. It was in that year that we for the first time heard terms like: emi lokan, the G5 governors, Obidients, among others.

The year 2022 witnessed notable events in the nation's history and will remain memorable for a long time to come. The one major, very important event is the signing of the Electoral Act as President Muhammadu Buhari signed the Electoral Amendment Bill into law in February 2022 after rejecting it five times. According to reports, the president had refused to sign the bill citing reasons that ranged from the cost of election, insecurity and drafting errors to proximity to the date of elections, amongst others. This law shaped the political landscape as the Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act bars political appointees from voting or contesting at party congresses.

The legislation allows INEC to review results made under duress or financial inducement. It extends the time for campaigns from 90 to 150 days, and provides for the use of technology to determine the mode of voting and transmission of results. Stakeholders in Nigeria strongly believe that the law can help manage challenges that were experienced in the past during elections amongst which was manipulation of election results.

However, one worrisome issue as contained in the Act is, instead of reducing the role of money in politics, the Act has increased the campaign finance limit from N1 billion to N5 billion for presidential candidates and also for all other elected positions have also been increased.

The Electoral Act requires that parties submit the names of their candidates 180 days before the elections, thereby allowing for the

legal resolution of fractious primaries ahead of the voting day. Before signing the Electoral Act, the president sought an amendment to the bill by asking the National Assembly to delete Clause 84(12) of the bill, a section that precludes political office holders from participating in party primaries and voting during congresses, as it breaches participation rights. Section 84(8) reads, "A political party that adopts the system of indirect primaries for the choice of its candidate shall clearly outline in its constitution and rule the procedure for the democratic election of delegates to vote at the convention, congress or meeting." However, the National Assembly refused to make this amendment.

This meant that several of President Buhari's ministers were unable to contest for elective office until they first resigned from their positions. The Act forced many political appointees to resign to contest their party primaries, while others jettisoned their political ambition to remain in office.

Another very important event in 2022 is the introduction of the Bimodal Voter Registration System (BVAS). The BVAS is a technological device used to identify and accredit voters' fingerprints and facial recognition before voting, while the IReV is an online portal where polling unit level results are uploaded directly from the polling unit, transmitted and published for the public. At the front end of the online portal, members of the public can create personal accounts with which they can gain access to all uploaded results stored as PDF files. This accessibility of polling unit level results increases transparency and public trust in the process.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is therefore on the right path by insisting on the use of modern technology, particularly the Bimodal Voter Registration System (BVAS) and the Election Result Viewing Portal (IReV). The introduction of this technology by the electoral umpire INEC is in fulfillment of its promise to

bequeath a transparent, free, fair and credible election in February and March 2023. It is instructive that the commission's chairman, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu says there is no going back on the use of the technology notwithstanding that some persons were calling for his resignation or removal over his position on the matter.

Although there are concerns over BVAS, which the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has acknowledged the challenges with the optimal functionality of the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS), the body has assured that such challenges are being worked on.

Another very major event of the year 2022 was the Presidential Primaries in which ab initio eighteen candidates were contesting to become Nigeria's next president. For the first time since 2007, the presidential election will be an open contest with no incumbent. A former Lagos State governor, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, emerged as flag bearer of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), former Vice President and 2019 presidential candidate, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, emerged flagbearer of the Peoples Democratic Party. Peter Obi, a former Anambra State governor emerged as the presidential candidate for the Labour Party, (LP) with Rabiu Kwankwaso, former Kano State governor took the day as the presidential candidate for the New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP).

There are a number of other presidential candidates for various parties in a list released by INEC which include: Imumolen Christopher - Accord Party (AP), Al-Mustapha Hamza - Action Alliance (AA), Sowore Omoyele - African Action Congress (AAC), Kachikwu Dumebi - African Democratic Congress (ADC), and Sani Yabagi Yusuf - Action Democratic Party (ADP), Umeadi Peter Nnanna - All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA). Others are: Ojei Princess Chichi - Allied People's Movement (APM), Nnamdi Charles Osita - Action Peoples Party (APP), Adenuga Sunday Oluwafemi - Boot Party (BP), Osakwe Felix

Johnson - National Rescue Movement (NRM), Abiola Latifu Kolawole - Peoples Redemption Party (PRP), Adebayo Adewole Ebenezer - Social Democratic Party (SDP), Ado-Ibrahim Abdumalik - Young Progressives Party (YPP), and Nwanyanwu Daniel Daberechukwu - Zenith Labour Party (ZLP).

Peter Obi, a known PDP stalwart was billed to contest for the presidency under the opposition PDP but later dumped it and joined the Labour Party. This notable event made headlines that year, as he emerged as the Labour Party flagbearer. This has led to a new movement making waves in the political space at the moment, known as Obidients or ObiDatti Movement. It mainly backed by most Nigerians, especially the youths, who are desirous of a new Nation and want to have a changed narrative in Nigeria's governance. The G5 governors is another new for the year 2022 that will not be forgotten in a hurry. This development was as a result of the fallout of the presidential primaries of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP where Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, a Northerner emerged as presidential candidate as against a Southerner going by the party's internal arrangements. The five governors of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), which include Nyesom Wike (Rivers), Samuel Ortom (Benue), Ifeanyi Ugwanyi (Enugu), Okezie Ikpeazu (Abia) and Seyi Makinde (Oyo) also known as the 'Integrity Group' was formed from the continuous wailing and disapproval of the activities of the leadership of the PDP.

The group which is headed by Rivers Governor Nyesom Wike, who had contested in the presidential primaries alongside Atiku Abubakar and lost, has continued to do things differently on their own but yet maintain they won't dump the PDP, rather they won't support the continuous stay of the party's national chairman, a former Nigerian Senate President, Iyorchia Ayu.

One particular event that marked year 2022 is the emergence of

Senator Abdullahi Adamu as APC's new chairman. Senator Abdullahi Adamu took over from the Governor of Yobe State, Mai Mala Buni who had held sway since the outsteeer of Comrade Adams Oshiomole, as the All Progressive Congress (APC)'s new chairman. This particular event greeted Nigerians with mixed reactions from opposition parties and political analysts who were against the Governor of Yobe State, Mai Mala Buni, serving as the interim chairman of the party.

In highlighting the major events that shaped 2022, the Ekiti and Osun offseason election were outstanding ones for the year 2022. The election in Ekiti State did not really surprise many because it was a case of handing over power to the successor and a case of the state's ruling party, the All Progressive Congress (APC) retaining power, as Biodun Oyebanji, defeated Segun Oni of the SDP to clinch the party's seat of power as governor of Ekiti State.

That of Osun State however came with a huge surprise with the emergence of the dancing Senator Ademola Adeleke, of the Peoples Democratic Party beating the incumbent governor of the All Progressives Congress to become the new governor of the state. A case of an opposition party beating the ruling party and the electoral body INEC was lauded by all as a first of its kind.

On the whole, 2022 was a great year politically, particularly because there has been a great reawakening amongst Nigerians and they are more informed and there is a gradual shift from the former ways of non-challance to one of owning the process of electing new leaders into office come February and March 2023.

The electoral body, INEC, had set the dates for the 2023 general elections with the presidential and National Assembly poll set for February 25 and governorship and other sub-national elections scheduled for March 11. The countdown is well underway and Nigerians hold the aces to change the narratives and take their destinies into their hands.

SUNDAY PEOPLE

SHENDAM OLD STUDENTS ENDORSE LALONG FOR SENATE

Plateau State Governor, Director-General Tinubu/Shettima PCC and APC Senatorial Candidate for Plateau South District, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (CON) was last weekend endorsed by his alma mata, Shendam Old Students Association (SOSA) for his senatorial ambition during their 5th National Convention in Shendam



Governor Lalong (CON) delivering his remarks



Old Students of GSS Shendam and other dignitaries listening to the Executive Governor's speech



HRH Miskoom Martin Shaldas III, Long Gamai (right) presenting an award of Excellence to Governor Simon Bako Lalong



Executive Chairman of Shendam LGC, Hon. Alex Miskoom Naantuum (left) receiving his award from Prof. Garba Sharubutu, Executive Secretary, Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria



Prof. Garba Sharubutu, Executive Secretary, Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria presenting the Keynote Address



Governor Lalong, a SOSA member being received with cheers on arrival



A cross section of SOSA members



Commissioner of Secondary Education, Mrs. Elizabeth Wapmuk making some remarks at the ceremony

THE presentation of the 2023 Appropriation Bill by the state Executive Governor, Simon Bako Lalong to the Plateau State House of Assembly on Friday 11th November 2022, tagged 'A Budget of Infrastructural Consolidation and Transition' is not new but has always been the norm in any functional democratic setting. The bill is aimed at sustaining the principle of continuity in governance in order to consolidate on the Lalong administration's achievements since 2015. It is also expected to leave memories and experiences that will provide a lasting legacy for the state and people.

The bill as presented has a total size of one hundred and thirty nine billion, three hundred and fifty seven million, one hundred and forty four thousand, nine hundred and eighty naira, thirty eight kobo (#139,357,144,980.38) only. This consists of seventy seven billion, six hundred and fifty million, six hundred and forty two thousand, thirty naira, eighty five kobo (#77,650,642,030.85) only as recurrent expenditure which represents 55.72% of the total budget. While the sum of sixty one billion, seven hundred and sixty million, five hundred and two thousand, nine hundred and forty nine naira, fifty three kobo (#61,706,520,949,.53) only as capital estimate, representing 44.27% of the budget.

The House Committee on Appropriation under the Chairmanship of Hon. Yahaya Adamu Mavo representing Wase constituency as is the norm, deliberated on the bill while also thoroughly scrutinizing the budget estimates for the various MDAs which was also scrutinized by other sub committees of the House. Afterwards, the appropriation committee in its final report came up with the following observations and recommendations which was presented before the floor of the House: First observation was that despite provisions in the 2022 budget, most MDAs had no releases on both overheads and capital estimates causing them to roll over most of their 2023 proposals.

The committee therefore recommends that overheads and capital estimates of MDAs be funded so as to ensure activities in the various MDAs. On the submission of quarterly reports by the MDAs to the various House committees, there seems to be no compliance yet. It was therefore recommended that henceforth, any MDA that does not comply with the directive will not be attended to during budget defense. It was also noted that the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), is still facing challenges in the area of funding despite recommendations made in previous years, calling that the law establishing the agency be reviewed to include twenty percent ecological funds made available to it.

In order for MDAs to function

effectively, they must be encouraged and supported. This seems not to be the case as the committee observed personnel cost of most MDAs being omitted in the 2023 estimates. As recommendation, all MDAs are expected to collect their extracts from the Ministry of Budget in good time to be able to compare their estimates with what was earlier submitted, in order to avoid discrepancies. The state government was also charged to release funds to them in order to enable them function effectively if they are to generate revenue for the state.

An observation was raised that



On PLHA's 2023 appropriation bill report



Sanda

retirees do not vacate government residential quarters after they retire and have claimed to stay on until gratuity is paid them, in spite of being paid their reparation. Meanwhile, the committee recommends that government should endeavour to pay up gratuities to retirees to enable them move out of the government residential quarters so as to pave way for those still in service. It however, noted with displeasure the deplorable and dilapidated states of the Sixteen Units guest houses of the state government and the Green House.

The committee subsequently recommends that given the strategic importance of both the Sixteen Units Guest Houses and the Green House to the state, it was important that renovation and proper maintenance takes priority. For the challenges faced by the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Town Planning especially in the area of revenue collection from the federal lowcost housing estate due to involvement of the federal Ministry of Housing, the committee acknowledges that it is indeed a serious issue. However in order to help step up the ministry's performance, it recommends that some advanced survey instruments



Mavo

such as drones be acquired to aid in sight inspection as well as data capture.

The place of culture and tourism in the state as a tool for revenue generation cannot be overemphasized. Hence, it was recommended that in order to make the Luka Bentu Indoor theatre viable and a revenue generating facility, government should lease it out on the basis of Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) since the place has not been functional over the years due to none patronage and funding. Notably observed was the need to create a new sub-head to accommodate Plateau Festival for Arts and Culture (PLAFEST) in the ministry of tourism and culture.

There is no doubt that the Jos Wild Life Park has been

experiencing challenges in the last couple of years, especially in the area of feeding the animals which has in turn affected their growth and health. For this reason, the committee came up with the recommendation that the wild life park be funded in order to take care of the feeding and health of the animals for productivity and subsequent generation of revenue. In the area of education, it was observed that the state government has not paid it's counterpart funds to SUBEB for the 2022 fiscal year. It therefore recommends that government should pay up their counterpart funds to the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) to enable it access the matching grant from the Universal Basic

Education Commission (UBEC). Lastly, the committee observed that the Jos Metropolitan Development Board's (JMDB) mandate seems to streamline its activities mostly around the Jos metropolis and for a wider operation in the entire state, recommends that the name be changed to Plateau Urban Development Agency. Other recommendations proffered are that provisions be created in the budget to take care of certain eventualities such as disasters and assistance to victims of disasters in the Plateau State Emergency Management Agency (PLASEMA). Most importantly, that the state government should release funds to MDAs to enable them function effectively and

"In order for MDAs to function effectively, they must be encouraged and supported. This seems not to be the case as the committee observed personnel cost of most MDAs being omitted in the 2023 estimates. As recommendation, all MDAs are expected to collect their extracts from the Ministry of Budget in good time to be able to compare their estimates with what was earlier submitted, in order to avoid discrepancies. The state government was also charged to release funds to them in order to enable them function effectively if they are to generate revenue for the state".

SUNDAY MAGAZINE



Nigeria 2023: The threat of severe hunger

THE food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), in its last report, is raising the alarm that food insecurity in Nigeria will take a worse turn this year due to the threat of harsh climate conditions heightened by the combination of bandits attacks, terrorism and natural disaster. These factors are now putting the country at a serious risk of severe hunger and famine in the midst of galloping food prices in the Nigerian markets. KENNETH DARENG, examines the implication and the indicators that may make life more difficult for the populace.

BY KENNETH DARENG

THE beginning of this year like any others was ushered in with prayers by Nigerians and with high hopes for better times ahead. Their expectations may just be due to the simple fact that a new Government is going to be put in place and perhaps taking solace philosophically that, the years the locust have eaten would pave the way to that of restoration.

But if the latest warning on the threat of severe hunger issued by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), is anything to go by, then more prayers might be required for the heavens to avert any major food catastrophe being speculated this year in the country.

According to Daniel Ighakpe, on FAO's alert, [Punch-Wednesday, January 18, 2023], noted that, some 25 million Nigerians will be at risk of severe hunger between June and August this year which the Organisation has identified the main causes of the potential hunger to include; Persistent conflicts, climate change, inflation and rising food prices.

In addition, currency depreciation has been listed

as a factor that will trigger the problem. A situation the FAO noted is likely going to be worst in the unrelenting terrorism activities in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states, as well as banditry and abductions in places such as; Katsina, Sokoto, Kaduna, Benue and Niger states.

This development according to Mr Tanimuwede, who is a grains seller at Bukuru market in Jos South Local Government Area of plateau state, told **SUNDAY STANDARD** that; "What we are experiencing now might even be worst as we get to the middle of the dry season because, we are just in the month of January and prices of foodstuff are not stabilizing which is either due to high cost of transportation as a result of the present scarcity of fuel coupled with low harvest recorded by farmers in some states affected by the flood of last rainy season.

"Imagine states like Benue, Nasarawa, Kebbi, Sokoto and other far northern states that are considered the food baskets of the country and the losses in terms of thousands of cultivated hectares of farm produce that were destroyed by flood during last year's harvesting season alone which I think will take not less than 5 or

more years for most of these farmers to recover in terms of monetary and other farm input losses."

However, some public analysts like Mr John Ndubusi, a dealer in pesticides in Jos North blamed the surge in prices of farming pesticides and fertilizers on major distributors as well as the Federal Government for the closure of the borders for several years now which he said; "Instead of a blanket closure, the Federal Government should have placed more emphasis on other items that are not agric based, because some unfriendly government policies are also factors that affecting farmers across the country at the moment.

"No serious government toys with the food security of its citizens, which in my opinion, successive administrations in this country have not actually given agriculture the desired attention it requires that is why even the yearly budget to the sector is very low as may be compared to defence and other ministries allocations. What we see is just lip service and no concrete road map has been designed and implemented to mitigate hunger in this country with a surging

population that is supposed to feed itself and its neighboring countries." Ndubusi, added.

The FAO's latest report had also recalled that the National Emergency Management Agency stated that last year's flooding claimed more than 676,000 hectares of farmland, diminishing harvests and increasing food insecurity across the country, thereby contributing to the risk of hunger.

The FAO, further stated that extreme weather patterns affecting starvation are being anticipated in the future. The report also highlighted the fact that children are the most vulnerable to food insecurity. It also noted that approximately six of the 17 million food insecure Nigerians today are children under the age of 5, living in Borno, Yobe, Adamawa, Sokoto, Katsina and Zamfara states.

SUNDAY STANDARD also gathered that, there is serious risk of mortality among children attributed to acute malnutrition which is also expected to increase from 1.74 million in 2022 to 2 million in 2023. Unfortunately too, as agricultural experts are raising concern that, the relevant authorities might ignore the warnings as was

done in the case of the release of water from the lagdo dam in Cameroon last year which added to the woes of the farmers in different parts of the country who could not control the volume of water that over flooded their farmlands and washed away the entire harvests in some communities.

Though these may be termed as man-made or self-inflicted disasters, there are what can easily go for natural disaster-flooding and fire outbreak in some states of the federation? Floodings particular have affected 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, floodings particular places are seen as man-made in areas where people advertently or inadvertently build houses on water ways.

The combination of bandits attacks, terrorist's activities and flooding have led to far 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

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NEWS

Governor galvanizes support for APC state Assembly candidates

From WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe

GOVERNOR Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya has visited Tallasse and Bambam in Balanga LGA to present APC party flags to candidates for the state House of Assembly.

The visit, the second time in less than one month, is to galvanise support for the APC through the presentation of flags to state House of Assembly candidates for Balanga North and South constituencies ahead of 2023 general elections.

In Bambam, Governor Inuwa Yahaya, in company of his Deputy, Dr. Manassah Daniel Jatau, top officials of the APC in the state, presented the flag to the standard bearer of the Party for Balanga South Constituency, Isa'ac Lamido.

The Governor told the party faithful and well-wishers in Bambam that the symbolic exercise involving state Assembly candidates is in fulfilment of a directive of the national leadership of the APC that leaders of the party in each of the states carry out such mandate.

He charged the candidate, APC stakeholders and supporters of the party in the



constituency to be resolute in canvassing for votes and goodwill from the electorate for an across the board victory of the APC.

In Talasse, the headquarters of Balanga Local Government Area, after presenting the party flag to Musa Buba, APC standard

bearer for Balanga North State Constituency, Governor Inuwa Yahaya challenged Hon. Buba to lead the APC political battle in the Constituency to victory from the front in view of the party's credentials and pedigree in social, economic and infrastructural development.

He also promised more people-oriented projects and directed the immediate rehabilitation of Bambam Central Primary and Junior Secondary Schools which are in a dilapidated state.

In their separate remarks, the flag bearer of Balanga South Isa'ac Lamido and his counterpart in the Balanga North, Musa Buba, assured Governor Inuwa Yahaya of their unwavering commitment to ensure that the APC emerges victorious at the end of the electioneering exercise.

Like the Governor, the candidates appealed to their constituents to ensure the collection of their Permanent Voters Cards without which they cannot exercise their franchise.



Community Protests over the killing, Catholic Priest

Youths of Kafinkoro Community in Paikoro Local government Area of Niger State protesting the gruesome murder of Catholic priest, Rev Father Isaac Achi, engaged the police in a violent clash that led to the death of one person and the burning down of a police station.

The youths who embarked on the protest to register their displeasure over the killing of the Catholic priest, Fr Achi and the shooting of another priest, Father Collins were confronted by the security personnel.

An eye witness said, the security agencies led by the police had initially tried to pacify the youths, but when it failed, they tried to use force in suppressing the protest.

"As they tried to use force on us, the youths became more agitated and the protest turned bloody," the source said.

The source said one of the protesting youths was killed in the ensuing violence, which made the youths set the community police station ablaze.

When contacted, the Commissioner of Internal Security and Humanitarian

Affairs, Hon Emmanuel Umar could not be reached on all his known phone lines.

Mufwang visits family members of deceased supporters

The Governorship candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Plateau State, Caleb Mufwang visited each of the 13 families that lost their loved ones in Ampang following last week's Saturday's auto crash while coming back from the Central Zone Governorship Campaign flag-off in Pankshin LGA of the state.

He said he is totally heartbroken and devastated with the unfortunate demise of party supporters who are the future hope of Plateau State, adding that it is a difficult and traumatic time for him as the deceased were his younger ones from his community.

Mufwang was accompanied by his running mate Josephine Piyo, Campaign DG Letep Dabang, member representing Mangu South Constituency, Bala Fwangje, PDP National office member, Olivia Dazyam, Campaign Council Central Zone Coordinator, Ephraim Usman, among others.

INEC says presidential runoff, possible

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has said a

Presidential run-off is possible after voters cast their ballot on February 25, 2023 for their preferred candidates.

Chairman of the commission, Prof Mahmood Yakubu, who stated this on Tuesday, while delivering a lecture at London-based Chatham House.

He stressed that INEC is prepared to conduct the run-off in the event where no winner emerges after the polls.

Speaking on the topic, 'Nigeria's 2023 Elections: Preparations and Priorities for Electoral Integrity and Inclusion', Yakubu stated that INEC had over the years prepared for the possibility of a presidential run-off in the last three elections and this year's presidential election won't be exceptional.

FG has enough external reserves to withstand global recession

The Minister of Finance and National Planning, Mrs. Zainab Ahmed on Tuesday admitted that although the projected global economic recession for 2023 appeared inevitable, with about \$34 billion in the nation's foreign reserves, the projected headwinds shouldn't pose much threat to Nigeria.

The comment by the minister came on the same day that the Senate directed her to liaise with the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Mr. Godwin Emefiele, and submit details of President Muhammadu Buhari's N23. 7 trillion budget within three days for scrutiny.

Mass resignation hits BBC Hausa

At least nine journalists with the BBC Hausa Service in Nigeria have resigned in the last one month in what is described as "unprecedented" in the history of the international media outlet.

It was gathered that the affected staff members comprised two senior digital journalists, three social media journalists – two of whom are senior reporters – a senior bilingual reporter for Hausa/English Africa, a multimedia reporter and two video journalists.

While five of the journalists left last December; the four others resigned on Monday to join newly established African section of Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) in Istanbul.

Israel to start direct flight to Nigeria

Israeli government has said it would commence a direct flight operation

From Israel to Nigeria in March to enhance trade and tourism between the two countries.

The Deputy Director General, African Department, Sharon Bar-Li stated this while interacting with journalists at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Wednesday in Jerusalem.

Sharon noted that the route, expected to be very busy, would serve not only Nigerians but some neighbours in West Africa and Israelis.

Compiled By HOSEA NYAMLONG

We want one Nigeria that is secured and productive -Obi

PRESIDENTIAL candidate of the Labour Party (LP), Mr. Peter Obi, says Obi/Datti emergence as the party's Presidential flag bearers has

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

changed the political weather of Nigeria by bringing together Nigerians with one

voice and promise to bring back one Nigeria when elected.

He stated this Friday when he was at Rwang Pam Stadium Jos, the Plateau State capital for his campaign ahead of the forthcoming general elections amidst a mammoth crowd coming from within the state as young and old kept chanting his name continuously.

The presidential candidate said, "I will build a Nigeria that will be self-sustained where poverty will be a thing of the past for Nigeria to compete with other great nations of the world. I have vowed to secure and unite Nigeria from the North, South, East and West so that Nigeria will be free from banditry and insurgency.

"I want to see a Nigeria that is secured and united. I want to see Nigerians move freely without any fear and do their businesses without any attack or harassment. I want us to rescue our country back from the hands of those who brought us to this present situation. We will make sure that Nigeria is one!", he stated.

Obi therefore, assured the people of Plateau State that, he would bring back the old Jos Plateau and make it a tourist haven by investing heavily on security and tourism to attract people around the world trooping in to have fun, invest and enjoy the beautiful weather on the Plateau when elected.

The running mate of Obi, Sen. Baba Ahmed Datti, described Peter Obi as a unifying factor of Nigeria because his emergence has united Nigerians, hence the need for Nigerians to come out

enmasse to vote for a better Nigeria that would be strong and united irrespective of tribe and religious differences.

Earlier, the National Chairman of Labour Party, Dr. Julius Abure, thanked the people of Plateau State for coming out in mass to receive them and expressed joy that Nigerians have seen that the country was rotten because of bad leadership and would want a change.

He said, the forthcoming election was a fight for the soul of Nigeria and Nigerians. He urged Nigerians to change their destiny using their PVCs because their destiny was now in their hands saying, "the country is already rotten and you must bring it back by making a wise decision".

On his part, the Labour Party gubernatorial candidate of Plateau State, Dr. Patrick Sunday Dakum, said all Nigerians belong to the Labour Party because Papa, Mama, Pikin were automatically children of the party looking at its logo and manifesto, hence the need for people to come back to the reality.

However, the popular Aisha Yusuf said, "a new Nigeria is possible because it is bleeding and we are tired of suppression, subjugation, manipulation and deceit of the past leaders. We will take our country and destiny back for generations and generation.

PUBLIC NOTICE

GLOREIVAL MINISTRIES

THE GENERAL PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT THE ABOVE NAMED MINISTRY HAS APPLIED TO THE CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION FOR REGISTRATION UNDER PART 'F' OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT 2020.

THE TRUSTEES ARE:

1. JANGNAN AMOS LOHNNAN - CHAIRMAN
2. DANTAYI JOHN RISHI - SECRETARY
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AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. TO TAKE OVER THE KINGDOMS AND NATIONS OF THE EARTH FOR OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
2. TO DEMONSTRATE THE SUPREMACY OF HIS POWER OVER ALL OTHER POWERS AND PRINCIPALITIES OF THIS WORLD
3. TO SPARK A REVIVAL FIRE ACROSS THE GLOBE FOR THE MASSIVE HARVEST OF SOULS INTO HIS KINGDOM

ANY OBJECTION TO THE REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION, PLOT 420, TIGRIS CRESCENT, OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET, MAITAMA ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION

SIGNED:
SECRETARY

LOSS OF DOCUMENTS

That I, Bitrus Bako Nabasu, male and citizen of the Federal Republic of Nigeria of Plot 260 Kingspark Estate, Kuwaba District, Abuja, do announce the loss of documents. On the 13th day of March, 2020, the following documents issued to me by Kaduna Geographic Information System (KADGIS), got lost in Jos, the Plateau State capital,

1. The original approval for the transfer of customary Right of Occupancy of a parcel of land at Unguwan MaduduLa.
2. Original Receipt of payment of Registration Fee 3. Perfected Registered deed of assignment.

That all efforts made to trace the above documents proved abortive, hence this publication.

That this publication is necessary for information, record and other reference purposes.

Signed:
Bitrus Bako Nabasu.

SUNDAY FEATURE

As waste dumping overwhelms Niger major towns

Cleanliness they said is next to Godliness but the opposite is the situation in Niger State as inability of the state government to pay contractors handling the collection of wastes and waste management trucks have led to indiscriminate dumping of refuse across the major towns. Mathew Jwantu writes.

AS floods peak period is fast approaching, roadsides, streets and markets in major towns across Niger State have been turned into refuse dump sites. The state government environmental officials have also failed to clear these refuses.

Our correspondent who took a trip across the state discovered that the refuse which usually dumped on the streets for the Niger State Environmental Protection Agency (NSEPA) stays for days without being collected leading to more refuse dumped in different areas apart from the designated place.

Due to inefficient system to collect these waste, the residents are left with no choice than to dump these refuse on any available space they find which include streets, roadsides and drainages; even markets across the state are not free from this development as wastes can be seen inside the market amidst raising concerns of the people towards the health impact.

Some residents of the town expressed fear over these waste saying that the indiscriminate dumping of waste especially during the raining season can result in water pollution, drainage blocking, flooding, land pollution and infrastructural degradation.

In Suleja, Ismaila Muhammad Yaro lamented that the dumping of refuse on roads should not be so and even if it is dumped, appropriate authorities should be made to remove the wastes as soon as they are dropped stressing that this can affect the health of the people.

Chidoke Charles who also lives in Suleja said that the refuse has been left unattended to for months, "those who are supposed to pack this refuse haven't been doing anything. We are suffering this. The smell alone is not good. They say that there is COVID 19, monkey pox and others and this refuse have been here for more than a month with nobody coming to pack it, instead of the government to pay the people that are packing it, they are not doing anything. We are suffering from the smell and the flies that come from it. They left it because they are not living here or doing business here. "We are begging the government to come and clear it for us"

At the Kure Ultra Modern market Minna, one of the traders, Mohammed Dangana whose shop is facing the refuse dump lamented that they have complained to the authorities but nothing has been done, "We are just looking. I have a POS stand close to the dustbin. We have complained but nothing is being done. We are tired of complaining, so now, we are just looking."

Customers going to the market said that they would no longer pay the gate toll fees to enter the market until the government decides to do something about the refuse dump which has become an eyesore in the market.

One of the customers, Juliana Jacob said, "Imagine a market like a dump site, in fact, the market has become a dump site. This is supposed to be one of the parking spaces. One wonders what all the revenue being collected as toll fees from vehicles is used for.

If you want to come inside the market, you either pay N100 or N50 depending on where you want to park, not to talk of the money collected from the traders especially those who hawk their wares. Hundreds of cars visit the market daily and yet, the local government authority



cannot use part of the funds to take care of this part of the market.

Imagine the threat to the lives of the people that this poses. Flies here can go and perch on meat, fish and other foods that are opened."

Abdullahi Usman said, "I have since stopped paying that fees to enter the market. I rather park my car outside in a safe place with a friend or my brother inside than to give that useless committee any penny for doing nothing. Everything about Niger State is from the opposite direction. I just pray we get the good leadership in place come 2023"

Muhammad Badamasi said, "I keep wondering the kind of government we have in Niger State who does not consider the situation of the all they know is to collect money from this revenue to the other ,to pass a gate in kure market you have to pay while the main road leading to the market are in sorry situation ,we call on the state and local government to do the needful regarding to that road".

Bakare Kabir says, "Chanchaga LG are just busy allocating land with no attention given to refuse management in the market. Imagine filling pothole with waste from market. Go to the other side, where ram sellers used the story is the same."

The General Manager of the Niger State Environmental Protection Agency, Habib Abdulkadir said that the government is being challenged by lack of funding as he lamented that the people have refused to pay for waste collection and there is no finance by the government to continue funding waste management.

"The government have been doing this for ages and it has gotten to a point that the government has arrived at a point of lack of finances in the area of funding of waste management in the state. The

government tries its best but the population keeps increasing and the cities are also increasing. There is need for us to improve on the equipment that we need to deploy to cover these areas that are coming up. It has come to a point that there is no other alternative than for the people to pay for their waste bills."

The officer in charge of waste management in NSEPA, Mohammed Isa Kutigi said the generation of waste is every time and that majority of the areas that the wastes are outside and not easily accessible by their trucks while he also pointed out that there is lack of vehicles for the collection of wastes.

He disclosed that the agency has not been able to pay the contractors for about three months which led to the withdrawal of their services, "the contractors cannot work because they are not paid. We have 11 trucks in Suleja, Kontagora we have six trucks, Bida, we have three and only five trucks in Minna and it cant take care of only Tunga side alone. We have a lot of challenges. The government need to intervene to provide a lot of trucks so that we can address this."

Speaking about the market, Kutigi said that NSEPA is not in charge of the markets and motor parks but the local government councils adding that the Agency is getting set to take the Chanchaga Local Government Council to court due to their negligence over the sanitary situation of the market.

"The market and motor parks are the responsibility of the local government and not the state government which we are operating under. The Chanchang Local Government is owning us for waste collection, because they could not pay, we had to stop our services because we have other areas of responsibility. We intend to

take them to court for allowing the market to degenerate to this level."

He lamented that the people have defaulted in the payment of the waste collection because they have been enjoying free collection of waste from 1986 till date, they are finding it difficult to pay. We need about 30 trucks in all local government areas to enable effective collection of waste in the state.

"we still need the government to intervene and support us in turning it into a private venture which will enable us to get the people to pay for the collection for their refuse. We cannot do this without government intervention and backing.

In June, the Niger State Commissioner for Environment and Forestry, Dr Daniel Habila Galadima stated that the Ministry had embarked on refused collection and disposal within major cities across the state, including Minna, the state capital following the directive of the state government to clear all the dump sites in the state but as of today, the state of refuse dumping remains the same.

The commissioner however acknowledged that the ministry had hitherto some challenges evacuating refuse in the state capital as a result of rise in the price of diesel which had affected the ministry's budget but stated that the state government had provided the resources for the Ministry to mobilise additional trucks so as to ensure the directive is quickly and efficiently carried out.

He said then that the refuse clearing has commenced with the assurance that in the next few days, the state will be cleared of indiscriminate refuse dump sites but the dump sites have since increased after the Commissioner's statement.

SUNDAY FEATURE

MOTNA a potential tool for sustainable tourism development

MOTNA means Museum of Traditional Nigeria Architecture. It is located inside National Museum Jos and part of National Museum Jos, but became a full fledge Museum in 2019. MOTNA was open to the public in 1975 by the administration of Gen. Yakubu Gown. EGERUAN SAMUEL ALUFOHAI, writes.



MOTNA is a miniature map of Nigeria showcasing the beautiful scenario of Nigeria's Traditional Architecture. MOTNA with life size structures of Traditional buildings represented each geographical zone of the country. MOTNA is possibly one of its kind in back Africa, it is aimed to preserve the diverse traditional Nigeria Architecture, for the purpose of research, education, history, recreation and some many other tourism potentials embedded in it. MOTNA has to its credit the exact replica of places, mosques, wall, and houses in full scale as they were in their place of origin. It is an open air museum (Eco-museum), its foundation was laid in 1972 on 64 acres of land allocated for the construction of 48 ethnic structure of monuments and historical buildings. The preliminary master plan of the site and the precise scale drawings were

made from architectural measured field notes taken and worked upon between 1958 at the research center for Tropical Architecture Gdansk technical university Poland under the direct supervision of a re-known polish professor of Tropical Architecture Prof. Z. R. Dmochowski. He undertook an intensive journey round different region of Nigeria and made a sketch drawings of outstanding traditional building such as palaces, shrines, residential building, compound, city gates, wall etc. The site is organized for the group of buildings, representation of the various ethnographic and tribal regions of Nigeria. The relationship of the group of buildings should be most practicable that it is close to their actual geographical location on the map of Nigeria thereby presenting a miniature map of Nigeria with beautiful scenery from the aerial view as each structure is

located within its geographic region of Origin.

MOTNA was established to promote Eco-tourism in Nigeria, free from the unjustified sense of inferiority in the eyes of the western achievement and technological advancement, it also serves as landscape garden and open air museum, encourage research and studies of Traditional and architectural ingenuity of our fore-fathers in regards to the aesthetic, historic, social, economic and cultural values as well as the historical buildings.

Sustainability is efficiency with a conscience, it is the ability to use our resources to achieve maximum possible impact, this means that using of our resource, must be conscious so as not to produce any permanent damage to the environment. It is meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future to meet their own needs. Sustainability is the capacity of historical building to continue in its existence in acknowledging historic importance, architectural and aesthetic value.

These traditional building in MOTNA have the potential to boast tourism development in Jos. Tourism involve the traveling of persons away from their immediate communities for pleasure and persons for a period not less than one day or more than a year.

When the traditional building in MOTNA is properly restored and conserved, it has the capacity to bring people from other parts of the country to Jos to enjoy the environment and the historical building in MOTNA, these will create and boast the economic activities

of Jos, generate income for people and also increase government revenue. Since sustainable development implies the ability to meet the need of present without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. No doubt that MOTNA as conceived its originality should be capable of acting as a catalytic to endanger sustainable tourism development in Jos. In fact, it should be emphasized that one of the reasons muting the idea was tourism and its development in Jos using MOTNA as a spring board among other things.

The tourism potentials in MOTNA include Eco-Museum, arrangements of the traditional building region by region, the aesthetic, historic, social, economic, educational and cultural value of the various building in MOTNA.

When MOTNA is well developed, the tourism potential has the capacity to affect other areas, such as increase in accommodation services, entertainment for people who are visiting MOTNA for pleasure, relaxation and enjoyment. Tourism is a product that is a source of income to individuals, corporate groups etc. It is very expedient that the government of Plateau State should collaborate with MOTNA in order to showcase the rich cultural heritage present in MOTNA. MOTNA have the capacity of attracting thousands of tourists from all over the world to Jos to enjoy the scenic beauty of the state.

EGERUAN SAMUEL ALUFOHAI, Institute of Archaeology and Museum Studies, Jos.

Sustainability is as efficiency with a conscience, it is the ability to use our resources to achieve maximum possible impact, this mean that using of our resource, and must be conscious so as not to produce any permanent damage to the environment. It is meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future to meet their own needs. Sustainability is the capacity of historical building to continue in its existence lies in acknowledging it historic importance, architectural and aesthetic value.

Last week, we discussed financial illiteracy in our society and the need to teach this to our children at home and in schools as part of the school curriculum. We equally spoke about the importance of sharing financial knowledge with family members and our community as a whole. This is very critical to value creation and poverty eradication in our society.

Our society is largely corrupt due to the show-off syndrome where people live to impress others by having lifestyles that they cannot truly afford to sustain. This leads to all manner of underhanded way of making money. Coupled with this is the lack of real financial education and education on value creation.

The people who populate government very often lack financial literacy. Often, the distance between a position in government and the civil service is how much taxpayers' money a civil servant can put in his or her pocket, after which he or she joins a political party, becomes a party candidate, buys votes and arrives in office. His or her period in office is characterized by more stealing which could be in the form of padding the budget, approving ghost contracts to friends and family members and burying cash in septic tanks. Some manage to invest in poorly thought out businesses that employ a handful of their relations, others send their money to foreign bank accounts while others simply pilfer and waste taxpayers money on irresponsible lifestyles at the taxpayers' expense.

The ability of a leader to manage our money is largely dependent on his knowledge of financial management and value creation. One cannot give what he or she does not have. This is why financial education from the rudimentary level of our education is very imperative. The absence of financial knowledge is what encourages the average corrupt politician to steal. This is particularly the case with the retired public servant who has moved copious amounts of tax payers money into his or her account. Not having any knowledge on how to create value with this money, he or she proceeds to bury the ill gotten money in septic tanks and in dingy places with the hope of coming back to the money when the attention on him or her has waned. Similarly, he or she starts to nurse the idea of politics and power and eventually ends up using the ill-gotten wealth to sponsor his or her political ambition.

When he or she wins the election, another vicious cycle of stealing begins. First to replace what has been spent with interest and then to steal for loot that will serve the politician to his tenth generation. Money meant for government projects and programmes as well as allocations are looted into private accounts with impunity. The politician who is a businessman may consider investing the stolen money in business. This provides employment for a small fraction of the youth whose resources have been pilfered.

In Nigeria, we often mistake popularity for capability. Just because a politician is popular does not mean that he is capable and knowledgeable in financial management and how to add to our treasury. It is time we started scrutinizing the scorecard and CVs of aspiring politicians to see if they have any deliberate knowledge and experience in financial management before voting them into power to manage our financial and material resources. When we continue to ignore the prerequisite for managing the economy, we continue to give room to thief's cloaked in political garbs, pretending to have something to offer and robbing us blue and black of our resources, because they have absolutely no clue on how to make use of Government resources to create more value for the society that they are meant to serve.

The politician's lack of financial knowledge also comes to the fore when he is working with civil servants that are well experienced in the art of cooking the books. He simply signs any financial document placed before him without doing due diligence because he simply is ill-equipped to know when the book is getting cooked and when it is not. He becomes a rubber stamp for corrupt civil servants who pad the budget and create holes in the national treasury through which they syphon taxpayers' money and our national resources. If the politician is willing, he is taught the ropes. If he is not, he might as well be in Siberia while copious looting goes on under its purview and leadership.

Why is it important to address the need for financial education in our society? Because it determines whether we come out of poverty or remain there. The following excerpt will shine more light on this need:

At its most basic, Public Financial Management (PFM) is the management of resources and expenditure within the public sector. In most countries this expenditure exceeds more than one third of GDP, meaning that public funds must be managed to the highest standards using established standards and systems. These systems are used to allocate public funds, account for all public expenditure and income, plan the cost of delivering services and audit the results. Why is it so important that a strong PFM strategy is in place? If the finances of a public body are managed efficiently, we see a close linked to poverty reduction as services are delivered more effectively and markets can be regulated more fairly. Poor PFM encourages the spread of corruption and allows waste which has a negative impact on the services offered to the

Financial illiteracy and corruption



public. Boosts public confidence. If the system is transparent and well managed the general public tend to have increased trust and confidence in the government. If public services are delivered effectively, a related improvement in economic growth and equality can be tracked. Demonstrate that services provided are excellent value. Citizens and stakeholders want evidence that public expenditure is being spent in a way that represents good value for money.

What are the key requirements for successful PFM system?

Strong leadership: Communication is key and leaders who manage and integrate the viewpoints and expectations of various stakeholders have the greatest chance of success. By coordinating and feeding back, the system will be stronger.

Good governance: Healthy internal scrutiny leads to improved decision making over time. This in turn leads to more effective use of resources and improved accountability;

Transparency in reporting

Not only does transparent reporting lead to greater accountability, clear and well communicated data can increase the confidence of the general public in the services.

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It itemizes the following as components of financial management Financial accounting, Management accounting, Revenue management, Cost reduction and assessing value for money, Internal auditing, Investment appraisal, Financial control, Financial governance, Procurement, Contract Management.

So how do we address this abnormally? Financial education should be included in the elementary school curriculum, the secondary as well as the tertiary institutions. When we have a society that has basic understanding of how money works and how it is made, the pool of leaders drawn from the generality to fill leadership positions will not be utterly ignorant. This will also enable us to hold them to account when our monies are stolen under their noses.

Similarly, the civil service commission, the house of assembly commission and government houses can come together and design courses in financial management for politicians. This is important because managing government money is entirely



financially balanced, responsible and ethical lifestyle and make appropriate financial choices during their lifetime. Studies have shown that financial literacy greatly affects a person's saving, investment, debt management and loan taking practices.

The Steps to Financial Literacy

Financial literacy is crucial to making appropriate financial choices throughout life. In this article, we examine seven steps to help you to improve your financial knowledge and literacy.

These steps are:

Learn How to Budget: The first step to gain financial literacy is learning how to budget. When you have a budget plan, you can spend money accordingly and will be able to save any extra to use later in case of an emergency. Without a budget plan, you will be unable to control your spending and, as a result of this overspending, may suffer if your salary or allowance ends.

In order to make budget plan, you first need to note your monthly income and, second, track your spending. You need to include all your fixed expenses like your mortgage or rent, utility bills, loan payments etc. and then include variable expenses such as groceries, entertainment, etc. After tracking your major spending, make sure to set your financial goals, saving money for example. There are two types of financial goal: short-term goals (can be achieved within a year) and long-term goals (may take longer than a year, such as retirement savings etc.).

After setting all these up, finalize your plan and make sure to follow it in order to achieve financial balance.

Understand Your Credit Score: It is very important to understand your credit score. But why is your credit score important, how is it calculated, and how can you it? When someone pays off their credit bills on time, they are viewed as trustworthy by the lender. They begin to build a credit history and are afforded an improved credit score that will help them obtain future loans. In the US, a credit score is a three-digit number from 300 to 850. A high score indicates someone who is a low risk financially and who repays their credit bills on time, while a low score indicates someone who is a credit risk and who has likely not previously paid their credit bills on time.

You should also be aware of your credit report, which is a summary of your financial situation. By reviewing your credit report, you will be able to spot any errors or fraudulent entries and can take legal steps to overcome the loss. This report may also help you to track your spending and improve your credit score over time.

Open a Savings Account: A savings account will help you to save any extra money you have, is the best way to keep your money safe and secure, and may even pay you interest, offer insurance and security. A savings account also makes billing easier and more convenient for the user, while an ATM card is portable and better than keeping cash in a wallet.

Understand Loans: It is important to understand the importance of paying off your debt/loans. Having a debt-free life is a desirable dream for most individuals. There are two ways to pay off your debt fast. One way is to identify the loan with the highest interest rate and pay this off first, hence reducing the amount of interest you will need to pay in the long term. Once this debt is cleared, you can then focus on paying off the loan with the second highest interest rate, and so on. An alternative approach is to pay off all small debts first and then focus on the larger loans.

Financial literacy helps a person to achieve a

DEUTERONOMY 21:22-23 tells us that, And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance. Jesus did not commit a sin that was worthy of death. We are the ones that sin in Adam but Jesus took our sins, and became condemned with our condemnation.

That's the beauty of the Gospel. When He was put on the cross, He fulfilled the curse of Deuteronomy 21:23. He was hung on a tree, our sins were placed on Him by God the Father. God, the Father turned His back on Him. He went to hell, paid the price for our sins; when He was raised from the dead, He broke the power of sin and the curse that came with it.

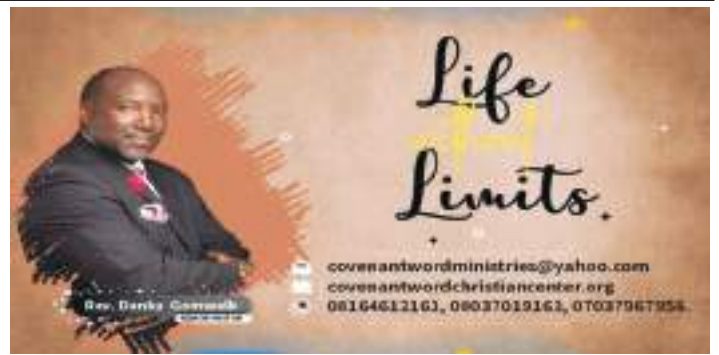
So in Christ Jesus, the curse has been broken. It does not matter what is going on in your life right now, the moment you come into Christ, you must acknowledge that the curse has been broken. You are no longer empowered to fail, but now you are empowered to prosper and succeed. The blessing has replaced the curse.

You have been redeemed from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13), and the reason for that is so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Galatians 3:29 said, *And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

In addition to that, Romans 2:28 & 29 says, *For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision*

is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God. God still has a plan for the Jew, but in Christ Jesus, we are spiritual Jews. When we come into Christ, we share

will start working in your life. Numbers 23:8 tell us that the rogue, renegade, backslidden Balaam was hired by Balak, the King of Moab, to curse Israel. But hear what Prophet Balaam saw when he stood upon the



You are empowered not to fail



in that anointing. He connects us to the lineage of Abraham spiritually, which is Christ and the curse is broken. Glory to the name of the Lord!

So the same blessing that is on Israel is upon us right now. We partake of that blessing because of Jesus Christ. And part of that blessing is that our lives are redeemed from destruction, and we are delivered from every curse of life, because Jesus took our place on the cross; He took our place in hell; He took our sin and broke the power of the curse.

Right now, you must come alive to that fact. For the exercising of our faith becomes effective as we acknowledge every good thing that is in us, in Christ Jesus (Phm 1:6).

If you are in Christ Jesus meaning you have accepted Him as Lord and Saviour, you must rise up and say, "The curses of life are broken! I am not cursed, I am blessed!" you must say it from the heart and believe it. And that anointing will start functioning in your life; that anointing, that virtue that Jesus carries to deliver men from the curses of life

high place to curse Israel, Christ Jesus. You are curse free in Christ Jesus. You must open your mouth and declare day and night and you'll see how every manifestation of curse will cease and will be neutralized. You must boldly declare in Christ Jesus: *I'm curse free!* "Whom shall curse who God has blessed? Who shall defy who God has not defied?" surely there is no enchantment, there is no witchcraft against you that can stand. There is no divination against you that can stand. You must declare in the name of Jesus. The next thing people will see is an accelerated manifestation of the blessings of God in your life.

So if you are in Christ Jesus, you have been delivered from the curses of life. God has blessed you in Christ. Never open your mouth and say you are cursed, no matter what you see.

You can reverse the curse by standing strong in faith, in your new position in your life.

Lamentation 3:37 says this: *"Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?"* My dear friends, if you're not in Christ, you're not safe. But that anointing will be made available for you today. If you've been listening to this broadcast today and you've not made Jesus your Lord and Saviour, or maybe you made Jesus Christ your Lord and Saviour but you know you are not living for Christ, you need to pray this prayer with me and get restored to fellowship with Him. Say: *Dear Lord Jesus, I come before you today; I believe that God sent you to this earth to die for my sin. I receive your salvation. Wash me clean with your precious blood; establish my name in the Book of Life. I receive this anointing; every yoke destroyed, every burden lifted. Heaven is now my home, you are now my Father, and in the Name of Jesus, I will live this life, carrying and walking in this anointing. I'll live out God's plan for my life. I'll cooperate with this anointing, and allow the anointing to preserve me, to protect me all the days of my life, and to give me the*

"So the same blessing that is on Israel is upon us right now. We partake of that blessing because of Jesus Christ. And part of that blessing is that our lives are redeemed from destruction, and we are delivered from every curse of life, because Jesus took our place on the cross; He took our place in hell; He took our sin and broke the power of the curse. Right now, you must come alive to that fact. For the exercising of our faith becomes effective as we acknowledge every good thing that is in us, in Christ Jesus (Phm 1:6)."

INTERNATIONAL

Germany pressed on tanks for Ukraine

Germany faced mounting pressure to supply battle tanks to Kyiv and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy aired frustration about not obtaining enough weaponry as Western allies conferred on how best to support Ukraine nearly 11 months into Russia's invasion. **GEIR MOULSON and JAMEY KEATEN write.**

SINCE the U.K. announced last week that it will send Challenger 2 tanks, Berlin has faced increasing calls to supply Leopard 2 tanks or at least clear the way for others, such as Poland, to deliver German-made Leopards from their own stock.

Germany's new defense minister, Boris Pistorius, left open whether that will happen and under what conditions after meeting U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on his first day in office.

He says he was "pretty sure we will get a decision on this in the coming days, but I can't yet tell you today how it will look."

Austin will host a regular coordination meeting of Ukraine's Western allies at the United States' Ramstein Air Base in Germany.

Speaking on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, Zelenskyy offered a veiled critique of major supporters such as Germany and the U.S. that have nonetheless hesitated about sending tanks.

He bemoaned a "lack of specific weaponry." Speaking through an interpreter, he said: "There are times where we shouldn't hesitate or we shouldn't compare when someone says, 'I will give tanks if someone else will also share his tanks.'"

Ukraine's foreign and defense ministers said that the promised British tanks, while welcome, are "not sufficient to achieve operational goals."

"We guarantee that we will use these weapons responsibly and exclusively for the purposes of protecting the territorial integrity of Ukraine within internationally recognized borders," Dmytro Kuleba and Oleksii Reznikov



Zelenskyy

said in a statement, appealing to Germany and several other countries that use the Leopard 2 to join an "international tank coalition."

For months, Ukraine has sought heavier vehicles such as the Leopard and U.S. Abrams tanks, but Western leaders have trodden carefully.

Germany has been particularly

in focus recently. Critics, some inside Germany's governing coalition, have long complained of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's perceived hesitancy to take the next step when it comes to weapons deliveries.

Scholz has been wary of pressure, insisting that Germany wouldn't go it alone and pointing to a need to ensure that NATO doesn't become a

party to the war with Russia, though every time so far Berlin has eventually moved ahead. He portrays his cautious weighing of each step as a virtue.

In Davos Scholz avoided directly answering a question about Leopards, saying Germany will remain one of Ukraine's top weapons suppliers and that "we are never doing something just by ourselves, but together with others — especially the United States."

German officials have conveyed their hesitancy to allow allies to give Leopards unless the U.S. also sends Ukraine the Abrams, according to a U.S. official who wasn't authorized to comment and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Asked whether Germany would only deliver Leopards if Washington supplies the Abrams, Pistorius replied that he isn't "aware of such a package." But he insisted that aid must continue to be "coordinated" and it's important for Germany to proceed "shoulder-to-shoulder with the Americans."

An upcoming new package of

U.S. military aid is expected to include nearly 100 Stryker combat vehicles and at least 50 Bradley armored vehicles — but not the Abrams, which U.S. officials say has complex maintenance needs and may not be the best fit.

"The maintenance and the high cost that it would take to maintain an Abrams — it just doesn't make sense to provide that to the Ukrainians at this moment," spokeswoman Sabrina Singh said at a Pentagon briefing.

Some eastern NATO allies have provided Soviet-era T-72 tanks to Ukrainian forces, but officials acknowledge that supplies of Soviet-era equipment with which Ukrainian forces were already familiar are limited.

Senior officials from Britain, Poland, the Baltic nations and other European countries met in Estonia before the Ramstein gathering.

U.K. Defense Secretary Ben Wallace said his country would send at least three batteries of AS-90 artillery, armored vehicles, thousands of rounds of ammunition and 600 Brimstone missiles, as well as the squadron of Challenger 2 tanks.

Wallace says that the decision to send battle tanks was a "natural progression" of U.K. military support for Ukraine and was discussed with the U.S.

"If you're going to donate armored personnel carriers, you need to complement that with tanks," he said. "We had some tanks that we thought could do that."

Wallace acknowledged that the Challenger shipment "is not the single magic ingredient" for Ukraine, which has said it needs 300 tanks, among other weapons, to expel Russian forces. But he voiced hope that it will complement Bradley armored vehicles the U.S. is already supplying and help "lead the way" for others to send tanks.

Estonia announced its largest military aid package to date, including howitzers, ammunition, artillery support equipment and grenade launchers.

Elsewhere, Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson said his country has decided to send up to 50 Swedish-made combat vehicles plus a shoulder-fired anti-tank missile system and the Archer artillery system to Ukraine.

Denmark plans to donate 19 French-made Caesar self-propelled howitzers.

Source: AP News.

Ukraine's foreign and defense ministers said that the promised British tanks, while welcome, are "not sufficient to achieve operational goals." "We guarantee that we will use these weapons responsibly and exclusively for the purposes of protecting the territorial integrity of Ukraine within internationally recognized borders," Dmytro Kuleba and Oleksii Reznikov said in a statement, appealing to Germany and several other countries that use the Leopard 2 to join an "international tank coalition." For months, Ukraine has sought heavier vehicles such as the Leopard and U.S. Abrams tanks, but Western leaders have trodden carefully. Germany has been particularly in focus recently. Critics, some inside Germany's governing coalition, have long complained of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's perceived hesitancy to take the next step when it comes to weapons deliveries.

INTERNATIONAL

Ardern to step down voluntarily

WHEN Jacinda Ardern announced this week she was stepping down as New Zealand's prime minister, speculation began almost immediately about what she might do for a second act.

When she leaves, she will have accumulated 15 years experience as a lawmaker and five-and-a-half years as leader. She will also be just 42 years old. Observers say she has all sorts of career possibilities open to her.

Ardern said she was leaving the job because she no longer has "enough in the tank to do it justice" and has no immediate plans for her own future other than to spend more time with her fiancé and 4-year-old daughter.

"I'll have to admit I slept well for the first time in a long time last night," Ardern told reporters Friday, adding that she felt both sadness and relief.

Stephen Hoadley, an assistant professor of politics and international relations at the University of Auckland, said he couldn't imagine Ardern would remain at home over the long term, given her energy and skills.

"She has the potential, she has the ability, she has the profile, she has the acceptability to do a whole lot of things," Hoadley said. "Give her a few weeks to rest up, and to refill the tank, to use her phrase. But I would imagine by the end of this year, she'll be off and running on a whole new career line."

Hoadley pointed to the career path of Helen Clark, another former New Zealand prime minister who went on to become a top administrator at the U.N., leading the development program.

"Jacinda could be tapped by any number of United Nations, or charitable, or philanthropic, or



Ardern

other kinds of organizations," Hoadley said.

"There are many, many possibilities, and her profile is so high that I think she would have her pick."

Climate Change Minister James Shaw, who first met Ardern in about 2007 and has remained friends, said he was in shock but also not wholly surprised when Ardern told him of her plans to resign.

"It's been a really intense five years," Shaw said.

On top of a busy legislative program, Shaw said, Ardern had needed to steer the country through a series of crises, including a mass-shooting at two Christchurch mosques that left 51 people dead, a volcanic eruption that killed 22, and the coronavirus pandemic. On

top of that, Ardern also bore the brunt of a growing number of threats, Shaw said, and a toxic, misogynistic online culture that had grown worse in recent years.

"What I hope is that she can get some time at the beach with her family, uninterrupted, for a while," Shaw said.

He said he believes Ardern when she says she doesn't yet have firm plans for the future.

"I think she could do pretty much whatever she wants from this point," Shaw said.

"Jacinda is one of the most selfless, determined, publicly-minded people I have ever met," Shaw added. "So I would imagine that whatever it is, it will be in the public interest."

MEXICO'S president said that he would consider a request by convicted drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman to return from the United States to complete his sentence on humanitarian grounds. The message from El Chapo was described as an "SOS" by one of his attorneys.

The Sinaloa cartel founder has appealed to President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador for help due to alleged "psychological torment" that Guzman says he is suffering in a U.S. prison.

Mexican drug kingpin Joaquin Guzman said he is "pleading for help" to return from the United States to complete his sentence on humanitarian grounds. The message from El Chapo was described as an "SOS" by one of his attorneys.

It was unclear if Mexico had the power to grant the request, "but the door must always be left open when it comes to human rights," he added.

El Chapo is serving a life sentence in a maximum security prison in Colorado after being convicted in 2019 of charges including drug trafficking, money laundering and weapons-related offenses.

He is incarcerated at the "Supermax" prison in Florence, Colorado, which holds a number of high-profile inmates, including Unabomber Ted Kaczynski, Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, Sept. 11 conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui and Oklahoma City bombing accomplice Terry Nichols. The facility is so secure, so remote and so austere that it has been called the "Alcatraz of the Rockies."

According to one of his lawyers, Jose Refugio Rodriguez, Guzman is unhappy with the harsh prison conditions including isolation and a lack of sunlight.

The message, described as "an SOS," was transmitted via one of

"El Chapo" sends "SOS" to Mexico's president



Obrador

Guzman's lawyers in the United States as well as his family, Rodriguez said.

He hopes to return to face outstanding charges and complete his sentence in Mexico under a prison agreement between the two countries, Rodriguez told AFP.

On Tuesday, Mexican Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard had downplayed the chance of any government intercession in favor of Guzman, who twice escaped from jail in his home country.

"Frankly I don't see any possibilities for him, but I'm going to review it with the prosecutor's office," Ebrard told reporters.

One of El Chapo's sons, Ovidio Guzman, was arrested by Mexican security forces this month in an operation that left

29 people dead and sparked a dramatic shootout at an airport in the city of Culiacan.

The U.S. Department of State had been offering a reward of up to \$5 million for information leading to the arrest and/or conviction of Ovidio Guzmán-López.

Ovidio Guzmán had not been one of El Chapo's better-known sons until an aborted operation to capture him three years ago. That attempt similarly set off violence in Culiacan that ultimately led President Andrés Manuel López Obrador to order the military to let him go.

Supreme Court says it's unable to identify who leaked draft of abortion decision

U.S. to allow private sponsorship of refugees' resettlement

With U.S. hitting debt ceiling, "extraordinary measures" being used to prevent possible default

Suspected al-Shabab fighters killed

SECURITY forces have killed 10 fighters from the Somalia-based al-Shabab group in eastern

Kenya, a government official says.

They also recovered rocket-propelled grenades and improvised explosive devices after fighting the group on Wednesday in the village of Galmagalla in Garissa county, Thomas Bett, deputy county commissioner of the Bura East sub-county.

"The operation to flush out the Somalia militants' group in the region was carried out by our multi-agency team, ... and [it] managed to neutralise 10 Islamist group militants and recovered assault weapons," he told the Reuters news agency.

Spokespeople for al-Shabab could not be reached for comment.

The al-Qaeda affiliate has made incursions into Kenya for years to pressure the country into withdrawing its troops from the African Union-mandated peacekeeping force helping Somalia's central government fight the group.

Al-Shabab has targeted security forces, schools, vehicles, towns and telecommunications infrastructure in eastern Kenya although the frequency and intensity of their attacks have declined in recent years.



Ruto

A 2013 attack on the Westgate shopping mall Nairobi, killed 67 people.

Al-Shabab has been fighting for more than a decade to topple Somalia's central government and establish its own rule, based on its strict interpretation of Islamic law.

Last week, the group killed four workers from Kenya's highway authority when their vehicle hit a roadside bomb in Garissa county. On Tuesday, one person died when a convoy was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade in the same region, police said in a report.

Jailed Kashmir activist awarded top rights prize

JAILED Kashmiri rights activist Khurram Parvez has won the Martin Ennals Award, one of the world's most prestigious human rights prizes, along with two other campaigners from Chad and Venezuela, with the jury hailing their "courage".

The other two winners are Delphine Djiraibe, one of Chad's first women lawyers; and Feliciano Reyna, a rights activist and advocate for access to health for marginalised LGBTQ people in Venezuela.

The common denominator between the

2023 laureates ... is their courage, passion, and determination to bring the voice of the voiceless to the international arena, despite the ongoing, sometimes life-threatening, challenges they endure," prize jury chairman Hans Thoolen said in a statement on Thursday.

"We are particularly proud to honour these three exceptional laureates who have each dedicated over 30 years of their lives to building movements which brought about justice for victims or delivered medicines to the marginalised," he said. "They have made human rights real for thousands of people in their communities."

The award ceremony will take place in Geneva on February 16, the organisers said.

Parvez, the founder of the widely respected Jammu Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society, likely will not be able to attend the ceremony, however. He has been

detailed by India since November 2021 under a stringent "terrorism" law that effectively allows people to be held without trial indefinitely.

According to the prize organisers, the 45-year-old was catapulted into non-violent activism at the age of 13, when he witnessed the shooting of his grandfather during a demonstration in Indian-administered Kashmir.

Last May, the influential US-based Time magazine named Parvez as one of the 100 most influential people of 2022. The Himalayan region of Kashmir is divided between India and Pakistan, which both govern over parts of it, but which both claim it in its entirety. Most residents on the Indian side either want an independent state or merger with Pakistan.

An armed rebellion against New Delhi's rule began in Indian-administered Kashmir in the late 1980s. To suppress the revolt, India deployed nearly half a million troops in the valley, making it one of the



Parvez



Most popular black female singers ever

Here we go guys, In this article, we are presenting you the most famous & popular Black Female Singers ever. They all are very talented and the most famous singer in the world, they won many people's hearts with their beautiful vocals. Black female singers face a lot of problems in the world like racism, sexism and more and have to work so hard. Nowadays, Black women are influencing the music industry and making their place in top positions. When you scroll up the page you will see the most popular Black

Mariah Carey

Mariah Carey is the most popular American black singer and actress, born on March 27, 1969. She is known for her five-octave vocal range, melismatic singing style, and signature use of the whistle register.



Robyn R. Penty

Robyn Rihanna Fenty is a Barbadian black singer, fashion designer, and businesswoman, born on February 20, 1988. Rihanna is one of the best-selling music artists of all time. She has earned 14 number-ones and 31 top-ten singles in the US and 30 top-ten entries in the UK.



Beyoncé

Beyoncé is the most famous American black singer in the world, born on September 4, 1981. She rose to fame in the late 1990s as the lead singer of Destiny's Child, one of the best-selling girl groups of all time. One of the most popular Black



Nicki Minaj

Nicki Minaj (real name Onika Tanya Maraj-Petty) is a black Trinidadian rapper & singer, born on December 8, 1982. She is known for her animated flow in her rapping and



versatility as a recording artist

Cardi B

Cardi B (real name Belcalis Marlenis Almánzar) is the most popular American rapper, born on October 11, 1992. She is the highest certified female rapper of all time on the RIAA's Top Artists. Cardi B is known for her aggressive flow and candid lyrics, which have received critical praise. One of the most popular Black Female Singers Ever



H. E. R

H.E.R. (real name Gabriella Sarmiento Wilson) is an American singer and songwriter, born on June 27, 1997. In 2021, she was awarded the Grammy Award for Song of the Year for "I Can't Breathe", and the Academy Award for Best Original Song for "Fight for You" from the film Judas and the Black Messiah (2021).



Best Original Song for "Fight for You" from the film Judas and the Black Messiah (2021).

SZA

SZA (real name Solána Imani Rowe) is a black American singer and songwriter, born on November 8, 1989. SZA is a neo-soul singer, whose music has been described as alternative R&B, with elements of soul, hip hop, & many more.



Continued on page 25

Nigerian celebrities who quietly ended their marriages

Some Nigerian celebrities have kept gist of their separation and divorce away from the public Here are some of your favourite celebrity marriages that ended quietly.



DR SID, SIMI

Nigerian music star Dr Sid and Simi got married in 2014 in one of the most talked-about celebrity weddings. They welcomed their first daughter and a second one a few years later.

Trouble in their marriage was first reported in 2017 but the couple stayed away from any public drama. In January 2020, Simi took to her Instagram page where she announced that their marriage was over.

Sid has remained silent about his divorce to date.



Osas Ighodaro, Gbenro Ajibade

Ighodaro and Ajibade met onset of a TV show and got married afterwards to fans and industry delight.

The couple's wedding ceremony was so huge, that it was televised on live TV.

In February 2019, fans and followers of Osas and Gbenro woke up to a rather strange post from the latter. He had in his post called out Osas over her parenting style. It was clear that they were separated at that time.

A few months later, Osas took down Gbenro's name from her Instagram handle. After several months in the United States of America, Gbenro marked his return to Nigeria with an interview on Rubbin Minds in December where he confirmed that they are divorced.



Etinosa Idemudia, Ighrosa

Etinosa Idemudia's marriage to Benin-based lawyer, Ighrosa is the most shortest-lived on this list. The former couple tied the knot in September 2020 and welcomed their first daughter on Christmas Day, the same year.

The movie star had planned to keep the news of her marriage crash away from the prying eyes of the public but the press had other plans. In May 2021, she called out a blogger for breaking the news about her marriage collapse.



Continued on page 25

Female Singers Ever.

Aretha L. Franklin

Aretha Louise Franklin was an American black singer and pianist, born on March 25, 1942, & died on August 16, 2018. Franklin recorded 112 charted singles on Billboard, including 73 Hot 100 entries, 17 top-ten pop singles, 100 R&B entries, and 20 number-



Diana Ross

Diana Ross is a black American singer, born on March 26, 1944. She is popular for the lead singer of the vocal group the Supremes, who became Motown's most



successful act during the 1960s and one of the world's best-selling girl groups of all time.

Tina Turner

Tina Turner is an American black singer and actress, born on November 26, 1939. Turner is famous for being the lead singer of the Ike & Tina Turner Revue before launching a successful career as a solo performer. One of the most popular Black Female Singers Ever.



EYE'S WORLD

With *Henrietta Gonzuk*

Relationship

Connect with your partner through intimate conversations

RELATIONSHIPS are not simply about being physically intimate; they are a lot more than that and involve love, trust, respect, and commitment.

Apart from having sexual intimacy in your intimate relationship, the two of you must be able to connect through emotional intimacy.

A great way to achieve emotional intimacy is by having intimate conversations.

Intimate conversations are simply about being together and enjoying each other's company. Such conversations are a great way to strengthen bonds between partners and enhance their feelings towards each other.

Another reason why intimate conversations are essential in a relationship is to resolve any intimacy issues that you might be facing.

To maintain your emotional connection or the emotional attachment that you share with your partner, you must be proactive in having intimate conversations.

So, if you are looking for intimate questions to ask your boyfriend or romantic questions to ask your partner, listed down below are a few ways that you can use to have intimate conversations with your partner.

Be the one to initiate the conversation

Do not feel embarrassed or ashamed, and instead, be the first one to initiate the talk.

Be the first one to start the relationship conversation and ask questions, tell details about yourself, and you will find that in no time, your partner will follow and adding in their part to the conversation.

Here are some good questions to ask a guy or a girl to intimate an intimate conversation:

- What is the first thing you



noticed about me?

- What role does physical attraction play in whether or not you pursue a relationship?

- How do you describe me to other people?
- What qualities make me special to you?

Asking these intimate questions would help you understand how compatible you are with your partner.

Be vulnerable

Put away all fears and worries when you talk to your partner. Be open and honest with whatever you say and be brave enough to share.

Fearing to lose your partner over your vulnerability displays lack of trust.

To share your vulnerability, here are some sexually intimate questions to ask a girl or guy:

Share secrets with each other
Relationships require each of the partners to be completely honest and candid with each other.

Many experts recommended couples to share secrets that they would otherwise never share.

Opening up a deep secret is a great way to get closer to your partner.

Some deep secret questions to ask your partner:

- Have you ever cheated on a partner?
- Is our relationship physical enough for you?
- Do you have any fantasies you would like fulfilled?

Appreciate and show gratitude

Feel free to tell your partner how grateful you are to have them in

your life. Tell them how much you value the time you spend with them and how much this relationship means to you.

Expressing gratitude would only strengthen your relationship.

Be a comfort for them

Be a supporter if your partner shares something that has been disturbing them or has affected them in a certain way.

Let them know you will always be by their side and hold them up no matter what and help them move past the incidents that bother them.

Have practical expectations for the session

Intimate conversations are simply not being all lovey-dovey but instead can be something more meaningful. Engage in talks about finances, family, children, even wills.

These are all subjects that show that both of you are willing to invest in this relationship further and wish to see it last forever.

Share important childhood experiences

Talking about your childhood or time before you met your partner is a great way to show your partner how you were before they stepped into your life.

It helps you reflect as well as allows them to see how much you've grown, learned and changed yourself over the years.

Talk about when you fell in love

During these moments of tenderness, it is good to share and tell your partner about the moment when you fell for them.

It could've been the tiniest of moments when you realized they were the 'one,' but it was so meaningful for you.

Tell your partner why you love them

We love our significant other for everything, but there are always a few things that remind us over and over again why we chose this person, such as their smile, the color of their eyes, the way they talk, etc.

Ask many questions

Ask everything you wish to know about your partner. Ask them about their life before they met you, about their plans for the future and anything that you feel would help you understand them better.

Connect mentally and physically

While sitting there and talking, it could be of further help if the two of you gazed into each other's eyes now and then or hold hands or anything small physical gesture.

This could help knit the two of you further close and enhance the status of your relationship.

Be yourself

All in all, be yourself! Be the person you are at heart, and do not try to change yourself just for the sake of your partner to like you.

Your partner should love you and accept you for who you are and not the façade you put up. Similarly, you should love and accept your partner for who they are without trying to change them or fix their flaws.



EVERYBODY'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Relationship

How to handle trauma bonding in relationship

By SYLVIA SMITH

TRAUMA bonding occurs when a victim develops a strong emotional attachment with an abuser. In the context of relationships, a trauma bond can develop when domestic violence or psychological abuse occurs.

For example, a wife or girlfriend subjected to ongoing physical assaults from her partner may develop a strong trauma bond with her partner, despite the partner being abusive.

Trauma bonds occur because, at the start of the relationship, abusive, manipulative partners will shower their new significant other with love.

The manipulators also use strategies, such as isolating the partner from others and making the partner financially dependent upon them so that when the relationship turns sour, the victim cannot leave.

Because of the strong bond that occurred in the initial stages of a relationship, the victim will remain with the abusive partner because they are convinced the abuser will change or that the relationship will go back to the way it was in the beginning before the abuse began.

1. The love bombing stage

The love bombing stage attracts the victim to their significant other and leads them to develop a strong bond. During this stage, the abuser is especially flattering and charismatic.

They will shower their new significant other with compliments and attention and make promises of a blissful future together.

The stage of trust and dependency

Once you move to stage two, trust and dependency, the abuser will "test" you to see whether they have your trust and commitment. They may place you in a situation where they test your loyalty or become angry with you for questioning it.

During this stage, the abuser must know you're bonded to them and "all in" within the relationship.

The criticism phase

During this phase, the trauma bond grows, and the abuser begins to show their true colors. During disagreements or stressful times, the abuser will begin to throw criticisms



your way or blame you for problems within the relationship.

You'll end up apologizing to your partner and then feeling that you're lucky they still accept you, as flawed as you are.

Gaslighting and continued manipulation

Gaslighting is common in abusive relationships and is often linked to the narcissist trauma bond. A person who engages in gaslighting attempts to convince their partner that the partner is crazy or misunderstands reality.

Over time, the victim in the trauma bond is convinced that they've lost their mind and are imagining the abusive behavior. This prevents the victim from breaking a trauma bond with her partner.

Giving in

Once the victim in the relationship gives in, they will stop fighting back against the abuser. The victim will "walk on eggshells" or do everything they can to please the abuser and reduce the likelihood of fights and

violence.

Losing your sense of self

People in a trauma bond often lose their sense of self and identity. Most of their time and energy goes into pleasing the abuser. They may have to give up their interests and hobbies because of the abuser's controlling behavior, and they've likely been isolated from friends and family.

Addiction to the cycle

Something important to understand about the stages of trauma bonding is that they tend to occur in a cycle.

Over time, the victim becomes addicted to this cycle.

The victim knows that once things cool down after a fight, the abuser will return to loving and attentive again. This becomes addictive because the victim longs for the "high" of the love bombing stage and will repeat the trauma bonding cycle to return to the good times.

Acknowledge that the trauma bond exists

The first step in breaking the trauma bond cycle is acknowledging that you have been involved in an abusive relationship that has led to developing a trauma bond rather than real, healthy love.

Stop fantasizing

A trauma bond will continue as long as you convince yourself that the situation will change. Perhaps you're holding onto the hope that your partner will stop their abusive behavior and become the person they pretended to be during the love bombing stage.

3. Make an exit plan

If you're set on leaving the relationship, it will require some planning. For example, you might need to ask supportive friends or family members to help you plan or to provide a place to stay once you leave the relationship if you're living with your significant other.

You may need to change your phone number or set aside money to help you exit the relationship.

Whatever the case, making a plan is important, with your safety as a top priority. This could include filing for a

protection order, staying in a secret location, or developing a "code word" with friends or loved ones you can call in case of an emergency.

4. Go no contact

Once you leave the relationship, it's important to go no contact. Remember, part of the trauma bonding relationship is an addiction to the cycle.

If you maintain any contact with the abuser, they will likely try to use love bombing and other manipulative tactics to lure you back into the relationship.

Seek therapy

It's essential to recognize that being involved in a trauma bonded relationship can significantly affect your physical and mental health. You





Reality Bites

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2023: Ways to start the new year positively

2022 has gone and we are in a new year. Experts advise that facing a new year with new plans and positive thoughts is the best way to start.

This is because you are able to take a review of your strengths and weaknesses in the last year, and make a deliberate move to improve various aspects of your life like work, lifestyle and relationships.

In 2022, there was many unmet expectations, unfulfilled desires and worse, a dwindling economy that affected the progress of many people in different areas. There were people who faced losses and other unpleasant experiences. But that does not mean all is lost.

"It's never too late to be what you might have been" says George Elliot. While Baz Luhrmann says "Trust yourself that you can do it and get it".

A new year means an opportunity for a fresh outlook on life, says an online counsellor, Mary Shull.

"Make sure that you do not overlook the important role that your personal well-being plays in your ability to achieve your goals in the new year" she advises.

"In particular, take time to think about your quality of life and the soundness of your personal relationships. There is always room for personal growth in these areas, and there are many steps you can take to optimize your enjoyment of life".

She says the following are five ways to make positive changes in the new year.

Make a commitment to improving your life and your relationships

"A goal without a plan is just a wish." - Antoine de Saint-Exupery

The path to positive change in the new year begins with your commitment and dedication to facing your challenges and nurturing your relationships. You must go beyond simply thinking about making positive changes in your life and craft a plan. A good first step is to write down your top three personal goals and post them in a highly visible location



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where you can see them every day.

Assess your overall satisfaction with life

Making positive changes will be difficult if you are dissatisfied with life or if you are experiencing depression. Some people know whether they feel happy or unsatisfied with their lives while others are unable to assess their satisfaction with life. One way to assess your degree of life satisfaction is to take a minute to complete a Life Satisfaction Scale. A score under 10 indicates that you are extremely dissatisfied with your life in general and could benefit from making positive changes.

Take a marriage fitness test
 A marriage fitness test can help

you assess the strength of your marriage and highlight areas of your marriage that could benefit from improvement. Even if your marriage is rock solid, vow to take some special measures to keep your marriage strong. These few simple ways to help maintain a strong marriage with your spouse:

Communicate openly with your spouse. Tell your spouse you appreciate him/her

Make spending time with your spouse a top priority.

Participate in enjoyable activities with your spouse.

Strive to Achieve the Proper Work - Life Balance, Pouring your heart and energy into your employment may help you meet your financial goals.

However, devoting an excessive amount of time to work activities can cause your relationships and personal well-being to suffer. Make sure that you have plenty of time in life to enjoy the following:

- Family activities
- Exercise and physical pursuits
- Relaxation and spiritual fulfillment
- Personal development
- Volunteer activities

Vow to improve your relationships with friends and loved ones

If you are like most people, you are involved in at least one personal relationship that can benefit from improvement. Take a few minutes to think about your relationships with family members, close friends, and work colleagues. Are any of them strained? Have you noticed any counter-productive patterns emerging in your relationships

with others? If you answered "Yes" to either of these questions, then you should take the necessary steps to improve your personal relationships.

Start the new year with a fresh positive outlook on life. Improve your income, think of better financial plan to get you to a better economic stability.

The best way to face the new

year with renewed strength to overcome your challenges is to seek the guidance of a trained professional. A Licensed Professional Counselor can help you develop the skills to successfully cope with your everyday challenges and help you approach your relationships with a positive, productive approach.



THE SWORD

With *Henrietta Gonzuk*

Health

Health benefits of pineapple skin for women

By **NOAH WILLIAMS**

DO you know that those pineapple skin peels you throw away have health benefits that your body needs?

Pineapple is one of the most popular fruit in the world because of its health benefits, but many people don't know that pineapple peels also contain amazing benefits.

Pineapple fruit also known as Ananas Comosus is an edible fruit from Bromeliaceae family. It can be usually found in tropical climate countries, but it is also cultivated worldwide due to its sweet and delicious taste.

Aside enjoying the benefits of pineapple juice, fermented pineapple skin drink offers many health benefits. This is because pineapple peel composition contains vitamin B, C, folate, thiamin, pantothenic acid, bromelain, niacin, and fiber.

It is also packed with mineral including magnesium, potassium, copper, manganese, calcium, iron, and other nutrients. It also contains antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, anti-aging and anti-cancer properties.

It is also an excellent source of antioxidants that can help your body fight free radicals which can cause numerous diseases. After reading this article you will never throw away pineapple skin.

Here are health benefits of pineapple skin peels women should know about:

Anti-inflammatory
Bromelain, a powerful enzyme found in high concentrations in pineapple skin, helps to cut down inflammation in the body.



It reduces swelling after surgery or injury.

Aids digestion
Not only do the peels serve to make digestion smoother, but they also help to fight intestinal parasites, constipation. They also build up healthy gut flora.

Boosts immune system
The high levels of vitamin C in the pineapple and its skin prevent and fight infections. Bromelain and vitamin C act as a bacteria fighter, mucus cutter, cough suppressant, wound healer, and overall system

Fights arthritis and joint pain

Bromelain works its anti-inflammatory magic in those who have arthritis or joint pain. Drinking pineapple peels juice works directly on the source of the pain.

Protects vision
Pineapple skin tea benefits include beta carotene and vitamin C. They are present in the entire plant and aid in battling degenerative eye diseases like glaucoma.

Strengthens bone and teeth
Pineapple skins have high manganese content. Manganese helps to grow, strengthen, and repair bones and teeth. Vitamin C and astringent properties keep gums clean and healthy.

Anti-cancer
Pineapple skins contain manganese, vitamin C, and antioxidants that have the ability to fight tumours and aid in cancer prevention.

Keeps blood pressure stable

Bromelain helps with preventing blood clots from forming, and the copper content in pineapple juice increase the formation of healthy red blood cells. Bits of potassium helps the blood vessels stay healthy and can counteract large amounts of

sodium, enabling the blood pressure to be stable.

Aids fertility
Pineapple is important to women trying to conceive because of its beta carotene and bromelain properties. It reduces inflammation in the womb that helps create an ideal environment for implantation.

Enhances Libido
Consuming the juice from pineapple peels enhances your libido. It is a natural way to get your sex groove back without complications.

These sweet peels also promote healthy skin and hair, aid weight loss, ease nausea, and reduce acne and pimples. The benefits also include treating intestinal worms, hydrating the skin and preventing hair loss.

How to prepare pineapple peels juice:

Ingredients
1 whole pineapple, unpeeled
1 litre of water
A natural sweetener to taste

Procedure:
Wash the pineapple and separate the peel from the flesh. Put the peel in a pan filled with water and add some pineapple pulp, then boil them together. Dilute the mixture in a litre of water and add natural sweetener to improve its taste.

BUSINESS WORLD

Customers and poor banking services during the holidays

A viral video of Daddy Freeze, the radio talk show host (real name: Ifedayo Olarinde) pillorying Zenith Bank for his inability to withdraw cash from the bank's ATM over the holidays has struck a chord with many customers. ETIM ETIM writes.

IN the video, Daddy Freeze is heard shouting, "Come, Zenith Bank, I'm officially tired of this stupidity... I came here to withdraw money from this ATM, I put in my ATM card, and the next thing was 'Out of Service'...and my card was seized...".

The rest of the video is full of uncomplimentary remarks about the bank which I do want to reproduce here.

Incidentally, I am a customer of the bank, and I have a good idea of what Daddy Freeze was complaining about.

But this piece is not all about my travails. Nigerians of different walk of life are used to unpleasant banking experiences, but sadly the frequency of out-of-service-messages at our ATMs is getting alarming. The authorities should come to our help.

Over the holidays, customers reported varying degrees of nasty experiences with their banks, and these bordered mostly on IT downtimes, crowded banking halls, cashless ATMs and glitches on internet payment platforms.

I personally saw long queues of customers waiting hours on end at ATMs in Uyo and Abuja where I spent the holidays as people tried to withdraw cash. "I have been moving from bank to bank since morning, but their ATMs are not working", a young lady agonized in Wuse 2 area of Abuja, on Boxing Day.

In Uyo, where banks are concentrated in a well-designed dedicated area known as Banking Layout, queues at ATMs, especially at weekends, are common sights, but this holiday, the queues have transformed into rowdy crowds, creating a bedlam everywhere.

At an airline office a few days before Christmas, officials turned me back because "our POS has not been working today". The CBN should investigate and address the causes of these glitches, more so since the



monetary authorities are taking steps to reduce the volume of cash in the economy and encourage less and less of its use as mode of payments.

But it is also commendable that a few banks did put in extra efforts to make customers' experience more pleasant during the holidays. Access Bank, for example, was proactive enough to prepare for the season's upsurge, and that explains why many customers flocked to its terminals.

With 600 branches and service centers; over 300 ATMs and more than 160,000 agents that cater for its 52 million customers, including this writer, the bank was careful enough to avoid a backlash like the one Daddy Freeze provided.

I understand that Access had deployed a performance tracker across its platforms and reviewed it every hour to monitor the level of customers' satisfaction. Some staffers were particularly put on standby to troubleshoot and load up the terminals throughout the season.

Focus was on tracking and speedy resolution of any issues that arose. I salute the banks that went beyond the ordinary to take care of their customers.

I should note that most of these problems are not entirely the faults of the banks. The industry also has to contend with the inadequacies of technology infrastructure in the country. "The central infrastructure that we share poses huge challenges to the electronic service we offer, but we keep seeking new ways to make things

work better", says a senior management staff of Access Bank.

Simply put, the quality of service from telecoms operators influences the quality of services that the banks provide. Over the holidays, Nigerians also complained of epileptic services from their network providers. It was a horrifying experience for me when internet services on my airtel line collapsed for up to 24 hours. I had to quickly switch to an idle line.

I should also commend the

millions of banking agents across the country that ensured that customers had cash when they needed. By my assessment, of all the initiatives that the CBN had introduced in the last ten years, the Anchor Borrowers Program and Agent Banking are the most positively impactful.

As I said earlier, the CBN should look keenly into the problems at the ATMs and work with the banks to address the many incidents of out-of-service occurrences. The world is yet to find a replacement for banking!

"At an airline office a few days before Christmas, officials turned me back because 'our POS has not been working today'. The CBN should investigate and address the causes of these glitches, more so since the monetary authorities are taking steps to reduce the volume of cash in the economy and encourage less and less of its use as mode of payments. But it is also commendable that a few banks did put in extra efforts to make customers' experience more pleasant during the holidays. Access Bank, for example, was proactive enough to prepare for the season's upsurge, and that explains why many customers flocked to its terminals".

BUSINESS WORLD

Deposit old naira notes before deadline, CBN reiterates

THE Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has charged Nigerians to ensure they deposit the old N200, N500 and N1000 notes in their various banks before the January 31, deadline.

Mrs Olufolake Ogundero, the CBN Branch Controller in Oyo State, gave the charge recently during the sensitisation programme held across markets in the state.

Recall that the CBN had introduced newly designed N200, N500 and N1000 notes with a directive that all old notes be out of circulation by Jan. 31.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the apex bank's sensitisation train which took off from the popular Dugbe market, went through Aleshinloye, Bodija, Gbagi and other major markets in Ibadan.

NAN reports that the sensitisation train is also expected to visit the markets in the five other zones of the state, namely, Ogbomoso, Oyo, Ibarapa, Oke-Ogun I and Oke-Ogun II.

Ogundero said that the sensitisation programme was aimed at enlightening the traders on the new naira notes and why they must deposit the old notes before the Jan. 31 deadline.

She said that the CBN had dispensed lot of the new naira notes to the banks.

The branch controller allayed fears of non-availability of the new naira notes in circulation, saying commercial banks had been instructed to load them in the Automated Teller Machines (ATMs).

Ogundero said banks that failed to comply with CBN's directive would be sanctioned.

"The Jan. 31st is still the deadline for all Nigerians to deposit the old naira notes in the banks. The CBN is doing everything within its capacity

CBN vows to sanction banks hoarding new notes

THE Central Bank of Nigeria on Thursday vowed to sanction any commercial bank found hoarding the new naira notes.

The CBN Kano Branch Controller, Umar Bui, made the disclosure during a sensitisation programme on the new naira notes organised for traders at the Sabon Gari market in Kano.

"You have the right to report any bank found hoarding the new naira notes or refusing to collect your old naira notes before the 31st January 2023 deadline," Mr Bui said, according to a Punch report.

"No bank should refuse to collect the old naira notes until the deadline of 31st January 2023."

The sensitisation programme was extended to Kwari Market, Wapa Bureau De Change Market, Kofar Wambam market and the popular Kurmi market, Kano.

Earlier on Wednesday, CBN's Director of the Legal Services Department, Kofo Salam-Alada, disclosed that the CBN



Emefiele

to make the new notes available for banks to dispense through ATMs.

"The banks have been instructed to load the new naira notes in ATMs. We are conducting spot-check to make sure that banks dispense the new notes through ATMs.

"We have visited some ATMs and I can assure you that banks which failed to comply with CBN directives would be sanctioned," she said.

Some of the traders who spoke to newsmen complained on the availability of the new naira notes, saying they were not in circulation as expected.

Alhaji Isiaka Onibode, a trader at Aleshinloye market,

called on the CBN to extend the Jan. 31 deadline for the notes to circulate as expected.

He promised to also enlighten other traders on the need to deposit the old naira notes before the Jan. 31 deadline.

Also, Rahmon Adebowale, a trader at Dugbe market, appreciated the beauty of the newly designed naira notes, but said they was yet to be well circulated.

"I have sold goods this morning and was paid with old notes. I was in the bank yesterday where someone deposited the old naira notes.

"He was asked to withdrawal from the ATM to get the new notes," he said.

AMID the lingering nationwide fuel scarcity, the Independent Petroleum Marketers Association of Nigeria (IPMAN) on Friday said the volume of products supplied to marketers have dropped by about 40 percent.

IPMAN Deputy President, Zarna Mustapha, who made a live appearance recently on Channels Television's *Sunrise Daily*, said the country is in a complex situation owing to the "burden of subsidy that government is carrying", which he said is no more sustainable.

According to him, the volume that the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL), the sole importer of Premium Motor Spirit otherwise called petrol has been hitting hard on the "paucity of the funds" of the Federal Government.

"Because of that, the supply that we receive as marketers at the loading points, we believe we don't get what we usually get - even 50 percent of what we get," Mustapha said.

"Some [time] in July, August, the volume of liftings (sic) we had and what we have today has dropped by about 50 percent or 40 percent."

The NNPC, on November 29, 2022, said it had a "national PMS stock of over 2 billion litres. This is equivalent to over 30 days of sufficiency".

However, Mustapha theorised that the lingering presence of queues at fuel stations across the nation may be due to the high cost of subsidy.

"We are just assuming maybe the volume of the products they are bringing in -

Volume of product lifted by marketers has dropped

- IPMAN

the more the volume, the more the cost of the subsidy," he added.

"It doesn't seem that they are bringing in more. If they're bringing in more, we would be having the same volume that we usually get at the loading point.

"As of today, with what is trending (sic) in the private depots, the volume available is not enough. The private depots also contribute by not giving the product as it is being regulated by the NNPC."

Mustapha pointed out that he had not heard any official statement from NNPC or the industry's regulatory body, the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) about insufficient supply.

"But with the look of things, [with] what is going on at the loading point, the product is not enough as they usually

bring it, supply it to the private depots and we purchase from the private depots," he said.

According to the IPMAN deputy president, NNPC is saddled with importing the products and distributing them to private depots, adding that independent marketers do not have depots.

"Yesterday, I bought a product in Lagos at a depot at N247 per litre to be transported down to the far North at the cost of N50-N60 per litre. Even we as independent marketers don't really understand what is happening.

"As of yesterday, it is going for about N240 in Lagos, N235 in Warri, and N240 in Port Harcourt. In Calabar, it's as high as N250 per litre.

"As a marketer, you will buy that product for upward transmission to where your retail outlet is. You'll transport it yourself," he said.



Sylva

Buhari meets D-G, Arab Bank

PRESIDENT Muhammadu Buhari says there can be no development without peace, saying the two are complementary to each other.

The president stated this recently at State House, Abuja, while granting

audience to the Director-General of the Arab Bank for Economic Development, Dr Sid Ould Tah.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that Buhari had recently in Nouakchott, Mauritania, received an

award for Strengthening of the Peace in Africa from the Abu Dhabi Peace Forum.

He said the work of the Arab Bank for Economic Development "is very critical, and, indeed, a major catalyst and tool for achieving our overall objective as leaders on the continent".

While lauding the Bank for its investment in Nigeria, the president pointed at strides in the agricultural sector regarding food security systems, capacity building and integrated infrastructure project.

He said the key focus of the

current administration had been Security, Economy and Anti-Corruption, noting that the three are critical "towards achieving our overall development objective not just as a country, but more importantly as a continent".

The president observed that the issues that affect one nation also affect others.

This, he said, had been clearly demonstrated in the fight against the tyranny of terrorists that have spread across the entire West African sub-region, and "beginning to emerge in our sister countries in some parts of East and

Central Africa".

He noted that focus on agriculture and infrastructure allowed Nigeria to be resilient during the last two global economic and public health crises.

The president urged the Bank to review the amount of capital it could inject into various economies, "as this would lead to greater impact as we stare at the various issues that would confront our economies".

Gov. Babagana Zulum of Borno, who had interfaced with the Bank at its headquarters, thanked the president for ensuring improvement of security in the North East region.

"We now get grants for livestock farming, gum Arabic production, infrastructure, and I believe Nigeria will still have more opportunities from the Arab Bank for Economic Development," he said.

Dr Ould Tah congratulated Buhari for his award on peace strengthening, saying it is a testimony to his efforts in promoting amity in Nigeria and Africa.

According to him, the Bank has a strong relationship with Nigeria, and will love to do more in the areas of wheat cultivation, gum Arabic, veterinary support services, women and youth development, among others.



Buhari

ENTREPRENEUR WATCH
WITH CELESTINE D. ATTSAR

Supply chain mapping, why it is vital

Professor Christensen's book, *How Will You Measure Your Life?*, provides powerful lessons for those in pursuit of both a meaningful career and a meaningful life. SANDY SANCHEZ writes.

THE past couple of years have been...tumultuous, to say the least. Amongst the plethora of global events, we've experienced a pandemic, a war, polarised politics, and worsening climate realities. But within this storm, we've also experienced adaptability, perseverance, and solidarity.

At a year's ending, there's often an inevitable period of reflection. 2022 was a year characterised by dramatics that necessitated growth in hard to cultivate skills, and though past years also ended with the inevitable period of reflection, 2022 was all the more critical to better understand both our place in the world and how we can help improve circumstances in the new year.

At the Clayton Christensen Institute, our application of business theory expands beyond the typical categories of business, management, and innovation. Business theory can also impart pertinent insights and lessons on health, education, global prosperity, even life.

Professor Christensen's book, *How Will You Measure Your Life?*, provides powerful lessons for those in pursuit of both a meaningful career and a meaningful life. As we all reflect on the unique dynamics of 2022 and come up with positive resolutions for the new year, here are three business lessons from the book that can also be applied to life goals:

Allocate your resources accordingly

We all have limited resources: a limited budget, limited opportunities, and limited time. Before we knew it, the shiny twelve months that gave us a



sense of fresh starts at the beginning of 2022 have flown by and the holidays are upon us yet again. Therefore, how we choose to allocate our resources is of utmost importance. Thinking back on our 2022 goals, how much of our resources were actually spent on them?

There tends to be a predisposition to allocate resources toward endeavours that will give us immediate rewards, but many of the goals we set for our careers and lives are long-term and won't offer immediate gratification. However, immediate gratification isn't always synonymous with lasting gratification. For example, market-creating innovations take years to reach successful scale, but when they do, the investment

returns of new markets are impactful both in quantity and quality, creating lasting sustainable prosperity. Similarly, investing time and energy in life-long projects, such as being closer to our families, might not give us immediate tangible results, but can provide powerful and enduring relationships and personal fulfilment.

My personal resolution toward resource allocation for 2023 will be to break down my year-long goals into monthly milestones, then pick one day at the end of the month to check on my progress. This way, even though my goals may not give me immediate gratification, I will still get a sense of accomplishment to

keep me motivated and disciplined.

Don't make the "marginal costs" mistake

Avoiding the allure of marginal thinking, or the "just this once" mindset, as we strive for our new goals will help us stay on track. Doing something that contradicts our goals "just this once" may seem enticingly trivial with marginal costs, but repeated or habitual "just this once" instances have led to company bankruptcies and financial crises.

As individuals, we must recognize when we are thinking marginally. Boundaries are set not just for discipline but for integrity, and knowing when not to cross them helps us avoid preventable setbacks. The decisions we make every day are what add up at the end of the year.

In 2023, I will endeavour to avoid the marginal costs mistake by taking a moment to stop and write out – not just think out – but write out the consequences and possible paths that one questionable decision might lead me down.

Address culture

A company's strategy is what they do, not what they say, and, ultimately, these strategies and routines define culture. Similarly, how we live our lives is determined by what we do every day, not

what we say, think, or hope we will do. Cultures can be built consciously or evolve unintentionally; but either way, culture is an effective management tool, both in business and in our personal lives because culture defines priorities.

Culture is the foundation of how we will function and accomplish our goals, so as we set and start working on new ones, we must take a moment to think about the kind of new routines we must develop to create a culture that will foster the accomplishment of our goals. When we begin to work towards our goals on instinct and not explicit decisions, we've successfully created that culture.

In 2023, I'm going to build a progress check routine to create a culture of both accountability and adaptability, allowing me to keep my goals on track, but also adopt flexible strategies when needed.

The Clayton Christensen Institute's business theories and lessons can be used every day, and whether they're used in entrepreneurial decisions or toward life decisions, they're powerful tools. As we measure our lives in 2022 and think about measurement in 2023, remember these tools are there for you to turn to.





Most popular black female singers ever

Continued from page 16

Whitney Elizabeth Houston

Whitney Elizabeth Houston was an American singer and actress, born on August 9, 1963, & died on February 11, 2012. She is one of the best-selling music artists of all time, with sales of over 200 million records worldwide. One of the most popular Black Female Singers Ever.



Mary Jane Blige

Mary Jane Blige is an American black singer, born on January 11, 1971. Blige has won nine Grammy Awards, four American Music Awards, twelve Billboard Music Awards.



Billie Holiday

Billie Holiday (real name Eleanora Fagan) was a most popular black American jazz and swing music singer, born on April 7, 1915, & died on July 17, 1959. She was known for her

vocal delivery and improvisational skills.

Ella J. Fitzgerald

Ella Jane Fitzgerald was a black American jazz singer, born on April 25, 1917, & died on June 15, 1996. She is sometimes referred to as the "First Lady of Song", "Queen of Jazz", and "Lady Ella".



Singers Ever.

Bessie Smith

Bessie Smith was a black American blues singer, born on April 15, 1894, & died on September 26, 1937. She was the most popular female blues singer of the 1920s and 1930s.



Patti LaBelle

Patti LaBelle is the most famous American singer and businesswoman, born on May 24, 1944. LaBelle is a dramatic soprano recognized for her vocal power, range and emotive delivery. One of the most popular Black Female

Singers Ever.

Etta James

Etta James (real name Jamesetta Hawkins) was an American singer who performed in various genres, including blues, R&B, jazz, & more, born on January 25, 1938, & died on January 20, 2012.



Gladys M. Knight

Gladys Maria Knight is an American singer and author, born on May 28, 1944. known as the "Empress of Soul". She has won seven Grammy Awards and is an inductee into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Vocal Group Hall of Fame along with

The Pips.

Nina Simone

Nina Simone (real name Eunice Kathleen Waymon) was the most American singer, and civil rights activist, born on February 21, 1933, & died on April 21, 2003. She has lots of musical styles including classical, jazz, blues, folk, R&B, gospel, and pop. One of the most popular Black Female Singers Ever.



Nigerian celebrities who quietly ended their marriages

Continued from page 16

Mofe Duncan, Jessica Kakkad

Mofe Duncan and Jessica Kakkad had one of the most discreet breakups in the history of celebrity marriage crashes. It had to take a die-hard fan of Jessica to burst the bubble in September 2019.

A few hours after the news broke, Mofe Duncan took to his Instagram page to release a statement where he revealed that the marriage had crashed a year earlier and that he still maintains a cordial relationship with Jessica and her family.



Anita Iseghohi, Tom Iseghohi

Another celebrity marriage collapse that was very discreet was that of former Most Beautiful Girl in Nigeria, Anita Iseghohi, and her business executive husband, Tom.

The former beauty queen took to her Instagram page in November 2018 where she revealed that her 11 years marriage to the former MD of Transcorp Corporation had ended. The union is blessed with three children.



Damilola Adegbite, Chris Attoh

Just like Osas and Gbenro, Damilola Adegbite and Chris Attoh had one of those onset beautiful love stories. The couple got hitched on February 14, 2015, in Accra, Ghana.

In April 2017, Chris Attoh slammed divorce rumours in a radio interview. The couple had earlier unfollowed each other on Instagram.

The actress remained silent about their separation after that. However, in September that same year, Attoh finally revealed that their marriage had crashed.



Blossom Chukwujekwu, Maureen Esisi

Blossom Chukwujekwu's split from Maureen Esisi was probably the most shocking separation gist in 2019. Social media will not forget in a hurry how Blossom and Maureen showcased their beautiful and 'happy marriage' to the admiration of many.

In September 2019, the news broke of their separation.

While blogs gave different accounts of the reason behind their marriage collapse, the couple remained mute. Although Maureen has made several cryptic comments about their failed marriage.

Blossom on the other hands has done a great job keeping conversations about his failed marriage out of his way.



SUNDAY FEATURE

Remembering senior citizens who are owed gratuities, pensions

In Nigeria, there is a widespread problem of pensioners not receiving their entitled retirement benefits. This has led to a number of protests across the country, as retired government employees demand to be paid the pensions and gratuities they are owed. In Delta State, for example, a group of aggrieved, famished pensioners congregated in front of Government House in Asaba, holding placards with slogans like "Wicked Okowa, pay us our pensions" and "Okowa, you owe the living and the dead." These senior citizens, who had worked for 35 years, were frustrated and sat on mats and the ground, blocking traffic to and from the seat of government. They vowed to stay there until the governor, Ifeanyi Okowa, addressed them personally. Austyn Ogannah writes.



At different times last year and even this year, similar protests have taken place in other states, including Kano, Imo, Niger, Anambra, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Cross River and Ogun. In Kano State in October 2022, hundreds of pensioners marched peacefully to the seat of government, protesting the nonpayment of their accumulated entitlements totaling N30.9bn. In Imo State, pensioners also took to the streets in protest, and in Ekiti State, some pensioners have even resorted to fasting and prayer in an attempt to get the government to pay their entitlements. The chairman of the Nigerian Union of Pensioners in Ekiti State, Mr. Joel Akinola, lamented that the state government has abandoned its retired employees, even though they invested their active years in civil service.

Nigeria's policy on aging is based on the country's constitution, which guarantees the rights of all citizens, including the provision of old age care, pensions, unemployment benefits, and welfare for the disabled. The policy also incorporates regional and international instruments such as the African Union Agenda 2063 and the United Nations International Plan of Action on Ageing. Nigeria's pension scheme began in 1951, but a lack of funding and mismanagement led to an accumulation of debt and forcing the creation of a new Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS) in 2004. However, the CPS, managed by the Pension Commission (Pencom), has also underperformed. Nigeria ranked low, at 64th, in the Allianz Global Pension Report 2020 due to the inadequacy of its pension system. The National Senior Citizens Centre Act was passed in 2017 and established the National Senior Citizens Centre (NSCC) in 2018, which fully became operational on June 7, 2021.

The NSCC has a mandate to identify older persons for inclusion in sustainable development and improvement of their quality of living and wellbeing for self-fulfillment. Omini Oden, Head, Corporate Affairs, Media and Communications of the agency, told me that though the mandate of the NSCC does not include pension management, it relates regularly with the Nigerian Union of Pensioners and other pension governance platforms to advocate for prompt payment of pensions to retirees who worked both in the private and public sectors.

There have been regular debates about how the country provides generous pensions to former governors, their deputies, former presidents and their deputies while many retired civil servants wait endlessly for months for their entitlements.

Paying pensions and gratuities to entitled retirees should be treated with the seriousness it deserves. The welfare of aged retirees should be seen as a human rights issue.

State governments often claim that they are unable to pay the pensions due to a lack of funds, but the pensioners argue that it is a problem of misplaced priorities and theft of public funds that is responsible for the nonpayment of pensions which continues to cause great hardship for these retired government employees, many of whom are elderly and in need of money for necessities such as food and medication. Some have even lost their lives or become sick and bedridden due to the financial stress caused by the nonpayment of their pensions.

As at August last year, 22 out of 36 states in the country had backlogs of unpaid pensions, and retired civil servants in several states have

resorted to protesting the payment of their pensions and gratuities as their predecessors have done for years.

At the same time, as retired civil servants regularly struggle to receive their pension benefits, some states have outrageous laws that provide for generous life pensions for governors and deputy governors who have only served for a few years. For example, the Public Office Holder (Payment of Pension) Law No. 11 in Lagos State provides a governor with 100% of the basic salary of the serving governor (about N7.7 million per year) for life, free healthcare for the governor and their family, six new cars every three years, furniture allowance (N23.3 million), house maintenance allowance (N778,296), utility allowance (N1.5 million), car maintenance allowance (N2.3 million), entertainment allowance (N778,296), a personal assistant (N1.9 million), domestic workers, and police and state security protection for life. Delta State offers a furnished duplex, medical treatment, two vehicles every two years, police and state security protection, annual vacation, and other benefits to its former governors. Kano State provides its former governors and deputy governors with 100% of the incumbent's basic salary, a six-bedroom house, and free medical treatment for them and their families.

Approximately 22 states, including Oyo, Jigawa, Zamfara, Edo, Kwara, Yobe, Sokoto, Osun, and Rivers, offer similar pension provisions for former governors and their deputies. At the federal level, about N13.8 billion was proposed for the payment of pensions to former presidents, vice presidents, heads of state, and other officials in the 2023 budget. These life pensions for former political officials are typically paid without issue, while pensioners who worked in the civil service for 35 years may not receive their retirement entitlements until they pass away. This ought not to be so!

Economic factors have put extra

strain on this issue. For instance, the non-remittance of receipts from crude oil sales by NNPC to the federation account and the inability of most of the states to earn enough revenue internally have no doubt compounded cash flow issues for the states. For instance, Abia State owes 20 years of gratuities and 38 months of pension arrears while Ogun State owes about nine years of gratuities and pension deductions spanning over 21 months. Others owing huge amounts of gratuities include Benue, Taraba, Plateau, Anambra, Lagos, Kwara, Ekiti, and Adamawa. Indeed, the issue of pension and gratuity is a huge problem for sitting governors as it predates their tenure in office and is seen as inherited responsibility. The Godwin Obaseki-led current Edo State Government which inherited unpaid pensions and gratuities from his irresponsible predecessor, Comrade Adams Oshiomhole, is one of the states in this category but has through ingenuity managed to handle its pension problems and is up to date with the payments.

However, some governors have neither been sensitive to the plights of their retirees nor appreciative of their peculiar financial state because they do not take any of that into consideration when they enjoy an extravagant lifestyle beyond the allowance of their states' economy particularly in a democratic government.

What has been said of states and their inability to live up to their responsibilities to past and present staffers can be directly applied to a host of other government agencies and departments, some of which no longer exist. In 2018, the federal government released N22.68 billion (about \$62 million) to settle retirement benefits for former employees of Nigeria Airways, a national carrier that ceased operations in 2003. The

government promised to address the remaining 50% of the owed benefits, approximately N45.3 billion, within six months, subject to the availability of government revenue. A committee comprising officials from various government agencies and the ex-workers' union was established to oversee the payment process.

With most attention turned to elections at the moment, the plight of these Nigerians has been lost in the noise of politicking and campaigns for the upcoming general elections. That is why I am using my column this week to call on governors and those in charge of government parastatals charged with the responsibility of paying retirees what they are worth to demonstrate greater sensitivity to the predicament of the pensioners and workers, especially with an economy that is witnessing galloping inflation which has made life miserable for these past and present staffers. It is disheartening and unacceptable that state governments are treating workers and the welfare of the pensioners in their respective states with levity. Before the commencement of this election season, some of these governors owing gratuities and pensions doled out N100m (and other similarly large sums) to purchase party presidential nomination forms.

The Federal Government, which has been forthright in paying government support funds to states, is set to do so again. In December it was reported that the government will soon begin the process of verifying how states have used funds provided through the Nigeria COVID-19 Action Recovery and Economic Stimulus (NG-CARES) programme (a \$750 million support operation programme from the World Bank) designed to provide grants and access to livelihood support and food security services for poor and vulnerable households and

businesses. An Independent Verification Agent (IVA) has been hired to oversee the program and ensure that the funds are being used appropriately. The purpose of the verification is to reduce poverty in the country and help the government achieve its goal of lifting 100 million people out of poverty. The Federal Government also cleared the arrears of 13% derivation fund owed since 1999 to all the Niger Delta states. Yet, these states (Cross River, Edo, Delta, Abia, Imo, Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa-Ibom and Ondo) cannot absolve themselves from this practice of owing current and retired staff.

This is why the FG must collaborate with the organised labour unions and the NSCC to put pressure on the defaulting state governments and executives of agencies to pay retirees their entitlements.

This is also again a clarion call for states to develop the capacity to generate income internally and not depend solely on revenue from the Federal Government to survive and take care of their responsibility.

It is only just that those who have laboured in their active years be rewarded accordingly. Attention must be given to this and quickly before current office holders take their leave. The swift running of the process of accrediting, documenting and processing their payments must be made a priority and the system of their payments must be institutionalised to the point where they will not be made to endure grave circumstances, long queues, repeated visits to government offices and other similar maltreatment, even in their advanced ages, just to get their paltry sums of money. If their pay can be reviewed upwards as stipulated, according to existing laws, that will be a judicious benefit to deserving Nigerians, whose service kept the country going in their time.

NEWS

Police, other security personnel rescue Pankshin DPO

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

PLATEAU State Command of the Nigerian Police, has in collaboration with Hunters and other security agencies rescued the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of Pankshin Local Government Area, SP Nwapi Larry carr Augustus, who was kidnapped by unidentified gunmen and taken to an unknown location recently.

This was contained in a press statement signed by the Plateau State Command Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Alfred Alabo, and made available to SUNDAY STANDARD in Jos, the state capital last Sunday.

The statement stated that, "following the gruesome kidnap of SP NwapiLarrycarr Augustus on 11/01/2023 at about 1930hrs by unidentified gunmen to an unknown destination in Pankshin LGA, the Plateau State Police Command in collaboration with other security agencies and Hunters in the area, swung into rescue mission and eventually unshackled and



Onyeka

freed the officer from his captors. The officer has been taken to the hospital for medical examination and treatment and will soon be reunited with his family.

"In view of the ugly incident, the Commissioner of Police, Plateau State Command, CP Bartholomew N. Onyeka, assures citizens of the state that the perpetrators will be fished out and arrested

to face justice as the Command will leave no stone unturned in the fight against kidnapping in the state", it stated.

The CP, therefore, thanked the general public for their concern since the incident happened and called for timely information and support from residents of the state to enable the police respond to criminal incidents.

THE remains of seven personnel of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), ambushed and slain by bandits in Birnin Gwari Local Government of Kaduna State community on Monday, 9 January, 2023, while on routine duty of protecting a mining site in BirninGwari LGA of Kaduna State, were laid to rest, Saturday.

A statement signed by Director of Public Relations NSCDC National headquarters, Abuja, DCC OlusolaOdumosu, on Sunday said their corpses were handed over to families and loved ones at the NSCDC Kaduna Command after a brief interment ceremony.

The Commandant General of the Corps, Dr. Ahmed Abubakar Audi, bid the officers and men goodbye when he paid his last respect at the lying in state ceremony, held on Saturday, 14 January, at the Kaduna State Command of the corps.

Dr Audi expressed rude shock while consoling families, friends and loved ones on the sad loss and prayed for the repose of their souls.

Represented by the Commandant, Kaduna Command, Idris Yahaya Adah,

Slain NSCDC staff buried

From JOHN FWAH, Kaduna

men of the Corps are also saddened. "What has happened has happened, we however, look unto God, and pray for forgiveness of their sins and for acceptance on the last day," he said.

The CG praised the efforts of the gallant officers who lost their lives in defence of the country and described them as "Heroes, never to be forgotten."

Addressing people during the ceremony, Dr Audi said, "they died in active service, they fought a good fight to the last drop of blood in their veins to safeguard the country."

He described the 7 personnel who died as committed and dedicated members of the Corps who will be greatly missed by colleagues and friends at work.

"They paid the supreme price for the nation. They died for us, they are our heroes and we shall always remember them."

"The world is saddened, the President and Commander in Chief is saddened, officers and

men of the Corps are also saddened.

"What has happened has happened, we however, look unto God, and pray for forgiveness of their sins and for acceptance on the last day," he said.

The CG assures families and their next of kin of timely dispatch of benefits accruable to them.

He thanked the President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, Muhammadu Buhari, for remembering the Corps at this trying period.

According to Audi, "Mr. President's condolence message motivated us greatly. It renewed our strength and rekindled our hope that we are not alone."

"This means a lot to us as a service and we are grateful for the support we are getting from the Presidency and we feel proud serving the nation."

Plateau High Court sentences 2 for contempt

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

JUSTICE A. Ashoms of the Plateau State High Court, has sentenced Mr. John Gabriel Mallo and Mr. Bulus Mandor to Prison for contempt of Court in respect to Butura Stool in Bokkos Local Government Area of the state.

The Court in its ruling in a committal proceeding brought against Hon. Dayyabu Garga (the incumbent Chairman of Kanam Local Government Council), Mr. John Gabriel Mallo, Mr. Bulus Mandor, Mr. Monday Adanchin and Mr. James Yilnaan by Masok Malo, Malo Matawal and Enock Kamo, insisted that, court orders must be protected.

While ruling on the Attorney-General's entering of a Nolle Prosequere in the matter, the Court which discountenanced the application of the AG said, giving effect to it would make the Court naked and robbed of its power.

However, Hon. Justice Ashom, who took several hours in his judgment to distinguish between a Criminal Case and a Quasi Criminal Case, held that, the committal case before him arose out of a Civil matter and the contempt was not against the claimants, but against the court and its orders which must be protected.

Mr. Monday Adachin (3rd respondent) Hon. Dayyabu Garga, the 4th respondent and Mr. James Yilnaan (5th respondent) were set off the hook by the court on the ground that they were not directly linked to the act and contempt.

While reacting to the ruling and judgment of court, M. A. Dawam (Esq), Counsel for the claimants said, "this is victory for us once more and for Justice because, this is a reinforcement of judicial principles. It also



Mann

reestablished the sanctity to the Orders of Court. It is a pointer that nobody should temper with the positive Orders of Court and go free. Beyond anything, we thought that this day will not come, but eventually despite the long period, today we have a judgment.

"There are two distinctive issues that we found very interesting and victorious. First, is the settlement in the ruling that the Plateau State Attorney General (A-G) to enter Nolle Prosequere in a Civil Matter, especially when the contempt of the orders of court in civil matters are concerned.

"My Lord, has painstakingly stated the position and the legal principle and beyond any else, it would have been otherwise very bad if the AG was allowed the power to stall or truncate the punishment that would have meted out to persons who are in contempt of the positive Orders of Court. But here, the court said, the judicial powers available to the court cannot be truncated by either the Legislature or the Executive. So, I am sure it has set parameters of engagement among the three arms of government with regard to the operations of the rule of law", he added.

Water Resources Ministry sets strategic plan

From ANENE AIKE, Sokoto

FEDERAL Ministry of Water Resources is currently developing a strategic plan for the coordination and tracking of the implementation of SDG-6 in Nigeria.

Mrs. DidiWalson-Jack, MCIPM, (mni) Permanent Secretary stated this Tuesday, 17th January, 2023 in her remarks during the 29th regular meeting of the National Council on Water Resources (NCWR) held at the International Conference Center in Kasarawa of Sokoto State.

She said, this informed the believe that water is central to national development and the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goal 6 which sets out to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all in Nigeria by the year 2023.

She also stated that Sustainable Development Goals 6 was critical to the achievement of all other Sustainable Development Goals because it has strong linkage to health, sanitation,

education, agriculture, rural development, tourism, transportation and indeed the environment.

Walson-Jack also said it has direct and rapid impact on poverty eradication and employment generation as it underscores the high priority this administration of President Buhari accords to the provision of adequate water supply, improved sanitation and irrigated agriculture for improvement of the living standards of the citizenry.

The Permanent Secretary Federal Ministry of Water Resources said due to these reasons, the theme for this year's council meeting is "Actualizing Sustainable Development Goals 6: prospects and challenges."

Furthermore, she said that the theme was carefully chosen, bearing in mind that the nation is just seven (7) years away from the target year set for achieving the SDG6.

She explained that in this regard, the council should review the strategies particularly in the area of implementation of projects

and programmes, identify gaps and proffer solutions on the way forward to overcoming the challenges while urging them to align the discussions and memoranda towards addressing core issues of the theme.

Mrs. DidiWalson-Jack, MCIPM, stated that specifically, the plan is to provide guidance and sustainable pathway for various stakeholders in the water sector to monitor the level of implementation of SDG6, across the eight (8) hydrological areas of the country.

She also revealed that the Federal Ministry of Water Resources recently conducted the Voluntary National Review on the implementation of SDG6 with a view to showcasing the status of its implementation in the country.

The PS explained that the two strategic documents are therefore the outcomes of the wide and in-depth consultations undertaken by the ministry, in order to ensure that SDG6 is mainstreamed and integrated into the various policies and plans in the sector.

She reiterated that the Federal Ministry of Water Resources has implemented a number of laudable initiatives, projects and programmes focusing on ensuring sustainable management of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for Nigerians.

She also said that identified initiatives, projects and programmes include but not limited to Declaration of a "State of Emergency" and the overarching launch of the WASH National Action Plan aimed at ensuring universal access to sustainable and safely managed WASH services by 2030.

These she said, includes Partnership for Expanded Water Supply, Sanitation and



Suleiman

NEWS

Lalong eulogizes outgoing GOC

By DUMAH RANDOMG

GOVERNOR Simon Lalong of Plateau State says he was impressed with the dialogue approach to security situation in the state by the outgoing General Officer Commanding the 3rd Armoured Division, Rukuba, Jos and Commander, Special Task Force (Operation Save Haven), Major General Ibrahim Ali, which was a blend of the military and diplomacy.

Lalong who stated this when the outgoing GOC paid him a farewell visit at Government House, Rayfield, Jos, recently maintained that his emphasis on dialogue on the security situation in the state was the way to go as it has paid off.

Represented by his Deputy, Professor SonniTyoden, Governor Lalong while appreciating the outgoing GOC for the services rendered to the state, noted that anyone who knew the security situation in the state will appreciate that he did well. The governor said there has been a lot of misconception by people outside the state about the security situation but said it was not as bad as what they thought about the state and expressed the confidence that the new GOC will not find it difficult to fit into the big shoe his predecessor was leaving behind.

Governor Lalong also applauded General Ali for initiating the movement of Internally Displaced Persons,



Lalong

IDPs back to their places of abode.

Earlier, the GOC, 3rd Armoured Division and Commander Special Task Force, Major General Ibrahim Ali had said he was at Government House to bid farewell to the government and people of the state and to also introduce his successor, Major General Ibrahim Abdulsalam Bagudu who was before his posting, the Director of Training at the Army Headquarters, Abuja.

He appealed to the government and people of the

state to accord the new GOC the same support he enjoyed while in the state to enable him carry out his assignment.

General Ali said he enjoyed a good working relationship with the government of Plateau State and other security agencies which brought about relative peace in the state and thanked the people for the support given him.

General Ali has been posted to Maiduguri as the new Theatre Commander, "Operation Hadin Kai," the Military Command battling insurgence in the Northeast.

From **AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja**

THE Kogi State Commissioner for Water Resources, Mr Abdulmumuni Danga, has appealed to Lokoja residents to exercise patience over the lingering water scarcity in the confluence city.

Danga made the plea in an interview with our correspondent recently. The commissioner said that the shortage of water supply was due to the huge damage to their mechanical and electrical equipment by 2022 flood at the Ganaja Water Works. According to him, the whole equipment were submerged and damaged by the 2022 floods that ravaged the state and the country.

He explained that Governor Yahaya Bello, had since given an approval for the replacement of those equipment, saying that arrangements were in top gear to bring them into the country.

Lokoja water scarcity: Commissioner appeals for patience

The commissioner said that the delay experienced was due to the festive season. "Most of these equipment are not something you can get within the country, so we have to ship them to Nigeria."

"As at last night, all the equipment had been loaded on the ship and we should be expecting them very soon."

"In the next two weeks, everything will be sorted out. "We are doing our best as government to reduce water scarcity in Lokoja to the minimum level. "The masses voted for us and we are here to serve them," the commissioner said.

Danga noted that as palliative measure, the government had done some repairs at the Old Lokoja Water Works for water supply to some parts of the state. According to him, the Old Water Works is currently supplying water to nearby communities of Kabawa,

Karaworo, Ipata, Cantonment, Maigari Palace and traditional areas of the confluence city.

He therefore appealed to the residents to be patient with the state government, saying, "we are doing everything possible to make water available across the confluence city within the shortest possible time". The commissioner stressed that the problem was due to natural disaster and not state government fault.

He said that he had personal meetings with some leaders, groups and residents, where he appealed to them to be patient, saying it had never been like this since the inception of this government.

"I believe in the next two weeks, the equipment will arrive and it will not take between four to five days to install them, and water will be restored to the metropolis," Danga said.

Ortom directs more medical personnel recruitment

From **TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi**

GOVERNOR Samuel Ortom of Benue State has directed the Ministry of Health and Human Services to activate the machinery for the recruitment of more nurses to take care of the shortfall in healthcare delivery.

The governor who gave the directive at the commissioning of renovated General Hospital Gbajimba and 30.5 kilometer Gbajimba-Tse-Ortom to Tse-Upev-Tse-Akaahena on the Nasarawa state border road project said the directive became

necessary given the priority his administration attaches to the well being of his people.

The rehabilitated General Hospital which was commissioned by the senator representing Benue Northeast Senatorial District, Gabriel Suswam represented by member representing Makurdi/Guma Federal Constituency, Hon. Bemzondou praised Ortom's infrastructural

development drive particularly his achievements in the healthcare sector, saying it has given a new lease of life to the people.

In his remarks, Governor Ortom said the newly commissioned road has opened up easy access to the communities as well as facilitated response by security agencies in event of distress calls.

The governor disclosed that the comprehensive renovation of Gbajimba General Hospital, Doctors' Quarters and other hospitals across the state cost the sum of N1.2 billion naira and was his administration's modest commitment to ensuring quality healthcare delivery in the state.

Commissioner for Rural Development and Cooperatives, Engr. Victor Ukaha said the 30.5 km road project was executed at the sum of over 2 billion Naira by Triacta Nigeria Limited. He stated that the constructed road has made life more comfortable for people of the community and appreciated Governor Ortom for providing funds for the execution of the project.

Commissioner for Health and Human Services, Dr. Joseph Ngbea extolled the Governor's commitment to the transformation of healthcare sector in the state, pointing out several projects the Ortom administration has executed in the sector.

He appealed to the governor to also provide an ambulance for the hospital as well as recruitment of more healthcare personnel to augment the shortfall currently being experienced in the sector.

Chairman of Guma Local Government Council, Dr. Mike Ubah and the TerGuma, His Royal Highness Chief Dennis Shemberga in separate remarks thanked Governor Ortom for providing the needed infrastructure in the area which they said had added value to the socio-economic development.

The projects commissioning was part of programmes lined up for the statewide campaign of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP.

FCT, UNESCO to launch Incentivized schools

From **AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja**

THE Federal Capital Territory (FCT) in collaboration with an NGO, Ladi Memorial Foundation (LMF), have concluded plans to launch the pilot phase of incentivized 'Schools' Sewing Championship Project (SSCP) 2023 supported by UNESCO.

The immediate past President, Nigerian Society of Engineers (NSE), Engr. Babagana Mohammed FNSE, disclosed this when he led the project Coordination Committee for the SSCP2023 comprising members from partnering organizations and

initiating NGO, LMF management, on an advocacy visit to National Commission for Mass Literacy and Non-Formal Education (NMEC)

Mohammed in a statement made available to journalists in Lokoja recently said the team was in NMEC to seek their collaboration and support for the pilot incentivised SSCP competition to be flagged off on Thursday January 19, 2023.

He noted that the UNESCO supported strengthening

stakeholders' support for vocational education and training (VET) through the SSCP competition.

The former NSE President, therefore urged the management of NMEC and other critical stakeholders to support the pilot schools' sewing competition as a way of boosting vocational skills acquisition in schools. On her part, the Executive Director of LMF, Hon. Mrs. Rosemary Ojochenemi Osikoya, noted that the LMF was partnering with UNESCO and other various relevant organisations and MDAs to make the sewing championship competition a huge success while encouraging vocational skills acquisition in schools. Osikoya, who was the immediate past Kogi State Commissioner for Education, Science and Technology, called for the establishment of vocational skills centers in existing schools to reduce unemployment. She urged the Federal Government to implement a policy where existing schools would house the center for skills acquisition in Nigeria.

According to her, having existing schools as center for vocational learning would attract more participation from the youths.

"We started the advocacy which is part of what led to what we are doing, that there's need for more stakeholders to become more

interested in vocational training schools.

"Everybody came out of the school system, so, why should everybody not give back? We treat schools as if they exist by themselves.

"Today, the school sit in the community, so rather than duplicate all the efforts by looking for extra land everywhere for skill centers, make the existing schools in every community a vocational Incubation Center.

Osikoya explained that it remained easier to build a skill center within an existing school, as LMF had done in the second year of its project.

"It should be opened up to people who are not in school, so that out of school youths and out of school children could come back to the school.

"Building vocational centers within an existing school would increase access to the equipments that are available and also increase collaborations," she noted.

The executive director also decried the stigmatisation of some skilled trades by people thereby discouraging youths from learning such trades.

Osikoya noted that teachers, parents and other stakeholders are the people mostly involved in stigmatisation of skills in Nigeria according to the survey that was carried out by LMF.

She added: We found that there are a lot of



Bello

NEWS

Use your votes to elect good leaders -Sultan

From ANENE AIKE, Sokoto

THE Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Dr. Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III has urged Nigerians to use their votes to elect good leaders in the forthcoming general elections scheduled for February and March this year 2023.

The Sultan made the call while addressing participants at the 29th Regular meeting of the National Council of Water Resources taking place in Sokoto.

He said many negative things were being said about Sokoto and the north in terms of the security "you who are here in Sokoto are living witness that, the state is peaceful with a very quiet and stable environment.

"Sokoto State is home to all. We don't have non-indigenes, but rather resident communities. We are one big family.

"Let's put ethnicity aside if we want our country Nigeria to progress as a nation", the royal father advised. He added, that Nigeria is far better than many countries of the world in terms of security.

"God has adequate reasons for making us live together irrespective of our beliefs,



Sa'ad

tribe or ethnicity". He stated that if God so wishes, he will in his wisdom make us speak the same language and practice same religion without challenge," the monarch said.

The Sultan further called on Nigerian citizens to do whatever they could to free the country from the present challenge of insecurity which is becoming a global phenomenon.

324 die, 1, 706 injured in road crashes in Kogi -FRSC

THE Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) has disclosed that a total of 324 persons died and 1, 706 others sustained various degrees of injury in road crashes in Kogi in 2022.

Corps Commander Stephen Dawulung, Kogi FRSC Sector Commander, made the disclosure to newsmen in Lokoja recently.

Dawulung described the auto crashes in the year 2022 as "very unfortunate" and "saddening" considering the number of innocent lives of patriotic citizens that were wasted.

He further disclosed that from January to December 2022, the corps recorded a total number of 458 road crashes in Kogi.

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

"Out of the total cases of 458 auto crashes, 5, 161 people were involved leaving 324 persons dead and 1, 706 injured.

"To us as a corps, the casualty and the rate of crashes within that year is very high and unacceptable, but that's the reality facing us today.

"We aren't happy with the outcome of the report looking at the enormity of sensitisation and enlightenment campaigns we carried out during the period under review.

"Of course, we have to blame this on the recklessness of the motorists, some of who continually refused to heed to traffic rules and

regulations to safety," he said.

The sector commander called on motorists to always ensure the road worthiness of their vehicles before embarking on a journey and drive with care along the highways.

He said, "this year 2023, my Command will continue carrying out

enforcements and enlightenment programmes against speed, overloading and mixed loading of goods and passengers, especially in trucks and other vehicles meant to convey only goods." Dawulung also advised motorists to exhibit high level of discipline and adhere strictly to road traffic regulations to avoid such ugly incidents.

Bauchi Records 872 Prenatal Deaths in 6 Months

From ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

Bauchi State Primary Healthcare Development Agency (BSPHDA) has said that 872 maternal and prenatal deaths were recorded in 123 health facilities between July and December 2022.

The focal person of the state's Maternal and Prenatal Deaths Surveillance Review (MPDSR), Mrs Jummai Inuwa, disclosed this at a two-day review meeting in Bauchi.

MPDSR is a form of continuous surveillance that links the health information system and quality improvement processes from local to national levels, which includes routine identification, notification, quantification and

determination of causes and the use of such information to prevent future deaths.

The pause and reflection meeting was organised quarterly by the Integrated Health Programme (IHP) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to ascertain activities, and identify issues and recommendations to expedite action in health and education sectors in the state.

Inuwa unfolded that Bauchi State MPDSR recorded 56 maternal and 816 prenatal deaths from July to December 2022. Noting that the MPDSR data is from 123 Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) and 20 general hospitals, adding that 31 maternal and 330 prenatal deaths were recorded within the stipulated period.

She further explained that the general hospital in Toro recorded 14 maternal

Court nullifies election of Imo West senator

From JIDAUNA YANUNG Abuja

venue clearly stipulated by law.

The Apex court held that by the judgment, PDP will not participate in the February Senatorial Election having failed to produce its candidate within time allowed by law.

Specifically, justice Agim held that since the time for the conduct of primary election to

nominate candidates was already over, it is deemed that the party would not have candidate in the February 25 National Assembly poll.

Justice Agim warned the parties to always conduct their affairs within the ambit of the law adding that section 87 (9) of the Electoral Act is clear on where primary election should be conducted.

Governor Bala tasks traditional leaders on peaceful co-existence

From ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

GOVERNOR Bala Abdulkadir Mohammed, of Bauchi state has urged traditional leaders in the state to continue to preach peace and unity within their domains for the socio-economic development of the society and successful conduct of 2023 general elections.

Bala stated this recently when he paid homage to the District Head of Dogon Jeji in Jama'are local government area of Bauchi state.

He told the monarch that he was in his palace to seek his fatherly advise and blessings in his ongoing re-election campaigns across the 20 local government areas of the state.

Governor Bala urged the



Mohammed

traditional leaders in the state to be fathers to all regardless of their political differences.

"I urge you to be fathers to all regardless of whichever political party they belong. You should use your position to foster peace and harmony, particularly before, during and after the general elections", the Governor said.

According to the Governor, ordinarily, traditional rulers are not supposed to involve themselves in partisan politics.

He said as a result of the role they play in the lives of their subjects, the traditional leaders are not expected to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of political differences but embrace anyone that needs their fatherly advise and support.

The Governor applauded the District head for emulating his late father who was the Chief Imam of the District 30 years ago.

"He is a man of integrity, hard work and dedication. So for this reason, the people of this district are lucky to have this man as their district head who is a replica of his late father", the Governor said.

"We, the contestants, starting from Atiku Abubakar down to myself and other candidates of the party are seeking your fatherly blessings and prayers along with your traditional leaders in this district", Bala stated.

The Governor said he was in the district to do consultations with stakeholders in order to know what is happening and what the citizens needs for government intervention.

Earlier in his remarks, the District Head of Dogon Jeji, Alhaji Ahmed Mohammed Jarma, recalled how the long standing relationship between his late father and the family of Governor Bala Mohammed has blossomed for decades.

The District Head while commending the Governor for executing numerous developmental projects across the state, added that he was not surprised with the political successes of the Governor and therefore wished him well in his political plan.



Biu

SUNDAY MAGAZINE



Nigeria 2023: The threat of severe hunger

Continued from Page 10

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 markedly attributable to signs and (Ruses like a diminished value of currency and sharp rise a concretionary 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 increasing 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 warnings, posing a threat to the ecosystem—the survivals 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 ray still be on increase. And this may spell doom for the Nigeria 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?

Though these may be termed as man-made or self-inflicted disasters, there are what can easily go for natural disaster—flooding and fire outbreak in some states of the federation? Flooding's particular have swear 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, floodings in particular where has seen as man-made in areas where people advertently or

inadvertently build houses on water ways.

The combination of bandits attacks, terrorists activities and flooding have led to far 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 warn 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.

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Meanwhile, the African Development Bank (AfDB) has challenged Nigeria to achieve a "zero hunger" status, adding that with her vast agricultural resources, its citizens have no business being hungry.

President of the bank, Akinwumi Adesina, said this at the official launch of the Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones

in Nigeria on Monday.

The AfDB boss, who commiserated with the Federal Government on the flooding that is devastating the country, recalled how he had to deal with the worst floods in Nigeria when he was Minister of Agriculture.

He said that while floods may wash away some land and harvests, the government must not let the hopes of farmers to be washed away.

He described agriculture as being critical for the survival of any nation, adding that the most important role of any nation is to feed its people.

He said, "Food is a fundamental human right. Africa faces huge challenges in meeting its food needs, with 283 million people that go hungry annually.

"Yet Africa has massive agricultural potential. With 65 per cent of the uncultivated arable land left to feed over 9 billion people in the world by 2050 being in Africa, what Africa does with agriculture will determine the future of food in the world.

"The story is no different in Nigeria, despite positive efforts that have been made to improve the agricultural sector. Food is now beyond the reach of many."

According to the Global Hunger Index (2022), released just a week ago, Nigeria ranks 103rd among 121 countries facing hunger crisis in the world.

"Hunger in Nigeria cannot be justified. Nigeria has the land, with 34 million hectares of arable land with rich and diverse agroecology.

"It has the water. It has the labor. It has great sunshine.

Nigeria must achieve zero hunger. There is no reason for anyone to go hungry in Nigeria", he added.

METRO-FOCUS

Eking a living out of truck pushing

By JIDAUNA DARING,
BALA N. JURBE,
MATHEW J. AKUMBO,
DARSHAK M. BARNIMAS

IT is a fact that an idle mind is a devil's workshop. This has indicates that in life, instead for someone to spend time doing nothing useful, it is better, for one to venture into genuine business that can bring food on the table of the family at all times.

In this regard, people should not be quick to get discourage with the little income in their hands no matter how their business may be described by some individuals whose stock in trade is to discourage others from doing what they can earn a living from it. In fact, a clear example in our hand is the wheat business work that is been neglected, especially by the young people who look at such business as a time wasted on their side because they aim high in life as far as their target of caring money in business for a is concerned.

It may interest you to know that people have keyed into wheel-barrow business with passion are making it in life, despite the little money that they might be gotten on a daily basis.

It is also believed that there are people that have passion for the business, but how to get the wheel-barrow to start the business is the problem.

This category of people need to be empowered for such business, since our fingers are not equal.

However, some of the wheel-barrow pushers ventured into the business through a hired deal which are based on the agreed amount of money that to be paid either daily or monthly to the owner of the wheel barrow. This would no doubt go a long in reducing the alarming rate of youth idleness of restiveness in the society.

Speaking with Metro Focus, a wheel barrow pusher, Mr. Yahaya Usman who is a diploma holder said that he has no single regret with the business he find himself doing it since the white colour job is not forthcoming for him to continue waiting.

Usman explained that what he do for his living is no other thing than the business of bushing wheel.

He added that it is from what



he realized that he use to feed his family and his parent.

He disclosed that, there are days that he can get N1,000.00 N1,500.00 and N2,000.00. He stressed the need for people not to always despise a little beginning.

According to some of the wheel-barrow pushers, the challenges sometime faced is lack of customers, and also sometimes drag with some of the customers when it comes to the issue of pricing the loads which is often based on the distances of the place.

Photos: Danladi Duk

SUNDAY PEOPLE

GOVERNOR LALONG SIGNS 2023 BUDGET

Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (CON) last year signed the 2023 budget at the EXCO Chambers, new Government House Rayfield, Jos, witnessed by the Speaker, PLHA, Rt. Hon. Yakubu Sanda and Chief Judge, Justice David Mann



Governor Lalong (middle) appending his signature on the 2023 budget being watched keenly by the Speaker (left) and Chief Judge (right)



From left are; Commissioner for Lands, Survey and Town Planning, Director General, Research Planning and Documentation and the Head of Civil Service



Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong delivering remarks at the ceremony



Cross section of members of EXCO at the ceremony



A cross section of Commissioners listening to remarks by the Governor



Commissioner of Finance, Dr. Mrs. Regina Soemlat (left) with the Commissioner of Youth and Sports, Hon. Daniel Dung Dalyop



Another section of members of the State Executive Council at the budget signing ceremony



Governor Simon Bako Lalong (2nd left) Speaker, PLHA, Rt. Hon. Yakubu Sanda (left) Deputy Governor, Prof. Sonni Gwanle Tyoden (right) and the Chief Judge, Justice David Mann

Road Runner
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 SAFER TOGETHER

NEWS

Heritage Bank emerges winner of Best Supporting Bank

HERITAGE Bank PLC, has emerged as the first Financial Institution in Nigeria to win the "Best Supporting Bank with Central Bank of Nigeria's (CBN) Information on Anchor Borrowers programme (ABP).

The apex bank recently awarded Heritage bank at the Bank Award Night Organised by the CBN recently for its robust publications of information in the media space on the several feats around the quoted the Managing Director of the Bank, Akinola George Taylor as saying that the award reflects the bank business fundamentals, resilience, and commitment to transforming Nigeria's

From JIDAUNA YANUNG Abuja

focused on increasing finance to the agricultural sector, the creation of new generations of famers entre preneurs, and growing employment rates.

The Managing Director further stated that with the support of the bank famers have boost the production of commodities and stabilize imports supply to agro processors which has helped in addressing the country's food insecurity.

He commended the Central Bank of Nigeria and other stakeholders in the agricultural sector and assured that Heritage bank would continued to commutate the broad objectives of Anchor Borrower's programme.

George Taylor explained that Heritage bank has

Heritage bank, he said, has remained the pioneer bank in financing the first ever large scale rain fed wheat production in Nigeria and it is a prominent participating financial institution under CBN ABP scheme.

Heritage bank Plc in conjunction with Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has also disbursed N31 billion to farmers from 14 states for the expansion of wheat production.

FMBN to commission 1,071 quality houses

IN line with the renewed drive to increase the deliver of affordable housing to Nigerian workers, the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN) plan to commission 1,071 completed houses in eight project sites nationwide. These are part of the over 3,560 homes under phase 1 and 2 of the National Affordable Housing Delivery Programme.

From JIDAUNA YANUNG Abuja

its group head corporate communications Mrs Timan Elayo said the programme is a collaboration between the FMBN, Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) Trade Union Congress (TUC) and the Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA).

The statement explained that the programme is to build

and deliver decent sage and quality housing for Nigerian workers at affordable prices, they comprises of one bedroom two bedroom and 3 bedroom units, with prices ranging from 3.1 million to N8.3 million.

The joint implementation committee of the programme comprising NLC TUC, and NECA approved the commissioning exercise at its meeting in Abuja.

The projects to be commission across the 8 include: 100 housing units in Akure, Ondo State on Monday, 16th January 2023, 100 housing units in Yola, Adamawa State on Monday 16th January 2023, 315 housing units in Katsina on Monday January 2023. 90 housing units in Abakiliki Ebonyi State on Thursday 19 January 2023, 180 housing units in Damaturu, Yobe State on Monday 23rd January 2023, 160 housing units in Sokoto on Monday 23rd January, 2023 86, housing units Maiduguri Borno State on Tuesday 24th January, 2023 and 100 housing units in Kogi State on Thursday 26th January, 2023.

The statement quoted the Managing Director of FMBN, Mr Hamman Madu as expressing delight with the completion of the first bath of the housing units, while applauding the labour centres for their cooperation and support.



Ahmed

NDLEA seizes assets, drugs worth N500 billion - Marwa

CHARIMAN Chief Executive Officer of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) Brig. Gen. Mohammed Buba Marwa (rtd) said the agency seized assets and drugs valued at N500 billion from drug barons since he took over in January 2021.

Briefing Journalists at the agency's head office in Abuja. Brig. Gen. Marwa (rtd) said an officer of the agency was killed last week in Sokoto State in the line of duty.

He warned that unrepentant drug barons and cartels would face tougher times in 2023. If they fail to back out of the illicit drug business.

The National Drug Law enforcement boss explained that the seizure of assets combined with drugs is a rough figure of

From JIDAUNA YANUNG Abuja

N500 billion.

Speaking on the person that was killed in Sokoto State Marwa said some of the barons build schools, clinics in various

communities and they also gave scholarships indicating that they are indispensable partners and helpers. "So when we go into such communities, they also armed some of their militants so when we go there for



Marwa

How to drive on level crossing

Level crossing refers basically to the crossing of intersection between motor road and railway. Level crossing presents a huge risk of collisions between trains and road users. This is further compounded by the existence of open level crossings in addition to those with gates. Whether with or without gates level crossing are potential danger points to watch. Such level crossings become death traps for drivers who tipsy or dread drunk.

General tips for level crossing. The following precautions must be observed at level crossings of any type:

Do not tailgate at level crossing

b. Do not drive onto a level crossing unless the road is clear on the rails and other side.

c. Do not stop on the rails
 d. Do not stop or park immediately after any level crossing.

Level Crossing with Gates

Some level crossings have gates or barriers that are either automated or manual. Some also have flashing red warning lights. Do not cross the railway once the lights have started flashing or when the gates are being closed. This indicates that a train is approaching.

Level Crossing without Gates

At level crossing without gates or attendants or warning lights, stop, look both ways, listen and make sure there is no approaching

train before you cross. This also implies that you do not blast loud music at such places and even if you were playing music before getting to such level crossing, put it off completely to enable you perceive extraneous sound. Always give way to oncoming trains.

Unmanned Level Crossing

Some level crossings without gates or attendants have flashing red "stop" light. When the red light flashes, stop and wait. Do not cross the railway as train may reach the crossing soon after the light begins to flash. The light will go off when it is safe to cross.

Stopping on A Level Crossing

If a vehicle stalls or breaks down or has a crash on the crossing;

a. All passengers should alight from the vehicle and move as far away as possible

b. Listen carefully to approaching train and if no train, push the vehicle clearly off the crossing.

c. If the above effort proves difficult, mobilize more helping hands and if still abortive, make phone call or contact the rail crossing signalman as soon as possible.

d. Get appropriate help and remove the vehicle.

Level Crossing with Alarm

If already crossing when the red light begins to flash and the alarm bell starts, keep going.

Railway Bridges warning signs

As you approach a bridge, you will see a warning sign

hanging below the closed bridge showing the highest vehicle that will be able to pass the bridge. The height of the bridge is called the maximum headroom and is written in metres. If your vehicle, including any load being carried, is higher than the height shown on the warning sign, you will not fit under the bridge ahead. It is very important to know the height of your vehicle and any load being conveyed before setting out for your journey. Know your height, know your route.

Railway Bridges information signs

These signs display basically the heights and other properties of the bridge as well as the maximum permissible height of vehicles allowed on the bridge. Do not attempt to use the bridge is your vehicle clearly do not fall within the regulated parameters, to do otherwise will be suicidal to say the least. You are under obligation to report all incidences of hitting any railway structure (damage to public presence) whether or not damage is obvious. The information sign shows the phone numbers of railway authorities to contact in emergency situations. Take advantage of the information sign accordingly.



SUNDAY FEATURE

Forthcoming elections and hope of Nigerians

December, which is the month for the celebration of our Lord Jesus Christ, has come and gone with a bang. December 25th was celebrated as the birthday anniversary of the creator of the heavens and the earth, Jesus Christ, who died and gloriously resurrected after three days of his demise.

The mystery beclouding his resurrection power has remained dumbfounding to human folks. How he was able to defeat the grave, death and other unseen forces that could have pulled him down.

No power has been able to conquer his supernatural reigns. Even DD Rawlings of Ghana had tried to toe the same line with Jesus but was humiliated into counterfeit, as thunderstorms struck and shattered him back to the grave.

It has outrageously become a nasty culture among some people, especially traders, to skyrocket the prices of goods and services for selfish reasons to make more gains and frustrate other citizens.

Sadly, the Independent Petroleum Marketers Association see the month as a time to sell their hoarded fuel at a higher pump price. Sometimes, the citizens apportion blame on the elected leaders as being the architects of the harsh situation of things.

During the Yuletide, the craziness of materialism and ill-gotten wealth triggered out of consciousness, prompt some youths to engage in armed robbery, killings, kidnapping, bags-snatching and other criminal acts that could lure them to death.

Literarily, this period is supposed to be a time for sober reflection, a time to assist those who could not fend for themselves and a period to let go of grievances and embrace reconciliation with one another, especially those who might advertently or inadvertently wrong us, and a time to personally take stock of how we made it from January to December.

In lieu of the above, the 2022 Christmas celebration was expected to be accompanied by political activities by various

A new year goes with resolutions. These are decisions, individually or collectively taken to quit actions. January 2023 is here; expectations are also high as the forthcoming general election will begin in February. Sampson Uhuegbu, writes.



candidates for the general election that will kick-start in February 2023. But campaigns appear to have been low-keyed. In fact, since I got old to know what elections are all about, I have witnessed the 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019 past elections, and the political activities that preceded them. The year 2023 is uncharacteristically different from the previous ones.

Expectations of Nigerians from the outgoing President, Mohammedu Buhari, henceforth, are high. The skyrocketed prices of fuel, food items, insecurity and other challenges are crying out loud to be redressed before he hands over to his successor in May

2023.

This time, there is a need to always appreciate due processes in our everyday dealings with people. The coming election is an auspicious period that should not be taken for granted. Nigerians should behave responsibly during this electioneering period and make sure to steer clear of unethical activities that would cause problems.

Parents, guardians, traditional rulers of the seven hundred and seventy four (774) Local Government Areas across the country and religious leaders are critical stakeholders, as far as the forthcoming election is

concerned. They need to urge their children, wards, subjects and adherents to desist from any form of disturbances that could mar the coming general election.

The 2023 polls ought to be deemed as a period to exercise our franchise, which is also enshrined in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Also, the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, should cooperate with the voters and other groups that have roles to play during the election.

The Police, Army, Civil Defense and other sister security agencies should see Journalists as partners in progress, whose duty is geared towards ensuring the coming elections are conducted in a free and transparent manner. I am aware that the expectations of Nigerians of various political party members are high, but one thing is certain; the presidential election must hold, and a winner will definitely emerge at the end of the exercise.

In the Southeast States, those setting infrastructures ablaze should quit their evil-

doing and channel their grievances to the appropriate quarters for necessary action to be taken.

Supporters of the presidential candidates of the registered parties that would participate in the forthcoming election; Peter Obi of the Labour Party, Bola Tinubu of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Atiku Abubakar of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), and the candidate of the New Nigerian Peoples Party (NNPP), Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, are expected to go about their campaigns responsibly.

Nigerians hope that the electoral umpire will conduct a transparent election as was exhibited by the former immediate past Chairman of the Commission, Prof. Attahiru Jega, in 2015, and Prof. Humphrey Nwosu, who made history.

Regrettably, the high rate of insecurity in the Southeast may affect the electioneering exercise in the region. The staff of the INEC are in fear. The lives of the electorate, security agencies, and Journalists are in danger if nothing is done about it.

"Nigerians hope that the electoral umpire will conduct a transparent election as was exhibited by the former immediate past Chairman of the Commission, Prof. Attahiru Jega, in 2015, and Prof. Humphrey Nwosu, who made history. Regrettably, the high rate of insecurity in the Southeast may affect the electioneering exercise in the region. The staff of the INEC are in fear. The lives of the electorate, security agencies, and Journalists are in danger if nothing is done about it."

SUNDAY SPORTS



Liverpool forward Roberto Firmino has made more appearances under Jurgen Klopp than any other player

The numbers behind Klopp's 1,000 games

By EMMA SANDERS

JURGEN Klopp will manage his 1,000th game when Liverpool take on Chelsea on Saturday with the German boss enjoying plenty of highlights in the dugout so far.

His managerial career has spanned 23 seasons at three clubs in two countries and he has won three league titles and a Champions League trophy on the way.

BBC Sport looks at what the numbers say about his managerial career.

He has won 538 of his 999 games in charge so far, losing just 222 of them - and almost half of those victories have come while in charge of Liverpool.

His win percentage record has improved at each club too.

While at Mainz, where he took over in the second division of German football, he won 40.4% of games.

At Dortmund, that progressed to 56.4% of matches and at Liverpool he has improved on that ratio again with a 60.7% win rate.

Klopp first made a name for himself in Germany when he orchestrated Mainz's promotion to the Bundesliga for the first time in the club's history in 2004.

He later went on to win two Bundesliga titles and the domestic cup with Dortmund before guiding Liverpool to European glory in 2019 and the Premier League title a year later.

Last season, he won a domestic cup double with Liverpool for the first time - lifting both the FA and Carabao Cups - as the Reds won 46 of the 63 games they played in 2021-22.

However, their form has dipped this season with Liverpool ninth in the Premier League table having won 15 of their 29 games so far in all competitions - a 51.7% win ratio.

They have not finished outside the league's top four since Klopp's first season in charge of Liverpool in 2015-16.

Saturday's opponents Chelsea are well known to Klopp. He has faced them 19 times, winning six and drawing nine. He has not drawn against another team on more occasions.

Indeed, the clubs played out two 0-0 draws in the EFL Cup and FA Cup final last season with Liverpool winning both in a penalty shootout. They also drew both Premier League meetings.

His favourite opponents are SC

Freiburg, having lost just twice in 18 matches against them. He has also won 10 of his 17 encounters with Tottenham, losing only once.

He has faced Bayern Munich more than any other team and has lost more games to them than anyone else too - 16 from 31.

Klopp and Pep Guardiola have had a long-standing rivalry - indeed, the German has faced the Manchester City boss more than any other manager.

While in charge of Dortmund, Klopp won three of the eight meetings with Guardiola's Bayern Munich. Now at Liverpool, Klopp has won eight of the 19 matches against Guardiola's City.

In total, Klopp has won 11 of the 27 matches against Guardiola - he has not won more against another coach, but has not lost more either - with nine defeats in total.

The good news for Liverpool fans is that Klopp is yet to lose a match when celebrating a milestone. He won his 200th, 300th, 400th, 500th and 600th games as a manager, drawing with Chelsea on his 800th.

Klopp made his mark at

Liverpool with intense, high-pressing attacking football.

The five highest-scoring matches he has been involved in have all been during his time on Merseyside, with the 5-5 draw with Arsenal in 2019 topping the charts.

Klopp's biggest win was the Reds' 9-0 thumping of Bournemouth in the Premier League in August.

His teams have not been shy of goals in the Champions League either. His Borussia Dortmund and Liverpool sides scored a combined 205 goals in 100 European games, winning 58 of them.

Liverpool's most prolific attackers under Klopp include Roberto Firmino, Mohamed Salah and Sadio Mane - all of whom made more than 250 appearances for him and are in the top seven on his 'most selected' list.

Silverware has come in standout seasons. During 2019-20, when he led Liverpool to the Premier League title, they lost just eight games in all competitions - the same number of defeats they have already suffered in 2022-23.

Dortmund lost only six, then

seven matches in consecutive seasons when they picked up back-to-back Bundesliga titles under Klopp in 2011 and 2012.

Liverpool will be without forward Firmino on Saturday through injury but the Brazilian is Klopp's most selected player having featured in 341 of his 999 total games as manager.

Reds midfielder James Milner is the only other player to surpass 300 games under Klopp (301).

Serbian centre-back Neven Subotic played under Klopp at Mainz and Borussia Dortmund and was selected 282 times, while former goalkeeper Roman Weidenfeller was Klopp's most used player at Dortmund, starting all 280 of his games under the German.

Salah has arguably benefited the most having scored a stunning 173 goals under Klopp, a ratio of 133 minutes per goal - a better ratio than Robert Lewandowski, who netted on average every 139 minutes for Klopp at Dortmund.

Liverpool's Harvey Elliott is the youngest player Klopp has selected (16 years, 174 days), while former Mainz defender Peter Neustadter is the oldest (37 years, 176 days).

SUNDAY SPORTS

Ronaldo, Messi both score in exhibition



Liverpool forward Roberto Firmino has made more appearances under Jurgen Klopp than any other player

CRISTIANO Ronaldo scored twice in his first game in Saudi Arabia and Lionel Messi was also on the scoresheet as Paris St-Germain edged a Riyadh All-Star XI 5-4 in a thrilling contest.

The exhibition match in the Saudi capital saw two of the greatest players of all time sharing a pitch together for possibly the final time.

The two PSG centre-backs were also on the scoresheet as Sergio Ramos added to Marquinhos' delightful finish in the opening period.

But the French side played much of the game with 10 men as Juan Bernat received a straight red card for hauling down Saudi international Salem Al Dawsari and Neymar also missed a penalty in a breathtaking first half.

Jang Hyun-soo's header drew the All-Star XI level at 3-3, but Kylian Mbappe's penalty and substitute Hugo Ekitike's composed effort put PSG out of sight.

Anderson Talisca drilled in a long-range consolation late in injury-time but there was not time for a dramatic equaliser.

Ronaldo has had to wait for his debut since a big move to Al-

Nassr because of a suspension from his time at Manchester United.

But he will make his competitive debut for his new side on Sunday, when they host Ettifaq at Mrsool Park.

So how fitting it was that his first game in the Middle Eastern country - a high-profile and hugely competitive friendly - was against his old foe Messi, who lifted the World Cup in neighbouring Qatar just a month ago.

The Argentina captain latched on to Neymar's pass and converted the opener after just two minutes, but the 37-year-old Portugal skipper was not to be undone.

Ronaldo's first was from the penalty spot, which was awarded after he was floored by PSG goalkeeper Keylor Navas' forearm smash into his face, leaving him with a badly bruised cheek.

And he showed the hunger and desire he still possesses for the second, an initial header hitting the post then reacting quickest to convert, showcasing his trademark celebration for both goals with the crowd joining in.

Both players were taken off on 61 minutes and could have

faced each other for the last time, unless they cross paths again in the twilight of their glittering careers.

The match, however, has been criticised by human rights group Amnesty International, who said Saudi Arabia's sportswashing strategy was at "full throttle".

Peter Frankental, Amnesty UK's economic affairs director, said: "Ronaldo's big-money transfer to Al Nassr and Messi's engagement by the Saudi authorities as a tourism ambassador are both part of Riyadh's aggressive sportswashing programme."

"The authorities are seeking to exploit the celebrity appeal of elite sport to deflect attention from the country's appalling human rights record."

"Saudi Arabia's extensive use of sport as an exercise in soft power is well-known, but with Qatari-owned PSG appearing in Riyadh we effectively have two sportswashing superpowers - Saudi Arabia and Qatar - flexing their muscles."

"Footballers like Ronaldo and Messi have huge profiles and we'd like to see them resisting being used as the famous faces of sportswashing, including by speaking out about human rights issues in both Saudi

DEJI Ayeni, the Chief Coach of Akwa United Football Club of Uyo, says his team's performance against hosts Enyimba International FC of Aba meant a lot to them.

Newsnow said that, Sporting Tribune reports that the 2020/2021 NPFL champions played a goalless draw with Enyimba on Wednesday, January 18, 2023, in a Group A Match Day 2 fixture.

Ayeni said in Aba on Thursday that their performance was not outrightly disappointing.

"We came (to Aba) with the determination to win, but we are grateful that we were able to get a point from the match. It was a good but tough game against a very tactical and

NPFL: Akwa United grateful for draw with Enyimba

mature side like Enyimba. "It's unfortunate that we "All I can say is that we got are yet to score a goal after this point because my two matches. We are players were courageous working on that. In our and determined for training sessions, we score something special.

"In our first match at way we are playing at the home, we made two moment, I'm confident that mistakes and paid dearly for when we get to Jos to play them, but today, it was a Nasarawa United, our goals near-perfect match for us will start coming", and we hope to build on this He however said they were performance as we look hopeful of getting either a forward to our subsequent point or the full three points games".

On his team's inability to Saturday against Nasarawa register a goal after two United FC of Lafia in Jos. games, Ayeni explained that The coach also said he was it is an issue of great hopeful they would have concern that he and his something to show for their technical crew are currently efforts by the end of the working to get it sorted out. abridged 2022/2023 league competition.



Akwa United NPFL: Shooting Stars play goalless draw with Kwara United

Gbenga Ogunbote, the Chief Coach of Shooting Stars Sports Club (3SC) of Ibadan, says his team drew goalless with Kwara United Football Club on Thursday

due to poor finishing. two games, but they (3SC Ogunbote told newsmen in players) have shown good performance," the coach said. Ogunbote however pointed out that 3SC's next game against Remo Stars would be interesting, considering the kind of officiating witnessed in the league so far.

Sporting Tribune reports that the Oluyole Warriors lost several goalscoring chances in the tension-soaked game.

The 3SC coach however assured that his team would improve on their striking efforts and ensure an improvement in their other games.

He noted that while his players might not have secured the maximum points from the two games they have a very strong and tactical played in the league so far, team.

They have however shown good performance.

"Kwara United cut us off from the midfield. They were not playing in the midfield and it worked for them. But the difference in the game is the goal we didn't score. Our players did well.

"Right now, we have just played two out of 18 games. We may not have picked up the maximum points from the

Alves arrested under suspicion of sexual assault

The veteran defender is in police custody following an allegation made against him in December 2022.

BBC SPORT said that, Dani Alves, the former Barcelona full-back and veteran Brazil international, has been arrested in Catalunya under suspicion of sexual assault.

The 39-year-old defender has been taken into custody following an allegation made against him on December 30, 2022.

Alves attended the Mossos d'Esquadra de Les Corts police station in Barcelona on Friday morning to testify against the allegations.

The South American will now be taken to the Ciutat de la Justicia in Barcelona, where he will attend a court hearing and a judge will rule on his provisional situation while the case in question is being investigated.

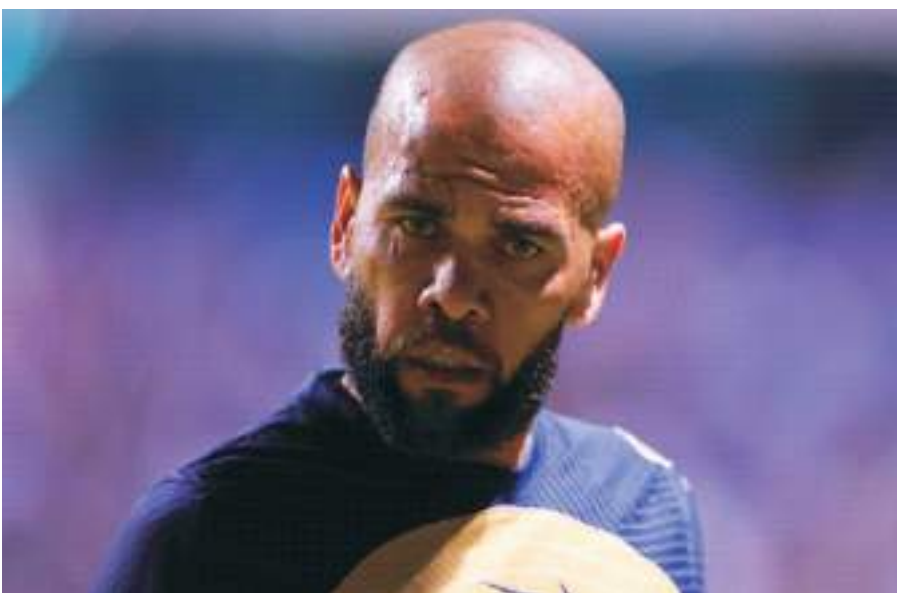
Alves has denied the accusations made against him, which came on the back

of a visit to a Barcelona nightclub, saying: "Yes, I was in that place, with more people, enjoying myself. And people who know me know that I love to dance. I was

dancing and enjoying myself without invading the space of others.

"I don't know who that lady is. You arrive at a bathroom

and you don't have to ask who's there. I have never invaded anyone's space. How am I going to do it with a woman or a girl? No, for God's sake."



Alves

SUNDAY SPORTS

Former Australian champion impacted Nigerian tennis

IN February 1976, Arthur Ashe - three-time Grand Slam singles champion, including the 1970 Australian Open - and some of his contemporaries cheerfully jetted off to Nigeria to participate in the Lagos Tennis Classic.

A week later, they were forced off the court at gunpoint - and were soon fleeing the country for their lives.

Ashe was the most famous member of the group that had flown to Africa for the Lagos-based round of the World Championship of Tennis (WCT), which had a \$60,000 prize fund courtesy of business tycoon Olatunji Ajisomo Alabi - popularly known as Lord Rumens.

Ashe was the reigning Wimbledon singles champion, but also on the trip were Tom Okker, Dick Crealy, Jeff Borowiak and Brian Fairlie.

The tournament's big claim at the time was that it was the first of its kind in black Africa.

Coincidentally, Brazilian football icon Pele was also in Nigeria that February on an ambassadorial tour sponsored by Pepsi.

The director of Nigeria's International Tennis Academy, Godwin Kienka, remembers it as a great moment for lovers of sport in the country.

"Arthur Ashe was as famous as Pele was in football. It was auspicious," he recalled.

"It just happened that two great sportsmen were in the country at the same time."

Forced off court

The tournament at the Lagos Lawn Tennis Club (LLTC) had passed off without a hitch until Friday 13 February, the fourth day of the Open.

That was the day General Murtala Mohammed, the Nigerian head of state, was



Ashe was the reigning Wimbledon singles champion at the time of the attempted coup on his visit to Nigeria in 1976

assassinated whilst on his way to work in Lagos as part of a military coup attempt.

Nonetheless, the organisers of the tournament - led by John McDonald, international director of the WCT - pushed for the tournament to continue, despite the chaos that began to envelop the country.

WHO WAS ARTHUR ASHE?

Started playing tennis at the age of six

First black player selected to the United States Davis Cup team, winning four titles

Only black man ever to win the singles titles at the US Open (1968), the Australian Open (1970) and Wimbledon (1975)

Also won Grand Slam doubles titles at the French Open (1971) and the Australian

Open (1977)

Retired in 1980

Believed to have contracted HIV from a blood transfusion he received during a heart bypass surgery in 1983

Died from Aids-related pneumonia in 1993

Matches resumed on Sunday 15 February, with four Americans - Dick Stockton, Bob Lutz, Ashe and Borowiak - in the quarter-finals.

A day later, the LLTC was filled to capacity with spectators on centre court excitedly taking their seats to watch Ashe play his semi-final against Borowiak.

But, just as it began, five men marched on to the court and stopped play.

"Arthur Ashe was actually playing a match when the army guys - upset about the

coup and the murder of Murtala Mohammed - came," remembered Kienka, picking up the story.

"And they said, 'what are you guys doing here?'"

According to Kienka, Ashe and Borowiak raised their hands in a surrender motion. They were told "get out of here" and then "they led [Ashe] out with a gun."

As events unfolded, the capacity crowd also began to flee, running from the stadium into the street.

Kienka told BBC Sport Africa how Ashe went into the changing room where the director of the tournament was holed up. From there they ran into the crowds until they found a cab sent by the US Embassy to come and collect them.

"Then, when they got into traffic, the car couldn't move," he added.

"They got down and started running towards the embassy. They just found the next plane out of the country.

"They could not have continued; it was too traumatic for them."

A legacy in Lagos

Ashe had been pivotal to the WCT's decision to take the event to Lagos in the first place; he had previously visited Nigeria in 1970 with fellow American tennis star Stan Smith as part of a US State Department goodwill tour.

Despite the way it ended, the president of Nigeria's Tennis Federation, Ifedayo Akindoju, thinks the impact of Ashe's

visit cannot be underestimated.

"Arthur Ashe brought two things: he came to Nigeria to play tennis and gave confidence to Nigerians that they can equally excel in this game," he said.

"We didn't have to travel to the US, we didn't have to travel to the UK - tennis was right here under our nose in Lagos. We saw the same game being played with the same racket we hold.

"Secondly, not too long after, we had a lot of Nigerians - up to the early 1980s - that went even as far as playing in the Grand Slams."

Nigeria has never had a Grand Slam champion but Kienka says Ashe's memorable visit did bring national success.

"The young boys who were ball boys and officials at the tournament are still talking about it to today," said the ITA director.

"Many of them became national champions in the country. The inspiration came from the visit of Arthur Ashe."

Indeed, Kienka thinks it ultimately led to a "golden age" of Nigerian tennis.

"The impact still lives on, the legacy is enormous," he claimed.

"It's the same as when you have Messi, or Ronaldo, or Mbappe coming to Nigeria and playing football with children in schools.

"What impact they have on their sports career cannot be quantified. And that's actually what happened."



Nigeria now has a regular place on the tennis calendar in the form of the Lagos Open - played at the same venue Ashe had to flee

SUNDAY SPORTS

Australian Open 2023 Lehecka beats Norrie



Cameron Norrie also reached the Australian Open third round in 2021

BRITISH men's number one Cameron Norrie is out of the Australian Open after losing to rising star Jiri Lehecka.

BBC SPORT said that, Norrie, seeded 11th, had been aiming to knock off another notable career milestone by reaching the last 16 at Melbourne Park for the first time.

He led by two sets to one before Czech Lehecka fought back to win 6-7 (8-10) 6-3 3-6 6-1 6-4 in the third round.

The 27-year-old left-hander was far from his best and needed treatment on his left knee early in the decider.

"I can't really put my finger on why I wasn't at my best, he played better than me and better in the bigger moments," said Norrie.

"The knee did not affect the outcome of the match - it was a small niggle and I wanted to check it was nothing serious."

Lehecka will play Canadian sixth seed Felix Auger-Aliassime in the fourth round on Sunday.

It was a measure of revenge for the 21-year-old after he was beaten by Norrie at the Auckland Open last week.

"I felt that I could beat him," said Lehecka, who is ranked 71st in the world.

"The only thing I learned from that match [in Auckland] was to never give up and fight for every ball."

Norrie's exit means Andy Murray - who won his extraordinary second-round match at 04:05 local time earlier on Friday - and Dan Evans are the only British players remaining in either singles draw.

Evans plays his third round match against Russian fifth seed Andrey Rublev on Margaret Court Arena at about 13:00 local time (02:00 GMT) on Saturday.

Murray takes on Spanish 24th seed Roberto Bautista Agut in the opening match of the night session on the same court at 08:00.

Norrie has enjoyed a meteoric rise over the past few seasons after his unprecedented success on the ATP Tour, which included his first career titles and a climb into the world's top 10.

His success has been a product of hard work and self-belief, delivering consistent performances based on relentless returning and athletic energy.

A deep run at a major had eluded him until he ticked off

that achievement in style with his Wimbledon semi-final showing last year.

However, he has yet to go far in Melbourne, having lost in the first round on four of his previous five visits prior to this year's tournament.

Norrie arrived in Australia on the eve of the year's first major after reaching the final in Auckland, the city where the London-based player grew up.

However, he was unable to transfer his best form to Melbourne Park.

He lacked rhythm against Lehecka, with a stream of errors flowing from the forehand side, and the young Czech maintained his composure to secure one of the biggest wins of his career.

"Maybe I peaked a bit too early and couldn't keep the momentum up but I gave myself the best preparation possible," said Norrie, who beat Rafael Nadal at the season-opening United Cup.

"I felt great arriving in Melbourne and it was perfect preparation."

"I played a lot of matches and I really enjoyed playing in Auckland - it was very special for me. I don't regret anything."

Donald trying to 'inspire' potential Ryder Cup team-mates

EUROPE'S Ryder Cup captain Luke Donald joked that he is trying to "inspire" potential team-mates after taking the early first-round lead at the Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship.

BBC SPORT said that, Donald, 45, birdied his last four holes and made nine in total at Yas Links to card an opening eight-under-par 64.

"I'm trying to put an aim for the guys who are trying to make the team. If they can't beat me, then what are they doing?" laughed England's Donald.

"Hopefully I'm inspiring them."

Donald holds a one-shot lead over Guido Migliozzi of Italy and Australia's Jason Scrivener, with Ireland's Seamus Power on 66, but play in the first round was not completed because of fading light.

Donald took over the Ryder Cup captaincy when Henrik Stenson was stripped of the role, after the Swede announced he was joining the LIV Golf series in 2022.

However, the Englishman minimised any suggestion he could become a playing captain at the event in Rome this autumn.

American seven-time major champion Arnold Palmer was the last man to do so in 1963.

"It would be tough to be a playing captain," said Donald. "I've been vice-captain twice, there's a lot going on. So, early days, it's a great start to the week, nothing more."

Stenson is making his first appearance on the DP World Tour since his involvement with the LIV series and carded a 68 on the opening day.

Asked whether he regretted his decision to join the Saudi-backed breakaway event, the 46-year-old said: "No, I made my decision and obviously Ryder Cup Europe made theirs."

"It's not great but it is what it

is, and [the] Ryder Cup has been a huge part of my career."

"I wish Luke all the best with the team and we'll see where we all end up in the long run with this."

A legal hearing in the week beginning 6 February will decide whether the DP World Tour can ban European players who defected to LIV from playing in the Ryder Cup.

The PGA Tour has already ruled that American players in the LIV series will not be able to play in the biennial contest which is being staged in Italy in late September.



Luke Donald (centre) will lead Europe at the Ryder Cup at the Marco Simone Golf & Country Club in Rome at the end of September

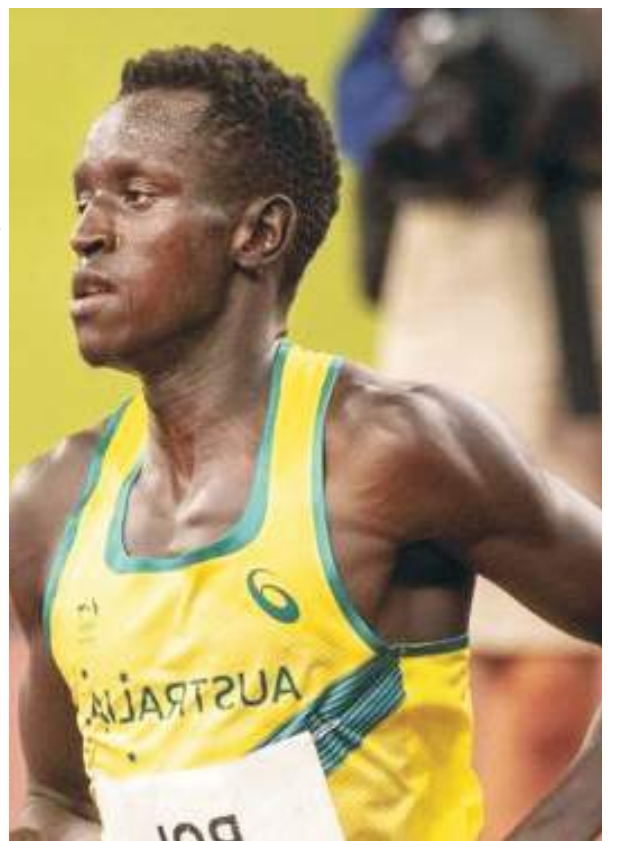
Olympic athlete returns positive doping test

AUSTRALIAN athlete Peter Bol has been provisionally suspended after testing positive for a banned substance.

Bol, who finished fourth in the 800m at the Tokyo Olympics, returned an adverse finding for erythropoietin (EPO) at an out-of-competition test in October.

The 28-year-old protested his innocence in a statement and said he had requested analysis of his 'B' sample.

"I ask that everyone in Australia believe me and let the process play out", he said.



Bol won silver at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham

"It is critically important to convey with the strongest conviction that I am innocent and have not taken this substance as I am accused."

"To be clear I have NEVER in my life purchased, researched, possessed, administered or used synthetic EPO or any other prohibited substance."

Athletics Australia, who handed out the provisional suspension, said he is not allowed to train at a national or club level, compete, receive funding or use

official facilities. A statement added that Bol, who won silver in the 800m at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, is "entitled to a fair hearing process to determine whether or not an anti-doping rule violation has been committed".

EPO increases red blood cell mass, allowing the body to transport more oxygen to muscles and increase stamina and performance. Under the World Anti-Doping Agency (Wada) code, Bol faces a ban of up to four years if found guilty.

Swiatek, Pegula through to fourth round

WORLD number one Iga Swiatek needed just 55 minutes to beat Spanish qualifier Cristina Bucsa and breeze into the Australian Open fourth round.

BBC SPORT said that, Poland's Swiatek, 21, won 6-0 6-1 on Margaret Court Arena and will play Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina next.

Third seed Jessica Pegula also enjoyed a speedy victory on Friday, taking 65 minutes to beat Marta Kostyuk 6-0 6-2.

Seventh seed Coco Gauff advanced with a 6-3 6-2 victory over American compatriot Bernarda Pera.

"I feel I'm more and more confident since day one here. I'm not even talking about matches, but also practices," Swiatek said.

"I feel like I've done so much work to feel more confident, more relaxed on court. I'm pretty happy that I did it because it's just a little bit easier."

Reigning French and US Open

champion Swiatek faces a tough task against Rybakina, who beat last year's Melbourne finalist Danielle Collins 6-2 5-7 6-2 to advance.

"We know each other pretty well. For me it doesn't really matter who it's against. I just want to stay focused on myself," Swiatek added.

Fellow title favourite Pegula will face 2021 French Open singles champion **Barbora Krejcikova** for a place in the quarter-finals, while Gauff plays 2017 Roland Garros winner **Jelena Ostapenko**.

Czech Krejcikova beat Ukraine's Anhelina Kalinina 6-2 6-3, while Latvia's Ostapenko

claimed a 6-3 6-0 win against Kalinina's compatriot Kateryna Baindl.

Two-time Australian Open champion **Victoria Azarenka** came from a set down to beat 10th seed Madison Keys 1-6 6-2 6-1 and will face either sixth seed Maria Sakkari or Zhu Lin in the last 16.



Iga Swiatek has won the French Open twice and the US Open once



January 22, 2023

Court stops Bayelsa United because of 15million naira

A Federal High Court sitting in Yenagoa has granted an injunction against Bayelsa United from featuring in the Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL) on account of their indebtedness to Nembe City FC.

BSNSports.com.ng gathered on Saturday from a post shared on Sports World WhatsApp Group that the order was made on January 16 by Justice Isa M.Dashen and this has since been served to the other defendants in the matter, the Interim Management Committee and the NFF.

The hearing in suit No FHC/YNG/CS/1/2023 has been fixed for February 9, 2023.

It would be recalled that Nembe City made a formal complaint to the Interim Management Company(IMC) regarding Bayelsa United's indebtedness to them.

The debts include 15 Million Naira being outstanding payments to Nembe City FC over the transfer of three players in 2014.

The players in question are Ebitimi Agogo, Sobomabo West and Opubo Japhet.

Bayelsa United have won promotion back to the top flight after many years in the lower league.

However, their huge debt profile runs counter to new Club Licensing requirements and thus disqualifies a club from featuring in the top division.

In another development, the Chairman of the Interim Management Committee (IMC) of the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL), Gbenga Elegbeleye, has described as wicked and cheap blackmail insinuations that the body collected N1



billion from a sponsor to run the league.

There were insinuations in some quarters that the IMC got N1billion to run the NPFL this season, and that Sports Minister, Sunday Dare, got N100 million as 10 per cent of the money.

Elegbeleye told The Guardian in a telephone chat yesterday that those spreading such rumour are wicked and cheap blackmailers.

"In the first place, nobody gave us any money to run the league not to talk of such huge

amount of N1billion," an angry Elegbeleye said. "GTI didn't give us a dime. GTI are economists. They are bankers, and they promised to help us raise funds for the NPFL, using their image. We believe in them, but we said before we go ahead, how can

you help our 20 clubs for a start because they need support. We agreed that N10 million is given to each club. GTI gave N200 million to the 20 NPFL clubs, which is N10 million per club. This money was not even given to the IMC. It was credited directly

to account of the clubs, so we didn't have access to the money."

Speaking further, the IMC boss said: "On the issue of referee, we told GTI to pay the referee directly from its account. So, for anyone to say GTI gave us N1billion for

Weah backs Morocco's bid for 2025 Afcon

LIBERIAN President George Weah has added his backing for Morocco's bid to host the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (Afcon).

The former striker, who is the only African ever to win football's prestigious Ballon d'Or, awarded to the world's

best player, said he expressed his "fullest and strong" support for the nation who reached the semi-final of the Qatar 2022 World Cup.

BBC Sport Africa understands Weah relayed his backing in private during the MEDays international peace forum last November which is hosted annually in the Moroccan city Tangier.

"Liberia fully endorses and supports Morocco's bid to host Afcon 2025. I have made this commitment to King Mohamed VI. It is cast in stone," Weah said in a statement released by Liberia's state house following media reports he was ready to back Algeria's bid.

Weah cited Morocco's investment in football development and said he has already begun campaigning for the bid with stakeholders around the continent.

The 56-year-old, who played for clubs including Monaco, AC Milan and Chelsea during an 18-year career, also spoke of Morocco bringing immense pride to Africa during the World Cup.

Algeria, South Africa, Zambia and a joint bid from Benin-Nigeria are the other nations seeking to replace Guinea, who were stripped of hosting rights because of concerns over infrastructure and facilities.

Confederation of African Football (Caf) inspection

teams are touring the bidding countries this month.

Findings will be submitted to the 24-member Caf executive committee which will announce the winner on 10 February.

Also, African football's governing body, the Confederation of African Football (Caf), has launched an investigation into political remarks made by Nelson Mandela's grandson during the opening ceremony of the African Nations Championship (CHAN) in Algeria.

In a statement, Caf said it will "assess whether there was compliance" with rules laid out by both Caf and world governing body Fifa.

The Moroccan Football Federation (FMRF) sent Caf a protest after the comments made at the CHAN opening ceremony on Friday, 13 January, where Zwelivelile Mandela was a guest of the local organising committee.

Both the ceremony and the tournament's opening match, in which Algeria beat Libya 1-0, were held at the newly-built Nelson Mandela Stadium in Algiers.

In part of his speech, Mr Mandela said, "The last colony of Africa, Western Sahara. Let us fight to free Western Sahara from oppression."

In the protest letter seen by

the BBC, the FMRF claims the statement on Western Sahara had no connection with the tournament or football in general and was targeted exclusively at the Kingdom of Morocco.

Western Sahara is a sparsely populated area situated on the northwest coast of Africa. A former Spanish colony, it was annexed by Morocco in 1975.

Since then, it has been the subject of a long-running territorial dispute between Morocco and its indigenous Saharawi people, with Algeria backing the Saharawi's claim for independence.

Relations between Morocco and Algeria became so strained that the two countries cut diplomatic ties

in August 2021 - and the fractious nature of that relationship has now spilled over into the CHAN with Morocco's decision not to defend their title coming after the host nation refused to allow the Atlas Lions to fly directly from Rabat to their base in Constantine on a Royal Air Maroc plane.

As well as his comments on Western Sahara, Mr Mandela led the crowd of 40,000 people in chants of "free Palestine".

"These political statements are not the statements of Caf and do not reflect the views or opinions of Caf as a politically neutral organisation," said African football's governing body as it began its investigation.



Weah won both the Fifa Player of the Year and Ballon d'Or awards in 1995

WORLD SEARCH Answer the clue and search for the word

B	U	H	J	I	N	I	K	E	Y	F	B	C
K	I	T	G	O	K	H	G	P	H	Q	I	I
B	A	R	S	H	I	M	W	D	E	H	R	D
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- Mutaz Essu.....(7) Qatar high jumper
- Deji.....(4) former Nigerian sprinter
- Patrice.....(6)Crystal Palace Manager
- David.....(5) West Ham Manager
- Usein.....(4) Fomer Jamaican sprinter
- Didier.....(6)Former Chelsea striker
- George.....(4)The only world best footballer from Africa
- Anthony....(6)Nigerian/British boxer
- Golf Peg (3)
- Rashidi.....(6) Nigeria's first world cup scorer
-Jo (8) Former Super Eagle handler
- Two under Par in golf (6)
- San Antonion basketball team (5)

By IBRAHIM T. LOT