

**ISWAP**  
planning to use  
drones for attacks  
- ISS

**News:** Lalong inaugurates population census committee

**Sports:** Fan sued UEFA referee on behalf of Osimhen

**Business:** Shell denies breach of Nigeria content law

# Sunday Standard

TRUTH EXALTS A NATION

# 2023 elections and matters arising

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*With the just concluded 2023 elections, it is expected as fall-out, series of election disputes have emanated. Therefore resorts to tribunals and courts are not anomalies. Nevertheless, such should be done with decency and decorum since elections are not do or die affairs.*



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### Curbing wanton killings in Nigeria

**WHEN** Nigerians ushered in the New Year, everyone thought we had left behind the previous year with its avalanche of security challenges. Regrettably, this resolve would not be so for all especially those who lost their loved ones in a wave of wanton killings which took place in Benue State and Zangon Kataf, respectively, where over 300 people were maimed by suspected herdsmen.

**LAST** week, displaced people who had to leave their homes were attacked at the IDP camps by the same herdsmen, on whose account the people had to flee their homes, killing men, women and children alike. This was as a result of clashes between farmers and herdsmen who graze along the Benue Rivers, subsequently going down south, sometimes allowing their cows stray into farms and eating up crops.

**MORE** worrisome is the dangerous dimension the incessant herdsmen attack have assumed, particularly in the past eight years which has led to 5,138 people killed, according to the Benue State Government. Sadly, again, less than a week after gunmen killed 17 people in Zangon Kataf in Southern Kaduna, no fewer than 10 people were again killed recently.

**THE** killing of innocent people at the IDP camps again resonates the case for the rejig of the nation's security architecture with the deployment of modern state of the art surveillance equipment at strategic locations nationwide. This latest attack sends a clear message that these act of wanton shedding of blood in the country is one too many that must be roundly condemned by all and must not be allowed to further degenerate into another Afghanistan or Somalia where only gunmen hold sway without any common sense.

**BEYOND** just issuing statements and making assurances, the Federal Government must at this moment begin to match words with action as Nigerians want nothing short of results. We as a people must also see these bandits as number one enemy of the state. Therefore, all must close ranks to give and share relevant information that would assist the agencies to succeed in the fight against such evil and criminally minded people in the society.

**NEVERTHELESS**, we are sick and tired of bloodshed which is not only satanic but one surest way of desecrating the land which the citizens must rise against to keep our homeland safe. Nigerians condemn these killings in all its ramifications. There is no better time to think Nigeria than now. We must begin to look beyond religions and tribe and those responsible for securing our lives and property must fish out the perpetrators of these acts because a life lost is a life too many.

**NO** doubt the insecurity in Nigeria is increasing exponentially with each passing day. In order to curb these killings and secure our lives and property, our borders have to be monitored. They have become as porous as never before. The federal government must face the challenges of boundary porosity squarely. It should make concerted efforts to recruit, train and deploy adequately equipped customs and immigration personnel across borders with gadgets and sophisticated equipment such as body cameras, drones, and so on.

**A** wholistic security reform and reorientation of our value system should also be done as well as setting up a security network with neighbouring countries in order to beef up security around our borders. There is also the need to collect and monitor information so that law enforcement officers can be proactive and predict potential crimes with near perfect accuracy and not reactively. Furthermore, there should be deployment of more security agents to hotspots to ensure their presence and activities in the areas.

**AS** the new administration comes on board on May 29, appointments for an effective security team should not be compromised, rather, merit, character, experience and competence should be paramount.

### Immigration CG dragged before ICPC over tenure elongation

**T**he comptroller General of Immigration, Idri Dere has been dragged before the Independent Corrupt Practises and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) for outliving his stipulated duration of his tenure in office.

This is just as he is alleged to have been planning a tenure elongation without the approval of the president of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari.

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A copy of petition by Coalition of Civil Societies signed by Comrade

Ayo Ologun dated April 14th 2023 addressed to the headquarters of ICPC, Abuja which was copied Minister of Interior, Rauf Aregbesola, made available to The Nation on Friday stated the tenure of Acting CG statutorily ended on the 24th of April 2022 but the president extended in a letter signed by the Chief of Staff by a year which lapse in April 2023.

According to the letter, "Relying on the letter of extension as signed by the Chief of Staff to the President, the one year elongation ends on the 24th of April, 2023 provided no further elongation is given which until the moment of writing this letter to you is non-existent.

Where such letter is nonexistent,

it can be rightly concluded that the acting CG is to vacate office before or on the 24th of April 2022 and any action taken or processes embarked upon run foul of the subsisting Public Law. Where this is the case, we shall be constrained to approach a Court of Law, to seek interpretations on whether the Executive power of the CG is self-renewable without the consent or otherwise of the president."

The coalition which consists of five groups held that such action is an act of corruption, saying, "a letter was issued from the office of the CG as to the effect of an official trip and the letter stated that the CG will be away from 13th April to the 25th of April when his tenure would have been duly and officially terminated."

### PTAD gives 6 months ultimatum for pensioners verification

**T**HE Pension Transitional Arrangement Directorate (PTAD) has announced a six months ultimatum for all pensioners under the defined benefit pension scheme to complete their aliveness through a technology based platform codenamed "I Am Alive" confirmation solution.

Executive secretary of PTAD, Dr Chioma Ejikeme made the remark at the full roll-out of the "I Am Alive" confirmation solution yesterday in Abuja.

Dr Ejikeme also disclosed that PTAD is working on a programme that will ensure the pensioners are registered for health insurance, an initiative the pensioners applauded as laudable. "We want to tie the I Am Alive to health insurance. It's going to be your ticket to health insurance. It is going to be your ticket to continue to receive pension."

The "I Am Alive" confirmation solution is an online application designed to enable pensioners under the Defined Benefits Scheme for pensioners to easily confirm their aliveness from the comfort of their homes or neighbourhood, using either a smartphone or a computer system.

Those who fail to confirm their aliveness within the grace period will be removed from the payroll automatically.

Ejikeme said any eligible pensioner who fails to come out for verification during the allowed period would be considered as fraud.

The ES emphasised the need for diaspora pensioners to particularly take advantage of the new platform to solve the problem of non-payment of their pensions because they have not been able to participate in the previous manual verification process. "You have to know where they are, who you are, you have to plan to verify them she said.

PTAD has trained pension desk officers from the ministries, departments and agencies that have pensioners under the old scheme on the use of the new application to assist pensioners who are unable to carry out the confirmation on their own.

She said the agency's communication channels are also open to receive comments, observations and render assistance where necessary, and we enjoin our pensioners to reach out to us.

The pensioners took advantage of the time to marshal out their challenges with the process, including the existential issues of difficulty in verification of next of kin of deceased pensioners.

The executive secretary addressed their concerns and

assured of her commitment to ensure all outstanding issues, especially the unstructured salary/pension harmonisation issue is formally done in collaboration with the Salaries and Wages Commission.

National secretary of NITEL/MTEL pensioners association, Emmanuel Adu said his association has set up computer centres in all the 36 states of the federation for its members to conduct the online verification exercise.

The pension boss said the agency will embark on a massive awareness campaign on the "I Am Alive" Confirmation solution, to sensitise

the pensioners and the general public on the commencement schedule.

She told the pensioners that the "I Am Alive" confirmation solution is free, "PTAD does not charge any fee for this confirmation. No PTAD staff will ask you for payment to process your pension or arrears, anyone who demands for payment from you is a fraudster and should be reported immediately."

The pensioners are simply expected to visit PTAD website: www.ptad.gov.ng, to conduct the verification exercise on "I Am Alive" solution.

### UNICEF laments FG's inability to rescue Chibok girls



Rusell

**T**HE United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) has expressed worry that nine years after 276 schoolgirls were abducted from their dormitory in Chibok, 96 of the girls are still in captivity, while more children in their thousands have been subjected to grave violations of their rights.

UNICEF lamented that since 2014, there have been over 2,400 incidents of grave violations verified, affecting over 6,800 children in the North East, adding that the most common violations are recruitment or use of children by armed groups with 700 verified cases, followed by abductions of children, with 693 incidents, and killing and maiming, with 675 incidents.

The global children body observed that on April 7, 2023, 80 children were reportedly abducted by militants in Tsafe Local Council of Zamfara State, according to local media, stressing that this "reinforces the urgent need for action to protect children in Nigeria."

In a statement, yesterday, in Abuja, UNICEF Representative in Nigeria, Cristian Munduate,

observed that the statistics were disturbing and devastating, adding that "we cannot turn a blind eye to the suffering of Nigeria's children."

She said: "It has been nine years since the horrendous abduction of the Chibok girls, yet the nightmare continues as children are still being kidnapped, forcibly recruited, killed and injured - their futures torn away. We must do everything in our power to ensure they grow up in safety, with access to education and the opportunity to fulfill their potential."


UNICEF stated that the impact of the conflict on education is alarming, with repercussions that will likely affect generations.

According to UNICEF, the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TCN) reported that, between 2009 and 2022, around 2,295 teachers were reportedly killed in attacks, over 19,000 teachers were displaced, more than 1,500 schools closed because of insecurity, and 910 schools were destroyed."


UNICEF commended the Government of Nigeria's signing of the UNICEF-supported handover protocol and its commitment to invest N144.8b (\$314.5m) towards the Safe Schools Financing Plan in 2022 and stands ready to support the Government in its implementation to ensure that all children encountered in the course of armed conflict in Nigeria or released from armed groups are quickly reunited with their families and benefit from reintegration programmes.

It called on all parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law and human rights law and protect the rights and well-being of children.

UNICEF expressed commitment to work with the government and partners to ensure that every child in Nigeria can enjoy their rights and live in a peaceful and prosperous society.



With  
**Katdapba  
Y. Gobum  
On Sunday**



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**"No doubt he has all it takes to lead the House of Representatives as its Speaker. He has the knack for pursuing the common good and also endowed with youthfulness, political ingenuity, tactician, and capable of managing diversity in the system; without injuring the sensibilities of those working with him, even as his cosmopolitan nature speaks well of him wherever he goes".**

**T**HE entrance of Rt Hon Yusuf Adamu Gagdi into politics may have been providential. For those who know, it was the progressive mentorship he received from Rt Hon Usman Zumunta Musa, (one time Deputy Speaker, Plateau State House of Assembly, now late) in the early years of his sojourn that unlocked his potentials for meaningful contributions to his people, state and indeed nation.

The manner, with which he took his fate headlong, changed the course for the better for the people; who deserve his intervention in various ways over the years. Even if some people did not give him the chance to be impactful on the political turf; it was because some had thought he was young with youthful exuberance. But those who thought in that direction have since been proven wrong.

Having learnt the ropes, he set out to put into practice the art in the general elections of 2011. He lost narrowly to Hon Sadat Garga, the incumbent of the Labour Party (today he is in the same camp with Rt Hon Yusuf Adamu Gagdi) who contested under the Peoples Democratic Party.

However, in 2015, the story changed for good. He beat all comers at the game and won the election to represent Kantana State Constituency in the state House of Assembly. That election was instructive as it became a turning point of his political journey, thanks to the fact that his constituents stuck with him despite the All Progressives Congress wave that swept across states that election year. He won on the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party.

Fate smiled on him soon after in the 8<sup>th</sup> Assembly: He achieved what his mentor had become during the height of his political days in the House of Assembly. He was made the Assembly's Deputy Speaker, working with his colleagues towards making good laws for the state.

While majority of the people of Kanam local government were APC, they elected to give Yusuf Gagdi the mandate to represent them. They didn't regret as he gave a good account of himself, in the Assembly. However, before long, he returned to the platform where his heart was: He cross-carpeted to the APC where his people were.

That action didn't go down well with some members of the House, particularly of his meteoric political ascendancy in the state; but more so for dumping the party that brought him to limelight, they thought he should pay for the 'sin' of abandoning them mid-stream. If they thought they reduced him; he turned it to his advantage.

Before long, the musical chairs swung badly against him in the Assembly. He lost the position of Deputy Speaker in circumstances which cannot be explained, as there was nothing established against him by any known committee of the House. But knowing the nature of politics, he took the development with equanimity.

He navigated through several other challenges before the impeachment. Earlier, he resigned

## Gagdi: A Speaker for the Nigerian people



**Gagdi**

from a teaching job, unarguably realizing he would be impactful in the lives of the people if he went into politics. He made no mistake, as his choice proved all doubting Thomases wrong.

His impeachment from the Deputy Speaker's position in the House soon turned out to him for good. The election turned out to his advantage; thus sending him to the Green Chambers in the National Assembly in Abuja in 2019 to represent Pankshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency.

But it was not his entrance to the National Assembly that was the news; what became significantly different was his approach to representation. Never in the history of the federal constituency has the communities been blessed than his arrival on the scene; but overcoming all that stood in his way, he was able to change the narrative in more ways than one.

The Gagdi-born parliamentarian understood the nature of what the people wanted and the service to deliver became one to beat in the execution of projects of various nature, empowerment and other initiatives that touch on the essence of the peculiarity of the constituency.

Gagdi showed tenacity and consistency, never choosing who and what community to bless. The empowerment, employment and touching lives in various ways increasingly became a seed in every community, big or small in the 36 federal wards; his presence was felt.

No wonder, his mantra, In God We Trust, became a movement which embraced the critical mass of the society, youth, men and women. They understood Gagdi's trajectory to offering service to the people. It is little wonder that when it was time to reciprocate the gesture,

they chose willingly to be on his side during the 2023 general elections.

The people of the constituency became the better for it, but more importantly, Nigeria benefitted from his work as a member of the Federal House of Representatives. He was blessed to have Speaker Femi Hakeem Gbajabiamila and his colleagues closely working in the areas of good laws.

In the last four years, he became a history maker, setting the record of being the first federal lawmaker in Nigeria since the establishment of the National Assembly experience to have sponsored about 12 private member bills and over eighteen motions. Six of those have received Presidential assent. Some of them include: Police Act 2020, Federal University of Education Pankshin Act 2021, and National Hydrographic Agency Act 2021 among others.

It is no longer news that the race for the Speakership of Nigeria's House of Representatives has since started. The gladiators for the office are varied with different political backgrounds and antecedence to boot. What we know is that it may not go to the last day before the winner will emerge among the lot.

Several names have been known in the public space to have indicated interest to contest for the office of Speaker, House of Representatives. Some of the returning lawmakers who have indicated interest to step in the shoes of Rt Hon Femi Hakeem Gbajabiamila include the incumbent Deputy Speaker, Ahmed Idris Maje Wase, Rt Hon Yusuf Adamu Gagdi, House Committee Chairman on Navy, who are gearing up for the top job come June 2023.

Interestingly, both of them are from Plateau State in the North Central Zone, while others such as Muktar Betara Aliyu; representing Biu/Kwaya federal constituency of Borno State and Aminu Sani Jaji, a

former chairman of the House of Representatives committee on National Security and intelligence in the 8<sup>th</sup> Assembly who has been reelected to represent Kaura Namoda/Birnin Magaji federal constituency of Zamfara State.

The position as other principal positions is expected to be zoned to various geopolitical areas of the country. The others who have publicly declared interest and are lobbying their colleagues are current spokesperson of the House, Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Tajudeen Abbas, Sada Soli, Princess Mariam Onuoha, Makki Abubakar Yallerman, Abdulrahman Olawuyi and the House Leader Alhassan Ado Doguwa. However, it should not be forgotten that those who are yet to declare their interest are wooing behind the doors their colleagues and other major stakeholders for support for the project. There may be more contestants.

It will be recalled that when Gagdi debuted in 2019, into the national parliament, he 'quickly got involved in the internal politics at the time, aligned with the "progressives" camp and eventually became the chairman of Navy Committee, a committee ordinarily would not be given to a first timer. He did not disappoint the House; neither did he fail on the home front, as he gave a good account of his capability while he served'.

It is no longer news, the 'permutations have commenced over who will be speaker in the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly, it has become necessary to draw attention to the need of zoning the position to the North-central as it is the zone that has the least representation on the seat. This will ensure fairness and equity and give all the zones a sense of belonging in the next administration'.

Convinced that his capacities are not in doubt to lead the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly, Rt Hon Yusuf Adamu Gagdi has since made his intentions known to his colleagues in the House and major and critical stakeholders who know who is deserving of the office. Those who have an idea of the capacities of Gagdi have been quick to point out his qualities and why he stands in a better stead to be Speaker.

A few Nigerians may recall that it is only the North Central geopolitical zone that has had the shortest stint of three months on the position of the Speaker, House of Representatives'. In 1983, during the short-lived second tenure of President Shehu Shagari, Hon Chaha Biam from Benue State was elected and served from October to December 1983. All the other geo-political zones have benefited variously 'with the return to democracy in 1999 uninterrupted for almost 24 years, has given all the geopolitical zones in the country, the opportunity to produce speakers of the House of Representatives for reasonable number of years except the North-central'.

Speaking of why his zone should be considered for the position, Gagdi has this to say: I'm from the North Central and the region deserves to be Speaker if you are zoning it to Northern Nigeria. It's only North Central that has not produced Speaker in the past years. North West has done it four times, the names are there. The North Central too has contributed to APC. The six governors in the North Central as it is; all of them are APC except Plateau State. so by the special grace of God, North Central has done its best to the APC and if the party zoned to North Central you will see more robust commitment from my side in ensuring I become Speaker of the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly'.

Little wonder, in the last couple of weeks, Rt Hon Yusuf Adamu Gagdi and some of his colleagues supporters have traversed the length and breadth of Nigeria meeting governors, governors-elect and representatives from all political parties that would be inaugurated in the House in June 2023 to explain why he stands as the best candidate who is able to lead the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly if given the chance.

It is not surprising that the campaign has gained traction with major power blocks that understand and have keyed into the movement to enthrone him as Nigeria's Speaker. But beyond that, he made the people of the federal constituency which he represents the center-piece of what he does.

No doubt he has all it takes to lead the House of Representatives as its Speaker. He has the knack for pursuing the common good and also endowed with youthfulness, political ingenuity, tactician, and capable of managing diversity in the system; without injuring the sensibilities of those working with him, even as his cosmopolitan nature speaks well of him wherever he goes.

It is the bridge of goodwill he helped built across the country that is currently working for to his advantage. More importantly, his interests spread beyond the North Central for progress and development; while giving support to all without discrimination, thus dwarfing the records of any who has passed the same road.

Already, Rt Hon Yusuf Adamu Gagdi has made a promise: I want to be a Speaker for the Nigerian people. I don't want to be a regional Speaker. God willing I will be a Speaker for the Nigerian people irrespective of tribe, religion. I will be saying that my primary responsibility is to add value to the people of the country,

'The qualities that I will expect from the next Speaker are capacity, sincerity, honesty and commitment. I want to see a just Speaker, one that will protect the interest of the people of all the geopolitical formations in Nigeria irrespective of population and what have you'.



NEWS

From  
AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

Gunmen abduct monarch, aide, kill worker

HOODLUMS believed to be bandits have abducted the traditional chief of Oghara in Kabba Bunu Local Government Area of Kogi State, an aide while a female domestic worker was shot dead by the gunmen



Alkali

The incident occurred around 3:00 am in the early hours of Tuesday.

Our correspondent gathered that one person identified as Toyin Onare, a domestic worker in the palace lost her life in the attack, while two others, Chief (Pa.) David Obadofin, the traditional ruler of the village and one Temidayo Elewa were abducted by the hoodlums.

The Kogi State Police Command spokesman, SP William Aya while confirming the incident said the hoodlums were said to have arrived the palace around 3:00 am while residents were sleeping and shot sporadically to scare residents before gaining access to the palace.

In the process, Chief Obadofin, a major cashew farmer and, a traditional ruler with one of his boys were seated in front of his house enjoying the cool breeze, when a staccato of gunshots jolted them to alert. Toyin, a widow who had gone to lend a hand in the farm received a bullet.

Promptly, the gunmen

whisked the traditional ruler and Temidayo, another farm hand to the bush, abandoning the poor widow in a pool of blood. One person, however, escaped, to tell the story. Toyin was rushed to hospital in Kabba, headquarters of the LGA, about 35 minutes drive where doctors confirmed her dead on arrival.

On hearing the report, the state Commissioner of Police, Hekeem Yusuf deployed a tactical team of officers to the area to fish out the perpetrators and rescue the victim," Aya said

in a telephone chat with our correspondent.

At the time of filing this report, the kidnappers have not made any contact, raising the level of apprehension among the locals.

"This is a terrible situation. Fulani herdsmen have long surrounded us. We raised alarm when they started coming, but our concerns were ignored. Now we are seeing the result. This is unfortunate. Government should quickly come to our rescue," a source who pleaded

The many faces of domestic violence

IN my formative years, it was an accepted norm for a man to beat his wife. There was nothing like woman battery. I have witnessed my grandfather beating my grandmothers for an offence as little as answering back as he was scolding them. Or calling any name close to his first or second name. It was a no go area for them.

These women were married the traditional way and accepted that their husbands could beat them if they went over the line. But even at that time our male folk were sensible enough to know that every discipline should take place within the boundary of love.

One cannot beat up a human being as if he is beating an animal. Even during my grand-parents time, beating a woman and using your leg to kick, smash her face, her stomach etc, was not condoned. We have heard of women who sought refuge at their neighbours house, before running for safety to their parents' house. This is the right thing to do because when temper has flared, one can do what one will regret.

Some years back, a Hausa young lady who got married to a butcher, developed the habit of always running home to tell her parents that she was dissatisfied with her husband.

She married as a virgin and before she could acclimatise herself to the act of making love, her husband who used to take enhancers turned her to a sex slave. He would come back several times a day from the market to have his wife.

It was not surprising she became pregnant immediately but her husband would not let off or reduce his tempo. In no time, a hatred for her husband built up. The young woman reported to her parents the situation on ground. Instead of addressing it, they dismissed her complaints by saying: 'marriage is all about patience'.

One fateful day, her husband who had closed for the day, was relaxing in their sitting room when suddenly she was filled with one rage against her husband. Grappling a kitchen knife, she ran towards her husband and stabbed him in multiple places.

When she realised what she had done, she cried out for help. When neighbours arrived the scene, she gave them a cock and bull story that they were attacked by armed robbers. But her story did not add up. There was no sign that anyone broke in.

As the first suspect, she was taken for questioning. In the course of it, she confessed.

The above case was purely negligence on the part of parents. This case was an avoidable one if only the parents had listened to their daughter. Instead, they wanted her to live her life guided by the same rules that governed their lives.

Another married woman said in her own case, the abuse she suffered was more of mental and psychology. This lady said she had a fight with her husband and after it, they kept malice.

During that period, her husband developed an evil habit of taking off to Minna from where they lived in Abuja from Thursday to Sunday evening.

She said her husband was quite aware of the fact that she could not sleep a hoot when she was alone. She used to lay awake, torturing herself with fearful pictures of horror figures. By the time their

kids came for vacation, she was suffering high blood pressure.

From every indication, most women who are being abused psychologically don't know. As far as their husband is not beating them, they believe he is not abusing them.

I have seen women who are so terrorised by their husband that in his company they are jittery and not normal. One of such women said her husband likes shouting on her for no reason. For that reason, she prefers to be quiet in his company to avoid embarrassment.

Similarly, another woman confided in her friends that her husband likes bringing her down. He laughed at her contributions, her dressing or anything she does. He calls her a fool and speaks to her harshly. It is no wonder that no one in his family respects her. This has affected her self-esteem. She can't have friends, she avoids people because of the way her husband treats her.

For the umpteenth time she is going into depression but her parents are still telling her to stay put and not bring disgrace to her family by seeking for divorce. They tell her that marriage and patience, go hand in hand.

I wonder how many women will lose their lives like the popular Nigerian gospel artist that died some time ago as a result of beatings she received from her husband. Will we continue telling women who are abused that it is well (as stated Minister of Women Affairs, Dame Pauline Tallen in her statement on the death of the gospel artist). Or give them a listening ear, a shoulder to lean on and advise them accordingly. Due to our poor handling of Women battery, instead of reducing, the cases have multiplied. Enough is enough!!!

“From every indication, most women who are being abused psychologically don't know. As far as their husband is not beating them, they believe he is not abusing them I have seen women who are so terrorised by their husband that in his company they are jittery and not normal. One of such women said her husband likes shouting on her for no reason. For that reason, she prefers to be quiet in his company to avoid embarrassment. Similarly, another woman confided in her friends that her husband likes bringing her down. He laughed at her contributions, her dressing or anything she does. He calls her a fool and speaks to her harshly. It is no wonder that no one in his family respects her. This has affected her self-esteem. She can't have friends, she avoids people because of the way her husband treats her.”

Men involvement in child spacing necessary

From  
WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe

-Media working group

A coalition of media practitioners in Gombe State with interest in family planning issues have unanimously agreed that the participation of more men in accessing services and involvement in activities of child spacing is necessary for best results.

The Media Working Group during its first quarter meeting for 2023 have therefore resolved to focus more attention on the need for more participation of men in child spacing procedures and activities.

Grace Saleh Mabudi, Acting Family Planning Coordinator, Gombe State Primary Health Care Development Agency (GSPHCDA), had earlier reported during the meeting that uptake level on family

planning services in the state is currently very high.

She said, "there is an increase in demand for services as well as commodities for family planning by women in the state". She therefore commended the media working group for the awareness creation adding that the increased patronage of the family planning services will in turn greatly improve maternal child health in the state.

However, during the discussion and discovering that women bear most of the burden associated with family planning procedures resulting in some physical

side effects, most contributors in the meeting suggested a shift to the men folk since they too have their commodities and services.

In her submission, Rebecca Caleb Maina, chairman of the Media Working Group, said apart from encouraging the men to access FP services, she encouraged the journalists to expand their reportage using the gender lens for their child birthspacing stories.

According to her, gender lens story is one that considers the different needs and circumstances of all people within the target group and not only focusing on the women folk alone in child spacing reports.

She said, "this involves interviewing the men, women, people with disabilities and relevant stakeholders such as government officials, traditional and religious leaders. These group of people are akey/ critical stakeholders in supporting uptake of child birthspacing services.

"Ensure that men also speak out. This is to have an all-inclusive report not centered only on service providers and women", she stressed.



Media working group in Gombe during their meeting on child spacing.

POLITICS

## APC female aspirant assures of peaceful primary

A female gubernatorial aspirant of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Bayelsa State, Prof. Ongoebi Maureen Orubide Etebu, has advocated for a peaceful primary across all 105 wards of Bayelsa State, as members troop out in their numbers to exercise their franchise on Friday, 14th April, 2023, to choose the party's flag bearer towards the November 11th 2023 gubernatorial poll.

Prof OrubideEtebu, assures that going by the track record of all six aspirants jostling for the party ticket, she is assured that the exercise shall be rancour-free, fair, transparent and credible.

The kaima-born Intellectual, and pioneer Vice-Chancellor of the first Maritime University in Nigeria, Prof OrubideEtebu, a former two-time Commissioner, blessed God for the safe arrival of national officials of the party from the headquarters in Abuja to Bayelsa State to supervise the conduct of the primary election, as she expressed confidence in the modalities already put in place for a free, fair and credible APC primary poll.

"As we all know, the party (APC) is known to adhere to basic principles of credible primaries. This is not my first time of vying for the Governorship poll and it has always been transparent and fair. Today's primary shall not be different. It's just a contest among political siblings and the best shall get the nod of the party members in Bayelsa State. We shall accept the outcome", she reiterated.



Etebu

Prof. OngoebiEtebu called on all aspirants who might not be lucky enough, to accept the outcome of today's primary, as it can only be one amongst all of the six aspirants, that shall occupy the slot of being the party's flag bearer.

The "Jesu-Uge" crooner, as Prof OrubideEtebu is fondly known as, used the opportunity to felicitate with the president-elect, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, on his victory at the just concluded Nigeria's General Elections, as she made reference to the APC Presidential Primary last year in Abuja, that set the pace for the party's strict adherence to internal democratic best practices, as observed by the electoral umpire, INEC and other observers.

According to her, "that

practice of a peaceful primary poll shall be replicated in Bayelsa primary."

The top female APC gubernatorial aspirant in Bayelsa State, also acknowledged the party leader, Chief Timipre Sylva, for creating an enabling environment for aspirants, as this shows that it is an internal family affair with no victor, no vanquished!

"I urge all party members across Bayelsa State to go out to vote their preferred aspirant as I, as an aspirant, I am happy with the peaceful and professional manner put in place by the National Committee in charge of the primary process. May the best win as we all shall work for the party for the general good at the November 11th poll", Prof. Ongoebi Etebu stated.

THE All Progressives Congress (APC) has adopted direct mode of primaries for the conduct of forthcoming Kogi Governorship Primary Election slated for April 14.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the party informed the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) of its decision to adopt the direct primary mode in a letter dated April 6.

The letter, which was signed by the party's Acting National Chairman, Sen. AbubakarKyari, and made available to newsmen on Wednesday in Abuja, followed an earlier one to the commission dated Jan. 25

The letter read in part: "We refer to our earlier letter dated January 25th 2023, with reference no: APC/NHDQ/INEC/19/023/191.

"Wherein we notified the commission of the mode of primary election for the

## APC adopts direct primary for Kogi governorship

conduct of the the party. The composition of the delegate list had raised concerns among the party's critical stakeholders in Kogi who said they were not carried alone during its compilation.

"However, our great party, the APC, has reviewed the modalities for the conduct of the gubernatorial primary election in Kogi.

"And has, therefore, resorted to adopt the direct mode of primary election instead of the indirect mode as earlier communicated," it said.

According to the letter, there would be a Special Congress to ratify the candidate with the highest number of votes at the primary election in the state scheduled for Saturday, April 15.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that an Abuja Federal High Court, on Wednesday, nullified the Kogi APC delegate list for the purpose of nominating a governorship candidate for

Justice James Omotosho, while delivering judgment, voided the party's ward and local government congresses conducted on Feb. 7 in Kogi, saying they were not conducted in compliance with 2022 Electoral Act and the APC Constitution.

However, stakeholders of the party across the country had said that the judgment was only an academic exercise as the party had already decided to adopt the direct mode.

The Kogi governor election had been fixed for Nov. 11 by INEC. (NAN)

## Kebbi APC suspends Reps member for anti-party activities

THE State Working Committee of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Kebbi, has suspended a House of Representatives member, Shehu Muhammed Koko, for anti-party activities.

Kebbi APC chairman,



Adamu

Abubakar Muhammad Kana, confirmed the development in a statement he personally signed in BirninKebbi.

"Sequel to the complaints instituted against him, Shehu Muhammed Koko, by the members of the party from Koko-Basse Local Government area over

allegations of anti party activities, which is likely to embarrass and have adverse effect on the party or bring into hatred, contempt, ridicule, or disrepute fractionation, flouting the rules, regulations and decisions of the party, engaging in dishonest practices,

thuggery, carrying out other anti party activities which tend to disrupt the peaceful, lawful and efficient organisation of the party, which are inconsistent with the aims and objectives of the party, contrary to Article 21(2)(I)(ii)(vi)(vii) of the APC constitution as amended.

"We wish to notify the public that, the State Working Committee has approved the suspension of Hon. Shehu Muhammed Koko from All Progressives Congress (APC) activities pending the outcome of the investigation of the complaints", the statement read.

## Anyanwu denies being sponsored for Imo guber

THE governorship candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) for the November 11 gubernatorial election in Imo State, Senator Samuel Nnaemeka Anyanwu, has denied reports that he was being sponsored to run for the governorship seat of the state.

His Special Adviser on Media, Ikenna Onuoha, in a statement on Thursday, described the report as misleading and mischievous. Onuoha urged Imo people and the general public to ignore the fake news, adding that the days of the All Progressives Congress (APC)

were numbered in the state.

He said, "Following this fake news, our phones were inundated with calls by well-meaning Nigerians, who in their curiosity, sought to ascertain the veracity or authenticity of the story.

"For the avoidance of doubt, this story is not only false, baseless, and misleading, but a brazen concoction garnished by individuals already afraid of PDP and its governorship candidate to deceive the general public.

"The questions are; who sponsored Senator Anyanwu in the 2019 Governorship poll if, in their mischievous imagination, he can be sponsored today? Whose interest was the PDP Guber candidate protecting as far back as 2019 when some of those championing the fake news today were struggling to be relevant?

"We wish to put the records straight that it is only a nonentity and a push-over that can be sponsored as a governorship candidate to destabilise the position of Ndi-Imo and not Senator Anyanwu, who represents the minds of

every average Imo person.

"The truth of the matter is that the PDP governorship candidate, Senator Anyanwu, is fully out to send the inhuman APC government packing and ensure that our state is secured in its entirety.

"To show his capacity and preparedness to achieve this, Senator Anyanwu presented and released abridged version of his manifesto to the public few minutes after his emergence as Imo PDP governorship standard bearer; a feat only he and PDP can undertake when others are still hoping to steal from people's strategic initiatives.

"We are aware that the APC government is still enjoying the wanton killings of innocent Nigerians, incessant kidnapping and total shutdown of all businesses in the country.

"We are also aware that the reason why these mischief makers resorted to blackmail is because the National Secretary of PDP resisted them from planting stooges as PDP governorship aspirants prior to the party's primary election."



Anyanwu

POLITICS

# NASS transmits Peace Corps Bill to Buhari

**T**HE National Assembly has transmitted the harmonised version of the bill on Nigerian Peace Corps, to President Muhammadu Buhari for assent.

Our correspondent gathered that, the harmonised version of the bill had separately been passed by the two Chambers of the National Assembly.

Sani Tambuwal, the Clerk to the National Assembly (CNA), in a letter dated 12th April, 2023, transmitted the bill to President Muhammadu Buhari for assent.

According to an authoritative source in the National Assembly, three copies of the authenticated copies of the bills, were forwarded to the President for assent, one of which is expected to be retained by him and the other two sent back to the National Assembly for further action.

In line with provisions of the 1999 Constitution, President Buhari is expected to assent to the bill on or before May 11



Lawan

when 30 days window given for such important action must have been exploited.

The Bill, if assented to, the existing Peace Corps of Nigeria

that had been operating on template of volunteerism over the years, will now be Federal Government owned and funded Agency in the name of Nigeria Peace Corps.

**K**OGI State Deputy Governor, Edward Onoja, and the Chief of Staff to Governor Yahaya Bello, Pharm. Mohammed Abdulkareem Asuku, have withdrawn from the governorship primary election of the All Progressives Congress (APC).

According to reports the ruling APC had fixed its governorship primary election for Friday, April 14, 2023.

This is coming after a critical stakeholders meeting hosted by the state governor, Yahaya Bello, at the State headquarters of the APC in Lokoja on Thursday, where the Governor allegedly unveiled his preferred candidate, a former Auditor-general of the State, Ahmed Usman Ododo.

Chairman of the primary election committee and Zamfara State Governor, Mohammed Bello-Matawale, confirmed the development after Thursday's meeting.

Matawale said other aspirants who have not withdrawn from the race are free to participate in Friday's primary to be held across the state.

"All other aspirants who have not withdrawn from the race are free to participate in Friday's direct primary election to be held across the state.

# Onoja, five others withdraw from guber race



Bello

"The gentlemanly agreement was reached and announced at a stakeholders meeting of the party held on Thursday, in Lokoja", he said.

Meanwhile, Onoja and Asuku have announced their withdrawal from the governorship race via their respective verified Facebook pages shortly after the meeting in Lokoja.

The deputy governor, Onoja's message on Facebook read: "To God be the glory for life and divine health. My appreciation to my leader, HE AlhajiYahaya Bello and all my supporters for your love and prayers. Let love, patience and perseverance lead. I am forever grateful."

For his part, the governor's Chief of Staff, Asuku, who was also seen as a frontrunner because of his closeness to the governor, posted: "Alhamdulillah! Alhamdulillah!!Alhamdulillah!!! "All praises and adoration are

due to the most high God, the creator of the entire universe and the sustainer of same who has safeguard my life and that of my immediate family and well wishers to witness this moment in my life.

"I sincerely appreciate His Excellency, my benefactor, for all that Allah has been using him to do in my life. As such, I hereby submit myself publicly to the decision taken today and I will forever live to remain loyal and dedicated to the decision of my party as I enjoin all my well wishers to work with us for our great party APC to become victorious in the November 11th General Election."

In a similar development, other aspirants including David Adebajji Jimoh; a former Commissioner for Finance, Asiwaju Ashiru Idris; Okala Yakubu, and Momoh Jubril have also withdrawn from the governorship race.

# CSOs fault calls for Interim National Government

**C**OALITION of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), the Nigerian Peace Advocates has faulted calls for Interim National Government to takeover from the President Muhammadu Buhari administration.

The group, which included Citizens for Development and Education (CDE), Center for Peace and Environmental Justice (CEPEJ) said this at a news conference on Wednesday in Abuja.

Spokesperson for the group, Ibrahim Waiya, Executive Director, CDE, said it was unfortunate that some politicians had resorted to unguarded statements following the outcome of the 2023 General Election which was not in their favour.

Waiya said it was important for politicians to apply restraint in their utterances, particularly as Nigeria was going through a critical period of democratic transition.

He called on media to exercise restraint on all

broadcast in the interest of peace and national unity.

The executive director urged media practitioners in Nigeria to avoid any form of broadcast capable of creating confusion and or aggravating the country's fragile security situation.

"It is important for the media to x-ray all contents before airing to avoid the Rwanda experience in Nigeria.

"Nigerians should not fall into the trap of any sentiments to serve the interest of any desperate and greedy political leader.

"Also, all aggrieved politicians should stick to legal process for redress as provided by our legal system.

"They should desist from threatening, intimidating and discrediting the same system they seek to serve,"he said.

Waiya called on international organisations and communities to exercise restraint in submitting to the sentiments of some politicians, who were hell bent on destabilising the

country. "Nigeria direly needs the support of its friends at this critical time of transition to salvage our nascent democracy in the interest of Africa's stability and the world at large."

He advised the President-elect, Bola Tinubu to run an all-inclusive government to give a sense of belonging to all groups and affiliations in the country.

MrMulade Sheriff, the Executive Director, Centre for Peace and Environmental Justice (CEPEJ) said inciting comments were capable of triggering violence.

"We are worried about inciting comments at this critical time in Nigeria.We need to use words that are palatable to the generality of Nigerians.

"We want peace and those interested in ruling Nigeria should use words that will not disintegrate is.

"We need a leader that will galvanisecitisens for a better Nigeria and one who will think above ethnicity and other

sentiments," he said.

The co-convenor said it was important to guard the country jealousy, adding that Nigeria had resources that made it the envy of other countries. Sheriff advised the Federal Government to ensure that all local refineries were revived before subsidy withdrawal to prevent unnecessary hardship on Nigerians.

He advised that incoming administration of Sen. Bola Tinubu to address the problem of Ogoni cleanup once and for all.(NAN)

# Delta Rep joins race for Deputy Speaker

**R**ep. Francis Waive (APC-Delta) has declared interest in the race for Deputy Speaker of House of Representatives in the 10th National Assembly, billed to be inaugurated in June.

The lawmaker said this in a notice to the 10th House of Representatives members-elect, a copy of which was obtained by our correspondent.

He said that his aspiration, aside from overriding competence and capacity to deliver, would be driven by equity and fairness.

The lawmaker's notice of intent read in part: "I believe the 10th Assembly deserves a leadership sensitive to the needs of members and serves all without any discrimination.

"I believe in the equality of members, in equal opportunities, both on the floor and in committee. I offer to serve you as Deputy Speaker, if zoned to the South-South."

Waive said that he would be easily accessible and help the first-timers to quickly find their

footing, adding that he would also carry everyone along during his tenure.

"Those who know me personally in the current 9th Assembly will describe me as a calm, cool and collected lawmaker. My antecedents

have always been that of service to humanity.

"As our induction and inauguration ceremonies draw near, I am available to interact with you personally and privately at your convenience," the lawmaker said. (NAN)



News conference by the Coalition of Civil Society Organisations in Abuja



Waive

# SUNDAY POLITICS

## Agenda for incoming administration

*The sixth circle of elections was held in Nigeria on the 25th of February and 18th of March, 2023, indicating about 24 years of unbroken civil rule since the return to civil rule in 1999. This is significant because, since Independence in 1960, the only other times of civil rule were six years (1960-1966) and four years (1979-1983).*

**O**UR history is always ready ammunition to be dispatched in any ethnic combat in that ungoverned social media neighbourhood. Contending sides launch missiles from the war rooms with their own "droppings" of history. I will not be a soundboard for those tiresome and unyielding conversations here. The duty of the citizen is to be a dispassionate arbiter, divining truth from untruth, and staying irrepressibly on the side of the nation's interest. I believe instead of these contentions which re-emerge in our public discourse every now and then, we can learn from our past and forge a better country.

The truth is, history is subjective. Every group has their own version of history — as regards their social and political existence in Nigeria. But we cannot keep recycling the epics of woes that have bogged us down as a people. We must move forward and look forward.

Nigeria's past is not a very glossy one, yes. It is replete with tales of pain, sorrow, and blood — depending on who is telling the story. Fatal mistakes were made, but must we keep reliving the errors of our past? Are we doomed to remain a rendition of our past? Can we not move forward — beyond our past?

Nothing changes because the old ways remain the same. We must think a new Nigeria, and a new Nigeria begins with new progressive thinking. We cannot take a leap into a glorious future while we are still stuck in the rut of the past. Our past has become today's pain, and tomorrow's burden.

But does this imply we must abandon our history? Absolutely not. We embrace it, but learn from it as well, and stop repeating the same mistakes. The current confusion shows we have learnt nothing from our chequered history.

Our past should teach us to be respectful of one another; it should teach us caution; it should teach us tolerance; it should teach us understanding; it should teach us discipline, and it should teach us the very essence of unity.

Like Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto, said to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe: "Let us understand our differences. I am a Muslim and a Northerner. You are a Christian, an Easterner. By understanding our differences, we can build unity in our country."

We must manage our diversity with "care, mutual respect, understanding, caution and trembling". We cannot discount our points of divergence, but we must also recognise that we have solid arcs of convergence. What



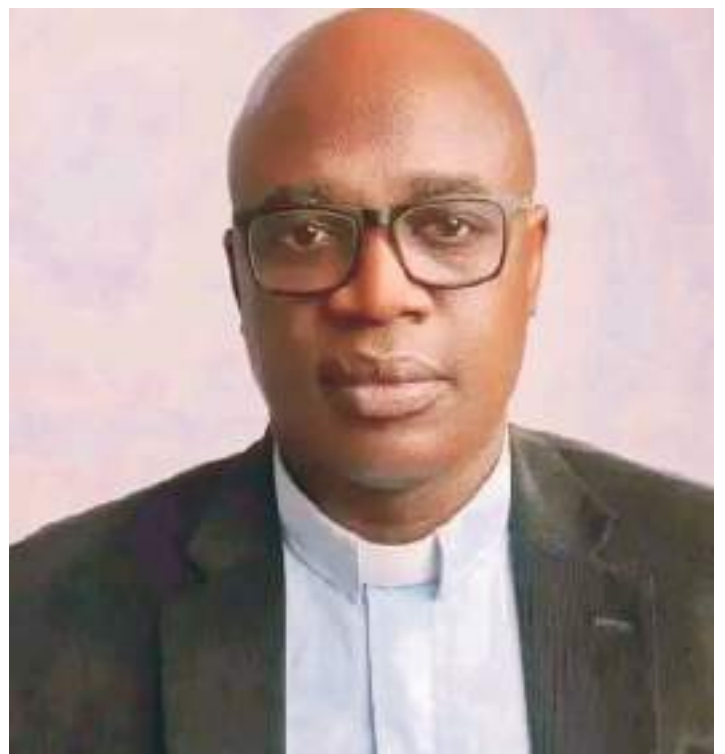
Mutfwang



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Mohammed



Fr. Alia

unites us should be stronger than what divides us.

It is unfortunate that to reinforce prejudices, some deploy self-archived ahistorical accounts. Our past as a country should not be a springboard for hate exchanges, but a source of learning to forge a better country. We hold on to "history", whether manufactured or inverted, to accent our biases. Evolving means we are better than yesterday.

No one can hold their own version of history as truth everyone must chow down. There are villains and heroes in every story. It is depressing that our much-vaunted past has become stuff of propaganda passed down from one generation to another. Hate transitioning from one

generation to another. We must break this circle of hostility.

Really, we cannot make progress as a country if we remain on this treadmill. We must sanitise our conversations, discard epithets, and evolve into a wholesome whole.

We must deconstruct revisionist fabrications and pretensions to make good of the future. Knowing that we started off on a shaky foundation should thrust us into consciously working out our destiny. We cannot hold on to an acrimonious past as a precedence for the present and the future. As I said previously, we take the lessons from the past and forge a new path.

We dissipate so much energy

on ethnic bouts of supremacy but leave very little to interrogate fundamental issues of governance. We must make our existence as a nation about jutting issues that govern our lives as citizens — economy, security, education, and health.

In conclusion, it is insalubrious to ascribe the actions of deviants within a certain pool to any group. I have maintained this position since the wave of baleful propaganda against the Fulani. I will not deviate from the path of unity and peacebuilding no matter how perilous the road becomes.

The invidious and menacing enterprise of Peter Obi's "Obidients" has driven the dagger deep into the national

umbilicus. Sore points quickened, passions inflamed, and bottled-up emotions unlatched.

First, we need to address the "Obidient" menace full-frontal, and we need to strengthen national and community concord. We need new ententes brokered for national cohesion or unity. We need to talk. We need to have those difficult conversations in civilised and decorous fora with a view to healing our nation. We need to talk with one another, not at each other.

We need new alliances cementing the north with the south, and the east with the west in holy matrimony. But to achieve this, we need to talk.

**Fredrick Nwabuo aka Mr One Nigeria is a media executive.**

# SUNDAY PEOPLE

## AIR COMMODORE MAIGIDA LAID TO REST

Remains of the late Director of Press and Information (DOPRI), Nigerian Airforce, Air Commodore Wapkerem Martins Maigida has been laid to rest at his hometown Nyak, Ajikamai of Shendam LGA on Friday after Mass at the St. Stephen's Catholic Nyak



Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (CON) his wife, Mrs. Regina Lalong (right) with the Executive Chairman of Shendam LGC, Hon. Alex Miskoom Naantuum



Chief of Air Staff, represented by Air Vice Marshall Paul Masiyer delivering the CAS condolence message



Governor Lalong (left) exchanging greetings with some members of the Security of Plateau State



Paramount Ruler of the Gamai nation, HRH Miskoom Martin Shaldas, Long Gamai making his condolence remarks



Wife of the deceased flanked by children and members of the family



Cross section of sympathisers at the Mass



APC State Chairman, Hon. Rufus Bature (2nd left) with other sympathisers during the Mass



Late Air Commodore Maigida's wife, children, classmate Navy Commodore Ike of the 42nd Regular (right) with others paying their last respect to the departed DOPRI

PHOTOS: DOPPA'S OFFICE GOVERNMENT HOUSE, RAYFIELD, JOS



**Q**UALITY representation, law making and oversight are part of the main duties of the legislative arm. With less than two months to go, it is pertinent to have an insight on some key legislative activities of the ninth state House of Assembly. Here are few of the extant laws and bills moved from June, 2019:

A Bill for a Law to Provide for Anti- Land Grabbing, Kidnapping, Cultism and Related Matters, 2020. Interestingly, passed into law after the state executive governor gave his assent last year.

A Bill for a Law to Eliminate Violence in Private and Public Life, Prohibit all Forms of Violence including Physical, Sexual Psychological, Domestic, Harmful Traditional Practices, Discrimination Against Persons and to Provide Maximum Protection and Effective Remedies for Victims and Punishment of Offenders, and for Other Matters related, 2020.

A Bill for a Law to Establish the Plateau State Displaced Persons Commission and for other Related Matters, 2021. This bill has passed first and second readings and have been committed to the House Committee on Judiciary to conduct a public hearing. **MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:** According to some school of thought, resolutions reached by the Plateau State House of Assembly are considered advises since all oars lie on the executive who does the implementation. Here are a few of these motions and resolutions.

A call on the security agencies to urgently investigate the constant harassment and killings of the good people of Bokkos constituency. Resolution reached was the House calling on the executive arm of government to provide security in the affected communities. Second, that SEMA and other relevant agencies should as a matter of urgency come to the aid of the affected victims in all the various communities in providing succor in terms food items, clothing and other necessities of life. Matter of urgent public importance on illegal motor parks on road sides within Jos-Bukuru metropolis and its environs.

Resolution reached by the House on the matter was that the Police and the Plateau State Internal Revenue Service should ensure that such parks are properly organized to avoid the break down of law and order, and to create other means of generating revenue for the Plateau State government. A motion on adjournment on the activities of cultist gangs operating in Jos and its environs.

Resolution: The House condemned in totality the activities of cultic gangs operating in some parts of Jos and environs, while also calling on the state government to work with security agencies in order to curtail cultist gangs' activities in Plateau State. The unending conflicts between

border settlements of Wadata in Wase Local Government Area of Plateau State and Kurmi in Taraba State resulted in several loss of lives and massive displacement of residents within the communities.

Resolution: The House called on the Government of Plateau State to provide the affected victims with the needed medical care and relief materials. Secondly, that government should liaise with Taraba State Government to prevent any form of conflict.

A matter of urgent public importance on the fire outbreak at the Laranto Market (Katako) which led to colossal loss of



## PLHA: Notable legislations of the Ninth Assembly



properties.

Resolution: The House called on the state government to provide a Fire Service Station outlet within the premises of all markets in Jos metropolis.

Another matter of urgent public importance was the need to take decisive action on the abduction and gruesome murder of Plateau citizens by Boko Haram in the north eastern part of the country. Resolution: That government should authorize the deployment of Nigerian troops along the North East and all other troubled spots in the country so as to safely guide the lives and property of citizens.

A call on the Plateau State Government to as a matter of urgency consider the resettlement and rehabilitation of victims of attacks in Rukuba/Irigwe constituency. Resolution: That the House was calling on the State Government to as a matter of urgency, resettle and rehabilitate the victims of attacks in Rukuba/Irigwe and other affected parts of Plateau State.

A call on the Plateau State Government to urgently consider the re-design of the state security structure in order to curb the incessant attacks on communities across the state.

Resolution: That the Government should deploy more security to protect the affected communities and fish out perpetrators for immediate prosecution.

A call on the Plateau State Government on the need to ban day time movement of heavy-duty trucks, trailers and fuel tankers within Jos and Bukuru metropolis.

Resolution: That the state government should provide short term alternative routes and long-term planned routes to reduce loss of lives and property.

A call on the Plateau State Government to ensure that justice was done over the killing of Ritji Peter Bala.

Resolution: The House deeply sympathized and condoled the bereaved family and condemned in strong terms the killing of Ritji Bala and also Dr. Nandi Drenkat. That the state government should liaise with the federal government to fish out perpetrators for immediate prosecution.

A matter of urgent public importance on the need to protect pedestrian lives on the stretch of the road between Hill Station Hotel and the Polo roundabout.

Resolution. The House sympathized with the families of those who lost their loved ones in the many accidents occurring at

Polo roundabout, and called on public importance on the need the Plateau State Government for the Plateau State to, as a matter of urgency, direct Government to strengthen the the Jos Metropolitan services of security agencies in Development Board (JMDB) and Plateau State, especially other related authorities to Operation Rainbow and to construct speed bumps from the provide armed security men for Hill Station Hotel roundabout to traditional rulers Polo roundabout, with a two Resolution: Again, that the week ultimatum given. Plateau State Government

A call on the Plateau State should strengthen the Operation Government to put in place Rainbow and Neighborhood stringent measures to curtail the Watch outfit. rising incidents of rape in the Matter of urgent public s t a t e . importance on the need for

Resolution: The House Plateau State Government to condemned in totality the act of caution the Joint Patrol team of violence and other forms of security operatives checking hideous crimes perpetrated on roads to be modest in their children by rapists. Also, that approach to motorists. government should empower Resolution: That the House relevant MDAs to conduct Committee on Works and advocacy on social behavioral Transport should invite the Joint change. Security Operative, Federal Road

A matter of urgent public Safety Corps, Police Force and importance on an attack in the Vehicle Inspection Officers Rotsu village of Miango district in (VIO) to the House for a parley Bassa Local Government Area of on 8th June, 2021. Plateau State.

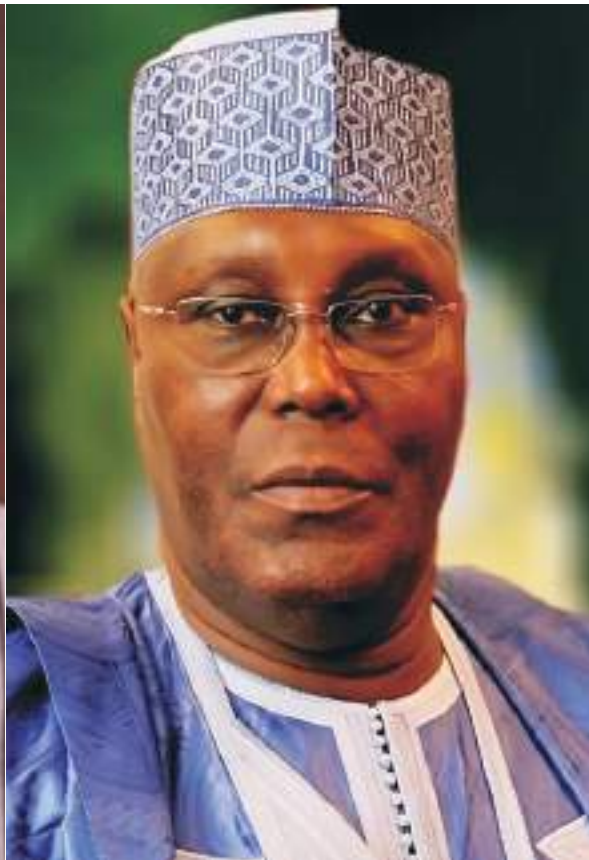
A matter of urgent public Resolution: That the importance on the increasing coordinator of the state cases of wanton destructions of Operation Rainbow and crops on farmlands by Fulani Neighborhood Watch be invited herders in Rikwe, Chongu and for a meeting with the principal Zou communities of Rukuba/ officers of the House, and the Irigwe constituency. House Committee on Labour Resolution: That the Operation and Security on Friday Rainbow should be more 24/7/2020. proactive in halting security

Another matter of urgent challenges in the state.

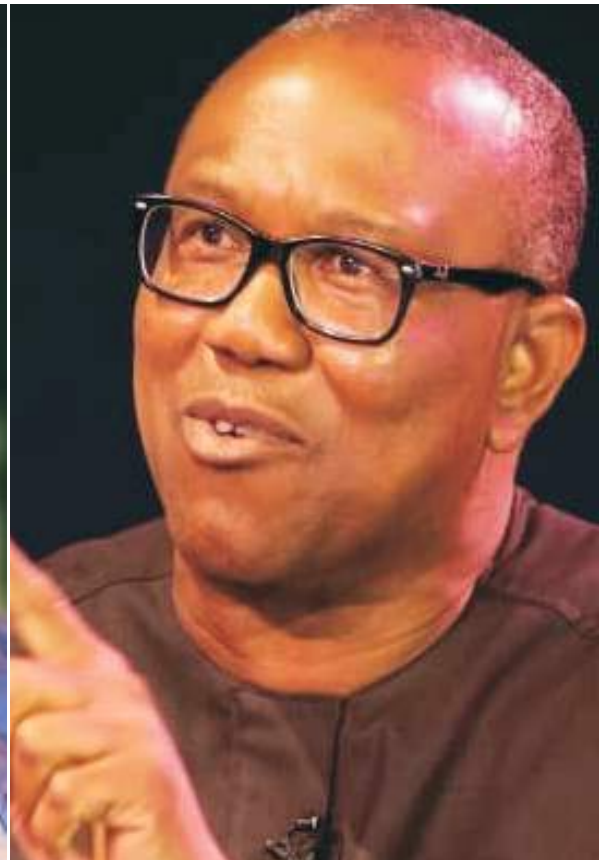
SUNDAY MAGAZINE



Tinubu



Atiku



Obi

# 2023 elections and matters arising

**With the just concluded 2023 elections, it is expected as fall-out, series of election disputes to emanate . Therefore resorts to tribunals and courts are not an anomaly, nonetheless, such should be done with decency and decorum since elections are not a do or die affair, VICTOR ALI writes**

CERTAINLY, the 2023 these results so declared, this one certainly cannot be experience has been The politics of tolerance, elections have come but there are decent and deferent. Reports enmeshed in acrimony and accommodation and and gone "which legal ways for seeking emanating from some parts violence. Almost three understanding seems to involved the Presidential, redress. The electoral of the country is not only decades of return to have taken flight. National Assemblies, tribunals are there and the worrisome but fighting. democracy after several Here on the Plateau, it is gubernatorial and state courts are readily available The alleged clashes between years of military not any different. Plateau Houses of Assembly polls . It in electoral disputes. the Yorubas and Igbos in interregnum, Nigeria, State, known as the home of can be said with some level It is saddening that the Lagos State stands amazingly seems not to "Peace and Tourism" is a of surety that, the elections 2023 elections came with a condemnable. Needless to say, While the people in. Since the return to went almost peacefully lot of misgivings and democracy is a government (electorate) are saddled democracy in 1999, it apart from some pockets of acrimonies. In a democracy of the people, by the people with the responsibility of produced the first National hitches which needed to be that is still growing; all these and for the people, apology casting their votes for Chairman of the self- addressed. Interestingly, altercations are uncalled for and really sad. That some to that iconic American leader, Abraham Lincoln). becomes an mathema that Africa, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), the late Chief Solomon Daushep Lar, and hosted several conventions, including Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as Nigeria's President in post military era. Before then, other National Conventions have been held in Jos to elect leaders".

**"Here on the Plateau, it is not any different. Plateau State, known as the home of "Peace and Tourism" is a serene environment to dwell in. Since the return to democracy in 1999, it produced the first National Chairman of the self-acclaimed biggest party in Africa, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), the late Chief Solomon Daushep Lar, and hosted several conventions, including Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as Nigeria's President in post military era. Before then, other National Conventions have been held in Jos to elect leaders".**

Though tribunals and electleaders. courts are seemingly With its multiplicity in avenues for redress of ethnic configuration, there judicial matters, must seems or be an unwritten Nigerian politicians are at law or agreement in power the centre of this electoral rotation. In the aborted saga. To such category of Second Republic, Sir Fidelis politicians, politics is a Tapgun of the then Social matter of do or die affair. Democratic Party (SDP), When people begin to talk of from the Southern turn-by-turn, it is no longer Senatorial Zone emerged politics or democracy. And the governor of the state, when ethnic profiling jets in, Fast-track to 1999, Chief it becomes most dangerous.

Continue on page 31

## NEWS

## 'Mbadinuju's demise is a great loss to Nigeria'

From  
AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

**G**OVERNOR Yahaya Bello of Kogi State recently expressed sadness over the death of former Anambra Governor, Chinwoke Mbadinuju, describing the development as a great loss to Nigeria.

In a condolence message to the government and people of Anambra, family and friends of the deceased, issued in Lokoja by his Chief Press Secretary, Onogwu Muhammed, the governor also expressed shock over the death.

"I am deeply humbled and saddened by the news of the death of former Governor of Anambra, His Excellency Chinwoke Mbadinuju.

"His death is a great loss to us all, and his contributions to Anambra in particular where he served as governor between 1999 and 2003 and Nigeria in general will always remain prominent.

"I hereby offer my sincere condolences to the people of Anambra, family, friends and associates of the deceased and pray that the Almighty God grants them the strength and comfort to weather the difficult period."

The governor said that he



Bello

shared in their grief, and offered his sincere condolences to them and prayed Almighty God to grant them the strength and comfort to weather the difficult period.

Bello also described Mbadinuju, who was also former editor of Times International and Associate Professor of Politics and

African Studies at the State University of New York, as a "visionary" leader.

According to him, the late Mbadinuju, while as Governor, had a clear understanding of the challenges facing his state and painstakingly designed programmes and policies that prioritized the security of his people while providing a level playing field for all Anambra

citizens.

He expressed confidence that the late governor would always be remembered for his sacrifices, contributions and the remarkable impact that he had on the people of the state.

"As we mourn the passing of our senior colleague and elder brother, we must also celebrate his life, pay tribute to his good works, and pledge to emulate his ideals.

"Please accept my heartfelt condolences, and may the soul of the former governor rest in peace with the Almighty God," he prayed.

Recall that Ubadinuju, fondly called 'Odera', passed on on Tuesday at the age of 77 at a hospital in Abuja, according to a family source.

Before joining mainstream politics, he was an Associate Professor of Politics and African Studies at the State University of New York.

He was Personal Assistant to the Governor of the old Enugu State, Dr Jim Nwobodo, between 1979 and 1980.

He also served as a Personal Assistant to former President Shehu Shagari between 1980 and 1983.

He was married to Nnebuogo and they have five children: Ada, Chetachi, Nwachukwu, Uche and Chima.

## Diplomat extols Makoju's legacies in power sector

From  
AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

**A** career diplomat, Amb. God knows Igali, has extolled Late Engr Joseph Makoju's efforts to fix Nigeria's power sector during his lifetime with an advice to the incoming administration of Asiwaju Bola Tinubu to sustain the feat.

Amb. Igali noted that the call has become imperative in order to pave way for the emergence of a robust power sector that would boost the nation's economy.

Amb. Igali made the call when he delivered a Memorial Lecture in honour of late Engr. Joseph Makoju at the Federal University Lokoja.

The guest lecturer spoke on "The Apogee of National Service and Vision for the Nigerian Power Sector: Reflection on the life and times of Engr (Dr) Joseph Oyeyani Makoju".

Igali, who paid great tribute to the late Engr Makoju for the tremendous role he played in the reformation and development of the power sector in Nigeria, leveraging on his robust background as an engineer, described power as crucial to the development of any nation.

He, however, expressed worry that despite all the changes and reforms made in the energy sector over the years, Nigeria electricity supply industry remained "lethargic, wasteful and unable to play its critical role in the national economy.

"For a country that is greatly endowed with multiple sources, it is a sad reality that these changes

have not been fully tapped. We also need to build more dams around the Benue River system," he said.

Amb. Igali noted that though the reforms of the power sector were well intended at ensuring a well-developed national power sector industry, the improvements in service delivery had been unable to meet the expected targets.

He identified factors responsible for the lack of improvement in the sector to include, serious payment issues, unimpressive regulator of the sector, low level of capital infusion and limited energy mix.

While commending the present administration in the country for its efforts in reforming the power sector, the guest lecturer, however, stressed the need for the incoming government to work seriously towards ensuring a robust sector.

"Most fundamental is the overall supervisory and regulatory environment. In the new privatised environment, as in the rest of the world, Federal Ministry of Power is expected, under the regulation of Heads of State, to provide robust policy guidance and supervision in the sector," he suggested.

Amb. Igali also called for the revival of the problem solving and decision-making platform as well as the Presidential Task Force on Power (PTFP) for the nation to have the desired power s e c t o r .

According to him, PTFP was established as a full time adhoc agency aimed at bringing together young talented Nigerians from within and in diaspora to daily brainstorm on performance strategies and targets in the sector.

Amb. Igali, who is the Pro-Chancellor/Chairman, Federal University of Technology, Akure added that PTFP, considered as an ombudsman with the hope that it would help the sector to experience the growth that occurred in the reformations was later disbanded.

Other areas, the guest lecturer wants the incoming administration to turn its search light on, to ensure the realisation of the desired power sector, are the transmission backbone, distribution of power, funding and financial liquidity.

In his address of welcome, the Vice Chancellor of the university, Prof. Olayemi Akinwumi, who described the lecture as a celebration of life and times of the late Engr. Makoju, commended his passion for power reforms in Nigeria.

"There is no doubt that the power sector has contributed immensely to the growth and development of Nigeria.

"Engr. Joseph Makoju's passion for power in Nigeria was second to none. No wonder, he dedicated his entire life to power generation and reformation in Nigeria," he said.

The vice chancellor promised that the lecture, a project reflecting the partnership between the university and Joseph Oyeyani Makoju Foundation for Development, Leadership and Technology,

would be an annual event henceforth.

Responding, the matriach of the Makoju family, Dr. Gladys Adesuwu Makoju, who attended the occasion with some of her children, thanked the university management and array of personalities that turned up to honour her husband.

Dr. Gladys Makoju, who announced a donation of the house of her late husband in Lokoja to serve as centre for the foundation, promised to keep the flag of the legacy of her late husband flying, especially in the area of scholarship programme and humanitarian services among others.

One of the children of the deceased, Dr. Ovayoza Adeleye, a U S-based medical practitioner, described her father as a strict disciplinarian, highly unassuming, who loved and cared for his family and trained them to attain greater heights in education and sound moral upbringing to become responsible leaders in their various positions today.

Represented at the occasion by the Secretary to the State Government, Dr. Folashade Ayo Arike, Governor Yahaya Bello also commended the deceased for his enormous contributions to the power sector and the well being of many people.

Engr. Makoju was a product of Nottingham University, UK where he graduated with first class degree in mechanical engineering, Engr.

Engr. Makoju (74) was an indigene of Egbira land in



## Doctors reject migration denial

The Medical and Dental Consultants Association of Nigeria, (MDCAN) has opposed the bill seeking to compel newly trained doctors to work for five years in the country before being granted a qualifying license to seek greener pastures elsewhere.

The proposed legislation which has passed the second reading at the lower chamber of the National Assembly is to discourage doctors from leaving the country in droves and heightening the brain drain scourge.

According to the bill sponsored by Hon. Abiodun Ganiyu Johnson, the aim was to make it mandatory for fresh medical graduates to provide services to Nigeria for up to five years before receiving full registration and license to practice.

The doctors said the bill violates the constitution of Nigeria, as Section 34 (1) b states that, "no person shall be held in slavery or servitude" while Section 34 (1) (c) states that, "no one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labor.

## Eight people killed in fresh Kaduna attack

At least eight people were reported killed during an attack in ZangonKataf Local Government Area, Kaduna State, residents of the area have said. The President of Atyp Community Development Association, a community organization in the area, Sam Timbukw, told reporters in Kaduna on Thursday.

The gunmen invaded the community from a nearby bush and began a shooting spree, killing eight people in the process.

He said the terrorists' attack affected five houses, and four people were also wounded

## Peter Obi spent Easter in detention in London

Labour Party Presidential Candidate, Peter Obi, was last week detained in London by United Kingdom immigration officials for alleged impersonation.

This was made known in a statement issued on Wednesday by the Head, Obi-Datti Media, Diran Onifade.

Onifade however said Peter Obi has since returned to Nigeria.

According to him, the LP Presidential Candidate in the February 25 presidential poll arrived at the Heathrow Airport in London from Nigeria on Good Friday, April 7, 2023, and joined the queue for the necessary Airport protocols when he was accosted by immigration officials who handed him a detention note and told him to step aside," Onifade said.

According to the statement, Peter Obi was harassed by London immigration officials and placed in detention where he spent the Easter holidays.

## CBN: Reacts to allege recruitment portal

The Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, has responded to viral news about its recruitment portal.

Isa Abdulmumin, CBN's Acting Director of Corporate Communications in a statement debunked the news on Thursday, describing the purported recruitment portal as fake and baseless.

The apex bank clarified that it is not carrying out any general recruitment exercise and would never request the BVN of intending applicants nor discriminate against persons with physical disabilities.

He advised Nigerians to be conscious of the activities of fraudsters.

"For the avoidance of doubt, the CBN is currently not carrying out any general recruitment exercise," he said

## Tinubu makes TIME Magazine's 100 World's influential people

The American magazine said Mr. Tinubu accomplished a "no easy feat" by winning the Nigerian presidential election after "nearly two decades" of preparation.

The 71 years old former Governor of Lagos State was listed among the 20 world leaders that made the 2023 edition of the magazine.

The list, now in its 20th year, recognizes the activism, innovation, and achievement of the world's most influential individuals in their respective fields of human endeavor.

## FG approves new policy on agricultural extension

The Federal Government has approved a new policy on Agricultural Extension Services. The policy was aimed at making the practice of agriculture in the country technology-driven, aiding the drive for food and nutrition security.

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mohammed Abubakar, said this while briefing State House Correspondents at the end of the weekly Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting, chaired by Vice President Yemi Osinbajo at the Council Chambers, Presidential Villa, Abuja.

He said the ministry had recruited more than 100,000 extension service agents in 2022. Fielding questions from journalists, the Minister said there would be no food shortage in the country, assuring that the ministry would continue to support the smallholder farmers, whom he said produce about 70 percent of the nation's food production.

Compiled by HOSEA NYAMLONG

## SUNDAY FEATURE

# Atrocities in Nigeria: A message from the Pope

*I like to listen to world leaders. Their speeches help us to understand their minds, thoughts and policies better. This morning, I listened to Pope Francis give his Easter message. He is one of the most influential global leaders, and so, I listen to his speeches keenly, just as I pay attention to Emmanuel Macron, Muhammadu Buhari, Xi Jinping, Joe Biden, Sunak Rishi, Vladimir Putin and other men of power. ETIM ETIM writes.*

THEIR words give understanding to the myriads of problems we face, convey ideas on how the world function and the direction things may take in the immediate or distant future. As a routine, I look forward to four major speeches in a year: the Pope's Easter message; US President's address at the opening of the UN General Assembly in September; US President's State of the Union Address in January (sometimes February) and Queen Elizabeth's (now King Charles') Christmas message. There is always something to learn from them.

On Easter Sunday, the pope focused on war-ravaged countries, conflict zones and troubled places around the world. Ukraine; Russia; Jerusalem; Middle East and Africa. He mentioned them by name, one by one. In Africa, he mentioned the DRC, South Sudan, Eritrea and a few others, but despite our huge problems, he did not mention Nigeria by name.

On Thursday, September 30, 2021, Pope Francis had condemned the spate of killings and kidnappings in Northern Nigeria, and specifically prayed for the country after 34 people were killed in villages in Kaduna. "I pray for those who have died, for the injured and for the entire Nigerian population", he had said at the Vatican.

Since then, thousands have perished in many parts of the country either through well-planned mass killings or random attacks. Early this week, over 30 people were massacred by invading marauders in Benue. Why did the Pope not mention us specifically this time?

The pontiff however prayed for countries experiencing violence and terrorism, especially in the Middle East and Africa, as well as nations suffering from natural disasters, poverty, corruption and places where Christians face difficulties in practicing their faith. Nigeria is well covered.

It is striking that corruption did not escape his focus this year. It is a major problem in Nigeria. Billions are stolen from state and federal governments every year. Corruption denies governments the resources they need to provide education, healthcare, roads



Pope Francis

and basic amenities to the citizens. According to the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) based in Victoria, Australia, corruption erodes the trust we have in the public sector to act in our best interests.

It also wastes our resources that have been budgeted for important community projects. Development economists have long established a nexus between corruption, poverty and insecurity.

The more corrupt a country or state is, the poorer the people become and the higher the rate of crime and spate of violence. It is however saddening that corruption has been normalized as a way of life in the country, so much so that ordinary citizens are longer outraged when it is reported. People just move on as if nothing happened. In the 1970s, Nigerians were greatly horrified if a civil servant or any public official was caught stealing, and he would face instant punishment and shame.

The reason Gen. Murtala Mohammed launched a massive purge of the civil service in 1975 soon after he took over as the third military Head of State was to cleanse the system of filth and corruption. We have come a

long way from those days.

Now, it is actually fashionable for people to boast of how much they were able to steal, and it is common to see convicted persons jostle for elective positions.

I was drawn to President Muhammadu Buhari's pledge to fight corruption eight years ago. He has recorded some modest achievements in that

area, but I'm disappointed that he could not do more. I am also disappointed that the governors have not been part of the fight.

Instead, some of them have become real enablers of the vice. There is no way Buhari alone would have killed corruption, but I must give him kudos for trying.

As the pope said, "unfortunately, corruption runs in cycles. Someone comes along who cleans things up, but it starts again until someone else comes along to put to put an end to this degeneration". It is now up to President Tinubu to carry on the fight. But does he have the aptitude and inclination for it?

***"It also wastes our resources that have been budgeted for important community projects. Development economists have long established a nexus between corruption, poverty and insecurity. The more corrupt a country or state is, the poorer the people become and the higher the rate of crime and spate of violence. It is however saddening that corruption has been normalized as a way of life in the country, so much so that ordinary citizens are longer outraged when it is reported. People just move on as if nothing happened. In the 1970s, Nigerians were greatly horrified if a civil servant or any public official was caught stealing, and he would face instant punishment and shame."***

## SUNDAY FEATURE

# Nigeria's past shouldn't be today's burden

*The post-election conversations have been a putrid salad of prejudices, recriminations, and elevated provincialism. Our wits, resolve, temperance, capacitance, and stability threshold as a nation are being tested, and they will be tested further in the months and years ahead. FREDRICK NWABUFO writes.*

OUR history is always ready ammunition to be dispatched in any ethnic combat in that ungoverned social media neighbourhood. Contending sides launch missiles from the war rooms with their own "droppings" of history. I will not be a soundboard for those tiresome and unyielding conversations here. The duty of the citizen is to be a dispassionate arbiter, divining truth from untruth, and staying irrepressibly on the side of the nation's interest. I believe instead of these contentions which re-emerge in our public discourse every now and then, we can learn from our past and forge a better country.

The truth is, history is subjective. Every group has their own version of history — as regards their social and political existence in Nigeria. But we cannot keep recycling the epics of woes that have bogged us down as a people. We must move forward and look forward.

Nigeria's past is not a very glossy one, yes. It is replete with tales of pain, sorrow, and blood — depending on who is telling the story. Fatal mistakes were made, but must we keep reliving the errors of our past? Are we doomed to remain a rendition of our past? Can we not move forward — beyond our past?

Nothing changes because the old ways remain the same. We must think a new Nigeria, and a new Nigeria begins with new progressive thinking. We cannot take a leap into a glorious future while we are still stuck in the rut of the past. Our past has become today's pain, and tomorrow's burden.

But does this imply we must abandon our history? Absolutely not. We embrace it, but learn



from it as well, and stop repeating the same mistakes. The current confusion shows we have learnt nothing from our chequered history.

Our past should teach us to be respectful of one another; it should teach us caution; it should teach us tolerance; it should teach us understanding; it should teach discipline, and it should teach us the very essence of unity.

Like Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto, said to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe: "Let us understand our differences. I am a Muslim and a Northerner. You are a Christian, an Easterner. By understanding our

differences, we can build unity in our country."

We must manage our diversity with "care, mutual respect, understanding, caution and trembling". We cannot discount our points of divergence, but we must also recognise that we have solid arcs of convergence. What unites us should be stronger than what divides us.

It is unfortunate that to reinforce prejudices, some deploy self-archived ahistorical accounts. Our past as a country should not be a springboard for hate exchanges, but a source of learning to forge a better country. We hold on to "history", whether manufactured or inverted, to

accent our biases. Evolving means we are better than yesterday.

No one can hold their own version of history as truth everyone must chow down. There are villains and heroes in every story. It is depressing that our much-vaunted past has become stuff of propaganda passed down from one generation to another. Hate transitioning from one generation to another. We must break this circle of hostility.

Really, we cannot make progress as a country if we remain on this treadmill. We must sanitise our conversations, discard epithets, and evolve into a wholesome whole.

We must deconstruct revisionist fabrications and pretensions to make good of the future. Knowing that we started off on a shaky foundation should thrust us into consciously working out our destiny. We cannot hold on to an acrimonious past as a precedence for the present and the future. As I said previously, we take the lessons from the past and forge a new path.

We dissipate so much energy on ethnic bouts of supremacy but leave very little to interrogate fundamental issues of governance. We must make our existence as a nation

about jutting issues that govern our lives as citizens — economy, security, education, and health.

In conclusion, it is insalubrious to ascribe the actions of deviants within a certain pool to any group. I have maintained this position since the wave of baleful propaganda against the Fulani. I will not deviate from the path of unity and peacebuilding no matter how perilous the road becomes.

The invidious and menacing enterprise of Peter Obi's "Obidients" has driven the dagger deep into the national umbilicus. Sore points quickened, passions inflamed, and bottled-up emotions unlatched.

First, we need to address the "Obidient" menace full-frontal, and we need to strengthen national and community concord. We need new ententes brokered for national cohesion or unity. We need to talk. We need to have those difficult conversations in civilised and decorous fora with a view to healing our nation. We need to talk with one another, not at each other.

We need new alliances cementing the north with the south, and the east with the west in holy matrimony. But to achieve this, we need to talk.

**Fredrick Nwabufo aka Mr OneNigeria is a media executive.**

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**L**AST week we started a discussion on the difference between politics and Governance and today we continue.

We saw the tools that governance uses in justifying tax-payers money and curbing corruption, tools such as strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation, data-based decision making and performance-based budgeting. This stands in total contrast to political tools such as rallies, political promises, lobbying, horse trading, which have nothing to do with the welfare of society but the pocket of the politician. The following Excerpt from the International Bureau of education throws more light on our subject matter:

Governance has been defined to refer to structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation. Governance also represents the norms, values and rules of the game through which public affairs are managed in a manner that is transparent, participatory, inclusive and responsive. Governance therefore can be subtle and may not be easily observable. In a broad sense, governance is about the culture and institutional environment in which citizens and stakeholders interact among themselves and participate in public affairs. It is more than the organs of the government.

International agencies such as UNDP, the World Bank, the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and others define governance as the exercise of authority or power in order to manage a country's economic, political and administrative affairs. The 2009 Global Monitoring Report sees governance as 'power relationships,' 'formal and informal processes of formulating policies and allocating resources,' 'processes of decision-making' and 'mechanisms for holding governments accountable.'

Often there is a tendency to equate governance with management, the latter primarily referring to the planning, implementation and monitoring functions in order to achieve pre-defined results. Management encompasses processes, structures and arrangements that are designed to mobilize and transform the available physical, human and financial resources to achieve concrete outcomes. Management refers to individuals or groups of people who are given the authority to achieve the desired results. Governance systems set the parameters under which management and administrative systems will operate. Governance is about how power is distributed and shared, how policies are formulated, priorities set and stakeholders made accountable.

The above forgoing is from the International Bureau of Education. What role can the electorate play in bringing about good governance? The electorate can scrutinize its candidates for Governance skills and ask questions. We need debates like never before. Let aspiring politicians come to the media and solve case studies. Stop asking them direct question. For example, I ask: if you become the counsellor of your local government where poverty is prevalent, tell us the strategic plan you have drawn up for tackling the problem of poverty? How will you advise the local Government Chairman? How will you spend the money put in your care for projects and how will you give account to your community? How will you raise revenue in your locality if federal allocation does not come? What community projects will you make a priority? How can you determine what is priority? Can you give us the blueprint of strategies you intend to use in solving the problems in your community? How can you demonstrate accountability? What is merit? What does that mean to you? What

does strategic planning mean to you? What does monitor and evaluation mean to you? What does performance-based budgeting mean to you? Do you intend to use these tools IF you are voted into power? What does data-based decision-making mean to you? what does need assessment mean to you.? How do you intend to use these tools IF we vote you in to power? Why is it important to use these in your administration?

Tell us about the performance indices you are going to use when carrying out the monitoring and evaluation of the projects that you will put in place for the implementation of your strategic plan in order to ensure that your objectives of



## Politics versus governance II



ending poverty in your community is realized. This is assuming that you have a strategic plan and you know the concept of strategic planning and implementation. This is also assuming that you desire to end poverty in your community. How do you intend to create jobs?

It is time to up the ante. Politics in Nigeria should be for those who are willing and able to intellectually equip themselves and bring knowledge into their leadership style. It is not all politicians that do not mean well for their electorate. Sometimes, it is that they do not have the prerequisite education, management and leadership training and experience. Every politician should know strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation. Sometimes it is not the politician. It is that those who surround him, who know better than he does and know how to cut corners and steal in his name and at his expense. They are our problems. The aspiring leaders need to go for training and evaluation because politics does not have the tools required for good governance and leadership. It is governance that does. Money can buy a political ticket but it will not help in giving the politician the tools to transform himself from a politician to a leader. Furthermore, politicians should choose their assistants wisely because whatever they do will be in the name of the politician. They need to appoint intelligent people who know and have their best interest at heart.

The era of the blind leading the blind is over. You are now facing the next generation and they do not play. 2023 is coming. This is the new order. This is Generation-Z. The young people of this generation are intellectually inclined and there is a limit to how long we can continue to use money as a political cloak for covering our ignorance. This new generation is a question-asking generation. They are an entitled generation and an intelligent one at that. Sooner than later, they will start disgracing politicians with their question.

They are Thirsty for knowledge and understanding. They will not be fooled or hood winked. That means that if a politician believes he can distribute bags of rice and wrappers for votes for these upcoming elections, he will be wasting his money and disgracing himself.

Politicians will be asked questions. Intelligent questions that will determine their fate. This generation Z is data savvy. Did you say electronic voting system? They have everything electronic on lockdown. They are databased. Their DNA is technology. The era of money and power politics is over. This is not 1980 when only rice and wrapper will get you votes or were manipulation and ballot snatching will help. Even the political thugs are tired. So, it is time to put your house in order. If you do not know strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation, run o! Go and learn it now because generation Z have no patience and the younger ones after them have questions that require a lot of education and gray matter. Do not be disgraced. Go and learn now before 2023. To make matters worse for politicians, the country is in such a situation today that even little children are feeling it and the young generation is concerned for their future. They are concerned about the debt-riddled country that they are going to inherit, and any straight-thinking politician will do well to sit up straight and acquire governance and leadership skill that he is expected to put to good use.

To the electorate who are not generation Z, we should demand accountability and knowledge of the subject matter from our politicians. As such, we must stop politicians in their tracks when they come at us with their promises. What we need to do is identify community problems and then ask our politicians who come for campaigns, for written blueprints giving us details of the strategic plan they have for the problem in our communities and how they intend to use Monitoring and evaluation and other tools in seeking for solution and realizing the objective of

solving the problem. If they fumble and their presentation does not fly, we do not vote for them. We will also ask them case study and outside-the-box question based on their submissions. That is one way of ensuring that we vote people who have what it takes to turn our economy around.

Problem number one is energy, followed by infrastructure and insecurity. If the politician climbs that podium and says that he will give you roads and water and hospitals, ask him or her HOW he or she intends to do that considering the condition of our economy. Ask the politician how he intends to boost foreign trades and increase our foreign exchange reserves. Ask him how he intends to boost exports and develop SMES. Ask him what he knows about green energy. Ask him if he knows the correlation between energy and criminality. Ask him what he knows about the relationship between job creation and security. Ask him about the relationship between export and development.

When there is a political debate, politicians should all come with WRITTEN blueprints of strategies on how they intend to solve our problem and the electorate should be ready to ask them case study question. E.g how do you intend to come up with the resources for fixing the energy sector? What do you know about wind and solar energy in industrialization? If he says that he will take a loan, please ask him to leave and escort him politely to his convoy. Safe journey. E no sabi anything...We are already in debt up to our eyeballs and the generation Z are supposed to be the generation to pay these humongous loans... and they are not smiling. Such politicians have already sold the future of our children and we need to redeem it through intelligent governance-based leadership.

This means that every voter must educate himself in governance and know the difference between governance and politics. Demanding for astute politicians who are grounded in governance, that is half of the election. That is the duty of the electorate. To know exactly what they want by knowing what governance is so that they can demand if from aspiring politician who wish to represent them. It is the right of the electorate to ask for substance and get it. Gone are the days when politicians sign off contracts awards that they cannot read or understand. Gone are the days when wearing a starch agbada is enough to be a leader.

Strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation do not only ensure good leadership but also provides us with a tool for measuring accountability. We cry about corruption without knowing how to stop it. We cannot all run away to Canada and United Kingdom so we must learn from their electorate and show courage in politely asking for good governance.

**To be continued next week**

**J**ESUS came as a fulfillment of all the sacrifices in the old testament and the Bible tells us that when He offered himself as a sacrifice for mankind, a sacrifice for our sin, our salvation, once and for all by His own blood the Bible said, he entered in once into the Holy place that is the throne of God, the alter in heaven, He offered His blood on that alter for everyone that will believe in Him and the Bible says He obtained eternal redemption for us.

It is important for us to understand that right now, Jesus has paid the price for the full redemption of every mankind, spirit, soul and body. He has paid the price for every human being to go to heaven, if you will believe in Him as Lord and Saviour. He has paid the price for you to live free from any satanic affliction, free from every mental affliction, free from any physical affliction, sickness or diseases, free from any form of failure, defeat, frustration or stagnation in this life. If it is a problem that will hit the human race, Jesus Christ has paid it in full for everyone that believes in Him to be delivered from it.

Our ability to enjoy everything that is ours in Christ is faith. All that is required is for you to receive what Christ has done for you, and having received him as your Lord and Saviour, you must understand that the same way that you received him as Lord and Saviour, you now receive every other thing that He has done for you. There are many aspects or compartment to our redemption, our salvation.

Psalm 103:1 shows us very wonderfully these numerous aspects, or compartments, or sections of our salvation in Christ. It says, **"Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.** Verse 2 says, **"Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits..."** There you have it- **"forget not His benefits or forget not the various aspects of His salvation"**.

You may have known Him as savior and Lord, and heaven is now your home; but He wants you to also understand that there are different other aspects of this redemption and salvation. He wants you to know Him as or in, for example, he wants you to know him as healer because, healing and health is part of that salvation package. He wants you to know Him as the one that prospers you, in your finances, prospers you in your career, in the works of your hands, He wants you to know that he is interested in your material life and he wants you to exercise faith in Him as the one that prospers you in your financial and material life. The one that heals your body, just like you exercise faith in Him as your savior from sin and hell, you exercise your faith in Him as your healer, as your financier, there are many other aspect to this salvation like it is written **"...forget not all his**

**benefits"**(Psalm 103:2). He does not want you to forget, that the same way He saved your spirit from eternal damnation, the same work on the cross has also made provisions for the healing of your body, has made provisions for the power of God to touch your finances, your career, your business, has made provision for the power of God to touch

**communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.**"That means our faith becomes effective as we know what belongs to us in Christ and make a decision to begin to believe it, then the power of God begins to come to uproot that foul affliction, that disease out of our body.



## He obtained eternal redemption for us



your family, has made provision for you to be preserved on the face of this earth, to be protected, to be abundantly provided for.

Now the Bible has listed these benefits in Psalm 103:3, thus: **"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases."** That is benefit number one- forgiveness of sin, which is the entry level that is the open door to all the other benefits that we receive in Christ Jesus. Remember the Bible says in Mathew 1:21 that, **"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."**

Sin is the open door to all the other afflictions of the devil. The right of the devil to afflict mankind is sin. However, when Jesus paid for our sin, He effectively closed the door of Satan's right to afflict us in any other area of our lives. So here it says: **"who forgiveth all our iniquities."** He paid the price for all your sins to be forgiven then it says: **"who healeth all your diseases."**

Psalm 103:3 is a scripture worth reading and meditating upon constantly. Meditating on it will always remind you that Christ has forgiven all your iniquities, or sins; He has healed all your sicknesses and diseases. It is important for you to understand that no matter what sickness or disease that's fastening itself on your body today, Jesus has paid the price for your complete liberty, but you must know this for yourself.

Philemon 1:6 says: **"That the**

Verse 4 of Psalm 103 says: **"Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies..."** So as you travel by air, by land, by sea, by rail any which way you go, as you live your life in this world, anywhere you are, you must understand your life is redeemed from destruction. Christ has put His hedge of protection round about you, but you must actively believe and receive this as part of your redemption. Remember we said that redemption is a complete package: when you confess Jesus as your Lord and savior, this entire package belongs to you, just like you enter a supermarket, imagine that supermarket belongs to you, but you go per time and take what you need from the different sections of that super market.

Psalm 103:5 says: **"Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the**

**eagle's."** Dear friend, it is worth emphasizing that our salvation or redemption in Christ is a total package, which becomes ours at the point at which we confess Jesus to be your Lord and savior. We must know this reality to enjoy it. Hosea 4:6 laments that **"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children."**

Psalm 103:1-5 is one of the perfect renditions of the different categories of the saving anointing that is on Jesus. Remember it belongs to you, but the way you accept it, the way you receive it or the way you enjoy it, is by receiving it, just the same way that you received Jesus as Lord and Saviour; you believed the message in your heart then you open your mouth and you spoke

words and you received Him through the confession of faith as Lord and Saviour- Saviour of your spirit from eternal damnation, from hell, now you have a place forever in heaven with Jesus, the same way you received Him as the Saviour of your spirit, the same way you must receive Him as the Saviour of your body, Saviour in your finances, Saviour of your family, wherever satanic affliction has the potential of affecting a human being, Jesus redemption has made provision for that satanic affliction to be cancelled, conquered and defeated in your life.

Now these are very important points and the next few broadcast I want you to take time to keep reading because we are going to be more detailed and deeper in how we can believe and receive these various anointing on Jesus as Saviour. They all belong to us, but they do not happen automatically: we must know what belongs to us, we must know what the scripture says, we must make a decision to believe it and just like He was faithful to save us when we confessed Him as Lord and Saviour, He will be faithful to manifest Himself in all these other anointing as Saviour in our life.

As we round off today's broadcast, I am inviting you to make Jesus the Lord and Saviour of your life, if you have not done so yet. I strongly admonish you to make that bold confession today; it will move you out of the realm of satan's authority, and establish a place for you in heaven forever, and will open for you to begin to enjoy the great anointing on Jesus in these various aspects of His salvation. Acts 2:21 **"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."**

So pray this prayer after me: **"Dear Lord Jesus, I come before you today, I believe your Word! God, I believe the Bible, Jesus I call upon your name today, save me, wash me clean by your precious blood, write my name in the Book of Life. From this day forward, I declare that you are my very own father and I am your very own child. Satan, I renounce you and all of your works in my life. I will live and follow Jesus all the days of my life."**

If you have prayed this prayer after me, I congratulate you- you have just become a child of God. Until I come your way again next week, stay blessed and enjoy your testimonies. God bless you!

“  
**Our ability to enjoy everything that is ours in Christ is faith. All that is required is for you to receive what Christ has done for you, and having received him as your Lord and Saviour, you must understand that the same way that you received him as Lord and Saviour, you now receive every other thing that He has done for you. There are many aspects or compartment to our redemption, our salvation.**  
 ”

## INTERNATIONAL

**Israeli protests: Clash of competing settler-colonial visions**

*The weeks-long demonstrations in Israel reflect the conflict within a settler society over how to handle the indigenous 'demographic threat.'* **Mohamad Kadan Benjamin Netanyahu. People take part in a demonstration against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his government's plan for judicial overhaul, in Tel Aviv. Mohamad Kadan Writes.**

**I**T has been two weeks now since Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu postponed the controversial judicial reform process his cabinet had introduced. The delay did not have the desired effect and protests against his government have continued. On Saturday, hundreds of thousands of Israelis marched, demanding that the proposed legislation be scrapped altogether.

In Western media, the weeks-long standoff between protesters backed by the Israeli opposition and Netanyahu's coalition of far-right and ultra-religious parties has been presented as a clash between the supporters of democracy and the forces of fascism.

But a closer look at the motivations of the protesters and the establishment on one side and the far-right government on the other reveals the Israeli anxiety about a perceived Palestinian "demographic threat" and a struggle between two different approaches to tackle it.

Containing the 'demographic threat'

The aim of the Zionist movement has always been the colonisation of all of historic Palestine. But as the Zionist forces vied for control of all Palestinian lands, they always faced one major challenge: demography. The Palestinian population was the majority within the borders of Palestine, so as they sought to establish a state, Zionists carried out a brutal ethnic cleansing campaign, killing 15,000 Palestinians and forcefully expelling at least 750,000 between 1947 and 1949.

But even after the Nakba, the newly founded Israeli state continued to perceive the Palestinians as a demographic threat to its settler-colonial project. This anxiety only increased after the occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza following the 1967 war.

The occupation gave the Israeli state the opportunity to aggressively expand the construction of Jewish settlements in new parts of historic Palestine, which was accompanied by the violent suppression of the indigenous Palestinian population. Israeli brutality fuelled Palestinian anger, which eventually boiled over in the first Intifada of 1987.

The ensuing violence drew much international attention towards the crimes Israel was committing as an occupying power and its constant violation of international law. Meanwhile, Israel was plagued by a deepening economic crisis and an escalating political struggle between the Labour party, which had monopolised power since the founding of the state, and its right-wing challenger, Likud.

The Labour leadership felt that not only was its political survival at stake but also the survival of the Israel settler-colonial project. That is why it resorted to a major transformation of the judicial and economic sectors in order to rebrand the country as a "liberal democracy" and regain Western approval and thus international legitimacy.

In the 1980s, under the leadership of Shimon Peres, the Labour government opened the Israeli economy to the global market. In 1992, it pushed through the Knesset the so-called Basic Laws, which strengthened the normative value of



**Netanyahu**

human rights and eventually empowered the Supreme Court to review legislation and strike it down if it contravened these laws. This came to be known as Israel's "constitutional revolution".

In 1993, the Labour government formed by Yitzhak Rabin started negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) under United States mediation and eventually signed the Oslo Accords, which commenced the so-called "peace process" between the Israelis and the Palestinians and eventually led to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA).

The passage of the Basic Laws allowed Israel to whitewash its occupation, presenting itself as a human rights champion, while the Oslo Accords covered up its oppression of the Palestinians with the language of "peace negotiations". Furthermore, the PA allowed the Israeli state to control the Palestinian population while not having to worry about providing it with basic services.

Thus, the Labour government controlled the Palestinian "demographic threat" and eased international pressure to stop illegal settlements in occupied Palestinian territories.

But not everyone agreed with Labour's approach. The Israeli right opposed the "peace talks" with the PLO, arguing that any compromise with the Palestinians would

endanger what they saw as the Jewish people's sovereignty over historic Palestine. Their incitement against their Labour opponents led to Rabin's assassination in 1995.

A civil war between settlers?

The current protests against Netanyahu's "judicial reform" – which aims to undo the 1992 "constitutional revolution" – are just the latest iteration of the struggle between the Israeli right and the centrist establishment built by Labour. The Israeli extreme right wants to undo the judiciary's power in order to facilitate its own plan to address the "demographic problem".

It wants to accelerate Jewish settlement-building, annex the occupied Palestinian territories, and forcefully displace more Palestinians from their lands. For all of this to proceed at a quick pace, the Israeli state, politics, and policies need to be decoupled from liberal values and human rights rhetoric.

The approach of the centrist establishment is not to reject ethnic cleansing but to control its course and dress it in the rhetoric of law and respect for human rights. From their perspective, the right-wing "solution" is detrimental to the Israeli settler-colonial project. In their view, weakening the judiciary and by extension, the perceived democratic order and rule of law in the country, could diminish Israel's soft power and undermine its international legitimacy.

The centrist establishment fears that it will transform Israel into a pariah state and lead to its isolation – the way apartheid South Africa was isolated. The protests of the past 14 weeks are an expression of this fear.

Israel is not the only settler-colonial state to have faced an internal conflict due to a perceived "demographic threat".

Its biggest ally, the United States, itself has been through such an upheaval. Among the factors that led to the 1861-1865 US Civil War were the competing visions for how to handle demography in the settler-colonial federation.

The white American elites were deeply concerned about the growing number of Black people brought in as slaves from Africa who could challenge white dominance. While in the North, they thought the solution to the "problem" was to stop bringing in more slaves, in the South, the owners of labour-intensive farms did not want to give up on the free labour that slavery provided and instead thought physical subjugation was enough.

Furthermore, as the ethnic cleansing of Indigenous people progressed westward, there was disagreement about how to approach building and expanding white settlements on newly occupied land. While the Northerners wanted this process to provide labour opportunities for whites only, the

Southerners wanted to bring in slaves.

The election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency and his plans for legislation that Southerners thought would go against their interests encouraged them to move toward secession, which led to the Civil War.

Of course, the circumstances in Israel today are quite different from the 19th-century US, and an actual armed conflict between the two sides is unlikely. Given the common Zionist ideology, no side is likely to seek "secession".

But the current conflict is having a destabilising effect on the Israeli state and may even disrupt its settler colonial project. The far-right which is dominating Netanyahu's government is unlikely to give up power or renounce its plan to decouple the Israeli state from "liberal values"; the establishment is also unlikely to let go of its grip on the Israeli state, even if its strategy is failing before its eyes.

The longer this upheaval continues, the more the liberal façade of the Israeli state will be eroded and its criminal occupation exposed. This further legitimises the Palestinian struggle and the campaign to abolish the Israeli apartheid regime. While the settler-colonial project in the US survived the clash between settlers, in Israel, it may not.

**Source: Al Jazeera**

**“But the current conflict is having a destabilising effect on the Israeli state and may even disrupt its settler colonial project. The far-right which is dominating Netanyahu's government is unlikely to give up power or renounce its plan to decouple the Israeli state from “liberal values”; the establishment is also unlikely to let go of its grip on the Israeli state, even if its strategy is failing before its eyes.**



# INTERNATIONAL

## US airman to appear in court over intelligence leak

A 21-year-old US airman will appear in court last Friday in connection with a leak of highly classified military documents about the Ukraine war and other national security issues. Jack Teixeira was arrested by the FBI at his family home in Dighton, rural Massachusetts, on Thursday. Dressed in shorts and a T-shirt, he was led away by heavily armed agents. Mr Teixeira has been identified as the leader of an online chat group where the documents first emerged. He is charged with the unauthorised removal and transmission of classified information. He will appear in court in Boston, Massachusetts later on Friday.



Teixeira

Dozens of leaked documents revealed US assessments of the war in Ukraine as well as sensitive secrets about American allies, embarrassing Washington and raising fresh questions over the security of classified information. Mr Teixeira worked as an IT specialist in the intelligence wing of the Massachusetts National Guard, based at Otis Air National Guard Base in western Cape Cod. The National Guard is a reservist wing of the US Air Force. They are not employed full time in the military, but can be deployed when necessary. Mr Teixeira's official title is Cyber Transport Systems journeyman and he holds the rank of Airman 1st Class - a relatively junior position. It is not clear what level of security clearance Mr Teixeira had, but according to the Air Force website, employment in the role requires a single scope background investigation (SSBI). That clearance is reportedly required for access to top secret information. It was not until intelligence material was posted outside the chat room group that Pentagon officials became aware of the leak, prompting a massive search for the culprit. Aside from the age of the suspect, the motive is also thought to be unusual. While Mr Teixeira is said to have harboured a scepticism of government, friends said he was neither a whistleblower nor a foreign agent. The Pentagon says it will re-examine how classified information is distributed, but a spokesman said it was "the nature" of the US military to entrust young service members with high levels of responsibility. Footage of the arrest in Dighton, a town of 8,000 people about an hour south of Boston, shows a young man walking backwards with his hands raised to armed FBI officers. He was handcuffed and led to a vehicle. US Attorney General Merrick Garland said the suspect was taken into custody without incident. He provided no further details on the investigation or the motive for the leaks. At a separate news conference earlier in the day, defence department spokesman Brigadier General Pat Ryder said the leak had been a "deliberate criminal act". Eddy Souza, a 22-year-old man who said he went to school with Mr Teixeira, said he was surprised his former classmate had been identified as the suspect in the leaks. "He's a good kid, not a

troublemaker, just a quiet guy," Mr Souza said. "It sounds like it was a stupid kid's mistake." Mr Teixeira also oversaw an online chat room made up mainly of male teenagers, with whom he had allegedly been sharing top secret information for months. Starting several months ago, at least 50 but perhaps more than 100 classified documents were posted on Discord - a social media platform popular with gamers. It was reported that the man was the leader of a Discord chatroom whose roughly two dozen members swapped "memes, offensive jokes and idle chitchat" and prayed and watched films together. The members included

people from Russia and Ukraine and a number of other countries in Europe, Asia and South America, the paper reported. At first the leaks were kept inside the small chatroom, but in early March members began posting them on other Discord servers, including ones dedicated to the game Minecraft and a Filipino YouTuber. From there they were posted on the fringe message board 4chan and on the Telegram chat app, particularly on pro-Russia channels. In some cases they were altered to increase Ukrainian casualty counts. A defence department spokesman said the Pentagon was continuing to work to "understand the scope, scale and impact" of

A major prisoner swap between warring sides in Yemen is under way, seen as part of stepped-up efforts to end the devastating eight-year conflict there. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said detainees were being flown from the rebel-held capital, Sanaa, to government-held Aden. About 900 prisoners are expected to be exchanged over the next three days. The war between rebels and pro-government Saudi-led forces has left tens of thousands of Yemenis dead. It has also created what the UN has called one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with some 80% of the population forced to rely on food aid to survive.

## Major prisoner swap raises hopes for Yemen

Houthi's main backer - agreed last month to restore relations after a bitter seven-year rift. Despite the failure to renew a UN-brokered six-month ceasefire in October, there has been a sharp decline in fighting, accompanied by some steps to ease tensions. They include the easing of restrictions on imports and prisoner exchanges, agreed in negotiations in Switzerland last month. In a statement confirming the releases were under way, the ICRC said it would use its planes to fly the detainees into and out of cities in both Yemen and Saudi Arabia. There are believed to be thousands of prisoners held by both sides. Yemen has been devastated by a conflict that escalated in 2015, when the Houthis seized control of large parts of the west of the country. Mr Hadi fled abroad and a Saudi-led alliance of Arab states intervened to restore his rule. However, years of military stalemate have followed. The fighting has reportedly left more than 150,000 people dead and more than 23 million people - three-quarters of the population - in need of some form of aid.



It is the largest-scale prisoner exchange for more than two years

The exchange - the largest since late 2020 - is seen as a confidence-building measure, following talks earlier this week in Sanaa between a Saudi delegation and Houthi rebels aimed at reaching a new and potentially permanent ceasefire. The talks were facilitated by Oman, which shares a border with both Saudi Arabia and Yemen and has played a key role in attempts to broker an end to the fighting for years. There has been increased momentum towards ending the war since Saudi Arabia and the Houthis resumed direct on-off talks last year. Hopes were furthered when Saudi Arabia and its powerful rival Iran - the

## Rebels refuse to disarm in DR Congo conflict

The M23 rebel group in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo have said that they will not disarm or demobilise as long as there is no direct political dialogue with the government in

Kinshasa. A rebel spokesman, Lawrence Kanyuka, issued the statement on Twitter after the Congolese

## 'Pay rises above inflation would be terrible mistake'

The chancellor has said it would be a "terrible mistake" to give pay rises above the rate of inflation, even though strikes are hitting the economy. Jeremy Hunt said the impact of the junior doctors' strike on NHS patients was "regrettable". But wage increases that fuelled inflation would have a "more damaging" impact on the UK economy, he said. Junior doctors are calling for a 35% pay rise, to make up for 15 years of below-inflation wage rises. There has been no breakthrough in the latest public sector strike. The government has said that junior doctors' pay demands are "unreasonable" and that talks can only happen if the BMA union moves "significantly" away from their current position.

we have to get right". Inflation, which is the rate prices rise at, is currently near a 40-year high in the UK. Prices in February were 10.4% higher than they were in the same month a year earlier. That has prompted workers in many sectors to call for higher wages, bringing a wave of strikes. Official figures revealed industrial action held back economic growth in February. But Mr Hunt told the BBC the government's aim was to "put this high inflation period behind us". He said if the government stuck to its plans inflation could be brought below 3% by the end of the year. Though the government has pledged to cut inflation, many economists have said that inflation is due to fall naturally in the coming months, as a result of energy prices falling. When asked about the junior doctors' pay demands, the chancellor pointed out that when nurses, who started out asking for a 19% rise, publicly committed to a much lower number "that became the basis of a fruitful discussion". Following an IMF forecast suggesting that the UK

would be one of the worst performing major economies in the world this year, Mr Hunt hit back. The IMF now believed the British economy was "on the right track", he added, and had praised his recent Budget. Other G7 finance ministers at the Washington gathering

warmly welcomed what they saw as a remarkable change in tone and engagement from the UK, from the last set of IMF meetings, which occurred in the middle of the mini-Budget crisis, under the previous chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng.

President Félix Tshisekedi said there would be no political negotiations with the rebels. Mr Tshisekedi said that - under an agreement negotiated by regional states - the M23 rebels are expected to demobilise before returning to civilian life. Under the brokered peace deal, the group has been withdrawing from areas it had captured. Over the last 18 months, around three quarters of a million people have been displaced by the fighting.



Demonstrators against pay rise that may cause inflation

Why no breakthrough in the junior doctors' strike? Speaking on the sidelines of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) spring meetings in Washington DC, Mr Hunt said agreeing pay awards without making inflation worse was an "incredibly difficult balancing act that



With **BULUS GAMBO**

# 'Do not make the mistake I made'

**Nollywood actress, Halima Abubakar, has urged ladies to desist from dating married men, saying leaving a quality life of being responsible with good moral virtues is the best life. The renowned movie star, who took to her Instagram page to give the advice, said that ladies should not make the same mistake she made by dating someone else's husband.**

**A**CCORDING to her, being a side chick to married men is morally wrong, but staying away from people's husbands is a morally upright living.

She stressed that she did not want them to experience what she went through, therefore, relationships with married men should be avoided.

She expressed gratitude to fans and well-wishers, for their constant prayers, love, and encouragement, adding that they should live a life they would be proud of.

The actress added that having a side business was far better than being a side chick, and urged them to leave people's husbands alone.

"Live a life you would be proud of.

"Thank you all for all the prayers and encouragement and love.

"I am on a new part to a new life; strive to be new and stay safe and morally upright.

"No do side chick o...see u soon. Find a side business and

leave people'

s



husband. "Don't make the mistake I made...The idea is to be morally right," she wrote.

Abubakar is a model, actress, television personality, philanthropist, and multiple award-winning member of the Nollywood industry.

### **Halima Abubakar and Apostle Suleman.**

Since July 2022, Abubakar and Apostle Suleman have been having a running battle over a love affair that the apostle denied ever took place.

Among numerous allegations, the actress said Mr. Suleman was behind an unnamed life-threatening ailment that plagued her for years and that he reneged on his promise to marry her.

### **Halima Abubakar Joins The 'Gorimapa' Club**

In September 2022, the actress and her siblings called Mr. Suleman out on social media, accusing him of being behind her illness.

In his response, Mr. Suleman issued a cease-and-desist

*Continued on page 26*

# Influential black musicians of all time

**T**his week at MI, we're celebrating Back History Month in the only way we know how—with some awesome music. Music is a rich part of black history in this country and the priceless records speak for themselves. From jazz to soul, from Bob Marley to James Brown, these artists have touched the hearts of many. So let's celebrate this Black History Month by remembering five of the most epic black musicians of all time. Will your favorite be on the list?

### **Prince: Simply, The Prince**



Prince. Need I say more? Prince Rogers Nelson signed his first record deal at the delicate age of just nineteen. To this day Prince is famed for his genre-defying anthems, androgynous persona, undeniable genius, and extraordinary vocal range.

Prince was a musical genius and multi-instrumentalist whose anthems will go down in history as an encapsulation of genres. His album Dirty Mind would achieve critical success in 1980, but many more were to follow, including Purple Rain (1984), and Sign o' the Times (1987). Prince died in 2016 but his music is well and truly alive in the hearts of many.

### **Nat King Cole: The King of Jazz Piano**



After facing consistent racial adversity through her early career, Marian Anderson performed at the Lincoln Memorial in 1939 to a crowd of 75,000 and a radio audience in the millions, which has been named a watershed moment in civil rights history. She then went on to become the first black person to perform at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City in 1955.

### **Sister Rosetta Tharpe**



Sister Rosetta Tharp is widely known as "The Godmother of Rock & Roll". She rose to popularity as the first recording artist to use heavy distortion on her electric guitar, coupled with gospel lyrics. She is cited as an influence to many early rock-and-roll musicians,

*Continued on page 26*

# THE SUNDAY STANDARD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

## Health

### Causes of early grey hair and prevention

**A**RE you worried about premature greying? Are you one of those youngsters who are dealing with greying hair and trying to look for tips and tricks to get rid of them? You're at the right place! Read on to know what the reason for white hair is in young age and how to prevent white hair at young age.

Well, greying hair comes naturally with your ageing. As you age, you may find that your hair is turning grey as well. Your skin contains millions of hair follicles that consist of melanin, a pigment responsible for giving your skin colour. As a part of your natural ageing process, your hair follicles lose melanin, which turns your hair grey.

#### What causes white hair in young age?

##### Genes

One of the primary reasons for greying early is genetics, even though the underlying reasons haven't been clearly identified. Your genes are responsible for either the defects in the cells that are responsible for the production of melanin, or not producing melanin at an early age.

Genes may play a role in turning your hair grey even at a young age. It may have just been the luck of the draw that you have white hair at age 15.

##### Diet

Hair greying can be accelerated by an imbalanced diet. Those who consume processed foods, cold drinks, and a lot of salt and sugar increase their risk of free radical production in the body which can turn their hair grey. Make sure you consume a healthy diet to prevent grey hair and maintain your hair health.

##### Stress



When you suffer from chronic stress for a prolonged period, you are more likely to experience premature graying. No matter how busy your family life is, or how tired and overworked you are, stress will make your hair grey much faster. Stress has been linked to stem cell depletion in the hair follicles; in other words, if you continually stress and resent yourself, you are more likely to develop white hair.

#### Vitamins and minerals deficiency

Follicle whitening can also be caused by iron deficiency, folate deficiency, vitamin D deficiency, and vitamin B12 deficiency. Premature graying of hair is associated with folic acid deficiency and low levels of biotin.

#### Oxidative stress

White hair can be caused by oxidative stress. This occurs when

free radicals outnumber antioxidants. Antioxidants are essential to fight free radicals, but if they are not sufficient, they lead to aging and many other health issues.

#### Hair products containing chemicals

Haircare products such as shampoos and conditioners may cause premature greying of your hair because they contain chemicals that reduce your melanin production. Bleaching agents and hydrogen peroxide ingredients in hair dyes can leave the hair white if used repeatedly.

#### Smoking

Not only is smoking harmful to your health, but it can also damage your hair. When you smoke, you dilate blood vessels, which reduce blood flow to your hair follicles. When cigarette smoke is inhaled, its toxins can damage hair follicles, causing grey hair sooner than expected.

#### Hydrogen peroxide

Hydrogen peroxide is produced by the hair follicles, which accumulates on the hair shafts over time. The bleaching causes the hair to go grey and eventually white. By removing this build-up, you may be able to restore your hair's natural color.

#### Several medical conditions

A few medical conditions have been linked to premature white hair, so we need to look at them as contributing factors. Thyroid disorders and autoimmune diseases can cause grey hair. A person with an autoimmune disorder experiences inflammation in the body, which may affect their hair pigmentation.

Hair color is also influenced by your thyroid gland. When you have a thyroid disorder, you experience hormonal imbalances and a reduction in melanin production in your body. As a result, your hair turns grey.

#### How to avoid white hair at

#### young age

**Stop using shampoos daily:** If you use shampoo every day, please stop. Replace it with a milder and organic shampoo. Shampoos and conditioners contain harsh chemicals that affect pigment production and cause hair loss, too.

**Opt for natural hair dyes:** Tea and coffee dyes are excellent natural hair dyes. You just need to boil them for 15 minutes to get the dye to work. Mix the essential oils in after they cool down.

**Try natural conditioners:** Make a paste of gooseberries and black walnuts, combine the paste with essential oils, and use it to moisturize your hair. This will keep your hair feeling soft and reduce premature greying.

**Consume dark chocolates:** Copper found in dark chocolate stimulates the body's production of melanin, which is great for preventing grey hair.

**Consume vitamin B12-rich foods:** Vitamin B12 helps prevent hair whitening and maintain scalp health. A diet rich in Vitamin B12 should include fresh fruits and vegetables (cheese, avocado, yeast, oranges, plums, and cranberries). **Henna:** The natural dye henna is a scalp healer. Henna can be used to prevent premature hair whitening by applying it at least once a week. Not only does it prevent your hair from whitening, it also makes existing white hair disappear.

**Hair oils:** Olive oil and almond oil can nourish your scalp. To repair damaged hair, you can also use powerful herbal oils. Oiling is one of the most effective and natural ways to remove white hair. Also, it is a sure-shot way to prevent hair whitening at an early age.

Gray hair occurs as we age. The loss of hair pigments in your early 20s or 30s can also result in white hair, which is mostly related to aging. While the graying of your hair cannot be reversed completely, you can make changes to your diet and lifestyle to slow the graying process. You can learn how to get rid of white hair by following the remedies mentioned above. Be patient, though, because the results will take some time to show.

#### What does white hair at an early age mean?

A lack of vitamin B-12 can also cause white hair at an early age. Vitamin B-12 is essential for your body. Besides giving you energy, it promotes healthy hair growth and gives it colour as well.

Can white hair turn black again?

One 2016 study on mice examined molecular pathways that govern hair pigmentation in order to restore hair color. The mice grew melanocytes, which produce melanin in their skin and hair. According to the study, identifying these pathways and developing a treatment to target them could help restore color to gray hair.

Gray hair can be turned black with the right diagnosis and treatment. If, however, the problem is genetic or age-related, then it is unlikely that it can be reversed. However, by eating a balanced diet and caring for your hair properly, you can slow down the process.



# EVER'S WORLD

With *Henrietta Gonzuk*

## Living

# Things that make men respect women

BY TOCHUCKWU

**R**ESPECT is a fundamental aspect of any healthy relationship, whether it is between friends, colleagues, or romantic partners. However, respect can be hard to come by for women in a male-dominated society. Many women face everyday challenges that can lead to a lack of respect from men, such as being talked over, belittled, or underestimated.

But what are the qualities that make men respect women? Here are eight things that can help women earn the respect they deserve:

**Confidence:** Men respect women who are confident in themselves and their abilities. Confidence is a quality that exudes strength and independence, and it can be incredibly attractive to men. When a woman knows her worth and is unafraid to show it, she is more likely to gain the respect of those around her.

**Intelligence:** Intelligence is another quality that men find attractive in women. When a woman is knowledgeable and well-informed, she can contribute to conversations and discussions in a meaningful way. This quality can lead to respect from men who value intellectual curiosity and an ability to think critically.

**Independence:** Men respect women who are independent and self-sufficient. A woman who is not reliant on a man for financial or emotional support is seen as strong and capable. Independence can also be a



sign of maturity, and men tend to respect women who have their lives together.

**Kindness:** Kindness is a quality that is universally respected, and it can go a long way in earning the respect of men. When a woman is compassionate and empathetic, she is more likely to build meaningful relationships with those around her. Kindness can also be a sign of emotional intelligence, which is a quality that is highly valued in any relationship.

**Accountability:** Men



respect women who take responsibility for their actions and are accountable for their mistakes. When a woman owns up to her errors and works to make things right, she demonstrates maturity and a willingness to learn from her mistakes. This quality can lead to respect from men who value honesty and integrity.

**Assertiveness:** Women who are assertive and speak their minds are more likely to gain the respect of men. When

a woman is unafraid to express her opinions and stand up for herself, she is seen as strong and confident. Assertiveness can also be a sign of leadership potential, which is a quality that is highly valued in any workplace or community.

**Honesty:** Honesty is a quality that is highly respected by men. When a woman is honest and transparent, she can build trust with those

around her. Honesty can also be a sign of integrity, and men tend to respect women who are true to themselves and their values.

**Ambition:** Men respect women who are ambitious and have goals for themselves. When a woman is driven and motivated to achieve success, she can inspire those around her. Ambition can also be a sign of intelligence and creativity, which are qualities that men tend to admire.



# Reality Bites

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## How to nurture your child's artistic talents

**W**ORLD Art Day is celebrated every April 15 to promote the development, diffusion and enjoyment of art. The day was proclaimed at the 40th session of UNESCO's General Conference in 2019.

Arts is an important aspect of life that involves creativity and many celebrated artists today started nurturing their skills from Childhood.

Pablo Picasso says "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up". He also believes "Painting is just another way to keep a diary".

On his part, world famous personality Albert Einstein has been attributed to a popular quote that goes: "Creativity is contagious. Pass it on".

According to UNESCO, art nurtures creativity, innovation and cultural diversity for all peoples across the globe and plays an important role in sharing knowledge and encouraging curiosity and dialogue, and these are qualities that art has always had, and will always have if we continue to support environments where artists and artistic freedom are promoted and protected. In this way, furthering the development of art also furthers our means to achieve a free and peaceful world.

Each year, on 15 April, World Art Day celebrations helps to reinforce the links between artistic creations and society. It encourage greater awareness of the diversity of artistic expressions and highlight the contribution of artists to sustainable development. It is also an occasion to shine a light on arts education in schools, as culture can pave the way for inclusive and equitable education.

There is much to learn, share and celebrate on World Art Day, and UNESCO encourages everyone to join in through various activities such as debates, conferences, workshops, cultural events and presentations or exhibitions.



Here are tips to nurture and encourage your child's artistic talents, says the Lee County Alliance for the Arts:

- Find inexpensive art materials to use. In addition to basic materials, like paper, crayons, markers, washable paints and glue, find items around the house that kids can use to supplement their art projects. Items such as paper towel tubes, scrap paper, shoe boxes, macaroni, sponges and paper plates can be useful for children to think outside the box.
- Look for art all around you. Point out colors and shapes in nature, such as the shapes of trees and clouds.
- Do art projects with your child. This will encourage them to continue.
- Encourage your child to talk about their creations. Use positive comments about their choices. This will stimulate your child to discuss the work.
- Display the art around the

house. This will give a sense of pride to your child.

- Use wordless picture books to jump-start the creative brain. Ask your child to come up with their own conclusion about the story.

- Visit art museums. Play investigator and find things to look for on your visit. Encourage critical

therefore check out these arts, crafts, and tips that may encourage their enthusiasm for self-expression so they never lose that artistic spark!"

She said the Impact of Creative Arts on Kids Childhood is a time when creativity really flourishes. "Arts and crafts are perfect open-



thinking in your little one by asking your child to discuss what they observe. Suggest creating a story, drawing or painting as a response to what they experience.

- Take your child to a concert, play or dance performance. The performing arts stimulate the creative brain. Discuss the performance and point out images, sounds and ideas about the performance. Have your child create their own performance or art project about their favorite part of the performance.

- Enroll your child in an art class. This will give your child the opportunity to learn from art teachers and work with other children who are interested in art.

Jayne Schultheis, in her online article, Young kids are so naturally creative says

"Whether it's drawing, painting, or sculpting with play-doh, their creative output is impressive,

ended activities for little ones who are exploring the textures and colors of the world around them".

"Setting your child up with an arts and crafts activity may seem like a great way to keep them occupied while you're busy with other things. However, it's so much more than that".

"When it comes to arts and crafts for kids, when you emphasize creativity, kids have an improved ability to express themselves. They also grow up to become more creative adults! That's why, as children get older, it's important to continue cultivating their curiosity and creativity, even if it's not in the arts".

"Creative expression also has a positive impact on the academic performance of kids. According to Americans for the Arts, kids who participate in the crafts or arts are more likely to achieve academic goals. In addition, the attention required for art and crafts projects can help them to develop focus, motor skills, and self-confidence".

She further advises you to lead by example, give Your Kids materials to create because since kids are naturally creative, give them the materials for their own arts and crafts ideas! Tempera paint, markers, glue, scissors, paper, glitter, or clay, are simple, yet useful materials that can help set the stage. " Don't overwhelm them with too many options, especially if they're toddlers or preschoolers".

Experts also suggest that you should give your kids time and space to create because art is a natural part of childhood. However they say as children get older it can be more difficult for them to take the time for creativity.

"Fortunately, by remaining supportive and flexible, they may be inspired to follow their passion into adulthood. Between sports practices and homework, make sure your kids have space and clutter so they can create. You could even set up an easel. Therefore ask questions to trigger their creativity, and teach your them that there are many ways to solve problems", they advice.



# THE SLOW WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

## Health

# Health benefits of sweet potatoe flour

By **KARLA WALSH**

**N**EARLY as versatile as cauliflower, sweet potatoes can now be found on shelves transformed into tortilla chips, crackers, french fries, mashes, soups, vegetable noodles, gnocchi, rice ... and now, flour.

Scientists just developed a novel way to turn sweet potatoes into flour, and a few companies already have products available commercially.

"Sweet potato flour is created by taking raw sweet potatoes, washing, peeling and slicing them, followed by drying at a specific temperature and grinding to produce the final flour product,"

Compared to fresh sweet potatoes, sweet potato flour has a longer shelf life, and it may be easier to incorporate into other and more foods.

Its subtly sweet flavor can play nicely in a variety of sweet and savory recipes, but due to sweet potato flour's low protein content, you may need to add xanthan gum (or another stabilizer) and subtract some water content to provide the structure required to score success with certain baking recipes. (This is similar to other gluten-free flours, and is why many cup-for-cup gluten-free flours.

Since it's so new to the market and involves quite a few steps to produce, "sweet potato flour does come at a premium. You could pay two to four times as much money for the sweet potato flour compared to other healthy flours on the market. "This is something to take into consideration as you weigh the cost and benefit for your specific health needs."

### Is sweet potato flour healthy?

There's no one set definition of



"healthy," but it's helpful to note maintenance and prevent that compared to all-purpose conditions like heart disease and flour, sweet potato flour has type 2 diabetes," slightly more sodium, carbs and It might have less of an impact calories. That said, the dietitians on your blood sugar than all-we spoke to noted several factors purpose flour.

about the benefits of This special kind of fermentable incorporating some sweet potato fiber is especially good at slowing flour into your diet. down the rise in blood sugar and

### It's a good source of fiber.

Since sweet potatoes have you may notice less of an energy more fiber than wheat, sweet spike (then crash) after eating potato flour has triple the fiber of recipes made with sweet potato all-purpose flour. flour compared to all-purpose

"Fiber is a powerful nutrient to

consume daily to support our **It delivers a dose of vitamin digestion, gut health, weight A.**

Sweet potatoes are an excellent source of beta carotene, which our body converts into vitamin A. (Sweet potatoes rank second, just after beef liver, on the list of top food sources of vitamin A.

So it stands to reason that sweet potato flour is a strong source as well;

### It's naturally sweet.

Just like the root vegetable it's made from, sweet potato flour lends a little natural sweetness to any recipe you add it to. As a result, "you may be able to use less sugar in recipes when using sweet potato flour, which can support your overall health and help keep your blood sugar in check.

### It's a good gluten-free alternative.

Sweet potato flour can be enjoyed by anyone, but anyone who has celiac disease or is gluten-free may particularly enjoy being able to try out sweet potato flour as a new substitute for regular flour. "The only group that needs to steer clear is anyone that has an allergy to sweet potatoes."

### Tips for using sweet potato flour

Those who have researched cooking and baking with sweet potato flour report that you'll have the best results if you substitute about 10% to 25% of all-purpose flour with sweet potato flour. For savory uses, try sweet potato flour in homemade

pasta recipes, to thicken pan sauces or as breading for chicken, pork or fish. On the sweet side, since sweet potato flour is fairly low in protein, it can help lend a tender texture to cakes, pancakes, brownies, biscuits and some cookie recipes.

"Sweet potato flour is starchy and does not contain gluten, which can result in a dense, heavy product. Although you might not get the same outcome, taste or texture if you try to use a lot of sweet potato in place of regular flour in some recipes, for certain baked goods, you may be able to get away with using a higher proportion of sweet potato flour than 25%.

For baking recipes that need more structure, "you may need to adjust the recipe and add more leavening agents, thickeners or liquid."

### Are sweet potatoes healthy? Here's what you need to know

Sweet potato flour can offer several health benefits, including more vitamin A, fiber and resistant starch than all-purpose flour. And for those who need gluten-free flour substitutes and prefer them to be nut- and seed-free, it's a fantastic new option.

"Sweet potato flour is a great alternative for folks who need to be gluten-free, or have other food restrictions," Thomason says, but she cautions not to assume it has magical powers. "It's not necessarily healthier just because it's the new kid on the block."

**Was this page helpful?**



# BUSINESS WORLD

## Appropriate forum for investment dispute resolution

**One of the greatest achievements of the Nigerian financial system in the last quarter of the 20th century was the enactment of the Investments and Securities Act, 1999 (ISA). Determined to make the Nigerian Capital Market (NCM) globally competitive, the ISA established the SEC, sought to protect investors, maintain a fair, efficient and transparent market and reduce systemic risks. AUSTIN AGOM writes.**

**T**HE Investments and Securities Tribunal (IST) was one of the novel features to drive the attainment of the objectives of the Act reenacted in 2007. Created as a fast track civil court of coordinate jurisdiction with the Federal High Court (FHC) it is to determine investment disputes before it within 3 months.

The Tribunal has jurisdiction to the exclusion of any other court in Nigeria to determine disputes between investors and capital market operators, capital market operators interse, capital market operators and regulators. The Tribunal is manned by legal practitioners and persons with cognate experience in capital market matters.

Dispute settlement at the IST is fairly robust and very few cases escalate from the Tribunal to the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court. In its years of existence, it resolved complex capital market disputes, inspired confidence, gave directions to the NCM and won several global recognitions.

Dispute settlement at the IST is fairly robust and very few cases escalate from the Tribunal to the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court

The status and exclusive jurisdiction of the Tribunal has, however, been subject to controversy by scholars and judges. It has been argued that since it is not listed in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended (CFRN) as a superior court of record, it is not one and could not limit the jurisdiction of the FHC whose jurisdiction on corporate matters is prescribed by the



CFRN. In SEC v Prof Kasunmu SAN, the FHC and the Court of Appeal held that IST did not have exclusive jurisdiction on the question whether a legal practitioner must register with the SEC to practise in the capital market.

In Nospecto v Olorunnibe the exclusive jurisdiction of the IST was successfully challenged at the FHC and upheld by the Court of Appeal in a matter touching on collective investments scheme. In Mufutau Ajayi v SEC, the FHC and Court of Appeal held that in a matter arising from concealment in a corporate account, the IST had

exclusive jurisdiction to determine the matter and not the FHC. In Wealth Zone v SEC, the attempt by the Court of Appeal to reconcile the conflicting judgments on the African Petroleum PLC in 2000. It was therefore clear that a pronouncement by the Supreme Court was needed to provide clarity on the matter. The opportunity finally came on 13/1/2023 when the Supreme Court considered the appeal against the judgment of the Court of Appeal in the case of Mufutau Ajayi v SEC. The apex court affirmed the judgment of the Court of Appeal delivered in 2007 which

upheld the decision of the FHC delivered in 2005 that the IST had exclusive jurisdiction in the matter of concealment in the corporate account of African Petroleum PLC in 2000.

This Supreme Court decision has some implications for administration of justice in the Nigerian financial system. Specifically, it ended the season of conflicting judgments on the subject of jurisdiction over capital market matters, lightens the crowded dockets of the FHC to focus on other matters before it, buoys investors' confidence that grievances in the capital market can now, without doubt, be resolved at the appropriate forum within three months of commencement of hearing the case; and for the IST, this decision overthrows a yoke it has had to grapple with since its creation in 1999.

While this Supreme Court judgment is celebrated, the period it took (23 years after the matter arose) for final resolution is a sad commentary on our justice administration system. The matter was in the Supreme Court for 16 years. For capital market transactions that are time sensitive, this is regrettable and underscores the essence of the IST where investment disputes are

resolved within three months. On the long haul however, the need to amend the CFRN and include the IST as a superior court of record provides a more enduring solution to the challenge of timeous investment dispute resolution in the Nigerian capital market.

As it now stands, any of these common grounds of disputes in the capital market will find resolution at the IST without much ado about jurisdiction: non-receipt of share certificates or dividends by shareholders, breach of an underwriting agreement, failure to return surplus monies, failure or delay by stockbroker to execute client's mandate or unauthorized sale of clients' securities by stock brokers, misappropriation of clients' funds or securities by a capital market intermediary, misrepresentation of the true position of the client's account in the register of a public company, failure by an issuing house to remit the process of a public offer to the issuer, failure of a receiving agent to submit investors application forms within time in respect of an offer, misappropriation of proceeds of an offer, late or non-submission of allotment proposal to the regulator for approval, non-payment of fees to parties to an offer.

### Trade dispute settlement in WTO



Presented by:-  
1. Prahlad Sharma  
2. Tanmay Jana

# BUSINESS WORLD

## Expert cautions farmers on pesticides use

**T**HE Director, Heinrich Boll Foundation Nigeria, Mr Jochen Luckscheiter, has urged farmers to exercise caution when administering pesticides to crops for healthy living and to help save the environment.

Luckscheiter made the call at a Two-Day Engagement Workshop of Social Media Influencers/Journalists on the Nigeria Pesticide Atlas at agro forestry Project farm in Kwali, FCT recently.

The director said the essence of the workshop was to increase public awareness on the impact of high use of toxic pesticides by farmers in the agricultural sector.

He said pesticides were designed to prevent yield losses in farming system, but it also gives rise to new problems on health and soil degradation which was harmful to ecosystem.

"The idea is to reduce the use of pesticides and farm more relying on organic input as the use of pesticides over the years in Nigeria has not necessarily increased productivity.

"You can increase crop productivity without using pesticides and artificial fertiliser.

"There is lots of knowledge out there that doesn't rely on artificial input to increase productivity," he said.

According to him, a significant number of pesticides are no longer authorised or are banned in the European Union (EU) due to their harmful effects on health and the ecosystem.

However, he cautioned farmers on the safe use of pesticides, stressing that it was highly dangerous to health, though it was aimed at



Abubakar

empowering workers on farm production while in active service.

The Executive Director, Chen Education and Development Empowerment (CEDE), Aneale Cynthia, said there was the need to enlighten Nigerians on the dangerous effect of hazardous pesticides imported into the country.

Cynthia said the toxic chemical contents in pesticides had increased from four to 40 per cent with adverse effects on the soil and environment.

According to her, there is the need to enact stiffer laws to prohibit use of toxic and hazardous pesticides by farmers to ensure healthy living and safer farming system in the country.

She stressed the need for the government and stakeholders to be concerned about the health of farmers, saying, "pesticides may cause acute and variety of adverse health

effects."

She said that the workshop was aimed at sensitising participants on the need to draw the public's attention to toxic pesticides and what could be done to regulate pesticides and alternative usage.

The Chief Executive/Chief Farmer, Be The Help Foundation Agro forestry Project, Mr Samuel Robert-Kwasari, said there was the need to stop the use of pesticides and revert to the traditional system of farming.

Robert-Kwasari said as farmers struggle to fight the pests, it has emerged that some pesticides are not effective, while other crops suffer adverse effects and soil degradation on the farm.

He said that agriculturalists were also being asked not to spray during a high wind as the chemicals might blow on the person carrying out the spraying. (NAN)

**T**HE Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria (SPDC) has denied claims that it was in violation of Nigerian Content laws at the EA fields in Bayelsa State.

The Ijaw Youth Congress (IYC) had recently alleged that SPDC had excluded indigenous players from its operations at the EA fields in breach of the community content guidelines.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the content guidelines were set out by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB).

The youth group said that it would resist any plot to exclude members of the host community by mobilising for a protest that would ground operations at the oil fields if the policy was not reversed.

The group also urged the Minister of Petroleum, President Muhammadu Buhari and leadership of NNPC Limited to prevail on SPDC to have a rethink and reciprocate the peaceful disposition of the host communities.

NAN also reports that SPDC operates the EA shallow offshore fields off Bayelsa coastline, deploying a Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FSPO) vessel, with a capacity to process and hold 1.4 million barrels of crude.

Reacting to the allegations, the SPDC said that on the contrary, it was a leading player in the development of local capacity in the oil and gas sector.

SPDC Media Relations Manager, Abimbola Essien-Nelson, in a statement, said that Shell awarded contracts worth \$1.9 billion to Nigerian companies and works with NCDMB in building capacity of Nigerian companies in the oil and gas sector.

"The Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited Joint Venture (SPDC JV) is committed to the development of businesses in

## Shell denies breach of Nigerian Content law

the Niger Delta.

"Working with government and community stakeholders, we have supported capacity development in several Niger Delta-owned businesses.

"The case in hand is a scheduled review of our logistics contracting process that has been in place for years. The review was supervised by the NNPC Upstream Investments Management Services (NUIMS) and the Nigerian Content Development & Monitoring Board (NCDMB).

"It was, however, conducted via an open and transparent bidding process which resulted in the entrance of several new contractors.

"The bid winners consist some of these new companies, as well as companies previously involved in the contract.

"All the bid winners, which are Nigerian companies, demonstrated their commercial and technical competences, as well as compliance with Nigerian Content regulations," SPDC stated.

The energy firm pledged that

it would continue to support the development of local communities and companies.

It stated that in 2022, the SPDC Joint Venture, Shell Nigeria Exploration and Production Company (SNEPCo) and Shell Nigeria Gas (SNG) awarded contracts worth \$1.9 billion to Nigerian-registered companies.

"Additionally, in 2022, the SPDC JV, SNEPCo and SNG invested \$5.6 million in education programmes and contributed \$34.29 million in direct social investment.

"Social investment was mainly in projects related to community, health, education, road safety and enterprise programmes.

"These projects are often implemented in partnership with local authorities and contractors.

"In addition, \$56.13 million has been earmarked to be paid in 2023 by the SPDC JV and SNEPCo for a statutory contribution to Host Communities Development Trusts (HCDTs), which will benefit Nigerian communities," it stated.



Kyari

## Japanese govt to spend \$2.9m on circular economy

**T**HE Japanese Government is to spend a total sum of \$2.9 million on the circular economy with Lagos, Abuja and the federal ministry of environment listed as beneficiaries of the first phase of the project.

The 36 months programme to be implemented in Abuja is a partnership between the Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), sponsored by the Japanese Government.

Circular economy is an initiative for sustainable and efficient use and processing of all raw materials especially plastic to protect the environment.

Speaking at a sensitisation programme for the project which held in Abuja, the Permanent Secretary, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Mr Adesola Olusola, said the Abuja Environmental Protection Board which is the Agency of the FCTA tasked with environmental management of the city in conjunction with UNIDO through the Japanese Government raises a clarion call to stakeholders and the

populace alike to contribute their quota in reducing and managing the hazards of plastic waste via "The Sustainable Plastic Value Chain Through Circular Economy Practices".

He said AEPB and UNIDO collaboration on circular economy and resource efficiency, funded by the government of Japan, will set up standard collection centers within the federal capital territory.

Represented by Nuel Haruna, the permanent Secretary said recent scientific studies show that plastic waste pollution accounts for about 4% of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions, standing at 65,662 parts per million (PPM), which is twice as much as carbon emissions produced from the aviation sector worldwide.

Also speaking, the representative of the UNIDO regional office, Oluoyomi Banjo, said plastic litter is a major global environmental problem with its production on the increase.

He said plastic produce in Nigeria can find its way to different parts of the world adding that since open burning of plastic releases harmful

emissions, added that in Nigeria, its consumption grew from 578,000mt to 1,250,000mt.

"By 2025, Nigeria will be the largest producer of these plastics that are harmful to the environment. That's why a circular economy is recommended," he said.

Speaking on behalf of the Director of Abuja Environmental Protection Board, Hajija Zainab Umar, said plastic waste is affecting the health of the city.

"The circular economy is to minimize the use of raw materials. We are working to discourage the excessive use of plastic and discourage pollution. AEPB will ensure that circular economy and management of environmental challenges is a success," she said.

Also, the Director, Solid Waste Management of the AEPB, Mr Benjamin Enwerem said the Japanese government voted \$2.9 million dollars for the project that is taking place in Abuja, Lagos, including the federal ministry of environment as beneficiaries.

"If the project is successful, they will definitely extend it to other states," Enwerem, who is

the focal point for the project with AEPB, said.

## Stock market closes N5bn lower

**T**HE Nigerian stock market on Thursday ended mixed with a bearish tilt as the overall capitalisation shed N5 billion.

The All Share Index (ASI) decreased by 8.83 absolute points, representing a dip of 0.02 per cent to close at 51,944.58 points. Similarly, the market capitalisation lost

N5 billion to close at N28.295 trillion.

The downturn was impacted by losses recorded in medium and large capitalised stocks, amongst which are; May & Baker Nigeria, Zenith Bank, Nigerian Exchange Group, Fidelity Bank and Africa Prudential.

Also, market breadth closed negative, with 18 gainers versus 21 losers. Transnational Corporation (Transcorp) recorded the highest price gain of 10 per cent to close at N1.54, per share. Wapic Insurance followed with a gain 9.69 per cent to close at 42 kobo, while Champion Breweries rose 7.64 per cent to close at N4.93, per share.

Mutual Benefits Assurance went up by 6.25 per cent to close at 34 kobo, while Prestige Assurance appreciated by 5.26 per cent to close at 40 kobo, per share. On the other hand, May & Baker Nigeria led the losers' chart by 10 per cent to close at N4.05, per share, per share. Ikeja Hotel followed with a decline of

9.24 per cent to close at N1.08, while Multiverse Mining and Exploration lost 7.60 per cent to close at N2.31, per share.

Academy Press lost 6.67 per cent to close at N1.26, while NPF Microfinance Bank shed 6.32 per cent to close at N1.78, per share.

However, the total volume traded rose by 18.72 per cent to 302.920 million units, valued at N2.023 billion, and exchanged in 3,743 deals. Transactions in the shares of Transnational Corporation (Transcorp) topped the activity chart with 107.213 million shares valued at N162.832 million. Fidelity Bank followed with 39.308 million shares worth N206.008 million, while United Bank for Africa (UBA) traded 22.603 million shares valued at N190.356 million.

Zenith Bank traded 20.614 million shares valued at N521.286 million, while FCMB Group transacted 12.611 million shares worth N47.830 million.



Yuguda



# ENTREPRENEUR WATCH

WITH CELESTINE D. ATTSAR

## Easy ways to join oil and gas business

*The oil and gas business is one of the most strictly regulated sectors, yet it remains amongst the most profitable and risky. This is due to the fact that Crude Oil/Petroleum and its derivatives are essential commodities that are consumed on daily basis. Kunle Aderemi Writes.*

**I**T is no secret that Nigeria as a country receives most of its revenue from the oil and gas sector. Wikipedia cites Nigeria as the 12th largest producer of petroleum in the world, the 8th largest exporter, and having the 10th largest proven reserves. (The country joined OPEC in 1971). Petroleum plays a large role in the Nigerian economy, accounting for 40% of GDP and 80% of Government earnings.

With the oil and gas sectors being what it is, creating job opportunities and even enriching individuals into multi-millionaires and billionaires. It is no surprise it gathers so much attention with people constantly trying to break into the market.

Joining the oil and gas business be quite capital intensive, but for those that may be short on capital, here are a couple of opportunities that can help you start an oil and gas business with limited capital.

### 1. join oil and gas business by starting a filling station business

A filling station is a place where premium motor spirit, diesel, cooking gas and kerosene et al are retailed. Investors from across the country have been making money for years through filling stations.

If you're looking to start an oil and gas business then starting a filling station is one of the ways to go. It is one of those businesses that thrives very well as people would always be in need of its products for daily living.

Filling stations are best located in areas prone to traffic. If you can successfully secure a space in a location like with heavy traffic, then you should consider starting a filling station business.

### 2. join oil and gas business starting retailing of cooking gas

Another profitable oil and gas related business that an entrepreneur who is looking towards starting a business should consider starting.



This type of business is particularly suitable in Nigeria as gas is not directly supplied to homes and apartments. All you need to start is a shop located in a residential estate, gas cylinders and supply of gas directly from a gas plant.

Retailing of cooking gas is amongst the oil and gas related business ideas that you can start with little startup capital. Please do also note that you will need to carry out some good research.

### 3. join oil and gas business as a servicing company

Major oil companies around the world such as Mobil, Shell, Agip, Chevron and Texaco, amongst others, rely on oil servicing companies such as Halliburton, Schlumberger and Baker Hughes et al, for maintenance and servicing jobs.

If you are looking towards starting a profitable and thriving business in the oil and gas industry and one that requires engineering

skills, then one of your options is to start an oil and gas servicing company.

Establishing an oil servicing company requires both skilled labour and capital but if you are able to kick start then you are guaranteed huge returns on your investment

### 4. join oil and gas business as a petroleum products haulage company

Petroleum product haulage companies are companies involved in the transportation of petroleum products such as premium motor spirit (petrol / fuel), kerosene and diesel from a refinery, seaport, and oil tank farms et al to various filling stations scattered across the country.

Aspiring investors/entrepreneurs looking into investing in the oil and gas business are welcome to try their hands on this as the profits involved are also huge.

To start with you need your tankers, drivers and

required permits. It is capital intensive but also quite lucrative.

### 5. join oil and gas business as oil spillage cleaning company

Countries where oil is drilled in the deep sea such as In Texas, United States, in Rivers State, Nigeria, there is the likelihood of oil spillages hence the need for professional oil spillage cleaning services. Not everybody can go into this as it requires very skilled manpower and professionalism but the payout as always is enormous.

### 6. join oil and gas business as lubricant production company

Production of lubricant is another profitable business in the oil and gas business value chain that an entrepreneur who is looking to start a business can consider.

The market for lubricant products is large and competitive but open to entrepreneurs willing to

compete. The range of products under this business, and as long as the quality of your product is assured you are guaranteed a profit.

### 7. Invest in the Oil and Gas Industry via Shares

For those that are not business oriented but still wish to cash in on the oil and gas industry, there is the option of investing in oil and gas related shares.

Investing in the shares of listed companies in the oil and gas sector is a good avenue to get into the oil and gas industry. The shares of such companies are usually in high demand and as such the prices are usually high.

If you have a good stock broker, you could be able to buy this stock at an affordable price when they are available for sale.

### 8. join oil and gas business by starting diesel supply business

One of the easiest and least capital intensive ways to venture into the oil and gas industry is to own a diesel supply business.

On major advantage of the diesel supply business is that you can start from home because the business involves going out there to market to clients and also buying diesel from the source and supplying directly to your client.

### 9. Lubrication oil retail shop

The need for lubricating oils in homes, companies, factories and industries cannot be overemphasised. Due to the increasing population and increasing demand, sale of Engine Oil, Brake Fluid and Hydraulic Oil et al, is another viable way of making money from the oil and gas business sector.

Lubricating oils are used in various places like vehicles, for daily running as well as during servicing. Generators and various equipment also make use of lube oil. This high demand makes this sector one you can readily venture into in the hopes of making the profit in.



# 'Do not make the mistake I made'

Continued from page 18

notice to the actress while asking for a published apology or facing legal action.

This did not deter the actress, who continued to call him out on Instagram, claiming they had an affair.

This caused the preacher, through his legal representatives, Ephesus Lex Attorneys & Solicitors, to bring Abubakar before a judge, J. Enobie Obanor, of the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory in the Abuja Judicial Division.

Despite the court order for her to appear in court for the commencement of the case on the 25th of March, the film star has granted an interview in which she made startling revelations.

In a live session with talent manager Samuel Olatunji, Abubakar alleged that she got pregnant by the preacher who promised to marry her.

She said Mr. Suleman cried when she



lost the pregnancy.

"When I lost the pregnancy, he was crying; you would think it's real because he was shedding tears that I lost his child," she said.

She also revealed that she got pregnant for Mr. Suleman three times and that the last one caused complications, which made her take medications.

"It's crazy. I got pregnant three times for him. The last one got me bleeding. I had to take tablets to stop it. I bled for five years. I just came out of a long hiatus.

"I've been in a spiritual battle, so I just came back. The blood just stopped rushing. You won't believe it. I wasn't seeing my period because I don't know which is my period," she added.

In a clip from another interview, Abubakar alleged that the cleric slept with her while bleeding.

"He was sleeping with me even while I was bleeding. That's the dangerous part, and he told other people, that's why.

"The whole thing took me unaware because I was naive and not a spiritual person. Even when I'm on my period, he does that," the actress stated.



# Influential black musicians of all time

Continued from page 18

including Little Richard, Johnny Cash, Elvis Presley, and Chuck Berry.

## Ray Charles



Ray Charles is widely regarded as the musician who combined soul and country to create a new sound of blues and R&B. Charles became one of the first black musicians to be granted full artistic control by a mainstream record company while he was with ABC. Charles is a 17-time Grammy Award winner among many other accomplishments.

## Aretha Franklin



Aretha Franklin, "The Queen of Soul", will go down in history as a remarkable musician, as well as a key figure in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. Her hit song "Respect" served as an anthem for both the Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Rights Movement. In 1987, she was the first female artist to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of fame.

## Jimi Hendrix



Jimi Hendrix pioneered new music technologies and redefined the role of guitar in popular music. His unique sound, extraordinary technique, and staggering stage presence influenced many guitarists that came after including Stevie Ray Vaughan, Prince, and Joe Satriani.

## SUNDAY FEATURE

# Nigeria's double digit growth dream

**Attaining economic growth of 10 per cent and above in a nation that celebrated two to three per cent annual economic growth for seven half years seems like aspiring to build castles in the sky. Double digit growth in a nation whose policy-makers do not know what works for the economy is near impossible as decision-makers move from one end of the economic philosophy spectrum to the other. In a country led by those with a groundnut pyramid mindset that birthed phoney rice pyramids. Writes, OLUGBENGA JAIYESIMI.**

**G**ROWING at over 10 per cent per annum for upwards of 20 years, barring unforeseen global shocks, is a must for the Nigerian economy if we are to join the middle income nations. It is achievable and my optimism is on the premise that Nigeria achieved sub ten pc growth for over 10 years before lapsing into current sub three per cent annual growth.

We cannot wish DDG into being, it must be deliberate, just as putting the first satellite in orbit (Sputnik) was. DDG should be our own Sputnik aspiration. This requires revolutionary thinking to reconceptualise strategies. Old thinking cannot deliver DDG, this old thinking is seen in the minds of current policy-makers. In their Medium Term Development Plan 2021-2025, they have as the second vision "improved economic competitiveness with an annual GDP growth of 3.8 per cent. Our policy-makers angling for sub 4 per cent growth between 2021 and 2025 means a lost decade 2015 and 2025, with the economy stagnating. A decade of population growth higher than economic growth and 2015 GDP being higher than 2025 GDP.

From the above we see the need for the first revolutionary move, the stepping aside of government. The Nigerian government has been described as a criminal enterprise by Catholic Bishop Mathew Kukah. People that have not produced or built anything beyond their careers should stop heading policy. The Nigerian government is limiting the possibilities of what can be on the economic front. The limiting effects of Nigerian governments have kept us at 5,000 megawatts of electricity while African countries of lesser size are generating 50,000 megawatts.

I tender no apologies for a total government step aside to achieve a minimised government presence in our lives. Apart from having been described as a criminal enterprise they have also been identified as a most inefficient spender among other opprobrium and vilifications. A change at the top come 2023 is not bringing change to the civil service that has a culture of misappropriation and budget padding.

New perspective is important and Nigerians should see themselves as being in the place America was after US independence in 1776. The vast territory was sparsely occupied and unconnected from the East coast to West Coast. What was the US government role in catapulting this vast country into prosperity? It was by adopting strong libertarian principles of



minimal government and laissez-fairism. This allowed people and investors to pour in and finance the developmental needs of the new nation.

Nigeria should also operate as a special economic zone to the rest of sub-Saharan Africa the way China allowed the Special Economic Zones of Shenzhen and Xiamen to galvanise the rest of communist China. In these zones central planning was out and free market capitalism in. The African Continental Free Trade Area affords us the opportunity to adopt this Chinese example and capture markets larger than Nigeria's 200m.

To deliver this transformation I would prefer an Aliko or a Samad, who together moved cement production from five million metric tons per annum to 50 million tons, for they and others to be at the helm of formulating possibilities for the nation's economy. They are doing a repeat in petroleum refining capacity after repeated government failure. Such a feat is not limited to the industrial sector as we find many examples in education, health, entertainment and sports. This will be the first in series of moves that will be necessary to deliver on double digit growth.

While advising we not burn bridges and abandon traditional sectors of agriculture or oil and

gas, we need to realise that DDG can come only from creating and promoting new sectors aggressively. This is explained by the diminishing marginal product theory as whatever additional efforts we put into agriculture production will contribute less and less to GDP growth unlike what fertiliser or refined products export would. This is the reason efforts at agriculture by this administration have not had much effect on GDP growth rate.

In these traditional sectors some new steps must be taken if they are to add to growth. One is intense value addition before sending the goods abroad. A recent example is our polishing sesame seeds before export. A second need is improving productivity in the agricultural sector. Rather than increasing acreage under cultivation only we must get more out of existing land under cultivation. I am certain this will not be achieved by our ministers of agriculture but by local and foreign agripreneurs.

Focus must be placed on moving industrial capacity utilisation from current 50 per cent to 90 per cent, it's 80 per cent in other countries. This idle capacity is one of several low-hanging fruits which will contribute to growth with little nudging. No country has achieved DDG on being insular

and because of our large market, countries that achieved DDG for no need to manufacture for export. The United States created avenues for industries to meet local markets from Africa to alone but for exports. Thanks to access US markets with the Aliko Dangote for having this in African Growth Opportunity Act, all his recent investments, yet Nigerian companies never sought to gain access to US intellectualism.

Enough of this broad take on DDG and suggest specifics. There are low -hanging achievable fruits with nairanised and domesticated infrastructure acquisition, cultural and cuisine exports, educational and health tourism. Let's see other pioneer areas we can explore. There is a shift going on in the world supply chain. The West is moving away from China and Nigeria has to key into replacing China in the global supply of complex goods. How easy is it for a nation that did not join the simple goods supply chain that AGOA afforded it to now participate in production of more complex items like electronics, phones, laptops, etc? A way out is to intensify our participation in heavy industries using the Dangote-Rabiu blueprint. We can learn copper ore from Zambia and supply copper cables to the world too. Same can be done with iron ore from Guinea or bauxite from Ghana. These heavy industry sites that gulp lots of power and can be used as nodes for power generation to feed into a multi grid power growth. On the other hand,

option.

## NEWS

## PDP executive, others felicitate with Mutfwang

**T**HE Jonah David Jang Lodge in Rayfield, Jos South Local Government Area was a beehive of activities as visitors from all walks of life have continued to throng the lodge to show their solidarity and deliver their congratulatory messages to Barrister Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, the Governor-elect of Plateau State.

Prominent amongst the groups were the People's Democratic Party (PDP) Executive, elders, elected members, members and illustrious sons and daughters of Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State, Mwaghavul Microfinance Bank, Board of Directors and Management, Centre for Non Violence, Nashak Group of Friends as well as PDP Youths Campaigns Directorate amongst others.



Mutfwang

Speaking separately during the visit, the chairman of PDP in Bassa Local Government Area, Mr Maraya said they were at the lodge to register their unalloyed support and to congratulate Barrister Mutfwang for a well deserved victory at the recently concluded Governorship and State Assembly elections.

According to him, the people of Bassa LGA would continue to support the party as well as the Governor-elect to ensure that he succeeds in the task ahead.

Dr. Randy Agaldo, a retired permanent secretary in the state, expressed deep support for the elected governor and called on all to rally round him in order to take the state to an enviable height.

Mrs Jummai Madaki who spoke on behalf of women urged the governor-elect to be gender sensitive and to also give women equal opportunity to serve in his cabinet if sworn in next month.

The member-elect for Jos North-Bassa in the Federal House of Representatives, Hon. Musa Agah assured of his constituency's total support to the incoming administration of Barr. Mutfwang.

Hon. Chris A. Hassan, the state PDP Chairman thanked not only the people of Bassa for supporting their party but the whole people of the state, describing the support as 'unprecedented'.

The Centre for Non Violence led by their team leader, Mr Obadiah Amuna told the governor-elect that they were there to rejoice with him and to assure him of their support in order to build a new Plateau where citizens would sleep with eyes closed.

According to Amuna, his emergence as governor was what people have been yearning of and promised to lend their support and to work with him in

securing the lives and property of the people.

He therefore called for synergy between the Plateau Peace Building Agency (PPBA) and the Operation Rainbow, saying that if that was done, the security challenges bedeviling the state would be nipped in the bud.

Barrister Caleb Mutfwang told them that he was touched by the concern exhibited by the visits, stressing that the recent victory at the polls was a victory for the state.

He pointed out that the expectation of the people was high and assured that with the support of the people and God by their side, they would succeed.

On security challenges bedeviling the state, the governor-elect posited that it was a great concern to him and the Plateau man and assured that they would integrate some of them with their wealth of experience to ensure they fight those that don't mean well for the

committee are drawn from the State Executive Council and directed to ensure the success of the exercise. They assured the commission of a hitch-free census in Plateau.

Terms of reference include the following: To assist in the conduct of the 2023 population and housing exercise.

To support the aspect of the creation of awareness on population activities in the state.

Making sure that Local Government Councils in the state support population activities in their respective council areas.

To augment the logistics needs of the commission in areas of office accommodation, provision of motorcycles, attending to any other matter relating to population activities and survey.

Ensuring the mop-up of about two million unregistered children in the state and enable data to be included in the national population statistics.

To upgrade the routine registration of births and deaths in the Plateau.

The high powered committee is to be chaired by the SGS, Professor Danladi Abokatu, Commissioners of Finance, Planning, Health, Education, Information, Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs who are to serve as members with Head of Technical NPC, Head of Vital Registration, Head of Public Affairs and the Secretary of the committee is the State Director.

Making her remarks earlier, the Federal Commissioner for Plateau State, Hon. Cecilia Dapoet said that the NPC has confidence in the

By PETER TITLE

**T**HE Board of Directors and the Management of Mwaghavul Microfinance Bank Ltd as well as the Nashak Committee of Friends were among the people who paid a courtesy call on Plateau State Governor-elect, Barr. Caleb Mutfwang at Jonah Jang Lodge to felicitate with him on his win at the polls.

The management of the bank led by the Chairman, Board of Directors, Dr. Stephen Hirse said they were there to rejoice with him and to assure him of the bank's support at all times.

According to Dr. Hirse, the bank was established to cater for those who could not access the services of financial institutions which are mostly based in the urban areas. He added that they have complemented that by effectively serving the downtrodden with their financial needs at the grassroots all over.

He intimated the Governor-elect, Barrister Caleb Mutfwang that the bank has products that the government can leverage on and key into so that the people of the state can benefit.

Dr. Hirse therefore congratulated him and urged him to rule without fear or favour, describing him as an instrument to be used by God.

The Nashak Committee of Friends who spoke through their leader, Mr Ayuba Jwanchin said they are a group of people of like

## Mwaghavul Microfinance Bank registers support for Mutfwang

in the country but commended the MMFB for weathering the storm.

According to Mutfwang who said selling of the famous Lion Bank which belonged to the state was a great disservice to the people of Plateau State but thanked the MMFB for standing in the gap.

He commended them for rendering qualitative services to the Mwaghavul nation and the state at large.

The Governor-elect equally thanked the Nashak Group of Friends for the visit and expressed the desire to work with him when

minds with the sole aim of ensuring the welfare of its members.

Mr Jwanchin noted that they have professionals in different fields of human endeavours and requested that they should be involved in the government so that they can put their wealth of experience in order to move the state forward.

Responding, the Governor-elect, Barrister Caleb Manasseh regretted the travails microfinance banks went through over the years



Hirse

## Lalong, CAS extoll Late Maigida @ funeral

By PALANG KASMI

**G**OVERNOR Simon Bako Lalong has described the late Air Commodore Wapkerem Martin Maigida as a fine military officer who was dedicated to the service of his country.

In the same manner, Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshall Oladayo Amao has expressed deep loss over the death of the deceased describing him as one who had dedicated his life to serve the Nigerian Airforce diligently.

Late Maigida was the former Director of Press and Information (DOPRI). He died on 2nd April

2023 at the age of 49.

During a funeral mass held in honour of the deceased at St. Stephens Catholic Church, Nyak, Ajikamai, Shendam Local Government Area on Friday April 14, 2023, the Vicar-General of the Shendam Diocese, Very Rev. Fr Raymond Gofut said death is an event that everyone must keep a date with irrespective of status, background or privilege.

He said the testimonials about late Air Commodore Wapkerem Maigida are encouraging because he was a man of compassion who did his best to impact the lives of others through practical love.

Governor Lalong said the death of Martins Maigida is a huge loss to the family as he was a team player who contributed to the progress of his immediate community and the church.

He thanked the Nigerian Airforce for supporting them during the period of grief. The Governor said the legacies of Wapkerem in the Nigerian Airforce will remain indelible because of his loyalty, patriotism and diligence.

Chief of Air Staff, Amao, represented by Air Vice Marshall Paul Masiyer said the Airforce has missed a great officer and gentleman who was committed to his duties in the defense of

Nigeria's territorial integrity.

He assured the widow and children of the deceased that the Airforce will not leave them because of the death of their father, assuring that it will ensure that they benefit from all its welfare programmes.

Navy Commodore Ike, who spoke on behalf of his course mates of the 42nd Regular Course, said the death of Air Commodore Wapkerem is a painful experience for them as people who shared their early lives in the military career together.

Ike said their late friend and colleague will be greatly missed having grown to be brothers and comrades working together for the peace and progress of the country.

The Long Gamai of Gamailand, HRH Miskoom Martin Shaldas III in his tribute described the death of Air Commodore Wapkerem as a great loss to the Gamai nation and also praised him for giving honour and pride to his homeland.

The late Wapkerem Maigida is survived by his wife Niavel, three children and many relations including Governor Lalong of Plateau State.

After the funeral mass, his remains was later laid to rest at the family compound, in Nyak Ajikamai, Shendam LGA.

## Lalong inaugurates population census committee

By DANLADI DUKS

**P**LAKEAU State Governor, Rt Hon Simon Bako Lalong, CON, through the Secretary to the government of the state, Professor Danladi Abokatu last week inaugurated a high powered committee for 2023 Population and Housing Census at the Old Government House, Rayfield Jos.

The state standing committee says, Census Exercise would help revalidate population figures in Plateau State and the country at large.

The governor, while inaugurating the committee being represented by the SGS said that the activities for 2023 Population and Housing Census are scheduled to hold from the 3rd to

5th of May nationwide.

Welcoming the Federal Commissioner, National Population Commission Plateau State, Hon. Cecilia Dapoet and her team to the seat of government, disclosed that the census is a welcomed development and will assist state and federal government have an update and accurate register on its database which will help government in execution of programmes and policies.

The governor disclosed that due to the esteem importance the state has placed on the 2023 census exercise, the members of the



Dapoet

## NGO feeds 400 widows

From

AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

carried out on monthly basis to alleviate their suffering and reduce hunger in the land.

"The humanitarian gesture is part of our foundation's vision to reach out to the less privileged and the vulnerable widows in order to alleviate their suffering in the time of need.

"We have been carrying out such humanitarian activities in this area and would continue as a way of improving the wellbeing of the poor people," she said.

The philanthropist urged other NGOs, well-spirited individuals and corporate organisations to emulate

Christ's love to mankind by reaching out to the less privileged in the society.

She advocated for a better social welfare for the less privileged especially at the grassroots.

One of the beneficiaries, Mrs Ruth Ekundayo, appreciated the foundation for extending the love of Christ to widows always.

"We thank Madam Doyin for her humanitarian gesture towards alleviating our sufferings and for always remembering us at the grassroots," Ekundayo said.

The food items distributed include: rice, beans, spaghetti, noodles, gari, semovita, seasonings,

NEWS

Health Commissioner commends WHO

By From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

AS the World Health Organisation (WHO), marks this year's Health Day and 75 years of existence, the Kogi state Commissioner for Health, Dr. Zakari Usman has hailed the agency in its task to provide good health for all across the globe.

According to the commissioner, "WHO has lived up to expectations in its ultimate goal to achieve good health for all using science-based programmes"

The commissioner gave the commendation while addressing journalists in Lokoja on Thursday in commemoration of the celebration of the 2023 World Health Day and 75 years of WHO'S existence.

The commissioner expressed delight that Kogi State government has enjoyed a robust partnership and collaboration with WHO in the area of polio eradication programme, Immunization, surveillance and outbreak of dreaded diseases.

Dr. Usman also praised WHO for its quick response to other emergencies such as flooding and humanitarian crises.

He noted that since inception of WHO, Kogi has continued to lead the global efforts to expand universal



Ehanire

health coverage through the co-ordination of WHO's response to health emergencies.

The commissioner congratulated WHO on its celebration of 75 years of eventful activities globally.

Responding, Dr. Sebastian Okwu, State Coordinator, Kogi Office, disclosed that WHO which was founded on 7th April, 1948, has the Theme of this year's celebration as "Health for All".

He enumerated the main objectives of the establishment of WHO to include; Promotion/Keeping the health conditions of all

safe worldwide, disease control, elimination of measles, control of seasonal meningitis and outbreak of dreaded diseases.

Dr. Okwu reaffirmed the determination of the agency to ensure that healthcare services get to the door step of rural dwellers across the globe.

Our correspondent reports that the highpoint of the celebration was a road walk by members of health workers union with the Kogi WHO Office across the major streets in Lokoja, the state capital.

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE staff, students and Alumni Association of Salem University Lokoja has described their Vice Chancellor (VC), Prof Alewo Johnson-Akubo as a disciplinarian and impactful leader worthy of emulation.

The trio groups made the declaration on Thursday in a congratulatory message duly signed and issued in Lokoja by the university's Registrar, Dr Emmanuel Adejoh in celebration of the VC, who clocked 50 years on Thursday, April 13.

Adejoh said that the entire university community has been thrown into jubilation and celebration mood of a man in Prof Akubo that "is a rare gem and a gift to Salem University Lokoja considering the virtues God encapsulated in him for the service of humanity."

The registrar described the Vice Chancellor as a fine administrator, disciplinarian and quintessential leader of tremendous impact not only to Salem University Lokoja but to Kogi and Nigeria as a whole.

"We today felicitate with our Vice Chancellor, Prof Alewo Johnson-Akubo, whose golden age can best be described as God's divine gift and grace upon him, looking at what he has so far attained in life.

"Aside being a young administrator, Akubo is a pastor in God's Vineyard, working assiduously at spreading the gospel of truth for the salvation of souls from the societal ills ravaging the entire globe as well as impacting on students by transforming them into global change agents.

"Joining Salem University Lokoja, Akubo served as the pioneer co-ordinator, Mass

50th birthday: Staffers, varsity students celebrate VC



Adamu

Communication Programme, Deputy Dean, College of Management and Social Sciences and Deputy Director, Academic Planning between August, 2016 and July 2017.

"Prof. Akubo was appointed Dean, College of Management and Social Sciences, 2017 and later rose to become the Deputy Vice Chancellor in January 2020, a position he held until January, 2021 when he was appointed Acting Vice Chancellor.

"As a member of council and head of management, he was confirmed as the 4th substantive Vice Chancellor of

the institution in February, 2022.

"Prof. Akubo is a recipient of many national awards, amongst which are; The Nigerians of Integrity and Excellence Award by The Guardian Newspapers (August, 2021) and the Award of Excellence by the National Education Summit and Awards (June, 2021)," he stated.

According to him, Akubo is a prolific writer, who has several academic publications in both local and international journals and presently serves as a member of the Advisory Board of the National Education Summit.

The registrar, however, said that it was a thing of joy that the entire staffers, students and alumni association of Salem University Lokoja have joined other well wishers in and outside Nigeria in celebrating such a man in Akubo that "is truly a shining example to all the Nigerian youths."

Adejoh said, "On behalf of staff, students and alumni association of the Salem University Lokoja, I wish Prof Akubo, more divine wisdom, knowledge, sound health, peace and joy as he celebrates his 50th birthday."

Qua'an-Pan gets additional Divisional Police Office

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Management of Qua'an-Pan Local Government Council of Plateau State, has constructed a befitting edifice and handed it over to the Nigeria Police Force as a new Divisional Police Office in the area to help curb criminal activities in the local government.

This is contained in the press statement signed by the Senior Special Adviser on Media, Publicity and Protocol, Hon. Mathias Yengoet Dajan, and made available to SUNDAY STANDARD in Jos, the Plateau State capital recently.

Speaking during the commissioning and handing over of the office in Namu town, the Executive Chairman of Qua'an-Pan Local Government Council, Hon. Ernest Abner Da'a described the event as a fulfilment of his administration's assurance to the people to partner with the various security agencies and outfits within and outside the LGA, towards maximization

of their services to secure them.

"You recall that on assumption of office and in the face of the many security challenges, we assured you of impactful partnership with the various security agencies and outfits within and outside of the LGA, towards the maximization of the services of the Army, Police and other recognized outfits.

"The vigilante, community police, Neighborhood Watch among others were not left out in curtailing the crime. Today, I am happy to inform you that this partnership has reduced drastically the level of crimes, criminalities and criminal activities in the local government.

"I am happy to inform you that my administration has completed the building of the fully fortified office structure, which we are commissioning and handing it over to the Nigerian Police Force for operational services from

today April 12, 2023", Da'a said to the applause of the people.

The chairman added that the securing and establishment of an additional Divisional Police Office in the LGA, with the full status of the office, located in Namu was a further demonstration of practical steps towards curbing security challenges by his administration.

The chairman expressed appreciation to the Nigeria Police for their understanding and co-operation towards the establishment of the 2nd Divisional Police Office in the local government and reassured them of the full cooperation of the people of Qua'an-Pan, expressing hope that the station would boost the administration's efforts towards minimizing security

breaches within the local government area and its environs to the barest minimum.

He thanked the Army and other security apparatus for their continued support to the administration and assured them that Qua'an-Pan Local Government Area would continue to enjoy more peaceful coexistence under peaceful atmosphere.

MOH inaugurates NTD Advisory Committee

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

PLATEAU State Ministry of Health has inaugurated the State Technical Advisory Committee (STACON) on Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) to provide technical advice to Programme Managers and support the implementation of control, elimination and eradication of NTDs in the state.

This took place at the Conference Hall of Lamonde Hotel Jos, the Plateau State capital Thursday, where stakeholders from the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), World Health Organisation (WHO), Christofel Blind Mission (CTM) and The Carter Centre (TCC) were in attendance.

The Committee which has Professor Dana'an, of the Department of Zoology, University of Jos as its Chairman, is to be deputized by the Executive Secretary of the Plateau State Primary Health Care Board (PSPHCB), Dr. Livinus Miapkwap and Director, Public Health of the State Ministry of Health, Dr. Bunan Mawwalun respectively.

Others included, Professor Matilda Banwat, Consultant

respectively. Inaugurating the Committee, the State Commissioner of Health, Dr. Ninkong Lar Ndam, thanked Governor Simon Bako Lalong for the support given to the ministry to inaugurate this committee and commended partners who came to witness this most important event.

He disclosed that the Neglected Tropical Diseases numbering up to 20, adversely affect people in poor living condition mostly in tropical and subtropical areas where there is lack of environmental sanitation, lack of good housing and good portable water supply. He explained that "they are significantly responsible for health, social and economic burden in Nigeria.

"It is estimated that over 122 million persons are at risk of one or more of these NTDs in terms of direct costs, loss of productivity and in how socio-economic and education attainment. These NTDs have been confirmed to be endemic in Nigeria, where the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) were affected",

respectively.

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Ndam highlighted.

SUNDAY STANDARD understands that some of these NTDs include: Lymphatic Filariasis (LP), Onchocerciasis, Schistosomiasis, Soil Transmitted Helminths, Human African Trypanosomiasis, Guinea Worms Diseases, Trachoma, Leishmaniasis, Leprosy, Buruli-ulcer, Dengue fever, Rabies, Yaws, Snakebite Envenoming among others.

There were presentations from the representatives of WHO, Dr. Mahdu Musa, Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), Abdullahi Zubairu, who intimated that the Commissioner about the availability of snakebite drugs; Director, State Public Health, Dr. Bunan Mawwalun, Christoffel Blind Mission (CBM) Dr. Ojo Victor Adekunle and the Representative of The Carter Centre (TCC), Bulus Mancha, who rounded up with an elaborate situation report of the programme. Qua'an-Pan gets additional Divisional Police Office



Da'a

NEWS



## USAID commends J4PD for human development

From **ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi**

**I**N an effort to achieve its goals by exploring opportunities for further collaboration with International Partners (IPs), a popular Bauchi based Civil Society Organization (CSO), Journalists for Public Health and Development Initiative (J4PD) has interacted with visiting officials of United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Nigeria in Bauchi.

The interaction took place on Thursday 13th April, 2023 in Bauchi, the state capital.

Elizabeth Kah, is the J4PD Coordinator in Bauchi and while welcoming the visiting team, briefed the team of the CSO's collaboration with some of USAID's interventions and programmes in Bauchi State which she described as "productive".

Kah explained that though the bulk of J4PD's collaboration with USAID Nigeria are mainly focused on public health, her organization is also targeting other thematic areas like Basic Education, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Climate Change etc, with a view to contributing their quota for improved service delivery in those areas in Bauchi State.

She however, unfolded to the visiting USAID team that membership of J4PD cut across media practitioners in both print, broadcast and online channels that use evidence based data and first-hand information in carrying out awareness and advocacy campaigns through reportage and also interfacing with citizens and policy makers that is aimed at strengthening institutions and changing negative perceptions on preconceived notions.

The coordinator said that J4PD has an ongoing collaboration with USAID funded Integrated Health Programme (USAID IHP), USAID State Accountability, Transparency and Effectiveness (USAID State 2 State) and Strengthening Civic Advocacy

and Local Engagement (SCALE) Project.

Kah then expressed J4PD's gratitude to the USAID team for capacity building exercises that her organization has been enjoying. She also added that "Our doors are open for more collaboration towards improved service delivery in our areas of competence".

Responding on behalf of the visiting team, USAID Nigeria Director of Peace, Democracy

and Governance Mr. Daniel Morris thanked members of J4PD for the visit and also commended their efforts towards improved service delivery in critical areas of human development.

Mr. Morris said the visit by J4PD has certainly added value to their official visit to Bauchi State and also wished them well in their work.

## Poverty reduction: BASG to absorb agric workers

From **ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi**

**F**OLLOWING the resolution of the Bauchi State lawmakers at its plenary sitting recently on the need for Bauchi State government to absorb agricultural extension workers into the state system, Bauchi State government is now to absorb the state agricultural extension workers already trained in Abuja to support poverty reduction programme of the state.

The motion for the absorption of the agricultural extension workers was moved by a member representing Hardawa state constituency, Hon. Babayo Muhammad who during the House sitting presided by the Speaker, Rt. Hon. Abubakar Yakubu Suleiman, where he appealed to the executive arm to absorb the workers.

He told the House that the Nigerian agricultural sector has encountered several challenges ranging from decreased funding, policy changes, reduced manpower and lack of interest of young people in agricultural entrepreneurship.

Other challenges, lawmaker Muhammad said, included changes in average temperatures, rainfall, climate extremes, growing infestation of pests and related diseases precipitated by climate change.

Also inclusive in the challenges are limited adoption of research findings and technologies, high cost of farm inputs among others which cumulatively posed a

great challenge to the integrity of the country's agricultural system.

He recalled that the federal government in its efforts to address these challenges, revitalized agricultural extension services to support small-scale agriculture, eradicate poverty and achieve national and household food security.

The lawmaker explained that as part of the efforts, the Federal Government trained thousands of agriculture extension workers drawn from all the local government areas in the country to assist in building farmers' agricultural knowledge and skills on modern agriculture.

It similarly trained the extension workers on mechanized farming by changing farmers' attitudes as well as promote community development through human and social development, facilitate access to markets and work with farmers' towards sustainable natural resources.

Hon. Muhammad emphasized that the training is important to Bauchi State because, as he puts it, it represents a good opportunity for the trained extension workers to grow their knowledge based and improve the state's agricultural sector.

He observed that in the long run, Bauchi would increase its internally generated revenue which is in tandem with the commitments of the state government under the amiable leadership of Governor Bala Abdulkadir

**N**ational Assembly Supplementary election will be held in the 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Sokoto State on the 15<sup>th</sup> April 2023, INEC Sokoto has stated.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Sokoto State, on Friday disclosed that the April 15 National Assembly Supplementary election will be held in the 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the state.

The Sokoto INEC PRO, Dr. Shamsudeen Sidi, disclosed that the election will hold at 522 polling units for the three senatorial districts and 466 polling units for the 10 out of 11 Federal Constituencies' supplementary elections.

Analysing the exercise, Shamsudeen Sidi said the 522 polling units in the senatorial district supplementary elections stand at 169 polling units for the Sokoto East, 185 polling units for Sokoto North and 168 polling units for Sokoto South respectively.

He gave the breakdown for the Federal Constituencies to include, Binji/Silame Constituency- 13 polling units, Kware/Wamakko Constituency- 58 polling units, Kebbe/Tambuwal Constituency- 56 polling units and Sokoto

## Sokoto supplementary elections hold in 522 polling units

From **ANENE AIKE, Sokoto**

North/Sokoto South Constituency 99 polling units, Others he said include Dange -Shuni/ Bodinga/ Tureta- 68 polling units, Isa/SabonBirni-18 polling units, Goronyo/ Gada- 74 polling units, Wurno/ Rabah- 53 polling units,

Illela/Gwadabawa- 14 polling units and Tangaza/Gudu- 15 polling units respectively.

In a separate development, Sokoto State INEC has distributed the election sensitive materials for the Saturday billed supplementary elections across the state.

The commission vowed to ensure that the supplementary elections are free, fair and credible.

Maj-Gen Modibbo Alkali, Rtd the INEC National Commissioner in charge of the election in Sokoto also assured that the election body and security agencies are well prepared for the polls.

He stated this at a stakeholders meeting, where he urged political party leaders to talk to their supporters not to cause any trouble during the polls.

He also boasted that the commission and security operatives are well prepared for the Supplementary elections while assuring all that INEC will ensure all inclusive, free, fair and credible election come April 15th, 2023.



Tambuwal

Ministry of Information to be mandated to sensitize small-holder farmers on adopting efficient and sustainable agricultural practices to improve productivity and livelihood of farmers in the state.

The Speaker, Rt. Hon. Abubakar Yakubu Suleiman while contributing to the motion, said that the best way to reduce poverty in Bauchi State is through farming, thus describing the motion as timely and important.

Another lawmaker, Hon. Musa WakiliNakwada (Bogoro Constituency) said that about 80% of citizens of the state are farmers, who need only guidance to improve their farming, saying however that farmers are finding it difficult to know the best way to use chemicals and fertilizers in their farms.

Nakwada recalled that years back there were many extension workers in the state but now they are nowhere to be found, hence the need to absorb the trained extension workers and employ more so as to boost agricultural production.

The House Majority Leader, Hon. Tijjani Muhammad AliyuAzareMadangala Constituency who also contributed to the debate, said the motion is not only timely but very important because of the role the service plays in improving agriculture.

Hon. Tijjani Muhammad noted that if care is not taken in the next two years, Bauchi State will not have good administrative and other



Mohammed

SUNDAY MAGAZINE



Mutfwang



Nentawe



Dakum

# 2023 elections and matters arising

*Continued from Page 10*

Joshua Chibi Dariye of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) from the Central Senatorial Zone was overwhelmingly elected by people of the state. Then in 2017, the enigmatic Baba", Jonah David Jang from the Northern Senatorial Zone became the helmsman of the state.

However, after the expiration of Jang's eight years of two term, there was almost a twist to this known arrangement. The then Governor (Jang), obviously wanted to foist his own, the late charismatic JNS Pwajok on the state which was vehemently resisted by Plateau people paving way for the incumbent Governor of the opposition, All Progressives Congress (APC) Barrister Simon Bako Lalong from the Southern Senatorial Zone.

The esounding defeat of the then ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), shows clearly that Plateau people are at home with the politics of understanding rotation or power shift.. Since the people understood their diversity, there must be the systanance of such a rotational framedwork as a

panacea. With Governor Lalong out of office this year without much ado, the governorship position naturally ought to revert to the Central Zone, as mentioned earlier, according to this unwritten arrangement. Yes, the governorship election has come and gone with the opposition Peoples Democratic Party's (PDP) candidate, Barrister Manasseh Caleb Mutfwang being declared the winner. Though the predominant ethnic groups in the zone are the Ngas (Pankshin and Kanke) and the Mwaghavul (Mangu), the ethnic coloration given to the victory of the winner is quit unfortunate. The change of baton in the leadership of the state should be seen as a collective Plateau project. However, since there are windows of seeking redress if anyone is aggrieved with the outcome of the elections, such should be pursued with utmost decency and decorum. After all, elections are not a die affair. It is quite interesting that they two leading contestants in the Plateau State gubernatorial elections, Caleb and Nentawe are said to be school mates and perhaps

friends. Plateau State is known for its maturity when it comes to politics. Acrimony, rancor and violence are not part of the political history of the state, therefore, the status should be maintained. Collectively, the people of the state can take it to the greater height.

While litigations linger, it should be eschewed. Plateau politicians and all relevant stakeholders to behave properly. Plateau cannot afford to get it wrong. Equally too, traditional and religious leaders should admonish their followers on the need to remain peaceful. The incoming administration should have a road map on the developmental need of the state because the state is in dire need of development in both the rural and urban areas.

There are high expectations of people from the incoming government. Therefore, the incoming government cannot afford to fail.

Where there is need for consolidation on past achievements by previous administrations, such should be done without further delay. The state needs

infrastructural development like roads, hospitals, schools, water among others. The rural areas should be opened up and the economy should be diversified.

The era of depending on federation allocation should be over. Plateau has a lot of resources for its development.

For instance, agriculture and tourism should be given priority. Plateau for long has been known with the possession of a lot of mineral resources. These should be harness to get revenue for the development of the state.

Equally too, sports is an industry in which the state has a lot of potentials. This can equally be exploited to reap maximum benefits. The Zaria Road Stadium should be given priority because huge sum of money had been expended on the project for a long. Therefore, Plateau cannot afford to leave it as an abandoned project. There should be continuity for its completion. It can equally be a source of revenue as the stadium is of standard to host international matches and other events. Plateau has a lot of potentials in tourism, such

should be given priority. All the tourist sites should be revitalized, examples are Asop Falls, Mado Tourist Village and many others.

Mining activities should be intensified. The activities of illegal miners on the Plateau should be curtailed. Individuals have been benefitting from such illegal mining activities to the detriment of the state.

By and large, whatever the outcome of the electoral adjudication, Plateau interests should remain uppermost on the minds of not only the candidates but equally too, genuine, relevant and indeed the entire Plateau stakeholders. Having said that, it be-hoves on the candidates to at the end of the judicial tussle collapse their agenda and programmes of action or manifesto and present it to whoever wins.

For other stakeholders, particularly the supporters of the gubernatorial candidates, they should apply maximum caution in their utterances and actions.

As stated earlier, it is not a do-or die affair. After all, it is the same Plateau, it is the same people and it is the same developmental aspirations of all. Lets await May 29, 2023.

## METRO-FOCUS



## State of the heart of Jos

By FRANCISCA ADIDI

IT was a sunny day, when we had to rush to town to do some things for the pleasure of our household. We were disappointed when we got to the shop and what we were assured of getting was not exactly what we thought it was. So we had to go right into the market to look for it.

Guess what we saw! Congestion, traffic hold-up, pushing here and there because of Easter celebration preparations. We were shocked, disappointed and disturbed that Terminus Market had degenerated to such a level.

At the heart of the market, there were heaps of refuse dumped here and there right in the center of the road. This also affected human and vehicular traffic. And because the middle of the road is narrow, the refuse found its way unto the road. As to be expected, flies swarmed around the dumps but that did not stop sellers of second hand clothes from displaying their wares everywhere there was space.

As if we were the only ones that were seeing the filth, interested buyers flocked all around them not minding the stench or their surrounding.

What has happened to the city acclaimed as the 'home of peace

and tourism'? The whole scenery was an eyesore. Noise, environmental pollution became normal things. And chaos became the order of the day.

Is it any wonder that cholera, Lassa fever, food poisoning, dysentery are recurrent diseases no matter what is done? Every year we lose our young population in their formative years due to threats posed by these diseases. If we are to make a head way, we need a change of attitude.

It beats our imagination to see that most people are moving about around the market without their face masks and especially the areas where second-hand clothes were displayed. It is common knowledge that chemicals are mostly used for preservation. Very few people were spotted wearing face masks.

It is quite unfortunate that a lot of people especially around the market do not believe that disease can be contacted in the air due to congestions and too many movements of both vehicular and pedestrians interactions. The experience that people went through during the outbreak of Corona virus would have taught them lessons of adhering to the safety protocols because it is not

yet uhuru.

Just take a walk to Terminus and Ahmadu Bello Way, and observe the situation around town, pause a while and look round, one will see how traders have displaced the vehicular movements of motorists with their goods. Many people are struggling to get space to display their items for customers to buy thereby inconveniencing pedestrians and commuters alike from proper movements.

A look at the situation at Terminus Market and Ahmadu Bello Way, and you will agree with me that Plateau State Revenue Service is not doing its work of collection of revenue very well. If it were, the nerve centre of Jos would have been decongested due to the heavy tax charged any one that

illegally takes up a space in the heart of town. And the coffers of government would have been enriched.

A shop owner who is popularly known as Iya Yusuf lamented over the congestion of the market by illegal traders. She said their habit of blocking shops with their mobile shop does not only take up space where motorists park, but that it enables them to do brisk business at the expense of shop owners. People who are in a hurry patronise them because sometimes their goods could be cheaper since they don't pay rent.

However, Iya Yusuf warned that they should beware of fake items because some of these mobile traders sell fake items and

unfortunately, one cannot come back and meet them at the same place as is the case with shops.

In the words of one of the mobile shop owners: "Do you think we just force ourselves to the market and boldly take up space without paying our dues?"

The young man claimed that they pay a token everyday, that is why they feel a sense of belonging and parade their goods without fear. Another mobile shop owner corroborated his colleague's story but like his colleague, he refused his name to be mentioned.

The ball is now in Plateau State Government's Court to bring sanity to the system. Plateau must reclaim its lost glory. And the time is now!

**"A look at the situation at Terminus Market and Ahmadu Bello Way, and you will agree with me that Plateau State Revenue Service is not doing its work of collection of revenue very well. If it were, the nerve centre of Jos would have been decongested due to the heavy tax charged any one that illegally takes up a space in the heart of town. And the coffers of government would have been enriched."**



# SUNDAY PEOPLE

## LALONG INAUGURATES CENSUS COMMITTEE

Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong (CON) last week at the Old Government House Rayfield, Jos inaugurated a high powered Committee for the 2023 Population and Housing Census, the Committee is to revalidate population figures in the state and the country at large, scheduled to be held from the 3rd to 5th of May 2023 nationwide



Governor Lalong through the SGS, Prof. Danladi Abok Atu delivering his speech



Commissioner for Special Duties and NGO, Hon. Gyang Musa Dung (right) with the Permanent Secretary, Policy, Mr. Peter Wuyep at the inauguration



Federal Commissioner, National Population Commission, Hon. Cecilia Dapoet delivering some remarks



Cross section of members of the inaugurated Committee



From left are, Commissioners of Finance, Dr. Regina Soemlat, Health, Dr. Ndam Lar and Planning, Hon. Dan Phil Hirkop



Directors from NPC and members of the committee listening keenly to speeches



Prof. Danladi Abok Atu (who stood in for Governor) inaugurating the high Powered Committee



Members of the Census Committee being inaugurated

PHOTOS: DANLADI DUJ

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## Risk factors with reference to cyclists, motorcyclists, pedestrians

**Cyclists and motorcyclists** are particularly vulnerable road users, mainly because we often fail to see them. Vehicle drivers are programmed to look out for other vehicles of similar or bigger size, as such anything of lesser size is not registered. The campaign THINK ONCE, THINK TWICE, THINK BIKE was designed to help drivers overcome this peculiar challenge.

Look out for **cyclists** at road junctions especially and try to allow them as much room as possible when overtaking. If you can't give them enough room, you need to slow down. Cyclists, particularly the young or those laden with shopping and bulky objects, can wobble or swerve suddenly. Even professional looking cyclists in cycling shorts and wearing helmets will not wish to risk damaging their wheels in potholes or drain covers, so be prepared for them to avoid poor road surfaces. Many cyclists may suddenly dismount if the hill they are climbing becomes too steep. Try to anticipate the actions of a cyclists. A glance over the shoulder for instance could mean that they intend turning right or will move into your path. The same goes for motorcyclists. Remember that they are exposed to bad weather, slippery or uneven road surfaces and crosswinds. Motorcyclists have the same rights and privileges as vehicles and other road users. It is important to make allowances and give them plenty of room.

**Pedestrians:** all pedestrians are vulnerable road users and should be seen as such; particularly children, the elderly, the mentally retarded and people living with disability. It is dangerous to assume that every pedestrian is physically and mentally fit enough not to step out and finish up under the wheels of a car. Generally speaking, you should give way to pedestrians who are crossing the road as you turn into a junction. If they are still at the pavement as you turn into the road, make sure before continuing that they have seen you and are not going to step out. In particular, look out for elderly people crossing the road. Their hearing and eyesight might not be so good. They cannot necessarily judge traffic speed so well and do not always realize the dangers involved in crossing the road. Nor will they be able to move quickly if they have misjudged the gap, so be prepared to slow down and give them time to clear the road.

**Disable people** need particular consideration. It is obviously difficult to tell if someone is deaf but take care if someone fails to look your way as you get closer. In civilized world, there are guide dogs for the hard of hearing as well as the visually impaired. The guide dog for the hearing impaired usually has an orange lead and collar while that of the visually impaired pedestrian has a loop type of harness. A white stick indicates the carrier is visually impaired. If the stick has two reflective red bands around it, the bearer is hard of hearing. Again, give these people plenty of time to cross the road.

As a driver, take great care near **children**. Children can dash impulsively across the road simply because they have spotted friends on the other side. Children are particularly unpredictable and you really need to be driving slowly and with special care in residential areas, near schools, parks and ice-cream vans. Be aware of the time of day when children are going to and from schools. If there is a school-crossing traffic warden holding a lollipop stick, or Stop-Children sign, then you must of course stop.

As a driver or any other road user for that matter, you just need to recognize where the risks lie, the types of conditions vehicles and road users that can potentially increase these risks. You identify the risky situation, assess it and adjust your speed and general driving habits accordingly. It is entirely up to you to decide how to deal with things. Just remember-your ability to take appropriate action lies in the speed at which you are driving.



## NEWS

### Group lobbies opposition to support Betara as Speaker

From WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe

A North East political pressure group known as 'Northeast Youth Group For Good Governance' is appealing to members-elect of the House of Representatives to consider Borno State born and APC's MuktarAliyuBetara for the plum position of the Speaker of the House.

The group which particularly targets the opposition parties in the Green Chamber to rally round Betara for the speakership position among other reasons said Betara is most competent following his 16 years experience in the House.

Addressing a press conference at the Gombe State Secretariat of the APC, the group's secretary, Khalid Ahmed Kumo said the group found MuktarAliyuBetara worthy of the speaker's position especially at this time that an experienced legislator is required to work with the executive in providing laws and order for the benefit of all.

He said, "We therefore wish to extend our hands of friendship to elected members of the House of Representatives under different opposition parties to come together and support national development and competency over any other personal desire for the betterment of our country by supporting MuktarAliyuBetara which will eventually

### 2023 Census: Deputy Gov chairs Advocacy, Logistics Committee

From WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe

GOMBE State Deputy Governor, Manasseh Daniel Jatau, is to chair the state's Advocacy and Logistics Committee for the 2023 national census exercise.

The Deputy Governor, who inaugurated the committee in his office on behalf of the governor, Muhammad InuwaYahaya, said the duty of the committee is to enlighten, sensitize and get the buy in of residents of the state to understand, cooperate, participate and assist in any way for the successful conduct of the census in the month of May 2023.

He told the committee members that their assignment will require the sacrifice of their time, energy and resources to be able to succeed. He added that the government had confidence in them, hence their appointment.

According to the Deputy Governor, even though census predates the biblical era, events and happenings in the society today necessitate the need for census in a nation more than ever.

He said, "the essence of census is to provide essential information about the socio economic variables of a population. Nigeria is no exception, and so the compelling need for a reliable, credible and successful census that will help in planning for not just



**Adamu** transform the legislature of the country due to his track record of experience in the service.

"Honourable Mukhtar AliyuBetara has been representing his constituency for the past 16 years and still counting. This is a clear indication that he understands both the needs of the people, the essence of representation and the lawmaking process of the country.

"He is someone who can unite the House to work together for the progress of the country due to his immense experience in legislative affairs, being the chairman of the House Committee on the Army, Defense, Appropriations beside membership of numerous standing

committees. This reaffirms his experience and knowledge of the job", he stated.

Extolling Betara'sbenevolence, Khalid Ahmed said, the member who had been representing Biu, Bayo, Kwayakusar, Shani Federal Constituency had no interest in politics at the onset but for the push and insistence from beneficiaries of his generosity from a large portion of the constituency.

"They believe that given his philanthropic activities as a private citizen, if given the support, he will represent them well at the centre. That was how Betara became a politician and ended up in the National Assembly and the constituents have never regretted having him as their representative", Khalid Ahmed said.

produce accurate, reliable and acceptable data of the state.

Membership of the committee include, Commissioner of Justice and Attorney General, Zubairu Mohammad Umar who is to serve as Deputy Chairman.

Other members are: Speaker of the House of Assembly, Abubakar Muhammed Lugerewo; Commissioners of Information, Meshach AduLauco; Commissioner for Finance, Muhammad G a m b o M a g a j i ; Commissioner for Local Government, Hon. Ibrahim D a s u k i J a l o , and Commissioner for Internal Security and Ethical O r i e n t a t i o n , AdamuDishiKupto.

Others are, the Special Adviser on Project Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation, Prof. NamalaKeftinAmuga, Director- General, Civil Service Reforms Commission, Alhaji Yusuf DaudaKaltungo; Chairman, Board of Internal Revenue, AlhajiSalisu Baba Alkali; Dr. Maijama'a Usman as well as the Executive Secretary, Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board, AlhajiSa'adu Hassan.

The state ALGON Chairman, Alhaji Ali Usman and the state Director, National Population Commission, Gombe, Mr. Jude Maigari also made list of the members while the duo of Muhammad Usman Shanu, and BalaSarki are to serve as secretaries respectively.

## SUNDAY FEATURE

# Africa: X-raying fight against poverty

Last week, the President-Elect, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, issued a signed statement titled, "Nigeria: At the Cusp of Renewed Hope", that was captured in the media by various headlines. In the I, 346-word treatise, it was the part that mentioned, "There has been talk of a government of national unity. My aim is higher than that. I seek a government of national competence. In selecting my government, I shall not be weighed down by considerations extraneous to ability and performance", that invoked various headlines. Wites **OLALEKAN A. BABATUNDE**

**P**OVERTY, the inability to satisfy basic human needs is endemic in Africa. Unfortunately, the continent is blessed with enormous human and materials resources to meet its needs and stimulate growth and prosperity.

Many factors such as illiteracy and lack of good governance have been identified as being responsible for this. Recent global developments such as COVID-19 outbreak have made the matter worse. AFONNE EMMANUEL writes.

According to the Economic Report on Africa 2021 (ERA2021) inaugurated by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic pushed an estimated 55 million Africans into extreme poverty in 2020.

The pandemic reversed more than two decades of progress in poverty reduction on the continent.

Reports show that in 2019, 424 million people in sub-Saharan Africa lived in severe poverty and 460 million in 2022.

Based on the Economic Development in Africa (ECA) Report 2021, Africa stands out as the most affected region in the world in terms of loss of income of poor households.

The Chief Economist of ECA, Hanan Morsy, says Africa currently accounts for more than half of the World's poor at 54.8 per cent.

Morsy, during the 55th session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, said the continent faced a tsunami of global shocks that have exacerbated existing socio-economic operation and equity.

She said because of these shocks; the continent currently accounts for more than half of the world's poor at 54.8 per cent.

"We have estimated 548 million Africans living in poverty in 2022 and 149 million at risk of falling into poverty in the same year.

"There is a skewed distribution across the continent in terms of concentration of these issues, with particularly East and West Africa having a higher share of poverty across regions," she said.

Morsy said the situation was further exacerbated by existing inequalities, noting that even in times of high economic growth in Africa, the rate of inequality still rose.

"We need to pursue inclusive macroeconomic policies such as targeted and efficient spending and build resilience to future shocks at the household and community level.

"African governments need to enhance resource mobilisation. To do that, I think several



measures would help, including closing tax loopholes.

"Africa loses 40 to 60 billion dollars annually in tax evasion. There's also funding that can be raised through tackling issues of illicit financial flows," she said.

Mr Adam Elhiraika, Director Macroeconomic Policy Division, ECA, said many African countries were struggling to meet the continent's development goals due to the impact of severe and mutually reinforcing shocks.

According to Elhiraika, the continent has encountered severe developmental challenges due to increasing poverty, high inequality rates and a lack of decent jobs.

He reiterated that the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ukrainian war and the resultant food and energy crisis, rising inflation, debt tightening, and natural disasters were critical factors to the challenge.

He spoke at a recent at a meeting of experts to herald the 2023 Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development in Ethiopia.

Elhiraika said the Africa's growth dwindled from 4.6 per cent in 2021 to 3.6 per cent in 2022 and is anticipated to grow by 3.9 per cent in 2023.

"In 2022, an additional 18 million new poor emerged in Africa, with more than half the highest proportion of the world's poor at 54.8 per cent.

"This is alarming because 546 million people were living in poverty in 2022, which is more than half of the continent's population," Elhiraika said.

To enable countries on the continent to advance, in spite of

the challenges they encountered, the ECA pledged its unreserved commitment to support and provide shields where necessary.

Acting Secretary-General of ECA, Antonio Pedro, said Africa needs adequate financing to tackle poverty on the continent and cushion the vulnerable groups while meeting its long-term development objectives.

Pedro, at the conference, reiterated that evidence showed the effects of COVID-19, the war in Ukraine, the looming debt crisis, and climate change impacts characterised the deep and interlocking crises in Africa.

He said overcoming these challenges, occasioned by the overlapping crises, would require African countries to formulate innovative and multifaceted strategies that provide a range of policy options.

The acting secretary explained that implementing the agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTA) continued to be the blueprint for the African pro-poor economic recovery.

He said there was the need to expedite action on the agreement's implementation, given its numerous benefits to member states, including resilience to shocks.

Similarly, the African Union Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Industry and Mining, Albert Muchanga, said African continental efforts alone were not sufficient to solve the problem.

He, therefore, urged the reform of the global value chain, focus on developing regional and continental value chains and the need for African countries to invest at least one per cent of their GDP in research and development.

Muchanga said the commission was designing a programme that would enable Africa to move from being a producer and exporter of raw materials to an exporter of manufactured goods, agro-processed foods, and services.

The commissioner, however, said Africa faced a climate finance challenge, which could lead to increased climate-induced poverty across the

continent.

Meanwhile, highlighting some of the resolutions at the end of the conference, its Chairman/Ministerial Committee of Uganda, Henry Ariganyira, said women and youth empowerment was imperative for the continent's development.

"Member States are called to leverage the agreement establishing the AfCTA to strengthen their resilience to future economic shocks and maintain sustainable growth.

"They should use it to create wealth and increase domestic resource mobilisation through prudent and targeted public spending, modernise the tax system and adopt home-grown fiscal and monetary reforms that attract small and medium-sized investors," she said.

Experts say that to address its poverty challenge, African countries should look more inwards with a view to harnessing the continent's abundant resources rather than depending on handouts and economic templates developed for the continent in foreign lands. (NANFeatures).

**"We need to pursue inclusive macroeconomic policies such as targeted and efficient spending and build resilience to future shocks at the household and community level. African governments need to enhance resource mobilisation. To do that, I think several measures would help, including closing tax loopholes. Africa loses 40 to 60 billion dollars annually in tax evasion. There's also funding that can be raised through tackling issues of illicit financial flows," she said."**

## SUNDAY SPORTS

## Where could Bellingham move next season?

By SIMON STONE

**A**LL eyes are on where Jude Bellingham will decide to play football next season.

After Liverpool suggested they would not pursue a move this summer for the highly-rated 19-year-old England midfielder, BBC Sport takes a look at other options.

This is not a ridiculous suggestion. Bellingham is not the finished article and is potentially going to be captain next season if he remains in Germany. While he is there, he is also able to operate slightly under the radar.

It's not quite sealed yet but Dortmund are almost certain to be in next season's Champions League and are in with a shot at winning the Bundesliga this term to end Bayern Munich's 10-year dominance.

The fact he is an automatic pick should not be overlooked. Dortmund are one of Europe's biggest clubs and while Bellingham will doubtless have a wide choice of options should he decide to leave, at Manchester City or Real Madrid, the pressure to perform every week is fierce and those who cannot live up to expectations can be quickly rotated out of the starting line-up and even moved on.

Bellingham will be a fabulous player but there is a lot to be said for waiting a year before he joins another European heavyweight.

Given their status, it is quite natural City should want Bellingham. The experience of England team-mate Calvin Phillips, who has struggled since a big money move from Leeds and Jack Grealish, who this season has started to fulfil his £100m price tag, should not put him off.

Bellingham backed his talent when he joined Dortmund, why not do the same now? It would be interesting to see where he would fit into Pep Guardiola's side because he likes running from deeper positions, as opposed to City's precise passing game.

However, the Blues have tweaked their system to accommodate striker Erling Haaland and Bellingham is one of the best young players in the game, so Guardiola could



Bellingham joined Borussia Dortmund from Birmingham City in 2020

make further tactical changes.

The name itself is bound to be an attraction. Bellingham moved to Germany, so evidently is not worried about playing abroad and, for many, Real Madrid is the ultimate test. There is also so much experience in the present midfield to learn from with 37-year-old Luka Modric and 33-year-old Toni Kroos.

There may be uncertainty over who will be coach at the Bernabeu next season given how far off Barcelona they are in La Liga and manager Carlo Ancelotti being linked with the

vacant Brazil job but Bellingham will know it is sure to be someone with an impressive pedigree in charge.

However BBC Sport understands Real do not want to spend more than £70m on Bellingham, while the midfield is not a priority position they need to reinforce just yet. Alongside Modric and Kroos they have 20-year-old Eduardo Camavinga, Aurelien Tchouameni, 23, and Federico Valverde, 24.

There is not a team in the world who would not want to have Bellingham in their squad. It is

fair to assume Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag and Newcastle counterpart Eddie Howe would respond positively to signing the teenager. The big sell for both would be that, while Manchester City and Real Madrid offer ready made success, at either Old Trafford or St James' Park Bellingham would be a central figure in a push towards a higher level than either has reached in recent seasons.

Chelsea are bound to be linked, on the basis that they have signed so many young players already. However, that fact, coupled with the knowledge they need to get rid of quite a few of their current squad to avoid financial fair play punishment having spent more than £550m on new players this season, plus the absence of Champions League football next season would seem to rule out a move this summer.

Arsenal are an interesting option. Thomas Partey, Granit Xhaka and Martin Odegaard have been the cornerstone of their title drive this season, so it would seem they are not in dire need of reinforcements. Yet Bellingham is so good - and Mikel Arteta builds his squad around younger players, that it is easy to see how he could fit in.

Despite being linked with a move

for Bellingham seemingly since the young midfielder could crawl, Liverpool have now decided to cool their interest with the fingers of blame pointing firmly at the club's owners.

It is thought the Borussia Dortmund player's star has risen so high that the price tag of £100m plus is just too much for Fenway Sports Group.

After taking a quadruple fight right to the bitter end last season, the lacklustre campaign for Jurgen Klopp's side this time has highlighted the frailty of an aging squad and a failure to recruit properly. Fans were already frustrated at their midfield woes but the Bellingham news is shifting the focus on to how their club is being run.

Many have asked why FSG held out believing they would snap up the 19-year-old in the coming transfer window only to back out now. It had been indicated that the Reds had not splashed huge sums previously because they were sure they would land Bellingham.

Supporters were already growing tired of the transfer policy and now they have big questions about the strategy going forward.

**"There is not a team in the world who would not want to have Bellingham in their squad. It is fair to assume Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag and Newcastle counterpart Eddie Howe would respond positively to signing the teenager. The big sell for both would be that, while Manchester City and Real Madrid offer ready made success, at either Old Trafford or St James' Park Bellingham would be a central figure in a push towards a higher level than either has reached in recent seasons. Chelsea are bound to be linked, on the basis that they have signed so many young players already. However, that fact, coupled with the knowledge they need to get rid of quite a few of their current squad to avoid financial fair play punishment having spent more than £550m on new players this season, plus the absence of Champions League football next season would seem to rule out a move this summer."**

# SUNDAY SPORTS

## Fans sued UEFA referee on behalf of Osimhen



Napoli

**T**WO fans associations, "NoiConsumatori" and "Napoli Club Maradona", have launched a 150 million euros (approximately N76 billion) class action against UEFA and Romanian referee Istvan Kovacs following his controversial decisions during AC Milan's 1-0 victory over Napoli on Tuesday.

Soccernet.ng reported earlier that an injury sustained with the Super Eagles kept Victor Osimhen out of the encounter. Still, the Nigerian international would have been livid with anger as his teammates endured the referee's drama at the San Siro.

In an intense game that could have gone either way, referee Kovacs showed 12 cards, with eight going the way of Napoli's players.

Three of those were shown to ZamboAnguissa in four second-half minutes, with the key midfielder earning two yellow cards before receiving a red card that got him sent off and ruled out of the return leg next week.

That decision and several others left Napoli fans and the management in a rage.

The two associations, NoiConsumatori and Napoli Club Maradona, assisted by lawyer Angelo Pisani and a pool of professionals, have prepared a class action for the arbitration of Kovacs.

According to Pisani (as per Tutto Napoli): "The principles of loyalty have been violated in sport. We are ready for a class action to ask for 150 million euros in damages from UEFA, Ceferin, and Marchetti.

"The refereeing the other night at San Siro risks breaking a dream of an entire city, damaging millions of fans who are always in love with this sport and who naively support thousands of euros in costs to stay close to their favourite team."

Former Real Madrid man Antonio Cassano has also spoken out about Kovacs' performance in the crucial quarterfinal match.

Commenting to BoboTv, Cassano said: "There should be no second yellow card from Anguissa who takes the ball first and then Theo.

"The referee was the worst on the pitch; I didn't like him

at all; he made a disaster. He booked six Napoli players, including Di Lorenzo, who is the captain, and goes to ask for explanations."

The decision to take legal action against UEFA and Kovacs highlights the frustration felt by Napoli and their fans over the referee's performance, with many feeling that the result of the

match was affected by his decisions.

It remains to be seen how the legal action will progress and whether Neapolitans will receive the compensation they seek.

Victor Osimhen, with four goals in five Champions League games, is expected to be fit for the second leg of the Milan fixture at the Stadio Diego Maradona next week.

## Nigeria to defend WAFU B title in August

**N**IGERIA will begin the defence of the WAFU B zone of the CAF Women Champions League title it won last year on August 18 in Cote d'Ivoire, the Confederation of African Football (CAF) has said.

According to Newsnow, the competition, which qualifies teams for the CAF Women Champions League final championship, was originally scheduled to hold from September 10 to 25. It will now end on September 3, 2023.

Nigeria's Bayelsa Queens won the last edition of the WAFU B competition in 2022 and went ahead to take the

bronze medal at the full CAF championship hosted by Morocco, beating Simba Queens 1-0 in the third place match.

ASFAR of Morocco won the 2022 CAF Champions League by beating Mamelodi Sundowns 4-0 in the final. According to CAF, the seven WAFU Zone B member associations are expected to present their national champions to compete for a slot in the Women's Champions League.

The countries include Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Benin, Togo and host Cote d'Ivoire.

**S**UPER Eagles striker Victor Osimhen has returned to full training at Napoli after missing the last two weeks because of an adductor problem Soccernet.ng reports.

Playvolume00:00/01:31 We love his craziness - Gent fans Love Gift OrbanTruvidfullScreen

Osimhen has arguably been the best player at Napoli this season. He has been the major lynchpin for the Partenopeans this season scoring 25 goals in 29 appearances in all competitions.

However, he sustained an injury while on international duty with Nigeria in March. Because of this, he has missed Napoli's previous three games, and the results were unconvincing. The Partenopeans were crushed by AC Milan in Serie A, but they got back on track with a 2-1 win against Lecce.

The last game that Osimhen missed was their UEFA Champions League quarterfinal clash against AC

## Osimhen returns to full training



The prolific Nigerian hitman has missed Napoli's last three games, but he has returned and would be looking to make his impact felt

Milan, and his absence was duly felt. Napoli lacked the cutting edge in the box, and they paid for it, as they succumbed 1-0 to the Rossoneri.

Napoli return to action this weekend against Hellas Verona, and ahead of the fixture, the club has confirmed that Osimhen has returned to full training.

He was part of the squad as they practiced tactical

work and dead ball exercises. However, coach Luciano Spalletti may be looking to keep him fresh and reduce his minutes against Verona.

The bigger picture is the second leg of their UEFA Champions League quarterfinal clash against AC Milan next Tuesday. Osimhen has never scored against AC Milan since he moved to Italy, but he would look to change that next week.

## Chukwueze interested in joining Madrid

**T**HE Nigerian star, Samuel Chukwueze, has shown interest in joining Real Madrid to his

agency despite interest from other top European clubs. lume00:00/01:31 We love his craziness - Gent

fans love Gift According to rumours, the 23-year-old is eager to emulate his hero, Cristiano Ronaldo, by joining the Whites despite interest from other elite European teams.

The Super Eagles forward reportedly informed his agent that he had ruled out moving to Italy or England and would accept any offer from the Madrid team.

Newsnow said that, the young winger has helped the Grognet become a menace to their opponents this season with his 13 goals and 11 assists while also assisting the side in securing a position in the European tournament.

Chukwueze reportedly drew the eye of Real Madrid's president, who would be eager to add him to the team to support Carlo Ancelotti after his recent performance at the Santiago Bernabéu.

Given that elite teams are interested in him and that his contract is slated to expire in June 2024, he would definitely give Fernando Roig Alfonso a contentious summer.

Although, Real Madrid and other elite teams may not want to pay the Super Eagles attacker's €80 million release clause in order to sign him.

However, despite having a release clause that might jeopardise his transfer to Real Madrid, the Nigerian has reportedly informed his agent that he would continue his career at the Santiago Bernabéu despite attention from the Italian league and the English league.



Bayelsa Queens are defending champions of CAF Women's Champions League WAFU Zone B.

## SUNDAY SPORTS

## Napoli close in on first title in 33 years

By SIMON STONE

**N**APLES is a city on the brink. You can see it, hear it, feel it. It's in the eyes and the smiles, the playful chatter and swaggering strides. Neapolitans can taste it, they're living every moment of it.

Napoli are 16 points clear in Serie A and cantering towards a first title since 1990. Flags hailing what will be the club's third championship hang from balconies, banners with "100% campione" ripple in the breeze. Even the usually superstitious Neapolitans can't help but acknowledge this is their year.

Clinch the Scudetto too early and some fear the city won't cope with a party 33 years in the making. Win the Champions League too? Well, the "skies will fall," beams Daniele 'Decibel' Bellini. "It's magical."

Provisions are in place for a party on 4 June - the final day of the season - but Napoli's wait for a first championship since Diego Maradona strolled these narrow streets could end in the next few weeks. Fifteen points from their final 10 games will make it certain, even if second-placed Lazio win all of theirs.

In the Quartieri Spagnoli, throughout Naples' historic centre, up to Stadio Diego Armando Maradona in Fuorigrotta and beyond, the streets are decked with blue and white festoons. Buildings and steps have been painted the same hues.

Life-size cutouts of the current squad stand in one piazza, club shirts and player posters are pegged to washing lines in alleyways and youngsters queue for half a block to buy Napoli-coloured panino at popular sandwich shop Con Mollica o Senza.

Hotel rooms for the next couple of months have nearly all gone. Expats wanting to celebrate, football fans intrigued by Napoli's story and visitors unexpectedly caught up in this historic moment are descending on the city. Sporting success coincides with a tourist boom.

"Naples is experiencing a moment of self-recognition and rediscovery of its greatness," says author Angelo Forgione.

When Maradona inspired Napoli to a first Scudetto in 1987, fans placed a banner outside the city's largest cemetery proclaiming: "You don't know what you missed." Now, a generation too young to remember such glory are living it themselves.

"I was six months old in 1990 but I grew up watching VHS of Diego Maradona," says Vincenzo Credendino, from CalcioNapoli24 TV. "Now this Scudetto is like reconnecting with that time."

Tributes to Luciano Spalletti's players intertwine with endless Maradona artwork. He is everywhere in Naples' charmingly gritty and dizzyingly chaotic labyrinth of streets - bar windows, bumper stickers, on billboards and etched across crumbling walls in giant murals.

At Bar Nilo, a strand of Maradona's hair rotates as part of a shrine to the Argentine. In an underground museum the belongings acquired by his maid's son when Maradona left the city are on display.

"Maradona is like God here," says 23-year-old fan Maria Roberta De Iesu. "He gave people hope. Neapolitans see themselves in Maradona."

This mural in Quartieri Spagnoli



A shield, symbolising the Scudetto, has been painted on steps in Naples' Quartieri Spagnoli

became a shrine to Diego Maradona following his death in 2020

When Maradona arrived for a world record fee from Barcelona in July 1984, the city was still on its knees from an earthquake that killed almost 2,500 people four years earlier. Feuds between the Camorra, the region's mafia, were as bitter as ever, unemployment was huge and the Bank of Naples was facing bankruptcy.

"Yet in a Naples on the bottom, Napoli, with the help of politics, managed to buy the strongest and most expensive footballer in the world and touch the sky," adds Forgione.

Then president Corrado Ferlaino had to lean on the city's mayor to help finance the deal, fans offered contributions to help get it over the line, anything to get Maradona.

'El Pibe de Oro' was everything to Naples, and Naples was everything to him. The city resonated with its Golden Boy not just because he inspired their club to two Serie A titles and a Uefa Cup but because they recognised him. He was anti-establishment, he echoed their principles and shouldered their concerns.

"Maradona was really good with his tongue, his mouth, his attitude," explains Credendino. "He understood how to get the heart of the Neapolitan people, he touched the right chords."

Maradona, despite his relationship with the Neapolitan mafia, brought "justice to the people" after struggles against the north that date back more than a century to the unification of Italy, says culture expert Francesco Carignani.

"He had many problems in his life but in Naples we only remember him for the joy," adds fan Paolo Cimmino. "We connect him as a man to a conqueror - the south won versus the north."

No club south of Rome has won Serie A since the Napoli of Maradona, Careca, Ciro Ferrara and a young Gianfranco Zola in 1990, and Neapolitans still endure hostile taunts from their northern rivals about crime, poverty, cholera

outbreaks and calls for Mount Vesuvius to erupt over the city.

People here "are first of all Neapolitans and then Italian", explains Bellini, Napoli's iconic stadium announcer. They have their own language, culture and history. Naples was once a thriving European capital, it remains a city of intriguing architecture, Caravaggio, pizza. Most of all, there is an intensity to life in Campania.

"Southern people in Italy, they live everything with love, with so much emotion, in different ways to the north," adds Cimmino.

Napoli had to fall before they could rise again. Financial decline, relegation and bankruptcy followed the glory years but the fans remained. More than 50,000 attended a game in Serie C in 2004-05.

"For our city soccer is so important," explains journalist Elena Lopresti. "It is not only football, it is a social instrument, a tool to develop us as a society."

Film producer Aurelio de Laurentiis seized an opportunity to purchase the club in 2004 and restore top-flight and European football to Napoli, the fourth-most well-supported club in Italy after Juventus, Milan and Inter, but one whose fanbase is concentrated in the region, rather than spread "from the Alps to Sicily" as Forgione says of the big three.

"De Laurentiis had a parachute," adds Credendino. "It was the love of the people, always ready to go to the stadium, always ready to support the team."

Naples, Forgione explains, is a rare European metropolis represented by a single club. "Napoli's victory is the victory of identity, of those who live it completely," he adds.

"In Naples, football is everything," says Cimmino. "It is joy, it is love, it is fun, it is sadness. It is a way to escape from the daily problems, a way to have fun with the people and party, and this period is happiness."

The De Laurentiis era has been characterised by astute recruitment

- Edinson Cavani, Ezequiel Lavezzi, Jorginho, Gonzalo Higuain - profitable sales, and falling short in the title race.

It was only last summer, after another championship bid slipped away, that ultras promised to return boss Spalletti's stolen Fiat Panda on the condition he left the club.

"Now he deserves a Ferrari, not a Panda," laughs journalist Credendino.

Spalletti is not from Naples, but he shares that Neapolitan passion. After being sacked by Inter, he spent two years on his farm in Tuscany before taking on the Napoli job. Now he lives by the training ground working relentlessly to deliver the Scudetto.

Maradona was the face of Napoli's previous triumph but this time unfamiliar heroes have emerged - cleverly acquired by sporting director Cristiano Giuntoli and fuelled by Spalletti's coaching.

"Giuntoli is the man of this miracle," says Credendino, despite some fans fretting when the club sold high-profile stars Kalidou Koulibaly, Lorenzo Insigne and Dries Mertens last year.

"Giuntoli discovered Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, he discovered Victor Osimhen, Kim Min-jae," adds Cimmino. "Spalletti makes this talent, makes this character. He can find the right keys to get the best of all the players. [Slovak midfielder Stanislav] Lobotka now looks like Iniesta, he looks like Xavi."

On a sold-out match day against Milan, outside the stadium that bears Maradona's name - an amphitheatre worthy of the Greeks who founded Neapolis, the "new city" - kids sport the mask of top scorer Osimhen and Georgian flags fly for irrepressible winger Kvaratskhelia.

There are a sprinkling of Boca and Argentina jerseys too, and, if there is a likeness to Maradona in this team, it is 22-year-old Kvaratskhelia. Signed from Dinamo Batumi last summer, he's aptly been dubbed "Kvaradona", but Cimmino sees him like Gianluigi Lentini at Torino or Kaka during his Milan years.

"He is incredibly unpredictable in the field," adds Credendino. "But if Maradona was a demigod,

Kvaratskhelia is the Pope. He has a totally different attitude, a totally different personality."

Kvaratskhelia plays with a rugged urgency, socks around his ankles, calves exposed. He cavorts, he conjures. But against Milan on Sunday, without 21-goal forward Osimhen - a man Spalletti calls a "dragon with two heads" - he could not stop a vacant and disoriented Napoli sliding to a jarring 4-0 defeat.

Milan were supposed to graciously pass on the champions' baton. Instead they slapped down a reminder the upcoming Champions League quarter-final between the two - the first leg is on Wednesday - should not be taken for granted.

Neapolitans' relationship with their club is complex. Rather than the result, the fallout was about wider issues. Scuffles broke out between different sets of ultras in Curva B over how to protest against De Laurentiis' ticket prices and rules over which flags or banners they can bring into the ground.

"De Laurentiis has a really complicated relationship with the city because the supporters don't like the power, and he represented the power," explains Carignani.

"But we have to say that this victory is great for him because he is a great businessman, he put passion in the city but also his entrepreneurship view in managing the team and that has made the difference."

In the next few weeks, supporters and the board will both celebrate Napoli's first title in more than three decades. The fans have been asking the city's patron saint San Gennaro for this moment, they have called on the spirit of Maradona. Residents have been saving up in preparation for the mother of all celebrations.

"We just feel this power, this emotion," says De Iesu. "It will be a great party all around the city, all the squares will be full of people."

"Now we are enjoying it," adds Carignani. "It was worth the wait."

# SUNDAY SPORTS

## Sadio Mane: What's happened to Senegal star at Bayern ?



Sadio Mane has been suspended from Bayern's squad before Saturday's

**I**T seems Sadio Mane's move from Liverpool to Bayern Munich has not paid off for any party involved. The Reds lost one of the cornerstones of their attack, while Bayern did not acquire a player who could at least partly fill the void left by Robert Lewandowski's departure to Barcelona.

Mane has not performed to the level we saw during his days at Anfield by any means. So far, the 31-year-old has scored 11 goals in 32 games. What might be shocking is that Mane has come off the bench in eight of these appearances this season. He serves as a bit-part player instead of a key man.

To make matters worse, Mane and Leroy Sane got into a physical altercation in the dressing room at the Etihad Stadium following [Bayern's 3-0 loss to Manchester City](#) in the first leg of the Champions League quarter-finals.

The two already started arguing on the field when, during one of Bayern's few attacks, Sane intended to play a short pass to Mane who instead made a deep run.

Moments later, Sane confronted Mane over what he considered to have been a mistake by the substitute, who had been on the pitch for only 14 minutes.

Once the pair returned to the dressing room after the game, Mane complained to Sane about the way he was spoken to on the pitch, which led to the altercation and left Sane with a swollen lip.

As a result, Bayern's executives decided to suspend Mane from the Bundesliga game against Hoffenheim on Saturday and fine him. While Bayern do not intend to terminate the forward's contract, they were convinced serious punishment was needed.

Bayern manager Thomas Tuchel stated that, in his eyes, Mane has received enough punishment, yet the clash has disturbed the team.

"I haven't seen the incident myself, as I was in the coaches' room," Tuchel said at a press conference on Friday.

"It was important to me that we resolve that matter before the next training session. We did that yesterday morning. We cleared the air. We are not the first team where something like that happens, and we won't be the last.

"It has caused a cleansing atmosphere."

Since his arrival at Bayern in late March, Tuchel has maintained a 'Mr Positivity' persona. He even found many words of encouragement after the decisive loss at City, saying he is "shocked in love" with his new team.

But Tuchel is aware he has to worry about Mane.

"You need time to acclimatise after changing clubs even at that age," he recently said. "Strikers like Sadio are sensitive, that is the key. It is about trust and patience so he can come back into a flow."

Finding a flow usually requires feeling comfortable in your role on the field. Mane, however, has not found a role that suits him perfectly since his summer arrival from Anfield.

In the early stages of the season, former boss Julian Nagelsmann, who left Bayern on 24 March, used Mane up front in an attempt to find a replacement for Lewandowski.

But Nagelsmann realised Mane was not the kind of target player the Poland international had been for years.

Mane moved back to the wing but also struggled to discover his sweet spot in Nagelsmann's oft-used 3-4-2-1 system.

If that wasn't enough, an inflamed head of the fibula prevented Mane from playing for Senegal at the World Cup in Qatar and sidelined him for six weeks after the restart of the Bundesliga season.

Tuchel seemingly prefers to use the former Liverpool star on the left side in a 4-3-3, or as one of a group of four floating attackers who try to crowd around the centre and break man-to-man coverage by switching positions.

Regardless of any discussions about tactical roles, Mane's issues seem to go deeper than that.

He appears to have lost the confidence that once made him go into one-on-ones with any defender in the world. His creativity and unpredictability are, besides his goalscoring skills, what made Mane a special player.

However, since his arrival in Munich and particularly since he missed the World Cup, Mane often looks dejected. Even some of his team-mates are puzzled by the lack of intensity the frontman shows in training and games.

What exactly caused Mane to

become a shadow of his former self is subject to speculation. But something is certainly off and which, reading between the lines, Tuchel has acknowledged.

The new manager has also mentioned trust and patience - two attributes that might not come to mind immediately when thinking about Bayern, who fired their head coach Nagelsmann despite a winning ratio of 73%.

Bayern are a club in uproar and Mane is a supposed star name on the downside. It could be a toxic marriage.

**F**ORMER Nigerian youth international, Emmanuel Ebiede has died at the age of 45 after a protracted illness.

Ebiede had been battling with hepatomegaly (enlargement of the liver) and despite the intervention of Rivers State Sports Commissioner, Chris Green last week, he eventually died on Friday.

Top Nigerian journalist, China Acheru who is based in Port Harcourt where Ebiede was receiving treatment confirmed the sad news.

"Good bye Emmanuel Ebiede. Your journey on earth has ended," Acheru posted on his Twitter handle.

The sad news was also shared by a former Presidential Candidate during the Nigerian Football Federation (NFF) elections in 2022, David Doherty.

"Unfortunately, Emmanuel Ebiede has passed away," Doherty who opened a fund raiser for Ebiede on his social media handles, tweeted.

Rivers State Sports Commissioner, Green took swift action over Ebiede's health challenges.

His condition had reportedly improved with Green stating that the responsibility for the eventual recovery and rehabilitation of the former Super Eagles midfield pearl would be borne by his Ministry.

Recall that Green had similarly spearheaded the

## Ex-Flying Eagles star dies at 45

rehabilitation former Rivers State and Nigeria national team (Basketball) point guard, Miebaka Clinton, who recently suffered a stroke.

Ebiede played professionally in Belgium (Eendracht Aalst) and The Netherlands (SC Heerenveen) and was capped three times by Nigeria at the

senior level. There is a question mark over paying €40m for a player that would just be a rotation option at best during the opening spell at Real Madrid. However, with the potential Veiga has, he could turn out to be an absolute bargain.



Late Emmanuel Ebiede

## NBA fines Mavericks \$750,000 for resting key players

**T**HE Dallas Mavericks have been fined \$750,000 by the NBA for resting key players against the Chicago Bulls despite being in play-off contention.

In a statement, the NBA said they had shown "a desire" to lose in order to improve their chances of getting a top-10 pick in this summer's draft.

NBA executive vice president Joe Dumars said the Mavericks' actions had "failed our fans and our league".

Mavericks were defeated 115-112 by the Bulls on 7 April.

Dallas said Kyle Irving,

Tim Hardaway Jr and Maxi Kleber were all nursing injuries while Josh Green and Christian Wood were being rested.

All five players - plus Luka Doncic, who played only 12 minutes - featured in their previous win over the Sacramento Kings, which led to the accusations of 'tanking' - fielding a weakened side in order to lose and improve their draft chances.

A lower finish in the overall standings would have boosted Dallas' hopes of signing highly-rated French teenager Victor

Wembanyama.

"The Mavericks violated the league's player resting policy and demonstrated through actions and public statements the organization's desire to lose the game in order to improve the chances of keeping its first-round pick in the 2023 NBA draft," the statement said.

"The league did not find that the players who participated in the game were not playing to win."

Dumars added Dallas had "undermined the integrity of our sport".

If Dallas secure a top-10 pick for the 2023 draft they get to keep it, but if the pick is 11th or lower, it goes to

the New York Knicks as final payment for the January 2019 trade to sign Latvian forward Kristaps Porzingis.

A lottery to determine the final order for the draft in June will be held on 16 May.

During Friday's play-in tournament, Jimmy Butler and Max Strus both scored 31 points as the Miami Heat gained the final Eastern Conference play-off spot with a 102-91 victory over the Chicago Bulls.

Miami will be the number eight seeds and will face the top-seeded Milwaukee Bucks in the first round, which starts in Milwaukee on Sunday.

Strus scored 23 points in the first half and made seven six-pointers overall for the Heat, while Butler made 22 of his 31 points in the second half.

The Minnesota Timberwolves also advanced to the play-offs with a comfortable 120-95 victory against the Oklahoma City Thunder.

Karl-Anthony Towns had 28 points and 11 rebounds and Rudy Gobert had 21 points and 10 rebounds on his return from a one-game suspension as the Timberwolves claimed the eighth-seed spot in the Western Conference.

They will take on the Denver Nuggets, who are the top seeds, in the opening round on Monday.



Luka Doncic (centre, covering his face with his hand) was taken off off during the first quarter against the Chicago Bulls



April 16, 2023

## Caging the beasts at NPFL venues

**T**HE urchins are back at match venues. No surprises. The league matches are grinding to a halt. Clubs are becoming more desperate in their search for points either to strengthen their quest to be part of the Super 6 or fight for their lives to escape being relegated to the lower rungs of the game in Nigeria.

So far, the officiating has improved going by the increase in the number of away victories secured by visiting teams unlike in the past when the domestic league was characterised by home wins aptly tagged win at all cost syndrome. Shame on the club owners who instigate their thugs who masquerade as supporters to cause mayhem at match venues across the country.

What happened in Remo penultimate weekend was unfortunate given the fact that the proprietor of Remo Stars Soname has been an incredible supporter of the beautiful game in Nigeria, not only in words but in deeds given the moral and financial contributions which predate being a member of the IMC.

If it were possible to plead for a reprieve on this dastardly act, one would have done so. The punishment meted out to Remo Stars was appropriate since it was meant to serve as a deterrent to any club whose supporters love to take the laws into their hands – wreaking havoc on innocent fans who have chosen to watch the game here.

The match of Sunday, April 2 was concluded the next day after the Referee was assaulted in the dressing room at half-time as a result of Remo Stars' failure to provide adequate security for the match Officials.

"The IMC in a Summary Jurisdiction notice signed by Davidson Owumi, the Head of Operations said the sanctions followed a review of findings of the official match report.

"In the charge, Remo Stars was found in breach of Rules B8.21, B13.21, C11 and B13.52. For breach of Rule B8.21 which is failure to adequately secure match Officials before, during and after the match leading to the assault on one of them, the club was fined N500,000 and also directed to pay N250,000 to the said Official, Uka Ndubuisi as compensation.

"For breach of Rules C.11, three points and three goals were ordered to be deducted from the total points and goals accrued to the club for the assault on the match official while Mr Ekene Adams identified as the attacker has been banned from all NPFL activities for the rest of the season.

"Remo Stars is also to ensure diligent prosecution in the law court, of Mr Adams who is the Club's, General Manager."

Remo Stars' management has appealed the decisions against them, with many lovers of the game pleading with the Appeals Committee



members to treat the matter on its merits and not on sentiments.

One would want to see how the big man who was also punished would escape the full wrath of the law, having been recognised by the referee to have assaulted him. The big question to ask is why the referee would choose to implicate the big man, if he wasn't at the stadium, let alone have beaten the referee groggy.

What stands out clearly is that Soname is a man of honour. Some other Nigerians would have cried wolf where there isn't. Soname has chosen the path of honour by following the procedure of asking for a superior body to take a second look at the

unfortunate incidents on April 2. Other Nigerians would have caused tantrums, throwing their weight around. No so for an internationally exposed Soname. The way to go, sir.

Sadly, Ikenne has become a hotbed of league violence with the fixtures between Remo Stars and Bendel Insurance FC of Benin City being a seasonal drama of crowd encroachment of the field seeking to interpret the rules of the game as the exclusive prerogative of the centre referee and his two assistants.

One of the games between these two teams was reminiscent of a war zone with the Benin lads running for their dear lives such that they flew over the walls in the stadium. It was that scary,

leaving weaklings among them being victims of cudgels flung on their heads.

One hopes that members of the IMC make it mandatory that they watch this red-lettered game to avert another dastardly act by the home fans, It won't be out of place to televise that game between Remo Stars and Bendel Insurance on Sunday in Ikenne live for Nigerians to see live in their living rooms. Top-notch security architecture should be provided by the IMC by ensuring the home team's management sticks to the rules on security before, during and after the game this Sunday.

I have always advocated here that such red-lettered

matches are handled by the best set of referees and match commissioners with several independent assessors. Indeed, the coaches and players sitting on the bench should be warned to be of good conduct before, during and after this Sunday's game.

The referee should be told categorically that anyone of them sitting on the bench who constitutes a nuisance on Sunday, including those whose theatrics on the touchlines could incite irate fans at the stands to wreak havoc should be sent off the pitch. It would be a shame if this game witness any form of violence with IMC's top men watching. I digress!

If you thought, dear readers that the Remo Stars'

punishment would serve as a deterrent, then what happened in Bauchi less than seven days portrays the level of decadence in the domestic league under the sacked LMC, where anything goes.

This followed a review of the findings of the official reports for the MatchDay 13 fixture between Wikki Tourists and Bayelsa United on April 9, 2023. The interesting thing about the two judgments against Remo Stars and Wikki Tourists was that there wasn't any form of favour in the application of justice on two similar offences. What is good for the goose should also be good for the geese.

Besides, the swiftness with which both decisions were taken against irritants in the league here is highly commendable. It is no longer business as usual where disciplinary committees give a slap on the wrist decisions for heinous crimes by criminals.

Interestingly, the window for appeals lapses after 48 hours as stated in the communiqué. It is quite laudable that the IMC's decisions have been timely, but it raises the poser why the league body hasn't contacted the State Commissioners of Police in the States where the games are played for them to watch over the different stadia to maintain public peace.

Of course, where the police or security operatives are present in the stadium, beasts who have flouted the law are immediately arrested and handed over to them for prosecution. It isn't enough for the body to make pronouncements or ask the criminals or offending clubs to pay fines and treat injured referees.

These injured referees and fans should be made to be part of the criminals' prosecution in court where they can narrate their close shaves with death, and the pains and mental torture they went through. Their accounts may further embolden the judges to strike out any pleas from the criminals' lawyers of them being first offenders.

The court proceedings should be covered massively by the media. The news stories from the courts should be published in all the newspapers and in the electronic media. Shouldn't the IMC members insist that venues hosting the domestic league games should have closed-circuit devices to fish out such miscreants?

When I raised the question of the television coverage coming back on stream soon, an ardent follower of the domestic game looked at me cynically and sighed: "Are you sure there is a television deal in place for the league? If there was a sponsor, shouldn't the organisers have unveiled them? Smaller African nations have their leagues covered by Supersports, for instance. Yet we had the South Africans as our sponsors, we let them leave."

## West Ham look to fade Arsenal title dream

**T**WO capital clubs with differing ambitions for the remainder of the Premier League season lock horns in a London derby today, as West Ham United host Arsenal at the London Stadium.

David Moyes's side enter the contest on the back of a 1-1 draw with Gent in the first leg of their Europa Conference League quarter-final, while the Gunners let a two-goal lead slip at Anfield last weekend.

Somehow still alive in their third-tier European quarter-final, West Ham goalkeeper Alphonse Areola came under siege from a barrage of Gent attacks at the Ghelamco Arena, and Moyes was left thanking his lucky stars that the Hammers were able to cling on for a slice of the spoils.

Following Nayef Aguerd's disallowed scrappy goal, Danny Ings got off the mark in continental competition to put West Ham into the ascendancy, but Hugo Cuypers swiftly levelled for a Gent side who can count themselves unfortunate not to be taking a slender advantage to the English capital.

Conference League

commitments take a back seat for a few days, though, as Moyes's men endeavour to continue their capital supremacy following a smash-and-grab 1-0 win over Fulham last weekend, keeping them above the dotted line in 14th place for the time being.

With just three points separating West Ham from Nottingham Forest in 18th place, results on Saturday could drag the Hammers back into danger, but losing just one of their last four in the division has somewhat eased their demotion fears and the pressure on Moyes's tired shoulders.

Then again, that loss was the humiliating 5-1 defeat to Newcastle United at the London Stadium earlier this month - bringing an end to a five-game unbeaten home streak in the Premier League in abysmal fashion - and an Arsenal side aiming to right their Merseyside wrongs will not be in any sort of charitable mood.

The stage was set for Arsenal to end the miserable Anfield Premier League hoodoo that has bedevilled them since 2012, and silencing the Kop through Gabriel Martinelli and

Gabriel Jesus's efforts had Mikel Arteta's men on course to do just that last Sunday.

However, once the spark was ignited in Liverpool fans' bellies, the hosts were a different beast - cutting the deficit in half through Mohamed Salah before the Egyptian sent a penalty wide - and Arsenal's public enemy number one Roberto Firmino headed home a deserved equaliser for the Merseyside giants.

Had it not been for a pair of scarcely-believable interventions from Aaron Ramsdale, Arsenal could have been travelling back to base without a point, as Arteta oversaw a timid second-half display which

has put a sizeable dent in their title chances.

Now sitting six points clear at the summit, Arsenal's lead will be cut down to a mere three if Manchester City - who have a game in hand - see off Leicester City on Saturday, and the Gunners can ill-afford anything less than maximums before their season-defining trip to the Etihad Stadium later this month.

West Ham drew first blood at the Emirates back on Boxing Day, but Arsenal brought the festive cheer to North London by coming from behind to win 3-1 - their sixth triumph from seven against the Hammers since a Declan Rice-inflicted loss at the London Stadium in January 2019.



Arteta