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Fuel subsidy removal: Why NEC made a u-turn

The planned June 2023 dateline for the removal of the lingering oil subsidy by the Federal Government has now been halted at the recommendation of the National Economic Council [NEC]. Chaired by the Vice President Prof. Yemi Oshibanjo, there are dare concerns on putting Nigerians into another round of economic crisis barely few months ago after the country was thrown into a total mess due to the CBN naira redesign policy.

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Building collapse: One too many

YEAR-IN year-out, building collapse has become a recurring phenomenon in almost all parts of Nigeria resulting in loss of lives and billions of Naira in investments. The rate at which some of the structures, some under construction, have been failing, are a source of concern and something urgent needs to be done to curb the menace.

THE recent collapse of a seven-storey building on Banana Island in Lagos brought to the fore, again, the recurring, and very disturbing issue of building and structural failures in the country.

IN other climes, buildings don't just collapse every other day. From the architectural design stage to civil and structural engineering, actual construction and completion of a project, efforts are made to ensure that laid down regulations are strictly adhered to. And, there are no shortcuts aimed at minimising costs. In Nigeria, however, failure of the regulating agencies to properly perform their supervisory roles has given way to a situation where quacks have taken over with dire consequences.

A number of reasons have been adduced for the recurrence. Some of them include failure of regulatory agencies in monitoring and enforcement, alleged sharp practices by representatives of regulators, the inability of professional bodies to fulfil oversight functions, failure of government at different levels to prosecute offenders conclusively which is believed to help perpetuate impunity, and preponderance of substandard building materials in the country, among others.

HOWEVER, there have been disturbing revelations that some construction sites would have had at a point been ordered sealed off. Yet, before one knows it, they will be reopened for construction.

REPORTS have it that some structural engineers would be pulled out of projects due to their inability to guarantee the integrity of the high-rise buildings allegedly due to sudden change and deviation from its initial design. Yet work would go on.

SEVERAL other factors have been fingered as the cause of the collapse, among them the failure of the supervisory and regulatory role of the state's Building Control Agency and other agencies such as the State Materials Testing Laboratory saddled with laboratory tests and services on soil, concrete, steel, chemical, calibration, Non-Destructive Testing (NDT), and geo-technics for buildings.

EXPERTS have also attributed the causes of incessant collapse to substandard building materials, pilfering, faulty non-adherence to designs, lack of comprehensive subsoil investigation before designs are done, illegal conversion or alterations to existing structures, and use of quacks or unskilled builders. They faulted government's agencies such as the various State Physical Planning Permit Authority, various State Material Testing Laboratory, State Building Control Agency, and various State Safety Commission, among others for not taking handling the issue with the seriousness it deserves.

THE incessant collapse of buildings in the country definitely reflects badly on professionals in the industry who are struggling to wrest construction jobs from the few foreign companies operating in Nigeria. But they cannot compete if their building sites become killing fields. It is, therefore, important that there be a register of every professional in the industry to check their activities and documentation. Given the volume of work in the construction industry, it may also be necessary to engage external but trust-worthy certifiers to carry out construction site monitoring.

Buhari should get visa ban after handover

—PDP

The Peoples Democratic Party has called on the international community to impose sanctions, including a visa ban, on the President, Major General Muhammadu Buhari (retd.), for undermining democracy in Nigeria.

The party stated this while reacting to a comment credited to the President wherein he claimed that opposition parties lost the presidential election because of overconfidence and lack of strategy.

While describing the remark as reckless, the PDP said history would not be kind to him as the comment was capable of destroying the nation's corporate existence.

Addressing a press conference at the party's national secretariat on Friday, the National Publicity Secretary of the party, Debo Ologunagba said, "Having clearly undermined democracy in Nigeria, the PDP calls on the international community to accordingly impose sanctions including visa ban and travel restrictions on Buhari and his family immediately he vacates office on May 29, 2023.

This demand for sanction is in line with President Buhari's request on February 17, 2022, in

Brussels, Belgium, wherein he called on the European Union to impose 'weighty sanctions' on those engaged in 'unconstitutional change of governments' as well as those influencing the 'process and outcomes of elections'.

"It is instructive to state that part of the electoral process is the adjudication by the Presidential Election Petition Tribunal which is considering petitions arising from the election.

The President, Major General Buhari (retd.) by his subjudice statement, is clearly interfering in the electoral process ostensibly to influence the outcome and undermine the constitutionally laid down procedures for change of government."

According to the party, the February 25 presidential election had been judged across the nation and globally as the worst in the history of our country.

The party added that the presidential election was marred by brazen violations of the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended), the Electoral Act, 2022, Independent National Electoral Commission Regulations and Guidelines, and manipulation of processes.

It stated that the poll was



Buhari

marred by the alteration of genuine results from polling units, the announcement of fabricated figures, and "climaxed by the vexatious declaration of the candidate of the All Progressives Congress, Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu as the winner".

It also said it was unpardonable that the President did not uphold the laws of our country to ensure a free, fair, credible, and transparent election.

Sudan crisis: Why FG splashed \$1.2m on buses

THE Federal Government on Saturday explained why it splashed \$1.2 million for the 40 buses hired to evacuate Nigerians from Sudan.

The hefty amount was settled for in a "condition of war", the Federal Government said.

The clarification came in a Joint statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development.

The statement was signed by the Director overseeing the Office of the Permanent Secretary, MFA, Amb. Janet Olisa, and Permanent Secretary, FMHADMSD, Dr. Nasir Sanigwarzo.

"The general public is also advised to discountenance unverified information being circulated on social media as some of it is either due to ignorance or sheer mischief. The outcry over the negotiated sum of \$1.2 million for the buses hired for the exercise, is uncalled for.



Farouq

"The amount in question was negotiated in a condition of war and where there are competing demands for the same bus services by other countries also trying to evacuate their citizens. Therefore, cooperation and understanding of all and sundry are required to complement ongoing efforts aimed at ensuring

the safe return of every Nigerian trapped in Sudan," the statement clarified.

No fewer than 5,500 Nigerian students are stranded due to the ongoing crisis in Sudan.

The government had released N150m for hiring 40 buses to convey its desperate citizens from Sudan to Cairo in Egypt.

FG postpones National Census indefinitely

THE Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, has announced President Muhammadu Buhari's approval for the postponement of the May 3rd 2023 population and housing census.

The Minister in a statement in Abuja on Friday morning, said a new date will be determined by the incoming administration.

The statement read: "President Muhammadu Buhari has approved the postponement of the 2023 Population and Housing Census, earlier scheduled for 3-7 May 2023, to a date to be determined by the incoming Administration.

The President gave the approval after meeting with some members of the Federal Executive Council and the Chairman of the National Population Commission and his team at the Presidential Villa in Abuja on Friday (28 April 2023).


In arriving at the decision to postpone the Census, the meeting reiterated the critical need for the conduct of a Population and Housing Census, 17 years after the last Census, to collect up-to-date data that will drive the developmental goals of the country and improve the living standard of the Nigerian people.

The President noted that with the completion of the Enumeration Area Demarcation of the country, conduct of first and second pretests, the recruitment


and training of adhoc workers, procurement of Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) and ICT infrastructures, appreciable progress has been made in the implementation of the 2023 Population and Housing Census. He also commended the methodology being put in place by the Commission to conduct accurate and reliable Census, especially the massive deployment of technology that is capable of delivering world class Census and laying a sustainable basis for future censuses.

"The President further directed the Commission to continue with preparations for the conduct of the 2023 Population and Housing Census in order to sustain the gains already recorded and provide the basis for the incoming administration to consolidate these achievements.

The meeting was attended by the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Mr Abubakar Malami; the Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs Zainab Ahmed; the Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed; the Minister of State, Budget and National Planning, Mr Clem Agba and the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Mr Boss Mustapha."



With
**Katdapba
Y. Gobum
On Sunday**



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"The time has come, and it must be emphasized that the state has long lost the Plateau spirit of togetherness. Every nationality appears to be on its own concerning several things that ordinarily should have brought them together for peace and development. Nations don't develop in the manner Plateau people are going about it. At the way and point the state is divided as Nigeria, it is high time we got leaders that can draw everyone together for its good."

As a reporter, there comes a time that writing on a topic becomes monotonous, however, I am aware that the concept of feeding frenzy in journalism is not lost in the case under consideration. Until the attacks on Plateau communities come to an end, only then would I cease to make a case for the concerns of the people.

When it comes to reporting crisis on the Plateau, I can beat my chest to have reported a number of them, though they are sadly remembered. But let it be noted; one is not being boastful, as if it is a record; for whom amongst us would feel happy to have your readers fed with details of the massacre of people, and even more continuously?

The attacks on communities of Mangu local government area as first reported can never be cheering to those who value human life; neither can any nation be any happier with the litany of harvests of deaths in the land for over two decades continuously.

When the Director General of the Plateau Peace Building Agency, Mr. Joseph Lengman issued a terse statement on April 17, 2023 of disturbing 'ugly turn of events in Mangu local government area of Plateau State', it was apparent that we have sadly returned to the dark days again. The 'disturbing reports indicate a deteriorating security situation in some parts of the locality that has led to the death of scores of precious human lives and property destroyed.'

That was not all as the 'attack is coming on the heels of pockets of attacks recorded in some parts of BarkinLadi in the last few days'. As usual, it is condemned 'in totality' as 'this resurgence of violence' has the 'potential to throw the state back into those dark days where human lives and property are destroyed at the slightest provocation'.

The sad aspect of the attacks is that they came 'at a time that the Christendom has just celebrated the holy season of Easter and the Muslim faithful are still observing the holy month of Ramadan speak volumes of the character and disposition of these unscrupulous elements who do not mean well for the state and its citizens'.

The attacks this time, took place in the sleepy villages of Murish in Bokkos and Jwak Mai Tumbi in Mangu local government areas. They are in many respects 'orchestrated' attempts 'to instill fear in the minds of the people, even as the wet season sets in'; thereby sending them away from their ancestral homelands, and by extension making most who are farmers to desert their farmlands. This is a sure way to create hunger and make them susceptible to begging for survival.

But the fact that the state was almost on its path of recovery for the old good days is enough to be worried. It is on this note that every sane man or woman desirous of living peacefully should be concerned. It is for the sake of what the state wants that more are on their knees to ward off the present danger and affliction.

In this regard, everyone has a responsibility to each other, particularly traditional institutions, community leaders, elders, youth and women to be vigilant, but more importantly 'by prevailing on their subjects to tow the path of peace in resolving all issues of conflict through dialogue and other Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanism rather than taking up

Where are the attacks taking Plateau to?



Mutfwang

arms that would only lead to a vicious circle of internecine violence'.

How better put, however, some of the times it is difficult to swallow the pains of loss and sit with the 'enemy' to discuss how to resolve the issues; particularly when the victims often are not the aggressors. Difficult as it comes, the sacrifices Plateau communities have undertaken to put behind them the pains of the death of family members and relations and of the destruction of property have been enormous and worthy of commendation.

The state government agreed with the position of the Plateau Peace Building Agency that 'the attacks are another attempt to reintroduce the era of violence and crises which have been largely contained due to government's huge investment in security, peace building and reconciliation'.

As stated by the government: The governor as always 'has ordered security forces to go after those perpetrating violence around villages in Mangu and Bokkos local government areas which has resulted in destruction of properties and loss of lives'; most of the time the perpetrators disappear into thin air; and the victims are left to rue their fates with condemnatory statements from all.

Is that not reason that they are commonly referred to as 'unknown gunmen'? It is not how many times that they are reported to have been arrested, but, of the few that may have entered the hands of security agencies, how many of them have been brought to justice? This question has been asked repeatedly without any tangible answer from those that matter. But the 'unknown gunmen' are not spirits; it is this development that saddens the natives wondering if their security means anything to government.

Those who know recall what the state has gone through from the numerous attacks; where precious lives of children, women and men were cut short; not to talk of property destroyed and lands grabbed from ancestral owners. Like Nigerians would say, 'this life no balance at all', meaning life does not favour all equally. But the essence of the cry is to demand for what is lacking in the land; justice being the meat of the oppressed.



Lalong

DavouBoyi, Joseph John and Timothy Peter.

The harvests of deaths in the five local government areas in the past have been disturbing, as it took place a couple of days ago in the same local governments mentioned above. Has anyone observed to ask, why is it that each time it takes place, the attackers target the natives during rainy season? Could it be deliberate or that it is mere happenstance, so as to stop them from producing food?

Could there be something the attackers know that we are not aware about the numerous communities which have come under attack? Are the attackers living in the communities or have they been hired to destabilize the state? We need to know if the attacks have taken place to settle certain scores or that they are out on a mission to make life difficult for the people of the communities?

There are many questions that must be asked. They may have been some of the questions the Plateau Peace Building Agency, which has done a lot of advocacy work in all communities that have been attacked and even much more to ensure that peace returns to the state have also asked. A lot of other people have asked: Have the security agencies failed to contain the upsurge? Have the communities just sat back and done nothing to encourage the violence to become a recurring decimal in the state? What has the state not done right to put an end to this systematic annihilation of Plateau people over the years?

There are still concerns that the nationalities in the state are not united in dealing with the crises. Sadly, many are of the view that the people of the state 'abandon' attacked communities any time it takes place in the state. They think it is the business of those communities where the attacks take place to 'deal with their problems alone'.

The time has come, and it must be emphasized that the state has long lost the Plateau spirit of togetherness. Every nationality appears to be on its own concerning several things that ordinarily should have brought them together for peace and development. Nations don't develop in the manner Plateau people are going about it. At the

way and point the state is divided as Nigeria, it is high time we got leaders that can draw everyone together for its good.

The state is 'blessed' with abundant sectional but tribal leaders willing to be connected only to where they belong. Only their people matter to them, as such, there is no voice that the state can rally round to speak and direct the people. If it has such, they will always be at the forefront insisting the best be given to all communities of the state.

What took place between 2019 and 2022 in Riyom, BarkinLadi, Bokkos, Mangu, Bassa, Jos North, Jos South and Jos East can only be imagined. If attacks take place in any community in these local government areas, many turn blind eyes to it, and expect only the communities to worry about 'their problem'. The resurgence should teach the state to create a rallying point, where all concerns can be channeled to for solutions.

In the estimation of the outside world, Plateau people are a difficult set. Those who have gone through same nature of unprovoked attacks know how it feels. But as we continue to peruse through condemnatory releases, government has a huge responsibility to the people. This may not be lost; which is why the land needs total cleansing.

It is the hope of the people that in the incoming dispensation, God willing, Plateau State should have a point for which its citizens can be brought together to realize its strength; which, for long has been exploited. Nothing can be better for the state than to stay and fight together for the cause of justice for its people. Today, I plead with well-meaning Nigerians to raise their voices and drown out the noises of those currently working overnight to pitch 'Ngas, Berom, Gamai or Mwaghavul or any tribe' against each other in the name of politics. It is time to break the monopoly of hate mongers. Warning: if you choose to be a peace builder, there is a price to pay: you may be accused of being politically correct or sitting on the fence. Refuse to be blackmailed by the merchants of strife. Above all, people are free to demand justice if they feel aggrieved. People can support any candidate they like. But nobody has a right to provoke or attack others because of their choices. We must put our primordial emotions in check for the greater good'.



Children frustrating parents' efforts

There are numerous stories making the rounds about children claiming to outsmart their parents. A very common one is bringing a fictitious list of books for which purpose they collect money that goes to their pockets. Or demanding money for non-existent hand-outs. These are the least but commonest ones.

Mr Simon (fictitious name) discovered after three years that his son had been in the University that he had been expelled since his first year for gross misconduct but no one told him. All this while, he has been playing his part as a dutiful father. He used to give him money for shopping to resume school. Credit his account with enough money every now and then. And once a while, he would call and demand for money.

Mr Simon said what pained him most was that his wife knew but joyfully joined in the conspiracy. He has developed high blood pressure due to the pain which has cost him sleepless nights. "I feel like I have been living with strangers. Nobody has my back in my family," Mr. Simon lamented.

Hanna left home full of promise to come to the school. However, she became friends with a group of girls who loved to live big and as such, make up for what their parents gave them by becoming call girls for some big companies. These companies called them whenever their top officials come for meetings in Jos. At the end of the meetings, Hanna and friends would leave with fat envelopes paid formally through the office.

While Hanna's parents who were Pastor's, saw her like an innocent girl that could not hurt a fly, she was a high-classed prostitute who was highly paid for services rendered. In fact, she was one of the favourites because of her innocent looks, voluptuous body and medium height. On top of it, she knew how to play shy even though a very intelligent and lively lady.

At the end of her education, she had amassed so much wealth. The only reasonable explanation she could give was that she was schooling and working. This held sway until the mother paid her a surprise visit. Everything added up as the mother watched her daughter's and friends' movements and the kind of men that came around. Hanna's only luck was that she was through with school because her mother chastised and preached to everyone that came around until they all ran away convicted or feeling condemned. The good news is that Hanna is now redeemed after a long struggle.

Babawo loves to think of himself as a very easy-going, generous and loving father. He has never withheld anything good from his children if it's within his means to give them. Recently, he got the shock of his life when police came knocking at his door that they came to arrest his son. They said he was one of

the member of the notorious gang that has been disturbing the neighbourhood. They have broken into most of the shops in the area and have robbed a few homes.

Nothing has been the same since. He has wondered where he has missed it or what went wrong. Why did his son bring them this kind of shame? They had to pack to a new environment to start afresh. His son is still locked up after being found guilty.

Madam Kach (not real name) has just discovered that her daughter has been sexually active as a lesbian since she was 12 years old. The worst part is that she is not even remorseful. She wants to blame it on the last housemate they had but claimed she has helped her make her choice.

Madam Kach has been a parent who is godly and teaches her children the word of God, encouraging them to know God for themselves. She has taught them since childhood about sins that God regards as abominations. And homosexuality was one of the sins she pointed out to them. So, where is this coming from? She wonders.

Mama Sara's shop used to be the rallying point of their street. She knew every one and everything about everyone. Gossip was her favourite pastime until the day her daughter was caught in a car making out with a married butcher. They were dragged out and paraded naked round the street until police arrived. Mama Sara has been unable to raise her head since. She is a shadow of her former self. The only good thing is that it has served to heal her of the bad habit of gossiping.

The stories are endless. Apart from children who transfer money from their illiterate parents' accounts. Or manipulate their parents to get what they want. There are those who have sold their parents' property, yes, even landed property, sending them to early grave. We are fast to forget the 4th commandment. The only commandment that comes with a blessing. 'Honour your father and mother so that you may live long in the land of the living.' Do you wonder why we are dying young?

You could be an onlooker who seems nonchalant towards what is happening around you. Whether we like it or not, we are all victims. One person's actions or inactions affect us all.

The ball is in our courts parents to draw our children close and lead them on godly paths. Spend quality time with them and pray together.

Government on its part should be proactive and give the society legislatures that will serve as deterrent against sale and intake of illicit drugs. Please we must act fast to salvage the next generation.

NEWS

Security personnel targeted as southern Taraba crisis escalates

From VICTOR GAI, Jalingo

One soldier is feared dead while several civilians were critically injured in the latest attacks by unknown gunmen in Takum Local Government Area of Taraba State.

This brings to three the number of security personnel that were ambushed and killed in one week in the troubled area.

The Nigeria Standard learnt that there is a similarity in the pattern of attacks that have been occurring in the same axis and which have been committed by yet to be identified gunmen.

Just last week, unknown gunmen suspected to be Fulani militias had ambushed and killed two immigration officers in Takum LGA of Taraba State.

The immigration officers were said to have been attached to Ussa Local Council checkpoint and were identified as Inspectors Adike Austin and Uzo James.

Also, in November 2022, 6 defence forces personnel and a Commanding Officer were killed in the troubled area when the forces intervened in the clash between the Kuteb ethnic group and Fulani.

Narrating what happened, a resident of the area, KM Kasman, said the soldier was ambushed and killed while returning from his duty post in a similar manner to last week's episode involving the immigration officers.

"He left his duty post and on his way back to the barracks. His duty post is in Kashimbilla Power Station. He was on a motorcycle and he ran into an ambush by some Fulani men. They picked his gun and his footwear. An ethnic Kuteb and Tiv man also fell into the ambush and they survived

with machete cuts. It was citizens have been killed by in the same place the bandits in Takum, Ussa and immigration officers were Yangtu. Equally, thousands ambushed and killed," he of people have been disclosed. displaced from their homes.

According to him, the troubled area was "I want the whole world surrounded by Fulani to know that about 80% of herdsmen and that it was Kuteb people are farmers highly risky to travel out and with the current wave of the general area. of attacks if care is not taken to stop the conflict, farming activities may be grounded and famine will be inevitable in Takum, Ussa and Yangtu.

"You can't travel a kilometer from Takum They kidnap and lay ambushes on a daily basis," Kasman added. "School activities have stopped in the affected areas for over one year now. There is no free movement of persons in the affected areas because one could be attacked at any point.

He also blamed the security personnel for being complicit in the crisis. "Since early last year, our people have been displaced in their thousands from their homes as a result of bandit's attack. They can neither go back to their homes because of insecurity nor census staff dare go to the affected areas to carry out housing census," Ukwem lamented.

"One surprising thing is that on every market day, the army escorts the Fulani with their cows to the market to sell. From Mararaba to Kashimbilla through Kwanbai down to Takum Cattle Market. It is like the army is using the crisis to make money. The armed forces- the army and police, it is like they are helping the Fulani to grow stronger," he lamented.

Meanwhile, the Kuteb National Population Commission to look into the people's predicament and ensure that the affected areas are not left during the forthcoming "headcount".

In a press conference held on Tuesday in Jalingo, the KutebYatgso of Nigeria (KYN), The Military Spokesman lamented the killing and in Taraba, Lt. O. Oni did not confirm the incident but said military operations were ongoing in the general area.

Emmanuel Ukwem, as the "Military operations are currently ongoing in the area. But for now I can't ascertain if there is any such incident.

He described the crisis as having a political undertone and that the forthcoming census exercise might be affected in the area. "Ussa has been in the news. There have been communal clashes in the general area. So after the operation, we can get facts and figures," he stated.

"Dozens of innocent



Akali

POLITICS

APC congratulates Kogi APC flag bearer

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress, APC, Senator Abdullahi Adamu, has congratulated Hon. Ododo Ahmed Usman, the APC candidate for the Kogi 2023 governorship election, for his well deserved victory.

He stated this at the party secretariat in Abuja, when Hon. Ododo in company of the Kogi State Governor, Yahaya Bello, paid him a visit.

A statement signed by the Chief Press Secretary to Kogi State Governor, Onogwu Mohammed, indicates that the APC National Chairman expressed delight at the party's prospects for success in the November 2023 gubernatorial election in Kogi State.

In his response, the APC gubernatorial candidate, Ododo, promised not to disappoint the party and the people of Kogi State.

He stated that he would build on the legacy and achievements of the current administration of Yahaya Bello when elected.

I want to thank you and the leadership of our great party for the peaceful conduct of the party's primaries in Kogi, which I won, and others in



Ododo

Bayelsa and Imo states, respectively. I promise to consolidate on the gains of the present administration of His Excellency, Governor Yahaya Bello, and it is our collective belief that we shall win the November 2023 gubernatorial election.

I want to use this singular privilege to seek your fatherly prayers as we move closer to the general election," Ododo said.

On April 14, 2023, the Kogi State APC Primary Election

Committee announced Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo as the winner of the Kogi APC governorship primary election, having polled 78,704 votes to defeat other contestants in the race.

Party stalwarts endorse Goje's expulsion from APC

From WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe

MORE Local Government party officials in Gombe State have come out in defense of the expulsion of former Governor Muhammad

speculations had been perished and their purveyors brought to shame.

According to the statement, Alhaji Atiku Bagudu, the Chairman of the PG, who is also the governor of Kebbi State, led his colleagues to Tinubu's residence.

It listed those in attendance to include Vice President-elect Kashim Shettima and Governors Simon Lalong (Plateau), Nasir el-Rufai (Kaduna), Aminu Masari (Katsina) and Hope Uzodinma (Imo). Others it said were Abubakar Badaru (Jigawa), Babajide Sanwo-olu (Lagos), Ben Ayade (Cross Rivers), AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq (Kwara), Dapo Abiodun (Ogun) and Biodun Oyebanji (Ekiti).

It said there were also the Deputy Governor of Ebonyi, Kelechi Igwe, and APC governorship candidate in Kano State, Alhaji Nasiru G a w u n a .

The statement quoted Bagudu as saying that the visit was to congratulate Tinubu on his election victory and extend goodwill to him over the end of Ramadan Fast.

Bagudu said the visit was also to welcome Tinubu back from his recent travel abroad and celebrate with him, adding that the governors are ready for any assignment the president-elect may give them.

On the election of presiding officers of the in-coming 10th National Assembly, Bagudu pledged that the governors would continue to discuss. He said they would continue to work with the party and the lawmakers to arrive at the best decision in the interest of the country. (NAN)

By PETER TITLE

PLATEAU State Governor-elect, Barrister Caleb Mutfwang has expressed sadness following bloody attack unleashed on innocent citizens by bandits at a mining site in Farin Lamba community of Jos South Local Government Area of the state which led to loss of lives.

Barr. Mutfwang who condemned the act in its totality asked security agencies to fish out the perpetrators so that they face the full wrath of the law.

The governor-elect who was moved by the sad incident in an appeal to security personnel said, "You should do all within your power to halt further attacks on Plateau communities. We cannot afford to allow acts of impunity to continue against our peace loving people".

He equally called and appealed to peace loving and patriotic citizens of the state and environs to be committed to peaceful co-existence and unity for maximum protection and safety.

Barr. Mutfwang further admonished Plateau citizens to

Mutfwang condemns Farin Lamba attack



Mutfwang

be conscious of their environment and to alert constituted authorities of any strange movement around them for swift action.

He used the opportunity to commiserate with those who lost their lives as a result of the incident and reassures citizens of his commitment to a peaceful and progressive state.

Tinubu tasks Progressive Governors on unity, support

THE President-elect, Sen. Bola Tinubu, has charged All Progressives Congress (APC) governors to work with the party's leadership and lawmakers on the election of principal officers of the incoming 10th National Assembly.

According to a statement issued by Mr Tunde Rahman, one of Tinubu's Media Aides, on Thursday in Abuja, he gave the task when the governors under the agies of Progressives Governors Forum (PGF) visited him.

"We thank God Almighty for our electoral victory. It was tough and turbulent.

"The challenge before us is working in unison with the party's leadership and the National Assembly over the election of their principal officers.

"And I charge you to unite in

spirit and faith and work in line with the party," he urged. The president-elect told the governors and former governorship candidates of the party that whether they were returned elected or not, the incoming administration belonged to all of them. "Once we know what we are doing and communicating as elected leaders and loyal party men, we will conquer the challenge," the statement quoted Tinubu to have said. He reiterated that as leaders, the governors were elected to serve the people and humanity with fairness and justice.

Tinubu expressed gratitude to God that he as the first Muslim minority from the South-West got the blessing of Allah to be elected as president.

He dismissed speculations about his health, saying all



Goje

Danjuma Goje, Senator representing Gombe Central, from the ruling All Progressive Congress (APC) amidst an existing Federal High Court injunction restraining the action.

A chain of support for the expulsion of the embattled Senator who is also waiting to be sworn-in for another term in the upper chamber of the National Assembly, has continued to pour in from other Local Government Areas outside the Senator's constituency.

But reacting to the expulsion, Saidu Muazu Kumo, a senior legislative aide to the senator, said they would rather keep mum over the issue until the determination of a restraining order instituted and served to the Kashere Ward executives of the APC even before they announce Goje's expulsion.

According to Saidu Muazu, a legal practitioner, the case had been in court even before the purported expulsion in Kashere on 18th of April, 2023.

He said, "there was a court order and the party (APC) was served in Kashere on the 16th and 17th of April, 2023 that they should restrain, they should go to court to hear all

the complaints of Senator Muhammad Danjuma Goje at the Federal High Court Abuja but they went ahead to do the purported expulsion.

"As lawyers, we have been admonished not to talk when a case is still in court. We don't have anything to say until when the matter is heard and determined by the court of law.

"We are operating a constitutional democracy in Nigeria, so, you cannot do anything that contradicts the power of the court and you think you will succeed", he emphasized.

He also described the action of the APC in Kashere Ward as 'subjudice' adding that adoption of the expulsion by other party executives from other Local Governments of the state was more like "building something on nothing".

The Senior Legislative Aide said, "they are building their foundation on what the Kashere Ward executives had done. So, it doesn't matter, it is just like building something on nothing. What they did today is not something new, they are still insisting on what the Kashere Ward did on 18th April, 2023".

He called on Goje's supporters across the country to remain calm and wait for the outcome of the court judgement. He added that, "what we know is that Senator Goje is a senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and a senator-elect for Gombe Central Senatorial zone under the APC".

The APC as a party and its Kashere Ward Chairman, Tanimu Abdullahi who appeared on the restraining court order as defendants were expected to appear in the Federal High Court Abuja on Thursday 20th April, 2023.

In the meantime, several local government party officials of the APC across the state,

have on 26th April, 2023, continued to endorse Goje's expulsion and passing a vote of confidence on the incumbent Governor, Muhammad Inuwa Yahaya as the leader of the party in the state.

They have also congratulated the governor, the President-elect, Bola Ahmed Tinubu and all others elected under the APC over their victories during the 2023 general elections.

In their address to the press, held simultaneously across nine LGAs on the 26th April, 2023 while two LGAs held their's on the 25th, the party chairmen expressed among others, serious concern over charges of grave misconduct and anti-party activities against some party members and officials in Gombe State during the recently concluded general elections which undermined the success of the party and caused serious harm to the party's unity and progress.

In Billiri LGA where our correspondent attended the briefing, the secretary of the party, Boyi Gidado who read the statement on behalf of the Chairman, Isyaku Zakari, called on party executives at all levels to take appropriate disciplinary measures against any party member and officials who committed anti-party activities before, during and after the elections with a view to entrenching intraparty discipline and sanitizing the party from unscrupulous and double faced elements.

They said, never again would the party fold its hands and allow unpatriotic individuals hold the party to ransom or commit any act capable of undermining its success, internal cohesion and unity.

They enjoined loyal party members to close ranks and support the decision of the party in order to build a more cohesive and strong APC.



Tinubu

POLITICS

Tinubu settles for Akpabio, Barau as Senate President, Dep

President-elect Bola Ahmed Tinubu has concluded plans to pair the former governor of Akwa Ibom State, Senator Godswill Akpabio, with Senator Jibrin Barau as Senate president and deputy respectively, Daily Trust has exclusively gathered. Akpabio and Barau are among the nine contenders for the Senate presidency of the 10th assembly, expected to be inaugurated on June 13.

CREDIBLE sources revealed that the president-elect, who returned to the country on Monday after 34 days abroad, communicated his decision to Akpabio and Barau during a meeting held in Abuja. The former Lagos State governor had on Tuesday met with Akpabio, Barau, Senator Opeyemi Bamidele (APC, Ekiti) and the Ekiti State governor, Biodun Oyebanji.

Sources said during the meeting, which they said was at the instance of the president-elect, Barau was asked to drop his bid for the Senate presidency in the interest of national cohesion, fairness and religious balancing. A lawmaker from the South said Barau was prevailed upon to sacrifice his ambition in the interest of peace and tranquility in the country. "He was told to drop his ambition for the emergence of a Christian as the president of the next Senate.

"The president-elect told Barau that he is extremely qualified for the job but that he should drop his ambition for the emergence of a Christian to enable his administration to commence on a good footing. "He said since he (Tinubu) and Senator Kashim Shettima (the vice president-elect) are Muslims, the right thing to do is to support a Christian.

"It was after the pleas that the president-elect told Barau that he would want him to work with Akpabio as deputy Senate president," the senator said, pleading not to be named.

Corroborating this, another

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It was gathered that the president-elect would meet other contenders for the Senate presidency to formally inform them of the decision on Akpabio and Barau soon. After that, Tinubu would also meet all the senators-elect who are members of the APC in furtherance of the consultation. It would be recalled that at a meeting on Wednesday, which had in attendance the president-elect, the vice president-elect, Senate President Ahmad Lawan, Speaker Femi Gbajabiamila, and the leadership of the APC led by Senator Abdullahi Adamu, it was resolved that Tinubu anchors the efforts of identifying and selecting the leadership of the National Assembly.

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Tinubu

source, a member of the National Working Committee (NWC) of the All Progressives Congress (APC), told this paper that the president-elect has contacted Akpabio and Barau on his decision to pair them for the Senate presidency.

"I was not there when the meeting was held, but two people who attended it have told me of the decision by Asiwaju. It is a fact that he has settled for Akpabio and Barau for the Senate president and deputy," he said.

An ally of Tinubu from the North had previously told our correspondent of the preference of Tinubu for Akpabio. However, he was not reachable when attempts were made to speak with him on the nomination of the former Akwa Ibom governor by his associate.

When contacted, Akpabio simply said, "I don't know." However, Barau could not be reached.

Daily Trust reports that aside from Akpabio and Barau, seven other senators have indicated interest in the Senate presidency including Senator Orji Uzor Kalu (Abia North); Sen Abdul-Aziz Yari (APC, Zamfara West); Sen Sani Musa (Niger East); Sen Ali Ndume (Borno South), Sen Osita Izunaso (Imo West), Dave Umahi (Ebonyi South) and Adams Oshiomhole (Edo North).

Efforts to get the reactions of Sen Kalu, Sen Ndume and Sen Musa yielded no results as they were unreachable via phones. A report claiming that Tinubu had endorsed Kalu for the Senate presidency had gone viral on

social media recently.

Asiwaju to convey decision on Akpabio, Barau to NWC, other contenders

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Daily Trust reports that in the 109-seat Senate, the APC has 59 senators, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) 36; Labour Party (LP) eight, New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) two, Social Democratic Party (SDP) two, Young Progressives Party (YPP) and the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) one seat each. Akpabio and Barau require a simple majority of votes to clinch the two positions when the parliament is inaugurated in June after the transmission of a letter of proclamation by the president to the Clerk of the National Assembly.

North can't be second fiddle – former governor

But an influential former governor faulted the decision of



Akpabio

the president-elect to settle for Akpabio for religious balancing.

In an interview, the former governor, said, "Yes, there is a need for sacrifice, but the North should not be second fiddle because of the need to placate some people who contributed almost nothing to the table.

"If there is something called sacrifice, it should go across the board; all the zones should be made to do the same," he said.

"After sacrificing the presidency to promote national unity and peace, now they want to treat us as second fiddle. We won't take this. We have made the first sacrifice. Let other regions do the same. The North gave Tinubu the party ticket and gave him the winning votes, so it is the turn of other zones to make sacrifices," the former governor said.

DailyTrust



Barau

SUNDAY POLITICS

Gov. Udom and Akpabio's search for Senate Presidency

A few weeks ago, Senator Orji Uzor Kalu flew into Uyo to meet with Gov. Udom Emmanuel and seek his support for his aspiration to be the next President of the Senate. Kalu knows that the relationship between Gov. Emmanuel and Senator Godswill Akpabio, another major contender for the senate top position, is quite frosty and so, he asked the governor to get the two PDP senators in the state to support him, writes ETIM ETIM.

I understand that Gov. Emmanuel was noncommittal in his discussions with Mr. Kalu perhaps because, in the first instance, the governor would be out of office by the time the senators elect their leaders on June 9, and so he may not have much influence on the senators from the state.

It is not clear if Kalu had met with the governor-elect, Mr. Umo Eno. With the President-elect back in the country, the leadership of APC will take a final decision on which zones will produce the Senate President and other principal officers of the National Assembly.

Meantime, I am reliably informed that Senators, politicians, religious and traditional rulers from Northern Nigeria are lobbying hard to have the position of Senate President zoned to the North West region. If that happens, it means that the top positions would be occupied by Muslims.

However, there are expectations that based on the need for inclusivity, the top senate position should go to either the South East or the South-South region and there are many compelling arguments for either. Akpabio and Kalu are the top contenders from their respective zones and both men are pulling all the stops to win. Even before Kalu visited Uyo, Akpabio's team had already spoken to the two PDP senators from Akwa Ibom to seek their support.

Akpabio is banking on the fact that Akwa Ibom people from across the political divide are also rooting for him. "I have nothing personal against him; he is from Akwa Ibom State and I will always support an Akwa Ibom person who is aspiring for any national assignment", said Senator Ita Enang, who had contested for the APC governorship ticket in 2022, but was not supported by Akpabio.

One of the two PDP senators-elect from the state, Dr. Ekong Sampson, declined to state categorically if he would vote for Akpabio on June 9 when I spoke to him recently. "I think it is too early for me to declare my stand publicly at this moment for strategic reasons", he said, adding, "but as you do know, Akpabio is my good friend, and my relationship with him goes far back to pre-1999. Ekong however advises Akpabio to reach out to all the 108



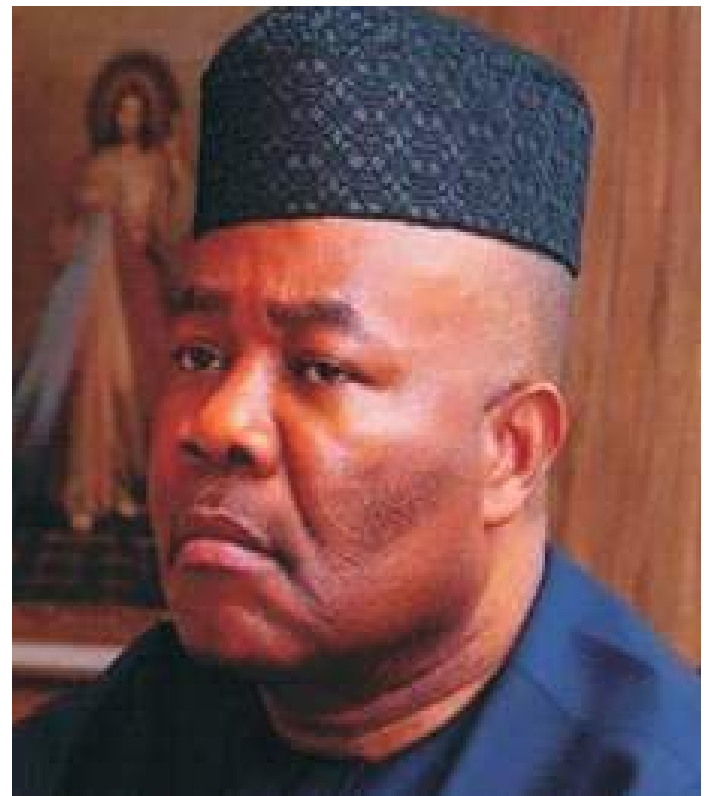
Emmanuel

senators as the "race is very intense and competitive".

Another influential politician from Akwa Ibom State, Rt. Hon. Onofiok Luke, is also in support of Akpabio's bid. A member of the House of Representatives, Luke was probably the first major PDP chieftain to publicly declare support for Akpabio soon after the election. In an interview with Thisday newspaper, Luke said that the former Akwa Ibom governor has the requisite qualities need for the job.

But where does Gov. Udom Emmanuel stand? Is he in support of Akpabio who is his predecessor in office and contributed immensely in making him governor, or is the governor rooting for Senator Kalu who does not even enjoy home support? A few months ago, Ohaneze Nd'Igbo, the sociocultural organization of South East people, had asked Senator Kalu to drop out of the race because he is not fit for the job.

"Igbos cannot present somebody with an EFCC case; Igbos can't present somebody as Senate President with EFCC case that could be disgraced tomorrow; Igbos can't present someone facing trial with EFCC", Okechukwu Isiguzoro, the Secretary General of the organization said in response to Kalu's aspiration. I recall that Senator Kalu's conviction by the Federal High Court, Abuja, was eventually quashed by the Court of Appeal sitting in Abuja. I do



Akpabio

not know which other EFCC case Chief Isiguzoro was referring to.

Senator Akpabio towers above other contenders in many respects. He commands immense influence among his colleagues, has a national appeal, understands the workings of the legislature and is fiercely loyal to the President-elect and the country.

I recall that it was the stepping down of Akpabio for Tinubu in the APC Presidential Primary at Eagles Square, Abuja, last year, that set the stage for the withdrawal of other aspirants from the race, thus facilitating Tinubu's

victory. Given Akpabio's deep experience in governance and politics, I trust that he will also give President Tinubu the required support and help to stabilize the polity if he is elected Senate president.

Unlike Kalu, Akpabio has never been arrested or imprisoned. He served Akwa Ibom people creditably well as their governor between 2007 and 2015. He was elected Senator in 2015, soon after he left office as governor, and was unanimously elected Senate Minority Leader as soon as he got into the Senate, despite the fact that he was a junior Senator. Such principal positions are usually reserved for ranking senators, but

because of the confidence his colleagues had in him, the requirement was waived for him.

Akpabio is also an asset to the APC. He worked with other APC leaders to secure 27% of the votes cast in the last Presidential election in his home state of Akwa Ibom for Tinubu. In Abia State, where Senator Kalu is from, Tinubu performed very poorly. Nevertheless, I urge the President-elect, the APC as a whole and all the other 108 senators of the 10th Senate to support the emergence of Senator Akpabio as the next Senate President.

"I am reliably informed that Senators, politicians, religious and traditional rulers from Northern Nigeria are lobbying hard to have the position of Senate President zoned to the North West region. If that happens, it means that the top positions would be occupied by Muslims. However, there are expectations that based on the need for inclusivity, the top senate position should go to either the South East or the South-South region and there are many compelling arguments for either. Akpabio and Kalu are the top contenders from their respective zones and both men are pulling all the stops to win. Even before Kalu visited Uyo, Akpabio's team had already spoken to the two PDP senators from Akwa Ibom to seek their support".

SUNDAY PEOPLE

BUHARI PARTICIPATES AT NIGERIAN ARMY COLORS PARADE 2023

Nigeria's President, Muhammadu Buhari, former Head of States, Gen. Dr. Yakubu Gowon and others participated at this years Nigerian Army Trooping and presentation of colors parade at the Eagle Square, Abuja



President Buhari (right) in a warm handshake with the former Nigerian Head of States, Gen. Dr. Yakubu Gowon



President Buhari (middle) with other Service Chiefs in a group photograph



President Muhammadu Buhari inspecting the Nigerian Army colors party Parade



Muhammadu Buhari taking salute at the colourful ceremony

PHOTOS: STATES HOUSE PRESS, ABUJA

PRESIDENT BUHARI MEETS APC GOVERNORS

President Muhammadu Buhari this week met with the All Progressives Congress (APC) State Governors at the Presidential Villa, Aso Rock, Abuja



President Buhari (left) in a handshake with the leader of the Progressives Governors and Kebbi State Governor, Atiku Bagudu



Governor Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State, SGF, Mr. Boss Mustapha in a group photograph with the President and other APC Governors



Cross section of APC Governors in a private meeting with President Muhammadu Buhari



President Muhammadu Buhari in a group photograph with APC Governors Forum

PHOTOS: STATE HOUSE PRESS, ABUJA

By **TIMOTHY TYEM**

THE current Plateau State House Assembly (PLHA), is the ninth in the series of Legislative Assemblies in the state beginning from the Nation's Second Republic in 1979.

Inaugurated on 11th June 2019, the State Legislature hit the ground running but not sooner had it taken off than its Legislative functions were scuttled by the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic in the country which forced national and global lockdown.

An Assembly composed of a handful returning lawmakers from the Eighth Assembly with versed experience on parliamentary duties and ethics, the blend of old and young members in the Ninth Assembly is the oxygen that energized some level of achievements recorded.

Without any sense of doubt, the present Assembly in Plateau State is able to fashion the legislative framework that birthed the Plateau State Contributory Healthcare Management Agency, PLASHEMA, achieved its legislative financial autonomy and returned the state budget circle from January to December among numerous successes recorded in the exercise of its constitutional responsibility.

However, many keen followers of the Assembly's activities within the public domain had at different times held critical opinions on the state of Ninth Assembly's performance. While some levied their criticism on the parliament's underperformance when compared to past Assemblies others express worries on its inability to convene sittings and discussed the state of affairs within the larger Plateau geographical space.

The Ninth Plateau State legislative Assembly is currently headed by Speaker Yakubu Yakson Sanda after the perceived "ill-fated" impeachment of Abok Nuhu Ayuba; an impeachment some political analysts believed has remained a curse rather than blessing to the overall operationalization of House's responsibility. Sadly though, the Ninth Assembly in Plateau has its own share of solemn moments. Three lawmakers (Ezekiel Afon of Pengana, Henry Longs of Pankshin South and Eric Dakogol of Qua'anpan North Constituency) sadly passed on at different times while Musa Agah of Rukuba-Irigwe Constituency won and moved to the Federal House of Representatives, the Green Chamber, to represent Jos North/Bassa Federal Constituency.

In the meantime, eight out of the twenty one serving members in the Plateau State House of Assembly have won primary elections from their respective political parties to boost their chances of returning to the Tenth Assembly. The Speaker, Yakubu Yakson Sanda, from Pengana, Naanlong Gapyil Daniel from Mikang, Nanbol

Daniel Listick of Langtang North Central, Bala Hudu Ismaila from Kantana, Bala Fwangje of Mangu South, Abdul Yanga from Mangu North East, Timothy Dantong of Riyom and Fom Dalyop Gwottson representing Jos South Constituency are the few that made it beyond party primaries. Peter Ibrahim Gyendeng, representing Barkin Ladi Constituency, however contested and won the Barkin Ladi/Riyom Federal Constituency seat at the National Assembly.

That the Plateau Tenth Assembly is a grazing field with or without an experienced lead horse is a matter only time can



X-raying the state Ninth Assembly



Sanda



Naanlong



Yanga



Dalyop



Gyendeng



Tyem

tell. But given the scenario that played out especially during the just concluded Presidential and National Assembly Elections wherein unpopular political parties also gained representative seats, fears are being entertained on whether or not all or some of the eight

lawmakers that scaled the first huddle will make it pass the March 18, 2023 Gubernatorial and House of Assembly Elections.

Pundits in Legislative affairs and Legislative scholars have often said that a legislator is like wine which tastes sweeter with

time. By this phrase, they are expected to perform optimally when the electorate decide to return them for another term.

In conclusion, it is near obvious that a dearth of experience is certain to roar its ugly head in the Tenth Assembly with the number not

really encouraging as it stands. Where this permutation suffices, a gamut of time to learn the legislative processes and procedures will take a toll on the new Assembly with resultant effects which include, among others, delayed productivity.

SUNDAY MAGAZINE



Buhari



Osinbajo



Zainab

Fuel Subsidy removal: Why NEC made a u-turn

The planned June 2023 dateline for the removal of the lingering oil subsidy by the Federal Government has now been halted at the recommendation of the National Economic Council [NEC]. Chaired by the Vice President Prof. Yemi Oshibanjo, there are dare concerns on putting Nigerians into another round of economic crisis barely few months ago after the country was thrown into a total mess due to the CBN naira redesign policy. KENNETH DARENG, writes.

THE decision appears momentary, as one anonymous oil marketer told THE SUNDAY STANDARD; "This decision by government is just to avoid embarrassing the in-coming APC administration that may not be able to handle the boomerang effects and the anticipated back lash from the public while it thinks of a convenient date. It is just like shifting the evil day which must surely come."

While the tension and pressure continue to mount for the deregulation of petroleum products, the body language of the Federal Government suggests that there is no going back on subsidy removal even as oil marketers and other stakeholders in the petroleum industry are already bracing up to matters arising from the implementation which SUNDAY STANDARD sources are predicting will trigger a hike in all

petroleum products particularly, Petroleum Motor Spirit [PMS], or Petrol as commonly known to many Nigerians may hit N800.00 per litre.

Nigeria as a nation that is operating a mono-economy which largely depends on its crude oil out-put in proving service delivery among all its socio-economic sectors, may witness so many challenges which many commentators ascribed to the uncertain measures put in place in terms of importation and managing sufficiency within the daily domestic demand of products.

However, part of the challenges may be as a result of foreign exchange gap which is about 15.1 billion US dollars on PMS only especially when the oil subsidy is completely removed. This comes to bare even as marketers have insisted that unless a practical framework is designed to manage the

transition to a deregulated market, and the crisis already created by the naira redesign policy may resurface and cause more economic crisis that may also cripple the in-coming Tinubu Administration.

According to Gabriel Mokoh, a Petroleum marketer in Jos, who expressed his opinion to SUNDAY STANDARD noted that, "This planned deregulation by the Federal Government is just shrouded in secrecy and creating unnecessary apprehension within the oil sector itself either due to lack of enough information on the way forward or the policy itself is not well conceived to succeed. And if care is not taken, it may rubbish the gains being envisaged and further destabilize our already struggling economy." Mokoh said.

Madam Patricia Dusu, a grains dealer in Jos South Local Government Area, expressed fear that the removal of oil

subsidy at a time when every average Nigerian is struggling to survive the present hash living condition in the midst of growing costs of food items in the market, high costs of transportation and that of general goods and services which revolves round the oil pump price of petrol would not anger well.

"I think we don't need such for now because we are already chewing enough of hardship. Look at what Nigerians had to go through with the CBN Cashless Policy, and as if that is not sufficient, they want to bring another one again, Are our leaders cursed?" She asked.

According to Kingsley Jeremiah [The Guardian- April 27, 2023], About 7 trillion naira is spent yearly to import PMS alone while the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited [NNPCL] funds the spending by being the sole importer. And as last year, only about 1.3billion Naira was provided by the CBN for fuel import, which went mostly into diesel and kerosene. Therefore, subsidizing fuel foreign exchange for marketers may not be different from the PMS subsidy regime. Besides, sourcing dollars CBN may not have the liquidity buffer to fund PMS especially from the parallel market which could be expensive.

However, based on the average cost of PMS in Chad, Cameroon, Benin and Ghana, where much of

subsidized Nigerian fuel is smuggled to, which as well is used as reference by anti-subsidy advocates, is , 1.078 US dollars per litre which also means, if Nigerian oil marketers sell below the threshold, there could be market disincentive.

As it is, the marketers do not even know if the CBN would provide forex to them or if the NNPCL would remain the sole importer of the petroleum product. Again, some critics who spoke to SUNDAY STANDARD wondered why the NNPCL which for too long had remained a conduit pipe for corruption and other sharp practices in collusion with some marketers should be allowed to retain sole importer status in the subsidy deregulation.

Martin Agyo, is a lecturer in one of the tertiary institutions in Jos, in his opinion, keeping the subsidy in place does not impact on the lives of most Nigerians, Rather, it only serves the common interest of a few cartels within the system." When our oil refineries have been forced not to be operational with only those close to the corridors of power reaping the gains of oil blocks and imports of the product while many Nigerians spend days in endless queues at Filling Stations and buying the products at cut throat prices without any option available..

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Continued on page 31

NEWS

Medical associations mourn first female plastic surgeon

From **AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja**

AS Nigerians mourn the sudden demise of the late first Plastic Surgeon in Northern Nigeria, Dr Halima Grace Rabeh David, the Medical and Dental Consultant Association, Federal Teaching Hospital Lokoja and Medical Women Association of Nigeria, (MWAN) Kogi State

Chapter recently held a procession in honour of the late surgical expert. The event which took place at the Federal Teaching Hospital Lokoja attracted friends, family, course mates and colleagues of the deceased whose death left people across different divides devastated. Speaking at the event, the Chief Medical Director, Federal Teaching Hospital, Lokoja, Dr Olatunde Alabi described Dr Halima Grace Rabeh David as a virtuous woman whose sudden demise has thrown the surgical world into sorrow. While describing the deceased as a big gain in heaven following her humanitarian service to the nation, and across the world, Dr Alabi noted the late plastic surgeon was an epitome of humility, who is widely loved by all that have had encounter with her.

Dr Alabi told the gathering to emulate the good virtues of the deceased, adding that she



Ehanire

would forever be remembered for her simplicity, humility, hard work and commitment to the work of God. In his speech, Dr Ebune Ojochide, from the Surgery Department, Federal Teaching Hospital, Lokoja, explained that late Dr Halima Grace Rabeh David lived a fulfilled life while on earth.

Dr Ojochide, who lauded the deceased for her exemplary leadership while on earth said "Living a life worthy of emulation is what people should strive to achieve. She fought the good fight and died in the process, and she has been and will continue to be remembered for her selfless service to her country".

Adding his voice, the Chairman Medical Advisory

Committee, Dr Ododo Bernard said the deceased was humility personified. He pointed out that Nigeria has lost a great woman on earth.

He charged the gathering to imbibe the positive life of Dr Halima Grace Rabeh David,

On his part, the Provost, College of Health Sciences, Federal University, Lokoja, Prof. Mike Ogirima said the deceased was his classmate in 1982. According to him, the deceased while on earth promoted the work of God and has won many souls for God.

The immediate past President, Medical Women Association of Nigeria, MWAN, Dr Mrs Patricia Medupin who could not hide her tears recalled that

the deceased was the first member to be lost in the history of the association in Kogi State.

Dr Medupin further revealed the role the deceased played when MWAN was launched in Kogi State in 2015. He said that she played an important role in sustaining the growth of the association.

Dr Medupin averred that the death of Dr Halima Grace Rabeh David has brought sorrow and sadness to the association, just as she described her as a pillar who will forever be missed.

She maintained that Nwan is still shocked over the demise of Dr Halima Grace Rabeh David, urging her family to take solace over the irreplaceable loss. Also speaking, the Kogi State Chairman, Nigeria Medical Association, (NMA) Dr Baoku Olushola lamented that NMA has lost some members in the last four months. He described the death of the deceased as sad, just as he commended the family of the deceased for raising a woman who helped change the lives of many in the world. According to him, Dr. Halima Grace Rabeh David lived up to the oath in line with her profession, family, religion urging everyone to retrace their steps to



Nigeria suspends fuel subsidy removal

The National Economic Council (NEC) on Thursday suspended the removal of fuel s u b s i d y .

Govs eager for new revenue sharing formula, to beg Buhari to send draft to NASS

Nigerian state governors are set to meet with President Muhammadu Buhari over the new revenue draft presented to him by the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC)

Your sins are unforgivable, IPOB tells Buhari

Outlawed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), has reacted to an apology from President Muhammadu Buhari calling on Nigerians to forgive him for whatever hurt he may have inflicted on them in his eight years in power.

Malami dismisses claim on illegal sale of 48m barrels of oil

The Minister of Justice, and Attorney-General of the Federation, Abubakar Malami, on Thursday described as baseless the claim that his office illegally sold 48 million barrels of oil worth \$2.4 billion in 2015

First batch of Sudan returnees to arrive Nigeria Friday

The Federal Government said on Thursday the first batch of Nigerians returning from war-torn Sudan would arrive in the country on Friday.

Overconfidence caused opposition's defeat in presidential election - Buhari

President Muhammadu Buhari said on Thursday identified overconfidence as the cause of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)-led opposition's defeat in this year's presidential e l e c t i o n

Court rejects alleged terrorist negotiator, Tukur Mamu's bail application

The Federal High Court, Abuja, on Thursday dismissed the bail application filed by alleged terrorist negotiator, Tukur Mamu.

Ezekwesili tasks Nigerians on solutions to challenges

The former Minister of Education, Obiageli Ezekwesili, has charged Nigerians to get involved in efforts at addressing the numerous challenges facing the country.

Oshoala stars as Barca overcome Chelsea to reach Champions League final

Super Falcons star, Asisat Oshoala was in action for Barcelona in their 1-1 home draw with Chelsea in a Champions League semifinal second leg clash on Thursday night.

Tony Elumelu parts with N23bn to take back Transcorp Plc control from Otedola

Tony Elumelu spent over N23 billion to tighten his control in Transnational Corporation (Transcorp) after Femi Otedola displaced him as the single largest majority investor in the firm.

Complied by JIDAUNA DARING

SOSG inaugurates Transition Committee

From **ANENE AIKE, Sokoto**

FOLLOWING the victory APC recorded at the just concluded 2023 Sokoto State governorship election, the Governor-elect, Ahmad Aliyu Sokoto, approved composition and inauguration of a committee for easy takeover of power by May 29, 2023 made up of over 108 members, first of such figure in the state.

The Governor-elect in his inaugural speech said the task before the transition committee is leveraged on the broad composition of 108 members with diverse experience and pedigree and directed them to ensure timely accomplishment of the responsibilities before them.

He pointed out that with the four terms of reference outlined in their letter of appointment, they are

expected to develop a clean framework for liaison with the outgoing administration for the purpose of smooth takeover.

In addition, the governor said, it is expected of them to carryout detailed analysis, review and provide preliminary assessment of the handing over reports they may receive from the outgoing administration.

The incoming Governor-elect, Ahmad Aliyu Sokoto advised them to draw inference and recommendations from the received handover reports as well as to highlight the most urgent and critical issues that may be confronting the incoming APC Sokoto State government.

Aliyu further stressed that the committee is aimed at obtaining facts that are necessary to develop a framework that will enable a great and easy start by the incoming



Tambuwal

administration.

On a serious note, he stated that the committee is expected to prepare a roadmap for implementing the manifesto for incoming government based on the collated campaign promises to be achieved on the short, medium and long term of the administration.

In his address at the ceremony, APC Chairman

in the state, Isah Sadiq Achida in his welcome address acknowledged the contributions of electorate towards the success of all the 2023 elections and assured them that their contributions will be rewarded accordingly as it's only an ingrate that forgets contributions made to him in time of need.

SUNDAY FEATURE

As waste dumping overwhelms Niger major towns

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SUNDAY FEATURE

Cult following, the Kenyan tragedy

'Those who fail to learn from history are condemned for repeating its mistakes' - George Santayana- Imagine a world without religion. Imagine still the hopelessness of life if the idea of the afterlife or hereafter is not a soothing balm to douse the grimness of death as the finality for man. This is where religion has become critically relevant because it teaches us of the superior being to whom we shall return and account on the last day. OBOLI AUGUSTINE, writes.

RELIGION essentially moderates our lives, emphasizes goodwill, ethics, and good morals, arms us with the inner strength and courage to do what is right, and enamours us with the virtues of selfless service. So, at both individual and societal levels, religion benefits us, given that it is positively related to higher levels of subjective well-being. Conversely, religion has also been used as a vehicle for intolerance, fundamentalism, and mass suicide.

A religious cult arises when people follow a particular leader in his teachings and ways because they believe he is divinely inspired.

Belief in God has a lot of psychological benefits but following depraved and extreme teaching is nothing but superstition and misplaced faith, and in recent history such misplaced faith and blind followership have wreaked enormous havoc in human deaths and destructions.

For about a week now the Goodnews International Church in Kenya has been trending. Founded by Paul Makenzie Nthenge in 2003 with the mission to nurture 'the faithful holistically in the matters of Christian spirituality as we prepare for the second coming of Jesus Christ through teaching and evangelism' the Church has once again shown the gullibility of man and the extent he could go to profess his faith and belief, whether well nurtured, ill-conceived, true or false. Words from the 'man of God' are godly and must be sunk in as the holy grail, even when they are against the grain of any sound reasoning. Contrary views, opinions, or attempt to question their reasonability or validity as dished out must be heretical and devilishly inspired.

Small wonder, Paul Makenzie Nthenge, having assumed larger than life annointed personality, deployed religion to promote a radical ideology and carry out the heinous crime. He was said to have told the proselytes to starve themselves to death to facilitate their ability to see Jesus. Didn't Karl Marx sound the warning about the numbing effect of religion and its capacity to push an unscrupulous and unsanctimonious ideology to a bitter end, when he wrote that religion is the sign of the oppressed creatures, the heart of a heartless condition, and the soul of a soulless world? Marx was gravely misunderstood as a sad atheist, but he was raising the alarm about the negative side of religion and the need to check it.

Nthenge during one of his teachings over the years would have touched on the beauty of the celestial plane where the angels are always in dancing and celebratory mode, and Jesus sits in His splendor, power, and glory. It, therefore beats one's imagination that neither he nor any members of his family was prepared to see Jesus yet. He is such an altruist, that he would leave the opportunity first for members of his



Pastor Paul Makenzie who starved his member to death

congregation. What a good man! And so the members heeded his instructions and embarked on starving to die and see Jesus. Funnily though, none of them dared asked the pastor why he was not participating in the observance of starvation to see the Lord. They were the poor members of society, who have always suffered deprivation, and saw nothing worth living for in their material world, thus they quickly embraced the pastor starving euthanasia as a way of leaving the evil world to be with their maker and suffer pains no more.

And so, in the Malindi district of southeastern Kenya, the Kenyan tragedy was born. In a forest area where the Church community operated, 800 acres of land were sealed off and declared a crime zone. Mass graves littered the massive area and the Kenya health authorities had the grim task of exhuming the remains of dead Church members, some of them long declared missing by family members. As of the last count, 89 bodies have been found and another 38 rescued from the jaws of starvation and death. Interestingly, some of the rescued refused to give up their resolve and mission to starve to death and meet their maker Jesus. They have been brainwashed and turned into zombies. How tragic! But the greater tragedy is that morality has been short-circuited and highjacked by religion. Luckily, the culprit and evil pastor has been arrested by the authorities.

While the Kenyan episode is instructive as a rude awakening, the issue of evil teachings by some of the religious leaders with a cult following must be on the front burner of our discourse. Because this issue of mass suicide has a

way of repeating itself. Perhaps, we are lucky in Nigeria that it has never really come to that. Though, we have our peculiar situation where innocent persons have been swindled and sold fake miracles and prophecies by dubious clowns posing as men of God; thereby tarnishing the image of those with genuine call and anointing in the vineyard.

History remains a guide but time and time again we failed to reckon with history. Yes, we have a Kenyan tragedy playing out before our very eyes because mankind is a poor student of history.

Doomsday churches that believe in the impending apocalypse have always been with us. I can effortlessly reel out a few extreme ones without breaking a sweat: Remember 'The Peoples Temple' founded in 1955 by Jim Jones, the mad messiah. He taught about the end of the world and encourage his followers to commit mass suicide and make an early exit to the great beyond, where they would be welcomed at the foot of the Lord. He caused his followers to drink poison. Nearly a thousand persons died in the mass suicide. The movie Guayana Tragedy reenacted the events in Jones Town, Guyana in 1978.

'Church of Euthanasia' was formed in Boston, USA. Their teaching forbids members from procreating which was against the ordinance of God when He charged man to 'go ye forth and multiply'. They practice suicide, abortion, cannibalism, and sodomy. Their slogan is Save the planet, Kill yourself.

Then, there was the 'Branch Davidian

Church' shepherded by David Koresh. It was founded in 1985. Koresh regarded himself as the final prophet and considered the state as the enemy of the people. He sexually abused women in his Texas temple. When his activities drew the interest of the state and there was an intervention in 1993, he urged his followers to set the property on fire to consume everybody. Close to a hundred devotees including Koresh himself died in the inferno.

'Order of the Solar Temple' also comes to mind. The Order based in Switzerland was founded in 1984 by Joseph Di Mamboro. They also believe in mass suicide as the only way to see the Lord.

Just imagine the time lag between when these cult doomsday churches were leading men astray in the name of God and the Kenyan moment. What it tells us is that we should be on alert and watch out for signals and red flags in the teachings of some of these religious leaders around us. It could happen anywhere at any time. Kenyan authorities and the populace never foresaw what happened. Yes, they might have read about such abnormalities and sheer insanity happening in far-flung places but never took note. It can never happen in Kenya, they may have concluded.

But it did.

Are there lessons learned? This thing will continue to have its episodes if we continue to turn blind eyes to it. Yes, religion is a private matter but when a private matter impacts the larger society it becomes an issue of concern which the government should take more than a passing interest in. Pastor Nthenge was said to have been arrested some time ago when its unorthodox teachings were first noticed. But he was let go and had no further monitoring. The result was the increased tenacity of his ideology and the mass suicide witnessed today.

But again as my mother would say, while you blame the goat for eating the yam, you should also blame the person who kept the yam carelessly within the reach of the goat. People mostly find solace and succour in religion because the system has consistently failed them. When the necessities of life are not provided by the political authorities, the religious bodies fill the socio-economic gaps, and concert a messianic mission to save the forgotten and lead them on the path to heavenly bliss for this world is not their home. Naturally, one tends to lean toward those that show love to them and take their words as the gospel truth. That is how the cult of followership is cultivated and nurtured. And before you could say jack, the adherents, and devotees are being taught and instructed to do unimaginable things.

While our hearts go out to the grieving families in Kenya for the needless and preventable loss of their loved ones, we should studiously learn from history to avoid a repeat of its mistakes.

I had a conversation with an Ivorian friend of mine who has been in Nigeria for a while, and we were talking about how wealthy but poor Nigeria is. He made an observation. He said that Nigeria is rich but poor. I smiled sadly in agreement with him. Nigeria is rich but poor. I agreed with him. Brutal truth. I told him that this has to do with our mindset. I told him that the poor mindset we have has affected our behavior to the point where most of us have become so corrupt. This corruption stems from the belief that gaining wealth at all costs is more important than any other consideration. This has tainted our image to the point where Nigerians are globally considered to be dishonest people.

Our mentality and mindset also influence our behaviour towards others. Ethnic and religious arrogance are widespread. Our political landscape is inundated with ethnic and religious sentiments and arrogance and when one region of the country is in power, that region takes over completely. It is almost as if the rest of the country is being told: "it is our turn to pilfer". These are our biggest problems in Nigeria: corruption, mediocrity, ethnic and religious arrogance, and a show-off culture that make up the cocktail of vices that has affected our behaviour and the development of this country.

When is Nigeria going to move from a country of great potentials to one that has fully exploited its potentials? I think that this will happen when we the people of Nigeria, embrace a different mind set. One of nationalism, a conscious and calculated change. It is when Nigerians become dissatisfied with the name that we carry and the disrespect it engenders. We both agreed, my friend and I, that our image abroad has been torn to pieces and the saving grace are our Nigerian music and movies. Our entertainment industry is doing us proud. This is the good legacy that our actors, artists and musicians are creating for Nigeria globally. Thank God for them.

How do great nations do it? How do they build a good name? My religion tells me that a good name is better than wealth. Business ethics also tells me that a good name is equal to a good brand and a good brand creates wealth. How do they arrive at creating a good name for their country? My research shows that it comes from a collective sense of nationalism. A nationalist is a patriot. One who places the country's image and good over and above his selfish interest, if he has one. One who believes in leaving a good name and a good legacy. What is a legacy? The Cambridge dictionary defines it as follows: "a situation that has developed as a result of past actions and decisions, something that is as a result of events in the past, a legacy is also money or property left to a person by someone who has died, money or property that a person or organization receives from someone who has died, a legacy product or system is one that is no longer available to buy or no longer used very often, but that is still used by some people or companies".

What is our legacy as Nigerians? Our founding fathers left a legacy of independence and unity. They gave us Nigeria. After them, it has been one group of leaders after the other. I will not go into new history in order not to raise my blood own pressure. Metaphorically speaking, it has been a southward journey. Our economy has gone from good, bad to

worse. Our unity is in question. The oil that brought us so much wealth and glory has brought us laziness and greed. We have become brazenly insensitive to poverty and suffering. Our capitalism has turned our politics into an exercise in horse trading, stealing, ethnicism and the deepening of poverty. Our polity is a business enterprise for enriching some of our politicians. This has had a trickle down effect on the society at large. Our youths want quick money. The absence of employment has justified turning to crime. This is the bad legacy we have been given as Nigerians.

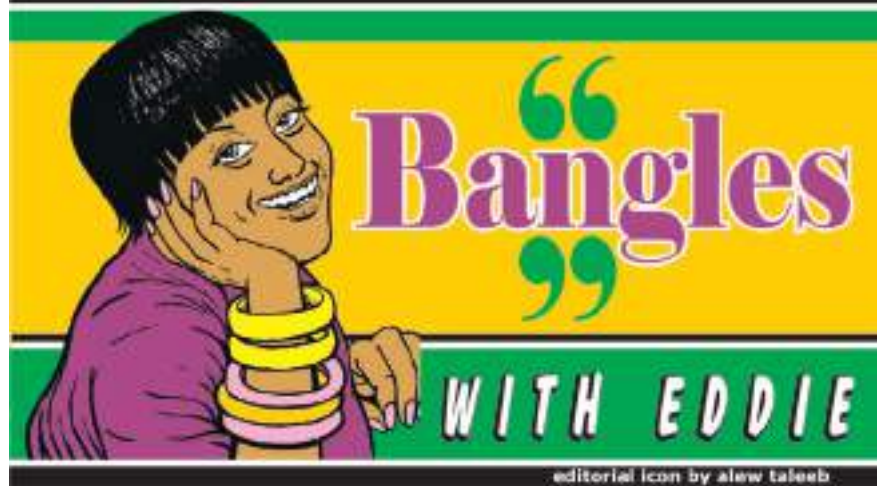
Nigerian politicians: Leaving a legacy



Zik

A friend told me a story about a counselor who stole money and built a 15-room mansion in his village to show off his new status. After his tenure, he became very broke. He could neither maintain the house, rent it, nor turn it into a hotel because it was in a business dead-end. The person said that there was no need to convict him of the crime of stealing because the house was a reminder of his wickedness and if he had a conscience, he would suffer each time he saw the dilapidating house that he could not sell or rent. He would also be a laughingstock amongst his people because he contributed to stealing their bridges, their boreholes, their schools and hospitals and their electricity. That is what he and his children and his children's children will be remembered for. His family name would also receive some of the heat and ridicule. If he had a conscience, this would bother him...If he had a conscience.

How many politicians have consciences? This is one ingredient that great leaders should have in addition to patriotism, selflessness, and a long list of other virtues...and some shame too. Leaders who have consciences and a good sense of shame always want to keep their name and their legacy untainted. In Nigeria, a politician could decide to enrich himself and his entire lineage for three to five generations at the expense of the people he or she is meant to serve. He is bold-faced in doing so. But then nothing ever lasts forever. When he or she leaves the office, he becomes a less than ordinary person. A shameless nobody. However, the politicians that build legacies are the ones whose names evoke respect and reverence in people because they served their people well like good shepherds and



Awolowo

their sheep, good leaders and their followers. Their names are never forgotten. They have monuments named after them. They have public buildings and places of national pride named after them. They leave behind principles to be emulated. They create movements and philosophies. They become engraved in our hearts and in our history, never to be forgotten. Their names elicit joy and happiness because of how they served humanity. They enjoyed their lives on earth and are enjoying their hereafter because every religion preaches service to humanity, selflessness, and love.

May 29th is around the corner. A new crop of politicians will swear oaths to serve Nigeria. How many of them are truly going to serve their people? How many of them understand that their role is important in the life of the smallest person in their communities? What does leaving a legacy mean to them? What is their leadership philosophy and what are their principles? What did they learn from our founding fathers? What do they know about the Great Baba Solomon Lar? What have they learnt from the life of the Great Awolowo? What have they learnt about the Great Aminu Kano, just to name a few.

Let us study the great men of yesterday who still leave through their legacies:

Wikipedia says of the great Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe: "Zikism is the system of political thought attributed to Nnamdi Azikiwe ("Zik"), one of the founding fathers of modern Nigeria and the first democratically elected President of Nigeria. Azikiwe expanded on this philosophy through his published works such as *Renascent Africa* (1973) and his autobiography *My Odyssey*". It goes on to add: "In the case of the great Zik, it

became fashionable among his adherents and supporters to be a Zikist. But Zikism was not synonymous with an ethnic ideology nor was it a divisive cause. Instead, Zikism was more of an ideology for African renaissance emphasizing the restoration of the dignity of the black man after centuries of colonial imposition and exploitation".

In their book: "The Political Philosophy of Zikism: A Re-Interpretation", Abubakar Momoh and Chike Osegbue wrote and I quote: "What is popularly known about Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe (Zik) is his genuine commitment to, and passion, for achieving decolonization and freedom in Africa. This is depicted by the nationalist cross which he painstakingly bore for Africans. With greater freedom, Zik believes, economic wealth could become fairly guaranteed for the people. Strict to sensus, his political ideas are the product of the authoritarian social and material contexts, which inspired, motivated and quickened his imagination, to which he responded with keen nationalist sensitivity and fully expressed in political erudition and sagacity. What this simply means is that the context of Azikiwe's political ideas was woven around the prevailing and pervasive contradictions of the colonial state in Africa and Nigeria, characterized by servitude, economic dependency, political domination and colonial exploitation, mass illiteracy, mass poverty, ignorance, fear and superstition, culminating in inferiority complex, which characterized Africans of his early experience (Idike 2000). This essay explores the Zikist philosophy with which Azikiwe mobilized Africans to regain their independence".

To be continued next week

TODAY I will like to outline and discuss five distinct areas that the salvation of Jesus applies to in the life of a believer. First, Jesus is our saviour from sin; secondly Jesus is our saviour from sickness, disease and infirmities of the flesh and body. Thirdly, Jesus is our saviour from poverty want and lack. Fourth, Jesus is our saviour from destruction, danger, evil and harm. And then finally, Jesus is our saviour from every curse of life.

In Luke 2:11, when the angel met the shepherds, it is important to note exactly what he said to them: **For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.** Note that the angel designated Jesus as Saviour and Christ at His birth. The word Christ means the anointed one, so the good news is that when you become committed to Christ and confess Him as your Saviour and Lord, you automatically share together in that anointing.

Again, Christ means the anointed one and the anointing He carries is the power of God that destroys yokes and lifts burdens. It is by the anointing that His saving ministry functions in your life. The genius of God is that the moment you become connected to Christ you also share in that anointing. This is what we are going to begin to discover as we explore these five broad areas of Jesus' salvation.

First thing to note is that every believer needs the anointing of God's Spirit in their lives. Just because you are born again does not mean that Satan is on recess. You have to recognise that the believer's superior advantage in this life is the anointing. Ones you know that and also acknowledge that when you came into Christ, you also came into His anointing, the next thing you need to know is how to function in that anointing.

Know that, to function in His anointing, you must learn to stay in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. It is only in the place of fellowship that the anointing can be deployed to answer every circumstance and every situation in your life.

There is no need for you to be afraid concerning anything in life. The anointing on Jesus that you

partake of when you come into Christ is more than enough to answer any vice of the devil. The anointing is enough to guide, lead, instruct, protect, preserve and provide you with all you will ever need in to overcome in this life.

The anointing is your life – That is what the Bibles actually says in the book of Col. 3:4, **When Christ, who is our life, shall**

actually functions in every area of your life to give you the solutions that you most desperately need and desire.

Now, from the list of 5 distinct areas in which the anointing of Jesus Christ works in our lives, the is salvation from sin. What the anointing upon the Lord Jesus came to achieve first and foremost is to save all mankind from their sins. No human being



Jesus saved us in these five areas



appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. It says Christ is our life; this anointing is our life and it is so important for us to understand this. The anointing has been given to you as an inheritance. The anointing has been given to you to partake in the divine nature.

The fact is that Christianity is not just a religious experience but a union with the anointing and with Christ who is the possessor of the anointing. The anointing is not something that just makes you shout or fall down or cry; those may be some distinct manifestations of the anointing but the anointing

can deliver man from sin. In Matthew 1:21, we see the angel telling Joseph about the child that his future wife, Mary will carry saying: **And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.**

Now when sin is dealt with, the power of the devil is effectively neutralized. This is a very important point to note. So no man can deliver himself from sin. Deliverance from sin is a God domain. Only God can do that; only God can change a man's nature; only God can assure a man a place in eternity.

Jesus is God manifested in flesh

to first and foremost, deal with our sin problem and grant us deliverance from the nature of sin and then from the acts of sin. Secondly, Jesus came to deliver us from sickness disease infirmities of the flesh and body. When Jesus took our sin he took our sicknesses and diseases as well. Matthew 8:17 said **That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.** Jesus did that on the cross. When Jesus took our sin in his own body on the cross, He took our diseases as well

The third area that the anointing deals with is the area of poverty, want and lack. What a joy to know that when Jesus took our sin He broke the power of poverty and lack and that there is provision and allocation in what He did for us on the cross to deliver us from the life of poverty and want forever.

Fourthly, Jesus delivered us from general destruction in life. He delivered us from accidents, premature death or whatever you want to call it. Jesus has delivered us from banditry, kidnapping - anything under the category of destruction, know that He died to deliver us from that and that anointing upon Him can preserve us in this life from all these things.

The fifth is that Jesus came to deliver us from every curse in life. Whatever the curse is;

whatever the empowerment to fail is, Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.

Galatians 3: 13&14 says, **Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.**

Psalms 103:1-5 captures beautifully these 5 general areas where we have been redeemed from by the power of God and where the saving ministry of Jesus kicks in.

Psalms 103:1-5 reads, **1 A Psalm of David. Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: 3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; 4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; 5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.**

Glory to God! These are the five basic areas, the five general areas that Jesus' salvation works in in the believer's life. Note also that these general areas actually cover all conceivable areas of your life or the life of any human being in world. Praise the Lord!

Know that, to function in His anointing, you must learn to stay in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. It is only in the place of fellowship that the anointing can be deployed to answer every circumstance and every situation in your life. There is no need for you to be afraid concerning anything in life. The anointing on Jesus that you partake of when you come into Christ is more than enough to answer any vice of the devil. The anointing is enough to guide, lead, instruct, protect, preserve and provide you with all you will ever need in to overcome in this life. The anointing is your life – That is what the Bibles actually says in the book of Col. 3:4, When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. It says Christ is our life; this anointing is our life and it is so important for us to understand this. The anointing has been given to you as an inheritance. The anointing has been given to you to partake in the divine nature. The fact is that Christianity is not just a religious experience but a union with the anointing and with Christ who is the possessor of the anointing. The anointing is not something that just makes you shout or fall down or cry; those may be some distinct manifestations of the anointing but the anointing actually functions in every area of your life to give you the solutions that you most desperately need and desire.



INTERNATIONAL

Biden v Trump: The sequel few Americans want to see

The 2024 election might just be a rematch of the 2020 election between Trump and Biden. Sequels are rarely as good as the original. We can all think of a few movie follow ups that should never have been made. American voters may have similar misgivings about the next US presidential election which looks increasingly likely to be a rerun of the 2020 contest, with the same characters in the leading roles. SARAH SMITH writes.

JOE Biden has now confirmed he's signed up to star for the Democrats, while Donald Trump remains the clear frontrunner for the Republican nomination.

It's a story we have seen before and only very few people seem eager to watch again. A recent poll found that only 5% of Americans want both President Biden and former President Trump to run again and 38% want neither to run.

One of the reasons Mr Biden is so determined to try to retain the White House is because he is convinced he is the only one who can beat Mr Trump. We will see. What is true is that he is the only one who has beaten him.

Elections which feature an incumbent president are often seen as a referendum on the last four years. The Biden administration does have policy achievements it can point to, and its campaign slogan will be "let's finish the job".

But it was striking that his official launch instead attempted to frame the election as a choice - a choice between moderate and extreme, between competent and crazy. The same "battle for the soul of the nation" that was central to Mr Biden's pitch last time.

Donald Trump does not feature in the campaign video, but we do see scenes from the January 6th riots at the Capitol as Mr Biden warns of MAGA (Make America Great Again) extremism and the threat he says it poses to American democracy.

Over the past two years, we have heard Mr Trump's



Trump

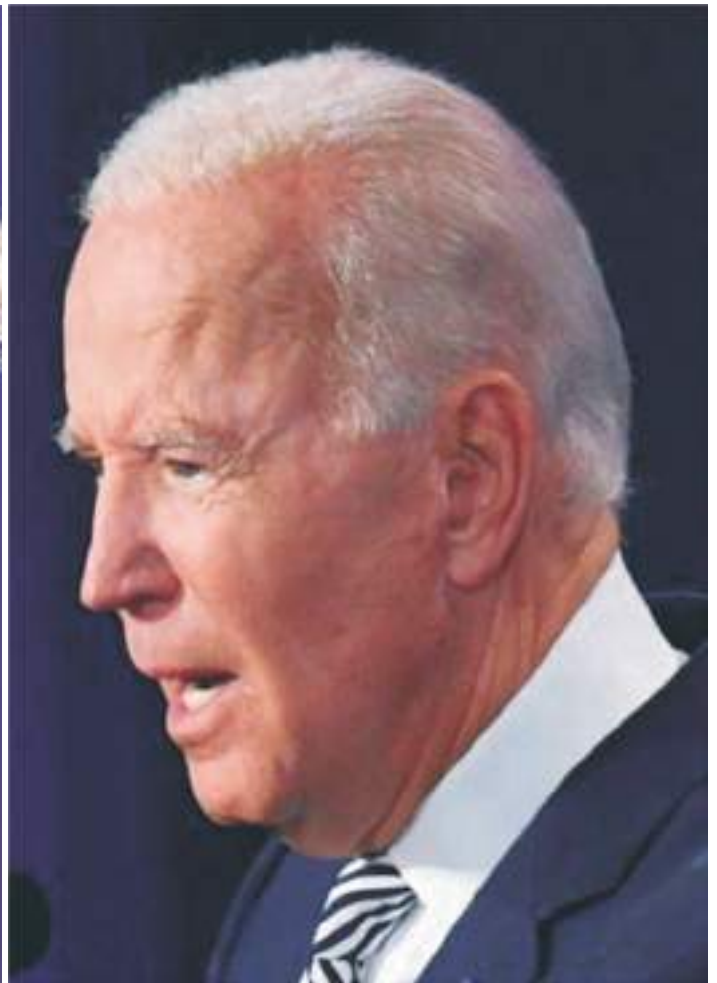
false claims that the 2020 election was stolen from him. If he becomes the Republican nominee in 2024, he will keep banging that drum. Yet, repeating lies about election fraud was clearly not a winning formula last year. Most of the high-profile election-denying candidates whom Trump backed in the 2022 midterm elections fared pretty badly.

In contrast, the Democrats enjoyed much better than expected results in those Congressional elections - even keeping control of the US Senate. That performance helped to

guarantee that President Biden won't face a major challenge from within his own party.

The biggest issue that played in the Democrats' favour was abortion. There has been a major voter backlash against the overturning of the constitutional right to terminate a pregnancy. Two-thirds of Americans consistently tell pollsters that they think abortion care should be legal and accessible.

President Biden will return to it again and again in the 18 months before election day.



Biden

In the launch video, Mr Biden accused Republican extremists of "dictating what healthcare decisions women can make" over footage of an abortion rights protestor outside the Supreme Court.

Republicans look like the dog that finally caught up with the car it's been chasing. After decades when they could advance anti-abortion positions without having to offer too much detail, now candidates backing abortion bans are seeing that it could hurt them electorally. Republican-controlled state legislatures are pushing ahead with restrictive laws, but party strategists are worried about the impact at the national level.

But President Biden remains vulnerable. His approval numbers remain historically low - 42% approve of his performance, while 52% disapprove. The only other president since Ronald Reagan to be as unpopular at this point in his first term was Donald Trump.

Whichever Republican ends up challenging Mr Biden, it's obvious they will portray the 80-year-old president as a doddering old man (even if Mr Trump is only four years younger). They will hope that a strenuous cross-country

campaign leaves the president looking exhausted. He will not be able to campaign from his basement in Delaware as he did through the Covid election of 2020.

Today's video features plenty of shots of the president looking deliberately vital and energetic - even running in one shot. But he cannot keep that up until polling day.

His opponents will also point to inflation (even if it is falling, that still means prices are rising) and to record numbers of migrants crossing the US's southern border. Two issues guaranteed to get the Republican base riled up.

The president does not excite Democrats in the way Mr Trump - and his main rival, Florida governor Ron DeSantis - fire up the Republican base. But they have largely accepted that Mr Biden may be their best bet in 2024.

And the Biden campaign seems to think that the prospect of Donald Trump returning to the White House is still the most effective way to drive up turnout among Democrats and independents. After all, it worked last time, and they will hope the result in a potential sequel is the same.

Over the past two years, we have heard Mr Trump's false claims that the 2020 election was stolen from him. If he becomes the Republican nominee in 2024, he will keep banging that drum. Yet, repeating lies about election fraud was clearly not a winning formula last year. Most of the high-profile election-denying candidates whom Trump backed in the 2022 midterm elections fared pretty badly. In contrast, the Democrats enjoyed much better than expected results in those Congressional elections - even keeping control of the US Senate. That performance helped to guarantee that President Biden won't face a major challenge from within his own party.

INTERNATIONAL

Mike testifies criminal probe of Trump, Capitol riot

FORMER US Vice-President Mike Pence has testified as part of a criminal investigation into alleged efforts by Donald Trump to overturn his defeat in the 2020 election.

Mr Pence, 63, sat for more than seven hours before a federal grand jury in Washington DC, sources told the BBC's US partner CBS News.

He was issued with a subpoena to testify under oath earlier this year.

The questioning by prosecutors took place behind closed doors.

His appearance on Thursday came just hours after an appeals court rejected a last-ditch bid by Mr Trump's legal team to stop Mr Pence from testifying.

Mr Pence's lawyers had also sought unsuccessfully to challenge the subpoena, arguing that his role as president of the Senate during his time in office meant he had congressional immunity.

His eventual testimony, which had been sought for months, is a major milestone in the two-year investigation which is being led by special counsel Jack Smith, a former war crimes prosecutor who was appointed to the role by Attorney General Merrick Garland.

The investigation has been gathering evidence about whether former US President Donald Trump and his allies broke federal law in their efforts to challenge the result of the 2020 election, which was won by President Joe Biden.

It is also investigating the US Capitol riot on 6 January 2021, when Mr Trump's supporters stormed the building in an effort to prevent the election result from being certified.

Mr Pence, who like all vice-presidents was also president of the Senate - a mostly ceremonial role - could in theory have derailed the final certification of the election result and delayed the transfer of power.

Mr Trump publicly pressured his vice-president to do so, and his refusal led him to lash out at Mr Pence.

Trump supporters then chanted "hang Mike Pence" as they stormed Congress and marauded through the corridors of the Capitol building as politicians sheltered inside.

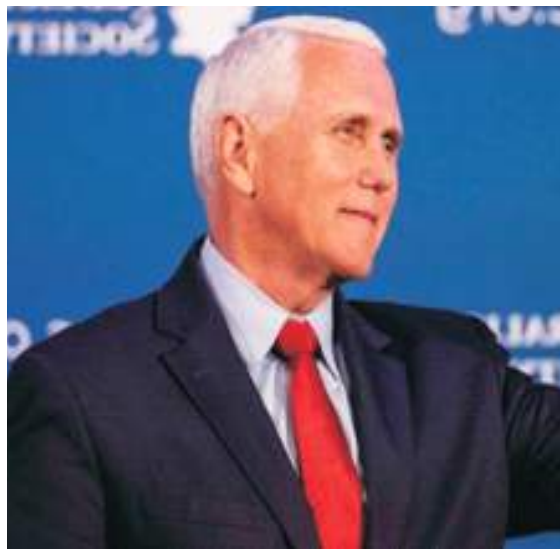
Media caption, Watch: New footage shows Speaker Pelosi during Jan 6 attack

Mr Pence is considered a key witness and prosecutors will likely have asked him about his interactions with Mr Trump and his team in the days and weeks leading up to the riot.

"We'll obey the law, we'll tell the truth," Mr Pence said in an interview with CBS on Sunday. "The story that I've been telling the American people all across the country... that'll be the story I tell in that setting."

Mr Pence has previously spoken about the Capitol riot and the pressure to challenge the result. "President Trump is wrong. I had no right to overturn the election," he said in a speech in February.

Mr Pence is reportedly considering a presidential bid of his own in 2024, which would see



Pence

him challenge Mr Trump directly for the Republican nomination.

Mr Trump, who has already launched his bid to return to the White House, was in New Hampshire on Thursday for a campaign event. When asked by NBC News about Mr Pence's testimony, he commented: "I don't know what he said, but I have a lot

of confidence in him." The former president is facing other legal issues, including another federal investigation led by Mr Smith into the potential mishandling of classified documents.

There is also a separate investigation in Georgia into alleged efforts to overturn the 2020 election result.

Sudan crisis: Cease fire extended but fighting continues

RIVAL factions of Sudan's military have agreed to renew a three-day ceasefire, shortly before it was due to expire.

The extension - for another 72 hours - follows intensive diplomatic efforts by neighbouring countries, as well as the US, UK and UN.

But there are continuing reports of heavy fighting in the capital Khartoum.

The previous truce allowed thousands of people to attempt to flee to safety, while dozens of countries have tried to evacuate their citizens.

Almost two weeks of fighting between the army and a rival paramilitary group have left hundreds dead.

The ceasefire had been expected to end at midnight local time (22:00 GMT on Thursday).

Early on Thursday evening the Sudanese regular army agreed to an extension, and its rival the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) followed suit hours later.

South Sudan has offered to host peace talks, and the army has agreed to send representatives to the talks.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Washington was "very actively working" to extend the truce, adding that while imperfect it had reduced violence.

But White House spokeswoman Karine Jean-Pierre later said the situation could worsen at any moment.

Meanwhile the RSF and eyewitnesses said the army had been pounding its positions in Khartoum.

The foreign minister in the former civilian government,



Al-Bashir

Maryam al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, told the BBC from her home in Khartoum that despite the ceasefire, civilians were still living in fear.

"What they call a truce has nothing to do with what is happening," she told Radio Four's World Tonight programme. "The bombardment by the aeroplanes is taking place almost all day and night."

Fighting has also been reported in the western Darfur region and other provinces.

At least 512 people have been killed in the fighting and almost 4,200 injured, although the real number of deaths could be much higher.

The World Health Organization said it expected there to be "many more" deaths due to outbreaks of disease and a lack of services.

Health officials say most hospitals in conflict areas are not functioning, and more than 60% of health facilities in Khartoum are inactive.

David Miliband, the head of the International Rescue Committee and former British foreign secretary, said the international community was in danger of neglecting the

PALESTINIANS have described remarks about Israel by the head of the European Commission as "inappropriate, false and discriminatory".

It follows a congratulatory video message by Ursula von der Leyen on Israel's Independence Day on Wednesday.

In it she praised Israel, including for having "made the desert bloom".

It has sparked an unusual diplomatic spat between the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the European Union (EU), its main donor.

A spokesperson for the commission told the BBC: "The EU is unpleasantly surprised by the inappropriate statement of the Palestinian foreign ministry accusing the president of the European Commission of racism."

"We are requesting clarification from the Palestinian authorities regarding this unacceptable reaction to her video."

The response of the Palestinian foreign ministry is a rare strong rebuke to a top figure in Brussels, with which it typically has good relations.

The PA singled out Ms von der

Palestinians condemn EU's Leyen for 'racist trope'



Abbas

Leyen's suggestion that Israel had cultivated barren land, calling it an "anti-Palestinian racist trope".

The phrase "making the desert bloom" is commonly used by Israel and its backers to describe what they view as the country's success in developing the land since the founding of the modern state in 1948.

However, Palestinians argue that it erases their history and suggests that the land was previously uninhabited or untended.

The PA is calling for an

apology from the European Commission president.

"Seventy-five years ago, a dream was realised with Israel's Independence Day," Ms von der Leyen said in her message. "After the greatest tragedy in human history, the Jewish people could finally build a home in the promised land."

"Today, we celebrate 75 years of vibrant democracy in the heart of the Middle East, 75 years of dynamism, ingenuity and groundbreaking innovations. You have literally made the desert bloom, as I could see during my visit to the Negev last year."

Her video shared on the @EUinIsrael Twitter account has had more than 2.9m views.

The PA statement describes the message, addressed to Israel's President Isaac Herzog, as "propagandist discourse" and part of an "ongoing dispossession" of Palestinians.

The PA claims it "dehumanizes and erases the Palestinian people and falsifies their rich history and civilization".

In addition, it says that the European statement "whitewashes" Israel's occupation of lands Palestinians claim for their hoped-for future state and denies what they call "the Nakba" (Arabic for "catastrophe") of 1948.

Some 700,000 Palestinians fled or were forced to leave their homes in the war that followed the Israel's creation.

Palestinians mark Nakba Day on 15 May according to the Gregorian calendar, while the timing of Israel's Independence Day follows the Hebrew calendar.

Some Palestinians on social media have also criticised or mocked the European leader, including for her comments about shared values with Israel.

The European Commission is part of the executive of the European Union.

The spokesman for the commission stressed the EU's diplomatic ties with the PA, pointing out that Ms von der Leyen met PA Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh when she visited the region in June 2022. They said a meeting to coordinate the delivery of international aid to the Palestinians was due to take place in Brussels next week.

"The EU is actively looking for solutions for the difficult situation of the Palestinian people," they added.

wider crisis in Sudan in the rush to evacuate foreign nationals. An army statement quoted by Reuters new agency said it had taken control of most of Sudan's regions but "the situation is a bit complicated in some parts of the capital".

It has not been possible for the BBC to verify the army's claims.

Foreign nations, including the UK, have been urging their citizens to leave the country as soon as possible.

Speaking on Thursday evening, Ms Jean-Pierre urged Americans to depart within the next 24 hours.

Evacuations are continuing, but many foreigners are still stuck in Sudan. Some have struggled to get to the airstrip used for evacuations.

Local civilians are continuing

China send peace envoy to Ukraine

CHINESE leader Xi Jinping told Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in a phone call on Wednesday that his government will send a peace envoy to Ukraine and other nations, state media said, after Beijing said it wants to act as mediator in Russia's war with the country.

A government statement reported by state TV gave no indication whether the Chinese envoy would visit Russia.

"China will send a special representative of the Chinese government on Eurasian affairs to Ukraine and other countries to conduct in-depth communication with all parties on the political settlement of the Ukrainian crisis," the statement said.

It made no mention of Russia or President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine last year.

"There is no winner in a nuclear war," the statement

to flee the capital, where there are problems with supplies of food, water and fuel.

The fighting broke out on 15 April as the result of a bitter power struggle between the regular army and RSF.

Army commander Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and RSF chief Gen Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, better known as Hemedti, disagree about the country's proposed move to civilian rule, and in particular about the timeframe of the 100,000 strong RSF's inclusion into the army.

Both factions fear losing power in Sudan because on both sides there are men who could end up at the International Criminal Court for war crimes committed in Darfur almost 20 years ago.

warned.

China has tried to appear neutral in the war but has refused to criticize Moscow's invasion.

Xi and Putin issued a joint statement before the February 2020 attack saying their governments had a "no limits friendship."

Xi's government released a peace proposal in February and called for a cease-fire and talks.

"Negotiation is the only viable way out," state TV said in a report on Xi's comments to Zelenskyy.

"There is no winner in a nuclear war," the report said. "All parties concerned should remain calm and restrained in dealing with the nuclear issue and truly look at the future and destiny of themselves and humanity as a whole and work together to manage the crisis."



'I'm a legend in my own right!'

We had the chance to ask some questions to Rick Hyde, rapper and producer of the Black Soprano Family, Benny The Butcher's crew, who told us about his latest album, entitled in Italian "Stima", about the importance that DJ Shay (R.I.P) had for him and the city of Buffalo (NY), about his past, his upcoming projects, how it is being in the same studio with DJ Drama, The Alchemist and Hit Boy and much more.

Can you tell us about the origins of B\$F and how and when did you meet Benny? Do you have any anecdotes about the first times you met?

B\$F started in 2011/12 once Benny had came home from prison on a violation. I've known Benny since roughly 2007 and we both were apart of a locally established label BuffCity Records owned by DJ Shay. BSF was our chance to rebrand as we gained further knowledge of the business and how to operate on a larger scale.

We heard that before B\$F and Griselda were successful, you worked in the airport or as a security guard... Who played the biggest role and what prompted you to quit your job to pursue a career in rap music? At what point did you take this choice and was it a difficult choice or were you already sure about what you were doing?

Man, answering this question brings back memories. I worked a shit load of odd jobs such as the airport, security at a hospital in Buffalo deemed "Heroin Hospital" because of the rapid OD rate, I worked at Target, Sears, Pizza Hut, some retail jobs, you name it. But I seen the changes and impact that



Rick Hyde



Griselda was making and I decided to give it my all one time. And now I'm a legend in my own right!

At the end of May you released your latest album called "Stima". Can you tell us how this album was born and how was the creation process of it? Where did this title come from?

"Stima" was released as a catalyst to what I'm about to do musically. I got production on the new BSF album and I'm working on "Plates 3" simultaneously, so "Stima" is a preview of the prowess to come!

"Stima" is Italian for respect or high regard and I feel like I'm at the point where the fans gotta respect my input in this game.

Do you have a favorite song in "Stima" and why? What does this album represent among your discography?

My favorite song on "Stima" is probably "Who Am I" because it's vivid and a different side of me. It's almost like I picked up where I left off on "Plates 2" but on steroids. It's captivating and forces you to hear me out.

Your first solo album that started to make a name for yourself as a rapper and producer is 2019's "Plates", in 2021 you released its sequel "Plates 2" and now "Stima"... In what do you feel you have matured most along this path? Is there something you regret or do you think you have lost along the way?

My journey is just beginning honestly, I'm in year 3 of what looks to be a prosperous career and I'm blessed to have that advantage. I feel like I'm growing at a rapid rate and I'll just continue to dominate both sides.

Working closely with the Griselda boys or working on your and B\$F projects you

Continued on page 26

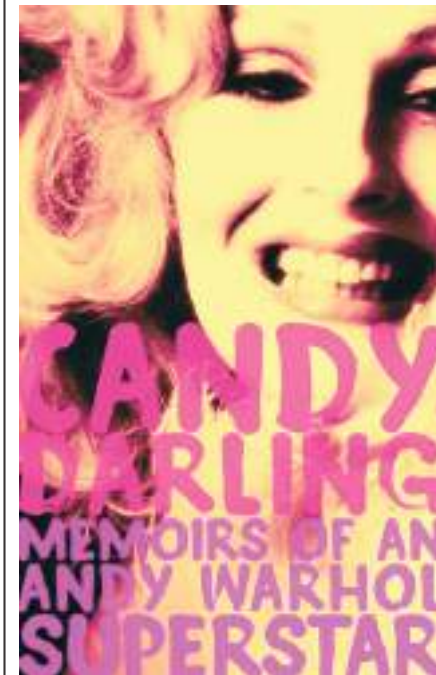
Biographies of remarkable women you need to read

These fascinating biographies deserve a spot on your must-read list.



History is chock-full of women who made incredible contributions to society, yet are overlooked by the public. From pioneers and political dissidents to inventors and astrophysicists, the biographies of these historical female figures deserve a spot on your must-read list, which is continued from last week.

Candy Darling



Rediscover the first trans superstar in Candy Darling's personal journals, chronicling her time in Andy Warhol's Factory and as muse to The Velvet Underground. Darling, who sadly passed away at only 29, was one of the most visible of Warhol's stars and starred in the first, Off-Broadway run of a Tennessee Williams play after the playwright specifically requested her casting. Her witty thoughts capture an era in this memoir.

Free Woman



Often ignored by historians, Victoria Woodhull is a historical figure that drastically shifted the political conversation in the United States. Woodhull's commitment to rabble-rousing and activism marked a major shift in the movement toward's women's suffrage. She even ran for President of the United States in 1872.

Those who opposed her views (and who were likely equally appalled by her unconventional background) heavily attacked Woodhull. She had been twice divorced and held a series of unorthodox careers before running for President.

Even the feminists of her time were infuriated by Woodhull's campaign—she was an advocate for free love, birth control, and the freedom of female sexuality, long before any of those ideas became commonplace.

Continued on page 26

THE SWORD

With *Henrietta Gonzuk*

Health

Possible health benefits of yam leaves

By Collins Nwokolo

Yam leaves are the leaves of the perennial herbaceous vines grown for the consumption of their starchy tubers in many parts of the world, especially in West Africa, South America, the Caribbean, Asia, and Oceania.

These plants belong to the sweet potato family, which is why they share some of the same health benefits. Yam leaves are a good source of vitamins A, B6, C, and E, as well as minerals like potassium, phosphorus, and magnesium. They also contain antioxidants that can help protect your body against disease.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF YAM LEAVES

STRENGTHENS THE IMMUNE SYSTEM.

Yam leaves are a good source of vitamin C which helps to strengthen the immune system. Vitamin C is an important nutrient that helps the body to fight against infections. A 2018 study found that yam leaves contained phenolic compounds and antioxidants.

Additionally, yam leaves contains antioxidants that help to protect the body against damage caused by free radicals. Free radicals are harmful molecules that can cause cell damage and lead to various chronic diseases such as cancer.

MAY IMPROVE EYESIGHT

Vitamin A is essential for good eyesight. Yam leaves are a good source of vitamin A, which may help improve eyesight. Vitamin A is important for the health of the retina and other parts of the eye. It can also help to prevent night blindness.

ASSISTS IN FASTER WOUND HEALING

Yam leaves are a good source of vitamin K, which assists in faster wound healing. Yam leaves contain a compound called allantoin which is known to promote the growth of new tissue and help wounds heal faster.

PROVES DIGESTIVE HEALTH

Yam leaves are a good source of fibre which helps to regulate the digestive tract. This is important for improving digestive health, as a well-functioning digestive system is essential for good overall health. Fibre also helps to keep you feeling full and can help to reduce cravings and overeating.

In traditional Chinese Medicine, the leaves are utilized as a cleansing agent for increasing bowel movements and lubricating the lungs and intestines.

SUPPORTS BONE HEALTH

Yam leaves also contain calcium and phosphorus, which are essential for building strong bones and teeth. A lack of these minerals can lead to conditions like osteoporosis and tooth decay. Therefore, including yam leaves in your diet can help to keep your bones healthy and prevent these conditions from developing.

FIGHTS INFLAMMATION

The health benefits of yam leaves



extend to their ability to fight inflammation. Vitamin C is a well-known anti-inflammatory nutrient, and yam leaves are a good source of this vitamin.

A 2021 study demonstrated that yam leaves possessed anti-inflammatory properties. This means that consuming yam leaves may help to reduce the inflammation associated with

conditions like arthritis and asthma.

MIGHT HELP IN TREATING RASHES AND SORES IN THE MOUTH.

Yam leaves have also been traditionally used in Asia to treat rashes and sores in the mouth. This is because they are thought to have antiseptic and antimicrobial properties. However, there is no scientific evidence to support this.

MAY HELP REDUCE APPETITE

Yam leaves are also used in other natural medicines in Asia. According to them, it can be boiled and consumed as tea to reduce appetite. Nonetheless, there is no scientific evidence to support this.

BRAIN HEALTH

Consuming sweet yam leaves regularly can prevent the brain from oxidative stress which is free radical damage because of its Vitamin K

properties. Oxidative stress damages the cells and contributes to the Alzheimer's disease, cancer, Parkinson's disease, stroke, as well as heart failures.

PREPARATION AND CONSUMPTION:

GET some quantity of fresh Yam Leaves, clean up in clean water with some salt, cut or slice to salad preparation and eat raw.

THE SLOW WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Relationship

How to be yourself in a relationship

By **RACHAEL PACE,**

WHEN you are in a healthy and happy relationship, you can retain your identity while still doing things that will make your partner happy. Some people lose themselves when they fall in love and enter a relationship. Hence, when their partner is unavailable, they might not be effective in their lives.

When it comes to what it means to stay true to yourself, it could mean owning up to your identity without pretending to be what you're not. It also suggests being open about your values, thoughts, and opinions.

If you want to understand how to be yourself in a relationship, prioritize spending time with your loved ones. You can also engage in some activities that don't involve your partner. Be sure to speak honestly and politely during serious deliberations about an issue.

It is fine to be in love with someone you can call your own. However, one of the mistakes some people make is forgetting their identity in a relationship. Hence, anytime their partner is not available, it feels like they are stuck. Here are some important tips on how to be yourself in a relationship.

Hang out with your friends

While you're in a relationship, remember that your friends are still an integral part of your life.



You should create time to bond with your friends and be open to meeting new people. Remember to set some boundaries when doing this because you're in a relationship.

Engage in your hobbies

Doing your hobbies is another way on how to be yourself in a relationship. Even though you and your partner may share the same interests, ensure you have time to engage in yours. If you want to stay true to yourself, don't put your hobbies away because they form your identity.

Set healthy boundaries

To learn how to be yourself in a relationship, you need to create boundaries. You might be able to compromise sometimes, but it is okay to let your partner know that they have limits. Discuss what is acceptable and the things that are not welcome.

Be honest with yourself and your partner

It is important not to pretend with your partner because it helps with being yourself in a relationship. If you are not ready for something, let your partner know instead of agreeing to do it with them.

Don't be afraid to say no

Many people find it hard to say no, even in relationships, because they feel their partner would be unhappy with them. While this may be true, saying no is one of the ways on how to be yourself in a relationship. And it lets your partner know that you have your beliefs, values, and preferences.

Have time for yourself

You may want to spend every minute with your partner, but it can get unhealthy sometimes. Creating time for yourself helps you learn how to be yourself in a relationship. It would help if you had time to reflect on your life, make new plans, etc. Doing this allows you to remain true to yourself.

Be conscious about personal development

When it comes to how to be yourself in a relationship, you need to prioritize your personal development. Ensure that you don't remain stagnant in

different aspects of your life.

Don't depend on your partner for everything

Even though partners might do things for each other, being true to yourself in a relationship may require sorting out things

you're not being true to yourself. Remember that everyone has flaws and insecurities that they are dealing with.

Be ready to grow with your partner

Regarding how to be yourself in a relationship, you and your partner should be ready to grow together. It should not be a one-sided affair where one person is progressing, and the other is just an onlooker.

Some commonly asked questions

Here are the answers to a few pressing questions that can help clear out your doubts related to being yourself in a relationship:

- **Is it good to be yourself in a relationship?**

Yes, it is good to be yourself in a relationship. When you stay true to yourself, you will be happier and find it easier to enjoy life by yourself and with your partner. Trying to be someone else can backfire as your partner would not know who you are and what you truly want.



yourself. If your partner decides to help without being invited, you can consider giving them a chance.

Don't let your insecurities weigh you down

If you had insecurities before meeting your partner, and you let them burden you, then

- **Is it healthy to put your partner before yourself?**

Like with everything else in life, balance is important when putting yourself over the needs of others. Sometimes, it may be advisable to compromise and let your partner have their way before you consider yourself.





Reality Bites

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Signs to walk away from toxic relationship

A responsible person is dependable.

When your partner does not take responsibility and is not aware of their obligations to keep your relationship going, they can't be relied on. In a relationship, both the partners need to share responsibilities. If you are the only one who is taking on responsibilities, consider walking away. You are the only one who is making compromises and sacrifices. When two people share a common life, they bring along their own set of baggage and flaws. They need to consider each other's feelings and make some adjustments to get everything to work. Making small compromises and sacrifices helps build a strong relationship, and the adjustments, compromises, and sacrifices should always be from both sides. But, are you the only one making compromises and sacrifices? If yes, you should consider walking away from the relationship.

You don't spend enough quality time together

Quality time is when you spend time together doing things you both love and giving your full attention to each other to show your affection, appreciation, and care. Spending quality time together is necessary for your connection to last. Does your partner show disinterest in spending quality time with you? Can this be resolved? If no, then contemplate walking away from the relationship, because you deserve to be loved. You don't feel comfortable. Being comfortable with each other is the foundation for keeping your relationship happy.

An uncomfortable relationship is one where you feel weird being around each other and can't be yourself.

If you do not feel comfortable expressing your deepest feelings to each other and constantly fear being judged or ridiculed, you are probably in an unhealthy relationship and should walk out of this relationship. You feel your



partner is emotionally immature. An emotionally immature person lacks the ability to understand and handle their own emotions and feelings and empathize with people. You will notice commitment issues, disagreements, defensiveness, and loneliness with an immature person.

Being in a relationship with an immature partner contributes to uncertainty in life. Does your partner, if such a person, it could compel you to see yourself differently, in a negative way, and lead to depression.

partner never accept their o

mistakes? Is your partner immature to understand their responsibilities and the importance of supporting you? Rethink about staying in a relationship with such a person. They indulge in body shaming. Does your partner pay more attention to outer appearance than the beauty of a person's heart? And do they indulge in body shaming? It is the clearest sign that they are immature, ignorant, and abusive. When you are with such a person, it could compel you to see yourself differently, in a negative way, and

lead to depression. And are you a victim of comments that gag you from within? Say goodbye to them, and go your way. They have lost interest in you. Do you feel your partner runs away from problems and shows disinterest when you suggest ideas or plans?

When you feel that they do not show passion any longer, and you are the only one trying to keep the relationship alive, it's time to move on. You do not find a sense of fulfillment. We expect to be treated with love, kindness, care, affection, and respect. Fulfillment forms the

basis of whether the partnership could be successful in the long run.

If you both are willing to live up to each other's unbiased expectations and help each other grow, you will find fulfillment in the relationship.

the relationship. When we focus on appreciating our partners for their efforts, it will strengthen the relationship. If your relationship lacks any of these, you may have to ask yourself if being in the relationship is right for you. They do not respect your personal space. In a healthy relationship, each partner works at helping the other person grow. While spending time together, doing fun things together, and having common goals are all fine, you should also be able to take up your own interests and hobbies. When you can take care of your personal needs, you'll be able to take care of your relationship. You should be able to pursue your interests, passions, dreams, and goals, and more importantly, be yourself.

If you are not getting any of these, you might need to get vocal, and if that doesn't work either, walk away. It is better to leave the table where respect is no longer served. Lack of respect and trust are prime indicators of when to walk away from the relationship.

If your partner does not value you enough or starts hurling abuses during an argument, then it may be time you draw the line.

If you are not comfortable in a relationship, find your partner immature and irresponsible, or do not find fulfillment, you may need to walk away before the relationship turns toxic and ugly.

Admire and acknowledge your worth, spend time on self-love, and set your life goals for a happier future.



EVE'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Living

How career can affect your marriage

By SARAH WILKERSON

PRIORITIZING your relationship is hard enough on its own, especially with adding family obligations, school situations, or caregiving responsibilities. When you throw two careers in the mix, you could be well on your way to a crumbling relationship. Do you even know how career can affect your marriage?

We already know that it's tough to keep up with a relationship while balancing your career. Early mornings, late nights, overtime, and an "always-on" mentality can cause your relationship to quickly shut off.

How can a career consume your marriage?

The world is all about winning these days, and maintaining a good career with a peaceful relationship is as crucial as possible. However, it can be balanced with the right approach.

You don't realize how your career consumes most of your life and starts affecting your relationships.

You might feel that you don't have time to talk, face more conflicts, constantly have a difference of opinion, and heated arguments may increase all of this, and, of course, bringing the office to home is already happening.

No matter how much we try to identify the red flags unless it starts impacting your marriage, however, it's always possible to make changes. Below are some tips that will help you identify the issues and be the answer to the question, how career affects your marriage?

These tips will help you prioritize your relationship again when the only thing on your mind is your next paycheck.

Establish a clear work-life boundary

Once 5 pm hits and you walk in the front door, work turns off.



Whether you have an empty email inbox or a to-do list a mile long, your spouse should be the first one to get your attention.

Having that clear boundary will make communication a lot easier.

Your spouse won't have to wonder if they get your attention because it's already being shown that they will.

It is important to develop your own boundaries that work best for you and your spouse (and not waver on them). Consistency will create habits that will ultimately renew your relationship over the demands of your career.

Shift your mindset

Sometimes, the main barrier between a struggling relationship and a prioritized one is a mindset shift. Don't believe it? Watch how small changes in perspective, mindset, mood, or thoughts can make a big difference in your

relationship.

Instead of always thinking your relationship is "you vs. me," partners in thriving relationships understand that their own career success and their spouse's success are equally important. Both spouses contribute equally to the overall goal – a healthy, prioritized marriage.

Undoubtedly, your career affects your life, but you don't have to let it rule your relationship. Dual-career couples with healthy relationships quickly noticed benefits once they shifted their mindset. These benefits included:

Take a deep breath, and commit to conquering your career and relationship together. That quick shift will result in a healthier relationship that is a priority for both of you.

Emphasize quality time

Quality time is important in a marriage, whether it's your love language® or not (more on that in the next section!). You may not realize that your career can affect your marriage.

Making time for your spouse is just one way to show them they are important. By prioritizing your spouse, you are taking the necessary steps to make your relationship a priority again. Careers take up a lot of our time – over 2,000 hours per year. If you're an overachiever and like overtime, double that amount.

Think about all of the hours that could be spent with your spouse instead. Chatting over dinner, watching a movie, spending quality time together – no phones allowed.

Your work still gets done, and you still reach success in your career, but your relationship with your spouse is so much stronger because of your decision to spend quality time together.

Show appreciation

Sometimes, it's the little things that go a long way. Whether it's:

- Picking up their favorite candy at the gas station
- Filling up their gas tank
- Washing the dishes because you know they hate it

Each seemingly small act of appreciation will add up with your spouse. When both spouses work toward consistently showing appreciation to the other, the relationship thrives. If words of affirmation are more their speed, a simple "thank you," "I love you," or "I appreciate you" can work wonders.

Communicate consistently

Communication is an important aspect of any relationship, but consistent communication can revitalize a relationship that was put on the back burner. Often, relationship satisfaction can be observed through the couple's current communication skills.

If you aren't communicating well or enough, it's time to prioritize that so you can prioritize your

expectations and open communication that blocks assumptions. By prioritizing consistent and genuine conversation with your spouse, you have the opportunity to revitalize your relationship.

Focus on your relationship first

Your career is important, but your spouse is who you come home to every day. The 9-5 grind will always be there, but your spouse needs to know that your marriage matters. If you do not prioritize your spouse, your career can affect your marriage.

By establishing a clear boundary, shifting your mindset, emphasizing quality time, showing appreciation, and communicating consistently, you can prioritize your relationship when it feels consumed by your career.

Have tech-free time

As much as you believe that your laptops and phones have made life easier for you, it is a no-brainer that around our loved ones, these devices can be a reason for conflict. Avoiding a



relationship.

Several benefits happen when a couple chooses to prioritize communication for the sake of their marriage. These can include:

- More intimacy
- Reduced levels of conflict
- Feel closer to each other
- Freely share thoughts and feelings

Communication in a relationship needs to happen consistently, but it also needs to be honest, open, and transparent. Marriage is not a place for deception, lies, manipulation, or confusion.

Instead, there should be clear

laptop or phone when spending time with your partner is better.

Receiving messages or emails while you try to spend some quality time with your partner can ruin the mood. If not, the constant notifications from different social media accounts can divide the attention.

This will not be convenient for your partner, and they will not appreciate it at all. So it will better to put away your work device and phone when you spend alone time with your partner to make the most of it.

Be mentally present with them and let them know that they have your undivided attention so they don't feel disconnected.

BUSINESS WORLD

Rice and its production in Nigeria

It is what most citizens, especially little children, of our beloved nation savour. They often relish to have it on their menu. Either at home or outdoors. At social events, ceremonies, in eateries and during all kinds of cultural and religious festivals. ABDULSALAM MAHMUD writes.

FRICE is what many will instantly order for. Because it is what they will love to eat. In Nigeria, many farmers cultivate rice. While some do it on a subsistence level, others go commercial.

Commercial rice farmers cultivate the staple food on large acres. Those who engage in subsistence rice farming need not have a plot of land, that is so massive.

Nigeria is among world nations that tremendously cultivates rice. Though the agricultural commodity is imported into the country, on a gargantuan scale.

There are however, many unknown things and interesting facts about the popular foodstuff. They may be a common knowledge to a few, but a majority will eagerly wish to know.

Okay, here they are. Rice is the seed of the grass species *Oryza sativa* (Asian rice) or less commonly *Oryza glaberrima* (African rice). As a cereal grain, domesticated rice is the most widely consumed staple food for over half of the world's human population, particularly in Asia and Africa.

It is the agricultural commodity with the third-highest worldwide production, after sugarcane and maize. Since sizable portions of sugarcane and maize crops are used for purposes other than human consumption, rice is the most important food crop with regard to human nutrition and caloric intake, providing more than one-fifth of the calories consumed worldwide by humans.

There are many varieties of rice and culinary preferences tend to vary regionally. Unfortunately, the production and consumption of rice is estimated to have been responsible for 4% of global greenhouse gas emissions in 2010.

There are factors that affect the growth and production of rice. They include environment, soil properties, biotic conditions, and cultural practices.



Environmental factors include rainfall and water, temperature, photoperiod, solar radiation and, in some instances, tropical storms. Soil factors refer to soil type and their position in uplands or lowlands. Biotic factors deal with weeds, insects, diseases, and crop varieties.

Rice contains carbohydrates, which gives energy, but it can also raise blood sugar. Again, rice is one of the oldest cereal grains in the world, and people have grown it for at least 5,000 years.

It is a staple food for more than half of the world's population, and 90% of the world's rice comes from Asia.

White rice is the most common type, though brown rice offers more health benefits. Brown rice comes in a variety of shades, including reddish, purplish, or

black.

Rice requires warm, moist conditions for growth and is grown world-wide in tropical and warm temperate habitats. Rice has a typical grass structure with a series of leaves that form a false stem through which emerges the main stem when the plant flowers and fruits.

Rice reproduces sexually, producing bisexual flowers that develop into fruits (cereal grains) after pollination and fertilization. Aside from being an essential source of food, rice also plays a significant role in the economies of many countries.

Rice farming is a vital industry worldwide, with an estimated 150,000 varieties of rice cultivated globally. Rice farming originated in Asia more than 5000 years ago.

According to historians, rice was first domesticated in the Yangtze River valley in China. From China, rice cultivation spread to other parts of Asia, such as India, Southeast Asia, and Korea. Rice farming also spread to other parts of the world through trade routes, such as Africa and Europe.

Nigeria is the largest producer of rice in Africa, producing about 8,435,000 tonnes annually, followed by Egypt, Madagascar, Tanzania and Mali, according to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

Ironically, Nigeria is the 3rd highest importer of milled rice in the world, importing about 2 million metric tonnes of rice into the country.

Rice farming is one of the most lucrative types of farming in Nigeria. The staple food crop is also one of the most consumed staple foods and important cereal in Nigeria. It is estimated that almost 7 million tonnes of rice are consumed per year, in the country.

In July 2015, when the Federal Government announced plans to place a ban on the importation of rice into the country, Nigeria's local rice production started experiencing growth.

The demand for locally-produced rice (then) also increased. At the time, the ban placed on the importation of rice caused the price of foreign rice to soar, turning the attention of Nigerians to locally produced rice.

Suddenly, an opportunity for interested individuals, farmers, organisations and even some state governments to go into rice production, was created.

Rice mills like Abakali rice, Lake (Lagos and Kebbi State) rice, Anambra rice, Labana rice, as well as the production of Babban Gona's rice and many others, are among the producers of rice in Nigeria. There are abundant opportunities in the rice farming sector, for intending rice farmers.

In Nigeria, rice farming is common in the north. But the major rice-producing States are Kano, Gombe, Niger, Kebbi, Ebonyi, Anambra, Nasarawa, and Ogun.

The Rice Processors Association of Nigeria (RIPAN) and Rice Farmers Association of Nigeria (RIFAN) are the two popular bodies that coordinate the essential activities happening in the country's rice industry.

RIPAN, in particular, has remained unwavering in its commitment to boosting the local production and processing of rice. It has, among other things, advocated administrative policies and programmes that will enhance rice farming and processing in the country.

In summary, RIPAN is one association that has contributed a lot to the growth and development of Nigeria's rice industry. Already, few of the rice processors' feats have been highlighted in this piece. It cannot be exhausted.

But again, there is always another time to talk about issues of vital discourse in the country's rice industry, together with the activities of its key stakeholders, like RIPAN. I am sure the opportunity will come. Very soon!

Mahmud is the Deputy Editor of PRNigeria, and wrote in via: babasalam1989@gmail.com



BUSINESS WORLD

Natural gas: Nigeria requires green hydrogen investments

– Osinbajo

VICE President Yemi Osinbajo says Nigeria, as a nation, needs to consider investments in Green Hydrogen in view of energy transition.

Osinbajo made the call while unveiling a book titled "Understanding Natural Gas: A Nigerian Perspective" recently in Abuja.

The Vice President urged the Nigeria National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPC Ltd) to take into account investments in green hydrogen for clean energy.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the book with 12 chapters, authored and Co-authored by Dr David Ige and Mr Dapo Akinosun (SAN), respectively, and reviewed by Mr Bello Rabi and Mr Osten Olorunsola.

NAN reports that global demand for green hydrogen, which is an alternative low carbon energy, is anticipated to increase by 700 per cent by 2050.

Osinbajo said already there were a lot of talks about green hydrogen in particular, which required natural gas to produce, adding that its huge investments were being taken advantage globally.

"So we, as a nation, ought to be thinking in terms of this greener gas. I believe that investments in hydrogen is something we should take seriously. I am sure that NNPC Ltd will take that into account as we plan for the future.

"We must embrace the opportunity to harness our vast natural gas resources responsibly and judiciously, and while simultaneously chatting a path towards a cleaner and greener future," he said.

The vice president also called for a faithful implementation of an energy transition plan which involved decade of gas proposals.

"Nigeria's energy transition plan attempts to chart a pathway forward because we see solar and renewable energy as the bedrock of that plan.

"And the plan is to develop about 250 gigawatts of solar plants by 2060, which is when we intend to achieve the Net 0.

"The plan also outlines our decarbonisation strategies in the area of power, oil and gas and transportation.

"But it also seeks to mitigate against the possible long-term job losses in oil and gas sector in particular, because this is an industry that has dominated our economy for decades," he said.

He said due to global geopolitics, especially Russian-Ukraine war, gas prices skyrocketed and countries were forced to confront the vulnerabilities of their own energy supply strategists giving rise to urgent calls for re-evaluation and diversification.

He, however, commended



Osinbajo

the authors of the book, which he described as one of the few technical texts that had a strong policy and legal perspective towards gas utilisation.

In a remark, the authour, Dr David Ige, CEO of GasInvest Limited, a natural gas consulting and investment company, said his personal sojourn in natural gas started 18 years ago.

Ige, former Group Executive Director – Gas and Power at the old NNPC, recalled that there was little or no data on gas at that time but realised as he advanced that the solutions being proposed for gas were inconsistent with the scale of demand in gas.

He said his key drivers and sources of inspiration were his policy work on gas master plan at NNPC, teachings in the universities, quest for holistic approach to gas, infrastructure, commercial framework, among others.

He commended the co-author for ensuring that the content of the book was adopted for its relevance to legal practitioners,

FG imposes 30% tariffs on wine, spirit, cigarette

THE Federal Government has imposed a 30 percent tariff on the importation of alcoholic beverages such as wine, spirits including whiskey, brandy, vodka, rums and smoking tobacco – cigarettes, among others.

Nigeria's finance minister Zainab Ahmed, disclosed this in a document seen recently.

"This is to confirm that Mr President has approved the implementation of the 2023 fiscal measures made up of Supplementary Protection Measures (SPMs) for the implementation of ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET) 2022-2026 and revised excise duty rate on alcoholic beverages, cigarettes and tobacco products as well as the introduction of excise duty on Single Use Plastics (SUPs)", she said.

The government has also imposed a 5 percent duty on telecommunications services such as mobile telephony and operations (GSM), fixed telephony operators (fixed/fixed wireless), internet

particularly the young players who would be entering the natural gas for the first time and industry professionals.

Also speaking, the Co-author, Akinosun, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) and a Founding Partner in SimmonsCooper Partners, a leading commercial law firm, said the history of the book began with the advice by the vice president several years ago to look into Gas Law.

"Even though gas was not popular then I went on the journey. How to find materials on gas and learn on it became a challenge," he said.

Akinosun, who specialises in gas, banking and finance, foreign investment, divestment, and commercial dispute resolution, said the collaboration with Ige who intimidated him on business for young lawyers on gas and agreements coupled with his passion aided the knowledge transfer.

The formal book presentation and unveiling had many dignitaries in attendance including Justice Olukayode Ariwoola, Chief Justice of Nigeria and Malam Mele Kyari, GCEO, NNPC Limited, among others. (NAN)

service providers (ISPs), other operators (operators other than mobile fixed telephony, ISPs), as such tariff on post/pre-paid for these services is now 5 percent.

The tariff on smartphones was increased to 15 percent from 5/10 percent 2022-2026 ECOWAS CET duty/IAT. Raw cane sugar now attracts 70 percent duty from 60 percent and crude palm oil 35 percent from 25 percent.

On beer and stout including other alcoholic beverages and beer not made from malted-whether fermented or not, attracts 20 percent import duty.

However, the Federal Government has reduced tariffs on maize (corn and starch) to 5 percent from 10 percent, and kept unchanged tariff on aluminum cans at 10 percent.

Also, the government has imposed 2 and 4 percent tariffs on the vehicle engine size of 2000cc to 3999cc and 4000cc and above.

According to the document, the approved Supplementary Protection Measures (SPM) in

ELECTRICITY consumers in Nigeria are being cautioned to reject any meter supplied by distribution companies without the NEMSA seal and labels.

The Nigerian Electricity Management Services Agency, NEMSA, said this through

Managing Director/CEO, Engr. Aliyu Tukur Tahir spoke to journalists yesterday in Abuja

He said identifying the seal and label is the first step in ensuring that the meters being installed are genuine.

Engr. Tahir explained that the agency tests and certifies every meter and other electrical assets used in the Nigerian Electricity Supply Industry, NESI, before they are deployed.

He noted that the labels inform consumers the date each meter was tested and the next due date for another test.

For customers who suspect that their meters were running faster than normal, he said: "So many things can cause your meter to read faster. First, is the installation of such a meter, it is important that only a NEMSA certified meter installer is allowed to install your meter and you can verify this by asking for their certificate.

"Another thing is the electrical installations in your premises around your meter. If there is linkage between your meter and the installation, the meter will see it as a continuous load and it will be reading. And most of these installations do

FG's suspension of fuel subsidy removal, best option

–Labour

THE Organised Labour have described the Federal Government's decision to suspend the removal of fuel subsidy as the "best option".

Mr Benson Upham, Head of Information, Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) said this to newsmen while reacting to the recent suspension of the subsidy removal by the Federal Government recently in Abuja.

It would be recalled that

earlier, the National Economic Council (NEC) had planned for the removal of subsidy on petroleum product.

According to Upham, we are glad that they have begun to see the light and decided to do the right thing.

"There would have been instantaneous reaction. Of course, we would have been glad to coordinate those reactions.

"But happily, they have beginning to see the light. Our advice would be that they should take a lesson from the document we gave them on the so-called fuel subsidy removal.

NEMSA warns Nigerians against accepting electricity meters



Aliyu

not have effective earthing. It is only when earthing is done properly that you can have leakages detected and isolated using the circuit breaker.

"Improper installation of generators and power supply can also lead to this. Some of us build our own generators in line with our meters. If you install the generator along the load line, your meter will continue to pick it up when you are running your generator. You must have a separate line for your generator if not you will pay the utility for using your own generator", he added.

The Chief Electrical Officer of the Federation disclosed that NEMSA carried out wide ranging tests of equipment and installations last year, adding that in 2022 the agency "inspected 10,876 new electrical projects, monitored 10,598 existing networks and resolved 771 of them.

"Tested 2.5 million meters, inspected 3,480 factories, public places and hotels; certified 2,719 electrical personnel and renewed 6,332 in total; inspected 647 pole manufacturers; removed 68,168 substandard materials and investigated 376 electrical accidents".

He noted that poor funding was hampering the agency's work in the sector, expressing concern that failure of DisCos to invest in the network was hindering growth in the indust.

He also added that refurbishing the existing refineries and production of petroleum products in our country is in the best interest of the country because of the huge advantages.

"First, it would create jobs, make the petroleum products available for consumption and probably reduce the price of the products. It will also guarantee foreign direct investment and make Nigeria a better of place.

"All the monies they claim goes to the process of deregulation can actually be utilised to make our refineries functional," he said.

He added that the decision to revise that policy had further vindicated Nigerians as this was the right thing.

He however, charged the incoming government that the instrumentality of social dialogue should be leveraged upon on issues that affect the general project of Nigeria, adding that the voice and interest of Nigerians could be accommodated.

"Policies should not just be drafted overnight and pushed through people's throat. Nigeria belongs to all of us.

"We are all critical stakeholders and must be part decision making and implementation body to ensuring that our country move forward," he said.

"We told Nigerians earlier on that the policy is ill-timed and is not acceptable. So it is good that the government has done

the right thing. Our advice would be that they should take a lesson from the document we gave them on the so-called fuel subsidy removal.

The answer cannot be far from domestic production," he said.

BUSINESS WORLD

International trade Africa growth and development

International trade policies have long been a contentious issue for African countries, particularly those in West Africa. While trade can be an important driver of economic growth and development, there are many ways in which international trade policies can hinder Africa's progress. ADEMOLA ADETUNJI writes.

ONE of the biggest challenges facing West African countries is unfair trade agreements. Developed countries often impose trade agreements on African countries that are biased in their favor. These agreements may require African countries to open up their markets to imports from developed countries while maintaining barriers to exports from Africa. This can lead to a flood of cheap imports that undermine local industries, making it difficult for African businesses to compete. In addition, many developed countries impose high tariffs on imports from Africa, which makes it difficult for African businesses to access their markets. This reduces the demand for African goods and services and can limit Africa's ability to export. Furthermore, developed countries often provide subsidies to their farmers, which reduces the cost of their agricultural products. This makes it difficult for African farmers to compete in the global market, reducing the competitiveness of African farmers.

Another issue is the strict intellectual property rights laws that developed countries impose on African countries. These laws can limit their ability to access new technologies and medicines, negatively affecting health and education in African countries, as well as limiting their ability to innovate and grow.

Moreover, African countries often have limited representation in global trade negotiations. This means their interests may not be adequately represented, resulting in trade policies that do not benefit African countries or take their specific needs and challenges into account.

Overall, these factors can make it difficult for African countries, particularly those in West Africa, to grow and develop through trade. In order to address these challenges, it is important for African countries to work together and advocate for fairer trade policies that support their economic growth and development. By doing so, Africa can better position itself to compete in the global marketplace and achieve sustainable economic growth and development.

Since it is crucial for Africa to be involved in these discussions in order to foster a bilateral



understanding and avoid being undermined. There are several steps that African countries can take to get involved in international trade policy-making and harness their growth and development.

Firstly, African countries can invest in building their own capacity to negotiate trade agreements. This may involve investing in training and education programs for trade negotiators and building strong institutions that can effectively represent Africa's interests in international trade

negotiations. By doing so, African countries can better position themselves to negotiate fair trade agreements that support their economic growth and development.

Secondly, African countries can explore alternative trade agreements that do not involve developed countries. For example, Africa can explore trade agreements with other developing countries, such as China and India, that may be more favourable to their interests. By diversifying their

trade partnerships, African countries can reduce their reliance on developed countries and reduce their vulnerability to unfair trade practices.

Finally, African countries can work to build a stronger domestic economy that is less reliant on international trade. This may involve investing in infrastructure, education, and innovation to build a more competitive and sustainable domestic economy. By doing so, African countries can reduce their dependence on international trade and better control their economic destiny.

In conclusion, Africa's participation in international trade policy-making is crucial for its growth and development. By building strong alliances, investing in capacity-building, exploring alternative trade agreements, and building a stronger domestic economy, African countries can better position themselves to negotiate fair trade agreements that support their economic growth and development. By doing so, Africa can harness the potential of international trade to achieve sustainable economic growth and development.

Dr Adetunji is CEO, MO Group



With **BULUS GAMBO**

'I'm a legend in my own right!'

Continued from page 18



started doing before? What are the biggest differences in your approach between producing and rapping?

Contrary to everyone's belief I always been a rapper first. I started producing out of anger when a local producer at the time denied me beats. I sat and learned the program and became a household name from the mud.

The approach to producing is better because I don't have to be as technical as I do a rapper. But it's my duty to be efficient on both sides, no excuses!

The city and Hip-Hop scene of Buffalo certainly suffered a huge loss with the passing of the late DJ Shay (R.I.P). What was your relationship with him and how did you get to know him? And what is the greatest help or advice he has given you personally?

I've known DJ Shay since 2006/07 and he was everything musically I needed. Producer, engineer, A&R, manager, literally all in

had the chance to see at work some of the greatest producers and mc's ever ... Who impressed you the most, also for unexpected sides, and why? What was it like working with Dj Drama?

Yeah, I'm in A LOT of rooms I don't speak on because those moments are dear to me. But I get inspired by HitBoy and Alchemist the most. Their work ethics are insane and contagious. You just wanna make an album on the spot when you are in the room with them.

Working with DJ Drama is cool, just seen him at a video shoot in NY recently and he insisted we do another "Respected Sopranos" tape, so you never know lol.

You are not only an MC, but also a really good producer: what was the thing you

one. I was Shay's understudy and not by position but by choice I learned the game from him and use that knowledge to this day.

How would you tell the importance of DJ Shay for Buffalo to those who don't know what he did?

That's easy, I'll have them Google BuffCity Records and you'll see where we came from in comparison to where we are now. Shay's legacy is all over Buffalo and lives vicariously through us daily.

What should we expect from the BSF and Rick Hyde until the end of 2022?

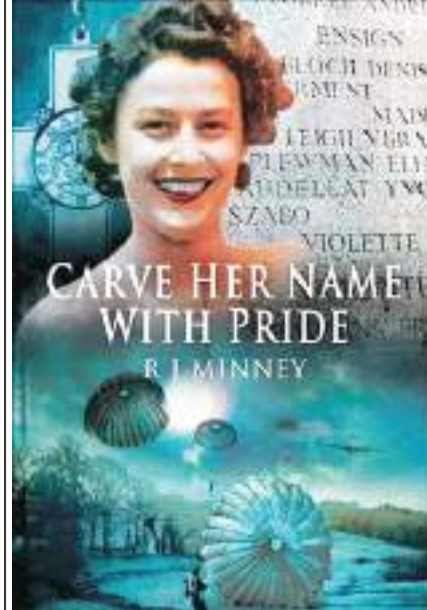
You should expect nothing and prepare for EVERYTHING! That's a jewel! Plates 3 on the way!!!



Biographies of remarkable women you need to read

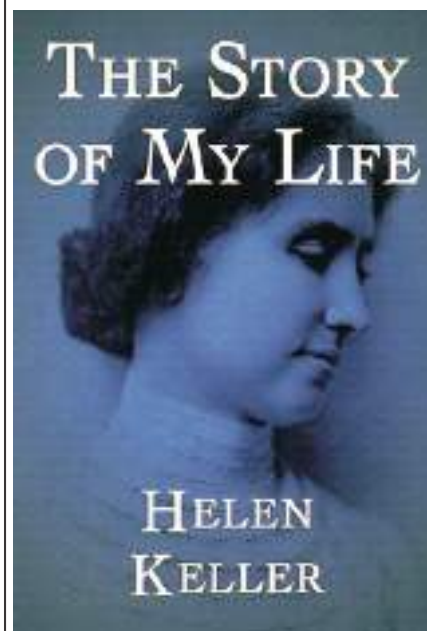
Continued from page 18

Carve her name with pride



One of World War II's most notable female spies, Violette Szabo was a French and British Special Operations agent in occupied France. Szabo's bilingualism was a major asset to Allied forces; she was sent into France to scout out the locations of German munitions factories undercover as a French secretary on her way to a new job. Szabo, sadly, was eventually captured by German forces and deported to Ravensbrück, a concentration camp outside of Berlin.

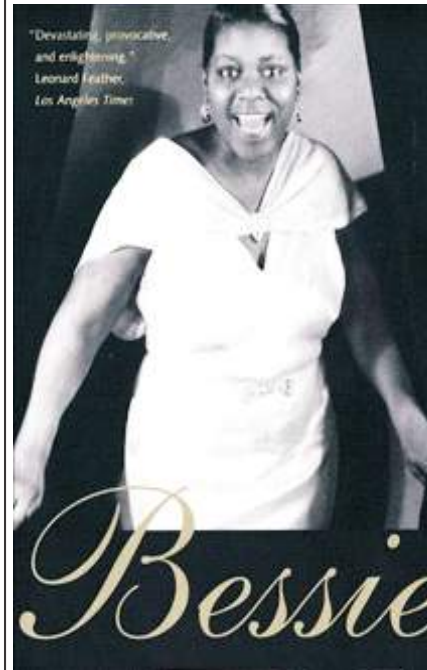
The Story of my life



A story that has been transformed into both stage and film adaptations, Helen Keller has remained an American icon for triumphing in spite of having lost her sight and hearing at a young age. With the help of her teacher—and later devoted friend—Anne Sullivan, she was able to embark on a journey that would change her life forever. Her perseverance led Keller to become the first deaf-blind person to receive a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Keller published this book when she was 22 years old; in it, she testifies to the darkness and silence she experienced before meeting Anne Sullivan. Her narration is rich with descriptions of her view of the world—she refuses to let her situation debilitate her understanding of the world. Keller's positive outlook on life and the testament of her willpower will leave you feeling hopeful.

Bessie



The "Empress of the Blues", Bessie Smith was the highest paid African American performer during the 1920s. Smith was performing by the age of 10, busking on the streets with her brother, Andrew. By the time she was 30, she was the biggest act in the black community, leading shows with as many as 40 supporting entertainers—singers, dancers, musicians—and touring in a custom-built railroad car. Now overshadowed by the singers that followed her, like Billie Holiday, Albertson brings the

iconic singer back to life through interviews with her family and friends.

To be continued

Our esteemed readers! We want to introduce a new innovation. This deals strictly with PROFILING. It is aimed at bringing to limelight personalities who have put their marks on the sands of time. They may be unsung heroes/heroines but models to our generation due to their personality, principles, beliefs, attributes, impact in the society or for standing out in the crowd. Here is our very first for your reading pleasure. Keep a date with us!

Sunday  Standard
PROFILE

others were imported from China. **Are you registered with Export Promotions for your products to be exported** No, I am not. My rights are patronised locally but we are doing very well. We have enough customers as you can see for yourselves. Our customers

that. **What about tapping into what bank of industry offers on form of grants?** Trully, I am just hearing about it. I grew my business from the scratch through hard work, determination and dedication. Besides, I prefer to thread carefully instead of going to

How did your business journey begin?

Mine was an issue of trial and error nine years ago when I decided to leave the business of milling corn and try something new. I picked interest in rice processing. It was a timely decision because spoilers were entering the corn milling business by the dozens every day. It was overcrowded and I lost interest in it. I decided to try something challenging. The attraction to me was to buy the unprocessed rice and process it myself. I began with 2 bags. At first we used to soak the rice in cold water for about 3 days to peel off the bran. But through our mistakes, we learned that we could do it faster and get better results soaking it in hot water for just one day. As it is now, our rice comes out very well. I can score it 90 per cent. Even the 10 per cent subtracted is because of machineries we still lack to finish the work.

What kind of rice do you process here?

We process the common rice for cooking jollof rice, white rice,. Also processed is tuwo-rice which is white in colour. Another service we render is destoning to get rid of stones. We also polish rice here. That apart, we have a machine for grading which separates long rice from the ones broken.

You mentioned processing the rice manually when you started. How did you come about these machines?

In the beginning, we had no option but to process the rice manually. However, there was a man that we used to take our work to because he had the processing machines. That man was kind enough to be cleaning up and finishing up the process for us. On the side, I use to engage in contributions we refer to as adashi. That was how I was able to save up to buy my first rice processing machine. Again, I have one talent that gives me an edge in this kind of business. God has gifted me with the ability to fix machines or couple machines. This could be due to the fact that I'm a trained welder.

Could you tell us how many machines you have?

We have Oscar- for threshing the rice to remove the bran. There is also Destoner which removes stones from rice. We also have Polisher for polishing rice and Grader from separating long rice from the broken ones.

How do you compare your work in the past and the present?

There's indeed a big difference. The machines have made a big difference. Our work is easier, faster and the rice processed is cleaner. As a result, we now have more customers.

Were your machines locally made or imported?

It is a mixture of both. Some were fabricated here by me, while

FADAC Integrated: Journey of self-made man

In an era when majority of people especially the educated, go for white collar jobs or wait to be empowered by government through grants before starting a business, one man stands out : Alhaji Bashir Ahmed. Born into a humble home, he decided to find a niche for himself in the business world. He started with corn mill. When Ahmed noticed that it was over-crowded, he decided to try his hands in a business that very few people were attracted to at that time- rice processing. Today, he can beat his chest and say that he is a self-made man. He is the CEO of FADAC INTEGRATED, JOS. YVONNE ISHOLA and YAKUBU KANGAH engaged him in a chat. Except.



overwhelmed us during festive periods like Christmas when Co-operative Societies buy in bulk for their members.

What is your staff strength?

My staff are about 30 in number. They are receiving training even as they work. School of Forestry usually sends its students for Industrial Attachment with us, year in, year out. My doors are also opened to pupils from primary schools and students from secondary schools and tertiary institutions that come for excursion.

Have you ever intimated ITF on what you do, to see if they will send youths to you to train in rice processing?

No, I have never thought of

banks at the point I am now. But when the business grows bigger, of course, we may have need for a loan to enable us buy some particular machines.

What is your primary source of rice?

We usually travel down to some villages like Jengre in Bassa LGC, Samunaka and some villages in Bauchi State to purchase the unprocessed rice.

What edge does foreign rice have over your processed rice?

Foreign rice has really gone far because of the machines available to the developed nations. There is a big difference. However, if our local rice is

processed well, it can be second comparing and contrasting with to none. Besides, Nigerians now the bigger brands with evil know that if you are looking for motives which could ruin one. But nutrients and tasty rice, our local hopefully as we grow bigger, that rice is the one to go for. As it is inevitable.

Tell us about the machines you have

now, some of our local rice can pass for foreign rice. Some middle men have even taken advantage of that fact to cheat customers. Sewing machine- for final packaging the rice inside them.

What is your take about engaging middle men in the sale of your products?

There is also the Scale to measure appropriately the bags in KGs. We have the horscar for threshing the rice. There is also a place built for that, considering the fact that soaking the rice. There are boiling tanks for per-boiling the rice, involved in rice processing. If dryers for drying the rice after they decide to ruin one's processing, steaming tanks used business, it takes little effort to for processing. Others include slander one's business by simply Polisher, Destoner, and Grader.

NEWS

Livestock Transformation Plan strategy for peace - PLSG

From **DUMAH RANDONG, Wase**

PLATEAU State Government said the adoption and implementation of the National Livestock Transformation Plan was part of strategies towards deepening peaceful coexistence between herders and farmers in the state.

State Deputy Governor, Professor SonniTyoden stated this while flagging-off the distribution of pastures to farmers in Wase Local Government Area of the state on Thursday.

The National Livestock Transformation Plan is a Federal Government framework geared towards improving the livestock sector and eliminating conflict by involving and strengthening intensive livestock production system with the aim of making it more productive and sustainable.

The plan which began in 2019, has Plateau, Nasarawa and Jigawa as pilot states.

The Plateau Livestock Transformation Pilot project situated on large hectares of land at the Wase Game Reserve is currently producing pastures with 30 farmers and herders each being trained in modern farming techniques at the project site.

Flagging-off the distribution of pastures to farmers, Plateau State Deputy Governor, Professor SonniTyoden expressed delight with the success story of the programme describing it as the best in the country.

Prof Tyoden who is the state Chairman of the Livestock Transformation Plan, commended the Steering Committee for a job well done and urged people of Wase LGA to take ownership of the project in view of its benefits.

"I am also praying that you will continue to give it the necessary support so that this programme that has started and gone this far, will be completed successfully. It is a project that is specifically meant for farmers and herders. They are the ones that will benefit from it", the Deputy Governor emphasized.

Director General Research and Documentation, Government House, Jos and Secretary, Steering



Lalong

Committee, Professor John Waktong Wade while highlighting the benefits of the project, attributed the successful implementation of the first phase to the support of the state government, traditional rulers and other stakeholders.

He pointed out that there were long term plans that will also be executed as the project gets into the phase 2 and noted that in the course of executing the phase, they enjoyed tremendous support of the state and the Federal Government as well.

Emir of Wase, Sambo Haruna and Chairman of Wase Local Government Council, Ado Buba represented by his Deputy, NanvenAudu said the project will boost agricultural activities and entrench peaceful co-existence

between farmers and herders in the state.

Earlier, state Project Coordinator, Livestock Transformation Plan, Luka Madaki who highlighted the milestone of the scheme since inception, noted that the organization hopes to expand to accommodate more beneficiaries.

Madaki while appealing for more intervention especially in the area of water and other infrastructure, stressed the need for the sustenance of the project by the incoming administration.

By **JIDAUNA DAARING**

A high power delegation from the Plateau State Government led by the Plateau State Secretary to the Government of the state (SSGS), Prof. Danladi Atu has paid an unscheduled visit to Plateau Publishing Corporation (PPC), Publishers of THE NIGERIA STANDARD and SUNDAY STANDARD in Jos, last Friday.

Our correspondent reports that, those among the delegation include Permanent Secretary (PS) Ministry for Information and Communication, Dr. Boniface Gwotbit PS, Budget and PS, Office of the Head of Service, Mike Lamu.

Prof. Atu and his delegation who were received by the PPC management, led by the Corporation's acting General Manager, Mr. Paul Jatau told the Management that the purpose of their visit was to assess the level of work to be done at the old building before its

PLSG inspects PPC prior to commissioning



Atu

proposed commissioning of the city line Machine by Governor Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State.

He maintained that, the planned work is aimed at giving the old building a face lift as part of sustaining the legacy of late J.D. Gomwalk in the state. The corporation acting General Manager,

Mr. Paul Jatau while taking the delegation round the organization also explained to them the function of some of the new facilities.

He told the delegation that the organization has challenges that need to be address, so as to ensure more effective service delivery at all times.

Thugs kill 6 in Minna

From **MATHEW JWANTU, Minna**

RESIDENTS of Minna metropolis, Koropma, Ugwan Daje Limawa Obasanjo complex and its

environs have continued counting their losses resulting from youth restiveness that broke out from Edilfitr Sallah celebration which claimed several lives in the state.

Sources revealed that since the day of Edil Fitr Sallah celebration, the alleged youths have continued their operations on daily basis without interference from the security agencies.

It was further gathered that the said youths including underage who are all male, operate along streets in Minna that include: Limawa and Obasanjo complex, Ogbomosh, Lagos Street, Mobile Round about to Keterin Gwari, Barkin Sale and Soje 'A'.

Others are Angwan Daji, Bosso, Angwan Roka, at times Tunga and Maitumbi were most of them reportedly use as their hideouts.

Reports revealed that the youths involved used to come out around evening period between six to ten o'clock or around six to after seven in the morning to carry out their nefarious activities without challenges from any quarter.

According to reports, no fewer than five persons have been killed within the Sallah celebration period with several people injured. However, many residents lost their cell phones to them.

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Residents have blamed the insincerity of the Niger State Government, security agencies and the traditional leaders in finding a lasting solution to the menace, while calling on the relevant authorities to as a matter of urgency find a lasting solution to the current youth restiveness in the state.

Some residents also blamed the state government, politicians, businessmen and traditional institution for bailing jailed criminals for political and selfish reasons at

the detriment of innocent citizens.

When contacted, the Niger State Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, DSP WasiuAbiodun confirmed the attacks. He said that 37 suspects have been arrested in connection with the incidents, adding that police have responded in every situation as it occurred while the Command is reviewing the situation towards finding a lasting solution to thuggery and robbery in Minna.

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Uplifting life style of the less privilege

From **ANENE AIKE, Sokoto**

NO fewer than 174000 less privilege in Sokoto Society do receive food item packages and household items including bed and beddings and clothing materials on quarterly bases from the Sokoto Zaqat and endowment. Commission Asst and the Director Dr. Muhammad Lawal in collaboration with Muhammad Jebbi Ibrahim of the commission have deposited.

In an exclusive interview with the Nigeria Standard Newspaper Tittles Correspondent, Sokoto - Friday 14th April, 2023, the Commission Executive Secretary, Muhammad Lawal Maidoki who spoke through the due revealed that the criteria for determining who and who

are the Less Privileged include Self Presentation, pointing out by the Communities residents and those identified by the Zaqat and Endowment commission staffers trained for such oppose.

Maidoki also revealed that apart from Food and Clothing, the Commission do Empower most of the Less Privileged by providing them with Equipment and Accessories such as Sewing Machines, Grinding Machines for Commercial activities to generate cash and take care of themselves that usually walk them out of Poverty into Self Reliance.

That most of the Less Privileged in Sokoto have through the Endowment Programs been able to own their own Personal Huts within the Rural Communities as the generate funds from the Empowerment machines.

Alhaji Muhammad Lawal Maidoki, the Commission's Executive Secretary also expressed joy and happiness because according to him, almost all the Less Privileged in the state, Sokoto manned through the 87 Services Centres especially the widows, widowers and the down trading always express these through the smiles on the faces.

He also stated that the commission do frequently distribute Live Animals such as Goat and Ram including Fowls to the for rearing after which the take them to market for sale adding quickly that it also augment what other Commercial venture they practice.



NEWS

NTN closes Jos performance



THE National Troupe of Nigeria's (NTN) Town and Gown, in partnership with the University of Jos, staged the last performance of the series, titled "Do the Right Thing" on Friday at the St Louis College, Jos in which the 200 Level students of Theatre and Film Arts Department of the University of Jos performed in the Assembly Hall of the College to an audience which included student, staff, and other special guests. as part of the requirement for the Theatre in Education course.

In a chat with some of the students after the performance, they expressed that they were happy with the message of the play, which was quite timely and of utmost importance to them at stage of life. A student, Patricia Zakka, on her part

said she is motivated to do the right thing, by being serious with her studies, and avoiding any distractions brought her way, by fellow students, or peer group, and squarely facing her studies so that she could become something in life.

Dr. Festus Idoko, course coordinator of the 200 level students of the Theatre and Film Arts Department, University of Jos, said that the National Troupe of Nigeria's Town and Gown started in the early 2000s and was mostly in the South. They just thought that it should be brought to the Middle belt, and Plateau State is benefitting. The idea, he says, is to see how "we can take the university out of the university into the community and impact them positively for national development."

He says the play encourages that we do the right thing.

That "it pays to do the right thing" and it would help them as individuals, it would help their families, and it would help Nigeria as a whole. He hopes that the effect would help guide them for the rest of their lives.

On his part, Mr Omale, Abel, HoD Languages and Linguistics, who represented the Principal prays that the National would continue in this light and carry on impacting lives with its programmes. He says they have had other programmes of this nature within the school, but that this one is a very good addition, and a very welcome programme that has a direct positive bearing on the students.

The school was presented with items which include soap, buckets, drinks/edibles, and other sanitation items.

PPPNN is saddened by violent resurgence in Plateau

THE Plateau Peace Practitioners Network (PPPNN), a network of local and international NGOs and CSOs is saddened over what appears to be the resurgence of violent attacks in rural communities in Mangu, Bokkos, Riyom, Jos South, and Barkin Ladi local government councils of Plateau State.

In a statement signed by its division, Pwaksim Jacob, the Network noted that the use of this medium to extend our condolences and solidarity to the immediate families of the victims, the state, and humanity as a whole because, a violation of the rights of anyone is a violation of all people. May the souls of the deceased find peace, and may their deaths be a reminder of the need for leaders saddled with the mandate to protect and be true to their responsibilities.

It added that there is no doubt that the government, non profit organizations, most members of the network, the donor community, and people of goodwill have made concerted efforts to address the persistence of violent conflicts in Plateau State through diverse approaches and interventions that have reduced the fragility of the state in the past.

Nonetheless, the fragility of the Plateau state has taken on new dimensions. From the usual religious antagonism Plateau state is regrettably known for, where parties to the conflict are identified for dialogue, peace treaties are signed, capacity building of the parties for conflict transformation is enhanced,

and other engagements are done to address violent conflicts and build a peaceful Plateau state, Plateau is now faced with major concerns where gun people who have been conveniently called "unknown gunmen" attack citizens of this state without documented evidence of arrest and prosecution.

It noted further that this is worrisome and unacceptable to the network. We wrote to the governor and made the following requests:

He should address the citizens of the state through a state broadcast on the actions that have been taken or should be taken to address the widespread tension, fear, and anxiety caused by the upsurge in attacks. The address should also provide citizens with hope, knowing that those tasked with protecting them have not abandoned them to their fate.

We also appealed that the medical needs of the survivors be met by the government, including assurance of security and safety, to avoid the clear case of praying for people to "rest in peace" rather than to "live in peace."

We called on him to make a frantic effort to hand over a state free of heightened insecurity as a legacy to the next government and the Plateau people. This should be done by directing the Plateau Peace Building Agency to collaborate with the Peace Practitioners Network and other critical stakeholders to avoid the escalation of these attacks while charging security to deal with this resurgence as a major threat to life and property,

particularly during this transition period when conflict marchants may seek to exploit the state.

While we have requested proactiveness on the part of the government and the state agencies to take responsibility for the enforcement of law and order, we have the following appeal for the citizens:

Community members should activate early warning and early response mechanisms in their communities in collaboration with state agencies. Where early warning is shared with state authorities without satisfactory action, communities can reach out to the National Human Rights Commission at Plot 12677, Laminga/Liberty Dam Road, Rikkos Village, Jos, and also report to any credible civil society organization. Let's put it straight, the state security agencies have also made commitments to the peace of the state, but they may not be devoid of bad elements who decided to act unprofessionally, thereby denting the good image of the agencies.

Communities must avoid isolated movements, especially as the farming season is fast approaching. They must think of safety and security first.

As legitimate as community protests and demands for safety and security are, people must avoid situations in which road users are inconvenienced as they draw attention to their plights. People must be more diplomatic and use less vulnerable methods of

THE Chairman Northern Governors Forum and Governor of Plateau State, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong has all the intellectual characteristics and competence to serve as Secretary to the Federal Government if given the opportunity.

In a statement signed by the Deputy Chief of Staff General Administration, Plateau State Government House, Alhaji Saliyu Kwando and issued to newsmen in Jos, the Plateau State capital also noted the laudable achievements of Governor Lalong who has selflessly and resiliently contributed in no small measure to the holistic integration of the multifaceted citizens of the country devoid of religious and or ethnic sentiments.

Alhaji Kwando noted that Governor Lalong's commitment to patriotic and selfless strategies of human developmental growth coupled with love for accountable administrative excellence has solidified stakeholders desire of creating an enabling environment for socio-economic and political advancement of the nation.

According to him, "though Lalong's leadership style may be misunderstood by a pocket

'Appoint Gov Lalong as SGF'

few, the Governor has in the past couple of years proven that our society can only move forward if we are prepared to isolate our fundamental differences and consolidate on our collective responsibility of building a virile nation for the sake of our future generation.

Alhaji Kwando also acknowledged that Lalong's

sincere obligation to the progress and victory of the All Progressive Congress, (APC) during the last presidential polls surely indicates his rare commitment to ensuring good governance and contemporary approach to projecting the positive ideas of Nigeria before comity of nations.



Kwando

Bokkos LGC beefs up security infrastructure

BOKKOS Local Government has advanced the security architecture of the LGA procurement and distribution of Mounted Power Bikes to all Security Agencies in the LGA.

Speaking during the hand over ceremony, Hon Joseph Guluwa reiterated that security of life and properties, is his number one priority. He urged the regular and non regular securities to judiciously use the to stem activities of criminals and mischief makers in the locality.

He also called on the citizens of Bokkos LGA to be handy in tipping security operatives on suspected criminals to enable a total flush out of criminal elements.

The bikes were distributed to Sector 5 Command of STF in Bokkos, Nigeria Police Division Bokkos, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corp, Nigeria Community

Police, Vigilante Group of Nigeria, and others.

Speaking on behalf of the security bodies, Col Aminu, the Sector 5 Commander thanked Bokkos Local Government Council for this immense support and pledged that the bikes will be fully deployed for the purpose. He further assured the people of Bokkos of adequate security cover, but called on communities to cultivate free flow of communication to enable swift interventions in case of security breaches.

Present at the ceremony were the Deputy Chairman Hon Gimba Dauda, LGC Secretary Pastor Alheri Sagai, many Councillors and Advisers, Head of DSS Mr Kevin. The Bikes were handed over to the heads of the security agencies who all

Guluwa urges on unconditional forgiveness

HONOURABLE Joseph Guluwa, the Executive Chairman Bokkos LGC has joined hundreds of thousands to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ the Son of the Living God. The CAN Easter Rally organized at COCIN Central Bokkos drew worshippers from various denominations in the LGA. Hon Guluwa

congratulated Christians in Bokkos LGA for witnessing the Easter Celebration for 2023 after a peaceful elections and enjoined all to be rest assured what God has through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ established forever and ever. He said Easter Season the World over is a period of joy for Christian/followers Christ across the globe, for

it is the foundation upon which Christianity is built upon. Let the spirit of forgiveness prevail amongst us as Jesus Christ paid with his blood for the remission of our sins.

Prayers were offered for the peace and prosperity of Nigeria and for the leaders of this land.

Also in attendance were Hon David Ishaya Lulu House of Reprs Member Elect Mangu/Bokkos, Hon Ishaku Yobo House of Assembly Member Elect, Hon Amurudu Hussein Member Plateau State House of Assembly amongst several personalities.

Earlier, Hon Joseph Guluwa attended the CAN Easter Rally at COCIN Church Mangu in company of Hon Ishaya David Lulu, where Hon Lulu urged all who succeeded in the polls to put aside party differences to join hands to deliver dividends of democracy to the people.



Guluwa

NEWS

Lalong sympathises with victims of attacks, tanker accident

By Palang Kasmi

GOVERNOR Simon Bako Lalong has condemned the recent killings in parts of Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State.

He has also sympathised with victims of a tanker accident along Bauchi junction, Jos.

He conveyed the message in a statement signed by his Director of Press and Public Affairs, Dr. Makut Simon Macham.

"I am deeply disturbed by recent events in the state which led to loss of lives and properties," the Governor said.

He described the recent attack on Farin Lamba Turu, Jos South Local Government where artesanal miners were killed by attackers as callous, condemnable and unfortunate".

"Already the security is working to apprehend the attackers and bring them to justice", he said.

The governor while sympathising with the families of the victims, assured that the government will stop at nothing to ensure that those who take joy in causing pain on innocent citizens are dealt with as no one will be allowed to reverse the gains made in restoring peace and security to the state.

Similarly, the governor expressed shock and



Lalong

sorrow over the unfortunate accident involving a fuel tanker which exploded and caught fire along Bauchi road Jos, leaving many injured, some dead, property destroyed.

He sympathised with the victims of the accident and praised the gallantry of security personnel and first responders who swung into action to rescue victims and bring the situation under control.

The governor also regretted and condemned the action of some irate youths at the scene who attacked officials of the FRSC and their vehicles that came to assist in

traffic control and evacuation of victims.

He prayed God to comfort those who suffered losses and assured that the government will step in to bring relief to survivors and other victims.

Senator secures release of 62 inmates

From ANENE AIKE, Sokoto

OVER 62 inmates of the Sokoto Correctional Centre have been released as the former Governor of Sokoto, Senator Aliyu Magatakarda Wammakko secured their freedom as Salla gift.

The gesture is the 10th of its kind in series by the Senate Committee Chairman

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Governorship Candidate in the recently conducted election of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Plateau State, Dr Nentawe Yilwatda Goshwe, has called for concerted approach and efforts in tackling the activities of bandits in the state.

This came in a press statement signed by the spokesman of #GenerationNext# Campaign Council, Shitu Bamaiyi, and made available to SUNDAY STANDARD in Jos, the Plateau State capital last Thursday.

According to the statement, the Candidate said there was a need for collective and methodologically efforts to confront banditry headlong.

According to the resurgence of terrorist attacks on some communities in Mangu, Bokkos, Barkin Ladi and Riyom Local Government Areas, should be handled frontally and collectively by all and sundry.

Nentawe charges security operatives on renewed attacks



Nentawe

"It is rather unfortunate and painful that when the people are about to put behind the ugly narrative of terrorism, some miscreants are hell bent on retarding the wheel of progress in the state. So long as the people do not put aside their differences and forge ahead with a unity of purpose, the terrorists would continue to cause mayhem on them.

"There should be

collaboration and sharing of intelligence among the communities in the state to forestall any possible terrorist attack. I want to use this opportunity to sympathise with those who lost their loved ones in the affected communities. I want to appeal to the security agencies to put more efforts in tackling insecurity in the state

Nentawe said..

Livestock Empowerment value chain Programme inaugurated in Sokoto

From ANENE AIKE, Sokoto

LIVESTOCK Empowerment value chain Programme for the needy has been inaugurated in Sokoto state where the Sokoto State Zakat and Endowment Commission in

collaboration with Qatar Charity Abuja Office started with 8 families picked from among the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) of Gandhi Areas of Rabah Local Government Area of the State, as a new project.

Mallam Muhammad Maidoki, the Executive Chairman SOZECOM, in his speech appreciated the founders for the initiative saying that the system was a new model which would immensely impact on the lives of many people towards ensuring sustainable communities.

He also stated that the Zakat Commission, Sokoto does not have enough words to thank the Qatar Charity's numerous interventions to its people, particularly the less privileged among the communities.

He said the day's project is like many others benefited in Sokoto State, adding quickly that it is a value chain model system that will enable a sustainable family empowerment.

He also urged the benefitting families to always remain patient and determined, because livestock business requires

on Defense.

Senator Aliyu Magatakarda Wammakko of Sokoto North Senatorial District on the platform of All Progressives Congress said the gesture was to enable the freed inmates serving various jail terms across Sokoto, Tambuwal, Wurno and Gwadabawa Correctional Centres to celebrate Eid-el

a lot of dedication to become sustainable.

In his address Dr Hamdi Alsayed, the Executive County Director, Qatar Charity Abuja Office, Nigeria, said the initiative was to assist the needy society to become self reliant.

He said the first batch of 40 cows were to be distributed to eight families, where each family benefited with five cows, bags of animal feeds and other materials required for livestock rearing.

He also stated that the cows will be artificially inseminated to be able to produce milk in commercial quantity for dairy production.

When accosted, One of the beneficiaries, Malam Altine Dan-Sale, who cares for a family of 14 members, appreciated the donors, while assuring that he will take good care of the cows gotten by his family.



Wammako

Fitr with their families and loved ones.

Secretary to Aliyu Magatakarda Legal Aide, Barrister Abdulhamid Zubairu who spoke on behalf of the senator charged them to be good ambassadors and avoid repeating same mistakes that may take them back to jail.

Barrister Abdulhamid added that the inmates were paid their different charges, fines and compensation according to a statement issued Friday by Bashar Abubakar, Special Assistant Media and Publicity to the senator.

He later announced the donation of ten thousand Naira each to the freed inmates for transportation back to their various

destinations.

Some of the beneficiaries, Bello Abubakar, Amina Muhammad, Amina Dahiru and Usman Muhammad thanked the senator for his humanitarian and invaluable gesture to them.

They also promised to be of good conduct and character while relating with other members of the society while praying God Almighty to continue to help and protect the senator to discharge his duty diligently.

The programme was initiated by Senator Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko since 2016 and is being run annually especially during every Eid-el Fitr and Eid-el Kabir celebrations.



Tambuwal

SUNDAY MAGAZINE

Fuel Subsidy removal: Why NEC made a u-turn



Continued from page 10

"Why we are having this bad situation is because we lack people of conscience in leadership positions in this country who are expected to do everything possible to make every citizen of this country enjoy the common wealth God has given us.

"We equally miss the point and deceive ourselves if we just think our problems lay in policies alone without looking at those factors that are making us loose focus while we remain backward as a nation. I challenge our leaders to look at a country like Libya, even in times of civil war, its oil output has not gone down, neither have the people found themselves in a precarious state as we are.

"Ours is just a failure on the part of successive administrations who turned our petroleum sector to a place only for dispensing patronage to family members and friends and a place that rightly or wrongly belongs to a particular section of the country." Agyo noted.

The former Chairman of the Oil Marketers Association of Nigeria [MOMAN], Tunji Oyebanji, said, whichever approach the government would take, if not known to the country, would face crisis similar to the situation witness a few months ago when the government tried to implement the naira redesign policy.

"We are saying that there has to be a clear roadmap so that all stakeholders can be carried along. For example, at the point we will remove subsidies, will other products be imported? We can't wait until the day subsidy will be removed then we know. If they are importing we need to have placed an order. If NNPC will be importing we need to know. Everyone needs to be on the same page." Oyebanji said.

The u-turn as announced by NEC at the weekend may be a temporary relief balm on the spines of most Nigerians who are already in limbo trying to make a meaning out of all these policies which are coming at the heels of each other without actually addressing the real problems. Yet the problem of oil subsidy has continued to be one hydra-headache that needs serious attention. But the reality on ground also suggest taking drastic measures to solve desperate problems, which many economic experts have faulted the strategies being used to overcome such challenges.

According to an economist, Paul Onaze, who spoke on Channels, Politics Today, Nigeria should not be contemplating on the idea of abrupt subsidy removal which is akin to comparing Nigeria with countries like Saudi Arabia or United Arab Emirate [UAE] that had done that in the past." If you want to make comparisons,

what is the monthly income of an average Nigerian to what is obtained in those countries?

"We cannot be talking about oil subsidy without first fixing our ailing oil refineries and then we can then begin to talk about a gradual removal of oil subsidy. The timing is even wrong and it should be done in such a manner that is the citizens will not be adversely affected by the pains associated with the outcomes." Onaze noted.

SUNDAY STANDARD gathered that, already with the 800 million US dollars loan obtained to handle the payment of palliatives to cushion the effect of the policy confirms that the measure will definitely come into effect sooner than later.

Energy expert, Henry Adigun, said, the country would experience serious economic catastrophe and challenge if the new government of Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu adheres to

removing subsidy on petroleum products as planned by the present Buhari Administration. Instead, the new administration should set up a subsidy removal transition process to provide a better alternative measures to address the challenges ahead.

"The best approach for Bola Tinubu is to set up a transition process supported by a phased withdrawal and good stakeholders' engagement." Adigun said.

On his part, an energy economist and Professor at the University of Ibadan, Adeola Adenikinju, noted that the planned removal of fuel subsidy is inevitable to preserve the fiscal and monetary stability of the country.

Another expert on energy and renowned Professor of Petroleum Economics and Policy Research, Wunmi Iledare, said the marketers should have asked for deregulation and should make

their own transition plans. "They have been asking for deregulation and one expects them to have mapped out the strategy to adapt to the new reality. You will recall I have asked for partial deregulation or gradual deregulation for years. Right after the Petroleum Industry clearing price. Let the NNPC sell at marginal cost pricing to guarantee a return to investment using price modulation for a short while. Prof. Iledare further said.

As it is, the situation remains to be seen how the present or the in-coming administration intends to tackle or wriggle out of such a sensitive issue bearing in mind that what is on ground is a problem that can make or break any Government but for now, the big question on the lips of Nigerians is, when and how the fuel subsidy removal finally comes into effect.

The country would experience serious economic catastrophe and challenge if the new government of Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu adheres to removing subsidy on petroleum products as planned by the present Buhari Administration. Instead, the new administration should set up a subsidy removal transition process to provide a better alternative measures to address the challenges ahead.

METRO-FOCUS

Jos, "guinea pig" for new illicit alcohol drinks?

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

Some of the things we deliberately ignored in the past are gradually coming to consume us lately. We were busy paying lipservice to casual but sensitive things that now turn out to be a scourge we grapple with.

The indiscriminate siting and sales of illicit drinks in and around our neighbourhoods which needed to be arrested before now, has turned out to be the unseen peak that is ploughing our eyes these days.

The spread of these beer parlours and level of alcohol consumption today in Jos, the capital city of Plateau State has been a thing of great concern. To some, it is a huge business to the point that there exist gin's "refineries" secretly coming up on a daily basis and people have been consuming it without knowing their sources.

Some of these illegal breweries are not far from our neighborhoods, but people are careless to monitor what comes in and out a "Jericho hall fenced building" that is sited around their neighborhoods. This is simply because some of their youth are employed as security operatives or distribution agents.

Ignorantly, these youths take their pay off every month without knowing what is happening inside the main factory. They are always brainwashed with the story that the structure was just a mere warehouse that stores products brewed from the Western and Southern part of Nigeria or other African countries.

This has been going on long before now and the authorities saddled with the responsibilities of monitoring these illegal factories are not aware because we failed to ask questions and inform them. All we are concerned about is the so-called employment these factories provide to our youths.

In fact, most of these people in the neighborhoods are aware of what is happening, but would prefer to keep mute because their children are working in one similar factory or the other and will be unfair to deny his child earning his daily bread.

Convincing any resident in such neighbourhoods that sounds of machines heard only in the late hours of night coming from these structures are a proof that industrial processes take place there is a herculean task. And that was the intention of the owners. In fact, the mere fact that they only produce in the dead of night make their products suspect.

It would be recalled that the immediate past GbongGwom Jos, Late DIG, Da Victor Pam, staged a fight against illicit drinks popularly known as "Goskolo" in the neighborhoods and it was communally fought, dislodging both brewers and sellers of this illicit drink in communities. But it appears the hydra headed monster has resurfaced.

Yes, the consumption of this dreaded substance was somehow reduced and the urge for it seemed to be completely subsided along the line. Unfortunately, we assumed that the battle was over and relaxed. We forgot that these desperate illegal businessmen always strategise. As it is now, the situation is going out of hand because a new style has been introduced.

It will interest you to know that the same Goskolo has surreptitiously been channelled and repackaged in some small containers with an attractive outlook to give the public the impression that they are refined, blended and legal alcoholic beverages



approved by the government. However, findings have revealed that most of these factories are located around Utan, Apata, Kabong (GadaBiu), Goodluck Jonathan road, Tafawa Balewa Street, Bukuru and many more. They are yet to be discovered and that they are brewed in some hidden corners in the capital city of Jos and only God knows the materials used. You see labels and addresses that indicate names of some unknown companies from southwestern and eastern states which are deliberate attempts to misdirect.

We, therefore call on government agencies like NAFDAC, NDLEA, SON, PAN, NSCDC, Police and other agencies to stage a house-to-house search in these areas to arrest all these illegal producers and marketers of this dangerous drinks that have killed so many of our promising youths. Communities should also collaborate with these government agencies to fish out those indulging in this life consuming business. Jos was one of the most serene and liveliest cosmopolitan towns in Nigeria that accommodated all and was fun to visit. It was a common

sight to see people in the cool of the day especially at weekends, relaxing with one or two bottles at various designated gardens. However, now the story is different. Most young people ignore the usual place where locally brewed alcohol (Bukutu) is normally found in isolated ghetto areas when they cannot afford a decent drink. They have embraced these illegal illicit alcohol drinks because they are cheap and they call them "Quick Action" and they are killing them silently. Could it be that the system then had monitoring mechanism that

recognised products that were accepted or welcomed in Jos? This is because products like Gulder, Guinness Foreign Extra Stout, Heineken, Star Lager and even the Rock Lager Beer/Class brewed in Jos were not abused as they are today. Therefore, government on its part should do the needful by coming with stringent rules and regulations that will monitor the excesses of these illegal factories and the influx of different illicit alcoholic beverages into the state as refined gin. It is killing us and we cannot fold our arms to see that happen!

SUNDAY PEOPLE

PRESIDENT-ELECT RECEIVES EMIR BAYERO AND OTHERS

Nigeria President-elect, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu last week received in audience the Emir of Kano, HRH Aminu Ado Bayero and APC Governors, some Senators and members, House of Reps at his private residence in Asokoro, Abuja



Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu (right) discussing with the Emir of Kano, Aminu Ado Bayero during the visit



Emir of Kano, HRH Aminu Ado Bayero (middle) with President-elect, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu (right) and his Vice, Sen. Kashim Shettima



Progressives Governors Forum Chairman, Governor Atiku Bagudu of Kebbi State (standing) making some remarks



President-elect, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, his Vice, Sen. Shettima, Progressives Governors Forum, Senators and Reps members in a group photograph

PLATEAU STATE GOVERNOR-ELECT INAUGURATES TRANSITION COMMITTEE

The Plateau State Governor-elect, Barr. Caleb Mutfwang recently inaugurated 10 man swearing-in and handing over ceremony Committee for the May, 29 at the Eliel Centre, Gold and Base Jos



10 Man Committee being inaugurated by Barr. Caleb Mutfwang, Governor-elect



Governor-elect, Barr. Caleb Mutfwang inaugurating the 10 man committee



Chairman of the inaugurated Committee, Prof. Ganyir Lombin responding on behalf of his colleagues



Chairman of the committee, Prof. Ganyir Lombin (right) with members Mr. Moses Nwan, mni and Prof. Shedrach Best

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NEWS

From **MATHEW JWANTU, Minna**

Gov appoints executive secretary pilgrims welfare board

THE Governor of Niger State, Alhaji Abubakar Sani Bello has approved the appointment of Muhammad Awwal Aliyu as the new Executive Secretary, Niger State Pilgrims Welfare Board.

A statement issued by Ahmed Ibrahim Matane, Secretary to the Government of Niger State (SSG) disclosed that the appointment of Muhammad Awwal Aliyu to the challenging position was based on professionalism, merit, proven credentials, integrity, and outstanding records of decades of experience.

According to the SSG, "the new Executive Secretary is expected to comply with the operational structure and policy objective as contained in the State Pilgrims Welfare Board".

Ahmed Matane reminded the Executive Secretary that he is also expected to bring his knowledge, skills, and wealth of experience to bear in the performance of his new assignment by working assiduously to justify the confidence reposed in him.



Bello

The Governor congratulated Muhammad Awwal Aliyu on the appointment and wishes him

success and God's guidance in the performance of the arduous duties of his office, the statement stressed.

CROSSING the road at Traffic Signal Point

Basically, the watchword for pedestrians here is

When the Red Man shows, do not cross.

When the Green Man begins to flash, do not start to cross.

III. When the Green Man is steady, check to be sure that traffic has stopped, then cross quickly.

If you have started crossing when the Green Man begins to flash, you have time to finish crossing. Do so safely to finish up.

Watch the traffic as well as the lights.

VI. Don not cross when the lights are on Green or Amber.

Junction without Traffic Light

When crossing at a junction without traffic light, pay attention to traffic turning into the road especially from behind you.

Manned Traffic Control Point

This is a point where a traffic officer controls traffic.

Do not cross the road when the officer has permitted vehicular traffic to move or has signaled you to stop.

Cross ONLY when the officer signals you to do so.

Look out for oncoming vehicles as you cross briskly.

At Bus Stop Board or alight from a bus or cab at an authorized Bus Stop.

Do not cross the road in front of a vehicle.

Do not board a vehicle while it is moving.

On Approach of

Emergency Vehicle

An emergency vehicle is a vehicle designed and authorized to respond to emergencies. Emergency vehicles include, Ambulances, Fire Trucks, Law enforcement vehicles, etc.

Give way to all categories of emergency vehicles. On the road. They life they are trying to save may be yours of that of a relation or friend.

When walking with children

Children are easily distracted on the road by fancy sights like ice cream vans, siren blasting and flasher displaying vehicles, carnivals, processions etc. An adult walking with children must guide and keep them on track at all times. Children must never be let loose as they may run off to dangers. As such, Walk on the walkway/extreme left facing oncoming vehicles.

Hold the child on the left and position yourself between the child and traffic.

Note that pedestrians include children have right of way immediately they step on zebra crossing. However, do not claim such right at the expense of your safety. Only the living can claim right of way.

Guide for children of School Age Using The Road

When crossing the road, use pedestrian bridge or Zebra crossing where they are provided.

Walk facing oncoming traffic.

Use the walkway where provided.

Avoid playing on the road.

Scream and run away as fast as you can from total strangers who stop to give you lift. They are most likely to kidnappers and robbers.

Do not accept any gift from total strangers.

Wear bright- coloured clothing when walking at night.

Work Zone Warning Signals

The lives of highway construction workers depend on vehicles who are expected to obey speed limits and other signs at work zones. Do not forget, the colour orange marks a work zone and means slow down. The sign "SLOW DOWN, MEN AT WORK" may also be seen at such places.

Flagger (Traffic Control Signalers) are responsible for guiding drivers and other road users through work zone areas. They wear orange or yellow reflective vests, yellow-green reflective shirts or jackets. They use "STOP" or "SLOW" paddles or red flag to direct road users and to let workers or construction vehicles to cross the road.

This is a high visibility barrier tape used to enclose an area in order to restrict unauthorized persons. it is used at crash scene to ensure that existing pieces of evidence are not tampered with. Do not enter the area or cross the tape when in place.

From **AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja**

Court stops concession process of Ajaokuta Steel, others

Rules 7 of the Kogi State High Court (Civil Procedure Rules) 2 0 0 6 .

A division of the High Court of Justice of Kogi State sitting in Lokoja, the state capital, has restrained the Federal Government from its planned concession of the Ajaokuta Steel Company Limited (ASCL) and the National Iron Ore Mining Company (NIOMCO) at Itakpe. Both companies are located in Kogi State.

The FG had commenced the concession process for the two companies with an advertisement. However, in a suit with number HCL/211M/2023 filed by the Attorney-General of Kogi State, on behalf of the government and people of the state, the court was asked, through a motion ex parte, to give an order for a stay of action on the concession process pending the determination of the substantive matter on it before the court.

The motion ex parte was brought pursuant to Order 11

conference or interview slated for May 4, 2023, pending the hearing and determination of the motion on notice.

Leading seven other lawyers, M. Y. Abdullahi, SAN, drew the attention of the court to the affidavit of urgency deposed to in the application while seeking the orders. He sought two orders: "An order for interim injunction restarting the Defendants/Respondents, their agents, representatives, officials and whosoever acting for them, or through them, or on their behalf, from proceeding with the concession of the Ajaokuta Steel Company Limited and the National Iron Ore Mining Company".

This was supported by another seeking injunction of restraint against defendants "carrying out any of the itemized functions or activities as contained in their publication published in the Daily Trust of Friday, 21st April, 2023", including the virtual pre-qualification for

He said the affidavit of urgency deposed to by the claimant clearly established that he "has a prima facie case on a claim of right to the 5th and 6th defendants (ASCL and NIOMCO) and that except the court intervenes at this stage to prevent the defendants from proceeding with their plan on concession of the 5th and 6th defendants, their action will foist a state of helplessness and hopelessness".

He said it will also lead to the "loss of his (Applicant's) cause of action leading to his right and interest extinguished completely (and) that the defendants would have completed the process of the concession in less than 30 days which is before the period of 30 days allowed by the rule of court for the defendants to file their defense".

He therefore ruled: "In the circumstance, I hold that the grant of order of interim injunction is appropriate and necessary to preserve the res in this case as a matter of urgency and to prevent a situation of irreparable damage to the applicant as one having interest in the 5th and 6th defendants pending the determination of the motion on notice." He consequently granted the application accordingly.

The defendants in the matter are the Attorney-General of the Federation, the Ministry of Mines and Steel Development, the Bureau of Public Enterprise, Ajaokuta Steel Company Limited and the National Iron Ore Mining Company.

The motion on notice has been scheduled for hearing on 4th May, 2023.



Arioola



SUNDAY FEATURE

Jungle justice, human rights violations and institutions

No religious group – Christians, Muslims, Jews, traditionalists, pagans has any right to kill any citizen under whatever reasons, including blasphemy. SAMUEL OLOMU writes.

ACCORDING to a survey conducted in 2014 by NOI Polls, 43% of Nigerians had personally witnessed a mob attack. According to SB Morgen's report, 279 mob justice incidents happened, leading to the death of at least 391 individuals between 2019 and May 2022, of which 223 of the cases happened in the South while the remaining 168 occurred in the Northern part of the country. This in fact is to say that the menace of jungle justice is not ending any time soon, we are still counting numbers.

Jungle justice is a form of self-help, the justice of the people by the people and for the people and of course, an extrajudicial form of justice — championed by a group of bystanders, 'street guys', 'garage boys', etc., who serve as the witness, accuser, judge and executor at the same time — where an alleged criminal/suspect is humiliated, beaten or killed. In short, it is a form of illegal and unconstitutional form of justice which regards not the involvement of the police or other law enforcement agencies.

In this essay, I inquire into the illegality of jungle justice by enunciating various statutory and judicial instruments that stands against it by giving a detailed account of the nexus between this vile practice and human rights and subsequently enunciate the causes and possible recommendations to this menace.

Jungle justice and human rights: An overview

Learned Oputa, JSC, in *Josiah v The State* said: "Justice is not a one-way traffic. It is really a three-way traffic: justice for the appellant/accused of a heinous crime of murder; justice for the victim, the murdered man, the deceased — whose blood is crying to heaven for vengeance; and, finally justice for the society at large — the society whose social norms and values had been desecrated and broken by the criminal act complained of..."

In *R v SUSSEX Justices, Ex parte McCarthy*, Lord Denning said, "justice should not only be done but must be manifestly be seen to have been done". These dictums and authorities however postulates that justice is cardinal and the procedures for the administration of justice has been spelt out in our laws. The singular question now is that, does the administration of justice extends to the people? I.e. can any person, other than the court administer justice on anyone?

The results are everywhere. Recently, a mob have gruesomely lynched a 35-year-old man, Olorunfemi Tope, after he reportedly crushed four persons to death in an accident at Ijoka area of Akure, the Ondo state capital, on April 11. The victim was alleged to be an internet



fraudster by the mob. Going down memory lane, one of the most popular of reported previous cases was the lynching of four University of Port Harcourt students "Aluu 4" on October 12, 2012, over alleged theft of laptop devices.

Last year, a mob of Islamist Fundamentalists lynched Deborah Samuel, a student of Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto, on the school campus on religious grounds. Also, in 2022, a mob of Hausa okada riders lynched a young man, simply identified as David, burning him to death over a misunderstanding that ensued because of an N100 balance with a commercial motorcyclist.

From all these cases, I have more than enough questions to ask. Questions like: What if the court will hold otherwise in these cases? Does the law approve the killing of a person without a fair trial? Or does our law approves one sidedness in the administration of justice? But how do we answer these questions?

Since no due process of law is followed in the administration of instant justice by the people; then it becomes an unarguable fact that, jungle justice is illegal and therefore, breaches many provisions of the constitution (as amended), Administration of Criminal and Justice Act (2015), Criminal Procedure Act (2004) and some other statutory provisions.

Section 33 (1) of the 1999 constitution provides for the

right to life of every citizen but however specifically gives that sole right (to carry out such proceedings and conviction of the person) to a court of law. Similarly, Article 4 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1986 states that the life and integrity of every individual shall be sacrosanct, and no one shall be unlawfully denied of it.

This is to say that the mob's brutality and use of violence erode the essence of legal clauses by condemning and killing other persons, thus contrary to the legal provisions which upholds the right to human life and specifically exempt it to different grounds including the sentence of a court in regard of a criminal offence. And to do otherwise will be unlawful, barbaric, capricious, unconstitutional and in all respect condemnable.

Jungle justice is also against the right to inhumane and degrading treatment. This right is provided for under Section 34(1 & 2) of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria, Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 7 of the ICCPR, and Article 1, Paragraph 1 of the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. In essence, all these legal sources clearly emphasize that any torture or severe physical and mental pain shall not be inflicted upon any person (crime suspect) to punish extrajudicially or obtain a confession from them

during a criminal investigation. Mob justice infringes this right as it involves alleged suspects being subjected to physical violence, torture, inhumane and degrading treatment, which consequently results in mental and physical health complications.

In the same vein, section 36 (4, 5 and 6) of the Constitution also makes an emphasis on the procedures and due process to take regarding conviction of a suspect. In the apple eye of the law, every person charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed to be innocent until proved guilty with the offence by a competent court of law — even if the person is caught doing the act. In essence, anything outside the provisions of the said section of the constitution is tantamount to infringement upon freedom to fair hearing as enshrined in the constitution and jungle justice will not stand otherwise.

Similarly, section 8 (1 and 3) of Administration of Criminals and Justice Act (2015) gives jungle justice no room, and thus, prohibits jungle justice. And by implication, any person caught or arrested participating or engaging in mob justice may face relevant criminal charges.

And in affirmation and support to the above statutory provision, the Supreme Court, Anthony Ikechukwu Iguh, JSC in *Kalu v. State* held the dictum that:

"...for a valid and proper arraignment of an accused person, the following three conditions must be satisfied namely:-

(i) The accused person must be placed before the court unfettered unless the court shall see cause otherwise to order;

(ii) The charge of information shall be read over and explained to him to the satisfaction of the court by the Registrar or other officer of the court; And

(iii) The accused shall then be called upon to plead instantly thereto (unless, of course, there exists any valid reason to do otherwise such as objection to want of service where the accused is entitled by law to service of a copy of the information and the court is satisfied that he has in fact not been duly served therewith)..."

But, despite the warning signs of the law, Nigerians who perpetrates jungle justice have failed to yield these signs and regrettably, the story is not changing anytime soon.

Causes and possible recommendations

Despite the explicit provisions of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria and the state's embrace of international human rights treaties, the condition of human rights is in shambles, occasioned by mob action and the age-long state's institutional inefficiencies. While the mob

violates the rights by disregarding the conventional justice system, the police and court complicate the justice process with corrupt practices. Citizens in Nigeria are at the mercy of police personnel in their unprofessional and illegal conduct.

First to consider is the dysfunctional judicial system. The court is the last resort of a common man but now, even the common never find solace in that abode. Justice delayed is justice denied. In actuality, the administration of justice is slowed down by our legal system. A quicker delivery of justice is one of the crucial tools usable in the fight against jungle justice. Criminal trials and proceedings shouldn't be delayed excessively. Additionally, anyone caught should be made to face the consequences set forth by the law.

Also, the law enforcement agencies has lost their credibility and as such, the people no longer have trust in them. Section 4 of the Police Act (2004) empowers the police as the only agency recognized and certified by law to apprehend and prosecute a suspect. Unfortunately, the Nigeria Police Force, which is charged with such a duty, has a poor reputation and is equally weak. Police are perceived as aiding and abetting criminality. In essence, the NPF needs to be reorganized—rehabilitated even. There is a paramount need to end jungle justice by building an effective and efficient police that would be capable of enforcing the law and preventing people from taking the law into their hands.

Moreover, ignorance and illiteracy is one of the major causes of jungle justice. Over the years Nigeria has bred thousand of citizens who are not aware of their rights, duties and obligations as citizens. They are not aware whatsoever of the constitution of the land and as such they tend to act in the contrary to the stipulated laws of the law. Therefore, the public's reorientation and education about respect for the rule of law and fundamental human rights (right to life and freedom from fear of hearing) should be the mission of both governmental and non-governmental groups.

In conclusion, this article has reflected in its introduction the prevalence of Jungle justice in the Nigeria society. It also evaluated the illegality of jungle justice as it relates to human rights of an aggrieved person and thereafter concludes by enunciating the various causes and possible solutions to ameliorate this menace. But back to the big question; is jungle justice ending anytime soon?

SUNDAY SPORTS



Why de Bruyne, Haaland will be key to treble pursuit

Kane missed a penalty in the World Cup quarter-final loss to France in December but made no mistake from the spot in Italy three months later, Kevin de Bruyne and Erling Haaland provided the silk and steel as Manchester City's seemingly unstoppable momentum consumed faltering Arsenal in their so-called Premier League title decider at Etihad Stadium, PHIL MCNULTY writes.

THERE may well be twists and turns ahead but few would bet against City claiming a fifth title in six seasons after they tore apart the league leaders, the one team who have made a contest of this campaign.

City's 4-1 victory was nowhere near a reflection of their superiority, Pep Guardiola's side making a mockery of the pre-match billing that this could be a tight affair settled by the finest margins.

The margins were vast in all areas - and at the heart of it all was the deadly duo of De Bruyne and Haaland.

Guardiola admitted there was a deliberate ploy in this game to use De Bruyne and Haaland to unlock Arsenal. It worked to quite devastating effect.

He said: "We've always had an incredible attacking threat but the connection between Erling and Kevin is extraordinary. Here we tried to use it as much as possible.

"Kevin is always pushing and feels he can do better but in this shape he moves behind Granit Xhaka or Thomas Partey and has more freedom. It's so dangerous for opponents. The threat with Erling-Kevin, Kevin-Erling is so important.

"I think Kevin is the master of the assist whether or not Erling is playing and Erling scores goals with or without Kevin but

together they are so dangerous." City's victory, however, came with a twist on the usual methods of menace the pair have inflicted on opponents throughout this season.

De Bruyne has traditionally played the role of provider for goal machine Haaland, creating eight goals in the Premier League for the 22-year-old Norwegian who has taken the season by storm.

This time it was Haaland, giving an illustration of how his all-round game has improved under Guardiola's guidance, who assisted De Bruyne in the league for the first time this season, doing so twice.

Haaland showed perfect close control to kill a long ball instantly on his left foot to put De Bruyne clear for City's first after seven minutes, then played the Belgian in again for the third nine minutes after half-time, extinguishing any Arsenal hopes of a comeback.

De Bruyne, who was given a pep talk of sorts by the demanding Guardiola a few weeks ago, showed once again that he operates at an elite level in the manner he took those two goals.

He ignored the temptation to go for power in both instances, placing his first beyond the outstretched left arm of Aaron Ramsdale with his right foot then showing glorious awareness and technique to place his second

between the legs of defender Rob Holding into the far corner.

Erling Haaland scored his 33rd Premier League goal of the season, the most any player has scored in a 38-game season in the Premier League.

Only Ramsdale stood between City and an even bigger rout, denying Haaland four times before the striker, literally, let his hair down and scored his 49th goal of this landmark season with

seconds left.

Haaland was not quite at his ruthless best in front of goal but there were other qualities to admire, qualities he has acquired since the start of the season, fashioned by Guardiola and taken on board by a player with almost frightening room for improvement.

The striker was relentless, worked tirelessly and showed a mastery of build-up play and

ability to bring others into the game that was a revelation.

De Bruyne and Haaland set the tone from the first whistle, the opening goal the result of a partnership that has looked so natural from day one of the Premier League season.

Guardiola was understandably delighted at a win that now puts the title destiny in their own hands. This was an ominous mission statement against the side that still leads the Premier League but who will be unseated if City win at Fulham on Sunday.

Haaland has provided a stunning cutting edge to this City side, making them even more intense and direct on top of the head-spinning passing carousel that is Guardiola's stock in trade and left Arsenal so helpless here.

Guardiola believes City's next three league games, away to Fulham then at home to West Ham United and Leeds United, may prove pivotal in the title race.

And City also have that Champions League semi-final against Real Madrid and the derby FA Cup final against Manchester United on their exciting agenda.

There may be uncertainties to come - but one certainty is that De Bruyne and Haaland will be the key men in their Treble quest.

SOURCE: BBC SPORT



SUNDAY SPORTS



Pelé

Pelé enters dictionary as synonym for 'unique'

PELÉ, the nickname of the late football legend, has officially become synonymous with "exceptional, incomparable, unique".

The Portuguese-language Michaelis dictionary, one of the most popular in Brazil, added "pelé" as a new adjective to its online edition.

BBC SPORT said that, the inclusion came after aUtaka declares interest in coaching job

Former Portsmouth player John Chukwudi Utaka has an eye on coaching any of the Nigerian national teams should the chance arise, Soccernet.ng reports.

Nigeria's 49-cap top scorer in the 1999-2000 Egyptian League declared that this would be a chance for him to give back to his homeland.

Utaka began his academy before being appointed in 2020 as an assistant coach for the Montpellier U19s. The former Lens footballer earned his UEFA A licence in 2022 and is now working towards earning his UEFA

The 41-year-old played for 13 different clubs throughout the course of his career, which spanned three continents. After retiring to a coaching position in France, he spoke with Soccernet.ng about his desire to share his knowledge with his nation.

"If the opportunity comes to coach Nigeria in the near future, that is something I would love to embrace as well because that is another way to give back and show your experience with your own country as well," he said.

Due to his fast legs, Utaka was mostly used as a pacy winger throughout his career, which made him a very useful component of a team's counter-attacking style of play.

Given that he has aspirations to manage his nation and become the first African coach to win the UEFA Champions League, it wouldn't be surprising if this were to become his primary coaching approach. campaign by the Pelé Foundation to honour the football star gathered more

than 125,000 signatures. Pelé died in December aged 82.

The only player to have won the World Cup three times, he is widely considered to be the best footballer in history.

During his playing career spanning two decades, he scored a record 1,281 goals with Brazilian club Santos, Brazil's national team, and the New York Cosmos.

Since his death from complications from colon cancer, his former club, Santos, sports channel SportV and the Pelé Foundation had been pressing for the football star's name to be recognised with its own entry in the dictionary.

On Wednesday, the publishers behind Michaelis dictionaries announced the word would be included in the digital edition of their

Portuguese-language dictionary immediately and in the printed version once the next edition was published.

The entry reads: "pe.lé adj. That or someone who is out of the ordinary, who or who by virtue of their quality, value or superiority cannot be equalled to anything or anyone, just like Pelé, nickname of Edson Arantes do Nascimento (1940-2022), who is considered the greatest athlete of all time; exceptional, incomparable, unique."

The Pelé Foundation, a charitable organisation created to preserve the player's legacy, said it was a fitting tribute to "the king"

"The expression already used to refer to someone who is the best at what they do has been [made eternal] on the pages of the dictionary," it tweeted

Our athletes won't disappoint us in Ndola

PRESIDENT of Athletics Federation of Nigeria (AFN), Chief Tonobok Okowa, is optimistic that the country's young athletes at this year's African U-18 and U-20 Athletics Championships in Ndola, Zambia, will do the nation proud.

According to The Guardian, forty-two athletes will fly the nation's flag at the combined fourth African U-18 Championships and the 15th African U-20 championships, which begin this weekend in Ndola.

The list is made up of 23 U-18

girls and boys, as well as 19 U-20 men and women. Team Nigeria departed in two batches on Tuesday and yesterday due to difficulties in securing seats in one flight.

Nigeria's U-20 women's record holder, Tima Godbless, is spearheading the nation's challenge for medals in the U-20 category, while Asaba 2022 National Sports Festival 100m and 200m silver medalist, Faith Okwose, tops the list of 23 athletes in U-18 category.

Other athletes listed in the U-18 category include Ewa Peace, Eyakpoeyan Justina

U-17 AFCON: Eaglets' jersey number revealed

NIGERIA'S complete under-17 squad list, complete with birth dates and jersey numbers, has been made public by CAF in advance of the U-17 Africa Cup of Nations competition, which will take place in Algeria in less than two days, Soccernet.ng reports.

Playvolume00:00/07:48A Day at TSG Hoffenheim Truvidfull scree The head coach of the Golden Eaglets, Nduka Ugbade, marched 26 players to the Algerian city of Constantine on Sunday night to commence their final preparations for the tournament.

CAF, after officially screening the two-time AFCON champions to play in



The Nigeria U-17 squad are labelled the most successful team in international football for their age group, having won the FIFA U-17 World Cup five times and the AFCON twice

the 15th edition of the biennial international youth football tournament. The Eaglets competed in 12 friendlies, winning 11 of them, drawing one, and scoring an amazing total of 66 goals while conceding just 14. Abdulmumin Jibril, who scored 10 goals for the

squad during the exhibition games, will wear the number 8 jersey. Richard Odoh, agoal keeper for the HB Football Academy, will wear the number one shirt, while Precious Tonye Williams, a striker for the same team, will wear the number nine.

Utaka declares interest in coaching job



FORMER Portsmouth player John Chukwudi Utaka has an eye on coaching any of the

Nigerian national teams should the chance arise, Soccernet.ng reports.

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Utaka began his academy before being appointed in 2020 as an assistant coach for the Montpellier U19s. The former Lens footballer earned his UEFA A licence in 2022 and is now working towards earning his UEFA Pro badge.

The 41-year-old played for 13 different clubs throughout the course of his career, which spanned three continents. After retiring to a coaching position in France, he spoke with Soccernet.ng about his desire to share his knowledge with his nation.

"If the opportunity comes to coach Nigeria in the near future, that is something I would love to embrace as well because that is another way to give back and show your experience with your own country as well," he said.

Due to his fast legs, Utaka was mostly used as a pacy winger throughout his career, which made him a very useful component of a team's counter-attacking style of play.

Given that he has aspirations to manage his nation and become the first African coach to win the UEFA Champions League, it wouldn't be surprising if this were to become his primary coaching



President AFN, Tonobok Okowa

Tiana, Saibu Yetunde Olayinka, Israel Okon Sunday, Monday Ebuka, Francis James M u s a , Jimoh Justin Osigwe and Abujei Chinedu.

For the U-20, Sule Rejoice Adijatu, Oke Opeyemi Deborah, Usenbor Osaretin Joy, Bright Ada Princess, Ajayi Kanyinsola, Adebisi Musbau, Musa Nurain Kola, Unorji Kingsley Emeka and Caleb Joshua are in the team.

Okowa told The Guardian on phone, shortly before he departed for Ndola that the athletes had undergone intensive training at the Steven Keshi Stadium for over two weeks, adding that he is optimistic they will perform optimally when hostilities begin tomorrow.

The AFN assembled the athletes after its national trials in Kaduna, but moved them to Asaba to train with modern facilities at the Stephen Keshi Stadium.

According to Okowa, who is also the Chairman of Delta State Sports Commission, the athletes showed a steady improvement during the camping exercise in Asaba.

"I am sure they can hold their own against any opponent in

Ndola because they got the best of training in Asaba under the supervision of some of the best coaches in the country," Okowa stated.

Meanwhile, AFN Technical Director, Samuel Onikeku, who traveled with the team to Ndola, says the federation selected the best athletes, who will follow in the footsteps of their predecessors that launched their way to stardom at the championships.

"We selected the best crop of young athletes, who will not only be medal contenders in Ndola, but will grow to become one of the best in their events," Onikeku stated.

The Guardian recalls that at the last edition held in Cote d'Ivoire in 2019, Enoch Adegoke came to limelight with a 10.29 seconds Championships record, and two years after, he became the first Nigerian man in recent time to run in the final of the Olympics.

Another athlete, Favour Ofili, also set two Championships records in the 200m (23.38sec) and 400m (52.28sec) four years ago, same as Rosemary Chukwuma, who successfully completed a sprint double in Cote d'Ivoire in 2019.

SUNDAY SPORTS

Taekwondo Federation to hold "intensive" national training camp

THE Nigeria Taekwondo Federation has announced plans to stage an "intensive" two-week national training camp for its athletes in the city of Birnin-Kebbi.

Newsnow said that, the camp is due to take place in the run-up to the first edition of the President Cup National Open Championship, due to be held in Abuja next month, as reported by the Nigeria Independent.

Nigeria Taekwondo Federation President Alhaji Abdullahi Saidu Baba said: "Let me tell you that this camp is organised by the Board of the federation where we felt that we should not keep our athletes idle for a long time because there are many upcoming competitions like the African Games and Olympics, so we concluded that it is necessary for them to {go} into camping, every now and then."

In total, 32 athletes and three coaches are set to take part in the camp.

Explaining the selection of Birnin-Kebbi Saidu Baba added: "You can all see that these facilities are of an



Saidu

international calibre, and we have made this location incredibly ready so that the athletes can come here and focus because they will all be in one place where they won't need to move up and down and they will be closely supervised."

Details of any prize money on offer at the President's Cup

tournament have yet to be confirmed, while the Nigeria Taekwondo Federation are still seeking a sponsor for the event.

Nigeria entered one taekwondo athlete at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, with Elizabeth Anyanacho defeated at the round-of-16 stage in the women's under-67 kilograms

world rankings.

She skipped Great Britain's Billie Jean King Cup defeat by France the week before that to prepare for the clay-court part of the season.

Defeat in Stuttgart was her second in a row in the opening round, after losing to Bianca Andreescu in the Miami Open last month.

Raducanu suffered discomfort in her right wrist against Andreescu and later said she must find a long-term solution.

The injury ended her 2022 season early and returned before Indian Wells this month, when Raducanu reached the last 16 despite preparations also being hampered by tonsillitis.

Raducanu, who has played only nine matches

this season and has also struggled with an ankle injury, is due to compete in the Italian Open in Rome starting on 8 May, before the French Open - the second Grand Slam of the year - begins on 28 May.

Raducanu's biggest concern at the moment is her right wrist, which first caused problems at the end of last season.

Practice sessions have been especially compromised since March, and even though she was able to train here in Madrid, it appears the pain ultimately became too much.

Raducanu and her team were hoping the wrist could be managed, but there now seems an acceptance a long-term

WILDCARD Mirra Andreeva has become the third 15-year-old to win a WTA 1000 main-draw match with victory over Leylah Fernandez at the Madrid Open.

Russian Andreeva, ranked 194 in the world, won 6-3 6-4 against the Canadian in the opening round on Wednesday.

Andreeva, who turns 16 on Saturday, saved five of the six break points she faced against world number 49 Fernandez.

She takes on Brazil's Beatriz Haddad Maia in the second round on Thursday.

American CiCi Bellis and compatriot Coco Gauff achieved the same feat at the Miami Open in 2015 and 2019 respectively.

Andreeva, who is playing without a flag because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, is the youngest player in the top 300 of the WTA world

Fifteen-year-old Andreeva beats Fernandez



Andreeva

Ancelotti apologises for 'unbelievable' Girona loss

CARLO Ancelotti apologised to the fans after Real Madrid lost 4-2 to Girona, but insisted Los Blancos "will be fine" against Manchester City.

BBC SPORT said that, an incredible four-goal haul from

New York City FC loanee Valentin Castellanos sunk Real Madrid in La Liga, with Vinicius Junior and Lucas Vasquez scoring for the visitors in a 4-2 thrashing at the Estadi Montilivi on Tuesday evening. Ancelotti was fuming with his side's defensive display but has promised that things will improve in their Copa del Rey final against Osasuna and subsequent Champions League semi-final clash against Manchester City.

"It's tough because when you lose it must be tough," the Madrid boss told reporters. "The match was bad in defence. And that was the key, because we did well on the ball, especially at the beginning. But we were not convincing in the duels, we were caught in two counter-attacks, and from there, everything became more difficult."

"I understand that the fans are hurt, we apologise. We are also hurt. But the fans know that we will be fine in the cup final, as well as in the semi-

final (against City). It's harder to say today, but this match does not represent Madrid. We apologise, but we must look ahead."

Madrid had kept six clean sheets in their last seven matches but looked completely disorganised against Girona. However, Ancelotti believes that this defeat might act as a wake-up call for his players heading into the business end of the season.

"Yes, it can (be good for the team)," he added. "A defeat is never good, but the defensive commitment is too important and if we have it, we will always win. It's unbelievable. The team was on a good defensive streak. We conceded with a lack of forcefulness in the duels and a lack of organisation. Every time they came out from the back they made uncontrolled transitions. And in one minute in the second half our legs were cut off. We are very hurt. We have to pick ourselves up. We have everything at stake."

Madrid Open: Raducanu withdraws with hand injury

BEMMA Raducanu one withdrawn from the Madrid Open with a hand injury hours before her first-round match.

BBC SPORT said that, the 2021 US Open champion, hindered by a wrist problem in recent months, was set to face Bulgaria's Viktoriya Tomova on Wednesday.

Raducanu, 20, is now almost certain to drop out of the world's top 100.

Her withdrawal came a day after a terse news conference in which she used just 58 words to respond to 16 questions.

Raducanu's most recent appearance was a one-sided defeat by Jelena Ostapenko in Stuttgart this month, after which she dropped to 85 in the

world rankings. She skipped Great Britain's Billie Jean King Cup defeat by France the week before that to prepare for the clay-court part of the season. Defeat in Stuttgart was her second in a row in the opening round, after losing to Bianca Andreescu in the Miami Open last month. Raducanu suffered discomfort in her right wrist against Andreescu and later said she must find a long-term solution. The injury ended her 2022 season early and returned before Indian Wells this month, when Raducanu reached the last 16 despite preparations also being hampered by tonsillitis. Raducanu, who has played only nine matches

this season and has also struggled with an ankle injury, is due to compete in the Italian Open in Rome starting on 8 May, before the French Open - the second Grand Slam of the year - begins on 28 May. Raducanu's biggest concern at the moment is her right wrist, which first caused problems at the end of last season. Practice sessions have been especially compromised since March, and even though she was able to train here in Madrid, it appears the pain ultimately became too much. Raducanu and her team were hoping the wrist could be managed, but there now seems an acceptance a long-term

solution will have to be found.

What impact that will have on her participation at the French Open and Wimbledon remains to be seen.

Raducanu has said the pain of the injury comes and goes.

Its effect on her was perhaps illustrated by the terse exchange with two British reporters in Madrid on Tuesday.

She has lost her past three matches, all to Grand Slam champions. She was beaten by the world number one Iga Swiatek in Indian Wells, and then to Bianca Andreescu in Miami and most recently Ostapenko in Stuttgart.

Raducanu will very likely find herself outside the top 100 when the next rankings list is published on 8 May.

And even though she has very few of last year's points to defend until August, there is now a big question mark as to how often she will be able to play.

Once a player's ranking falls below 100, they are unlikely to receive direct entry into even Grand Slam tournaments.

Raducanu's status means she is likely to attract wildcards from tournament promoters, but the alternatives are qualifying for tournaments or dropping down to play on the ITF World Tennis Tour.



Ancelotti



Raducanu

SUNDAY SPORTS

Dane who helped rebuild Zambia's football team

On 28 April 1993, travelling to Senegal for a World Cup qualifier, the squad's plane stopped in Libreville in Gabon to refuel but came down off the coast not long after take-off.

According to the accident report, delayed by almost a decade, the right engine caught fire but the pilot shut down the still-functioning left engine and the aircraft plunged into the sea.

Eighteen players and 12 others on board lost their lives. No-one survived.

With a "golden generation" of young players tipped for great things, including World Cup qualification, the crash is viewed as one of the great disasters of African football.

But for Zambia, it also became the story of a remarkable revival as they quickly rebuilt their team. Poignantly, the Chipolopolo, a nickname that means Copper Bullets, would go on to become continental champions by winning the Africa Cup of Nations in Gabon 19 years later.

BBC Sport Africa has been speaking to the Danish coach who was given the unexpected job of bringing a shattered nation back together.

At the time of the crash, Roald Poulsen was a coach working in Denmark's top tier.

With a strong pedigree, having already won both the Danish league title and cup, he was asked to take on the challenge of coaching an entirely new Zambia squad - one recruited at short notice that had never played together.

"Approximately three weeks after the disaster, I got calls from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Danish Football Association," explained Poulsen, "[to ask] if I could help over a period of six weeks in Denmark."

Roald Poulsen went on to spend many years coaching in Africa, including a role as technical director of Cape United academy in South Africa.

The plan was for the squad to spend three weeks in camp in Copenhagen followed by three weeks in the city of Velje. They would play games against teams at different levels of the Danish league system.

The party was made up of 16 players, two coaches and a physiotherapist.

"We were at the airport to welcome them but I had no clue about their football abilities.

"I didn't know any of them. But the main thing is that the common language of football is so strong."

After a conversation with the



Captain Kalusha Bwalya was Zambia's star player and was due to travel from Europe to meet his team-mates who never arrived

Zambian coaches, the initial focus was on fitness and the physical side of the game.

"I could see this was going to be a big job," said Poulsen, whose early impressions were not favourable.

"I felt the ability of the players was not really there, that they didn't have any confidence. All quite understandable given they were in foreign country with strange food and accommodation, far away from families.

"I didn't know anything about them individually, not even what position they played.

"I set up training programmes and we trained twice every day. We had some days off, taking the players touring so they could recover a little bit."

Not every experienced Zambian international had been on board the doomed flight to Senegal.

Several players based in Europe had been due to make their own way to Dakar, including captain and PSV Eindhoven forward Kalusha Bwalya and Anderlecht midfielder Charles Musonda.

Bwalya still finds it hard to tell the story but he vividly remembers having a conversation with then Zambian president Frederick Chiluba after traveling home for the funerals.

It was Chiluba who insisted Zambia must look to rebuild, telling Bwalya he was needed as the figurehead for any new national team.

"Neither Kalusha or Musonda were in Denmark at

that time," continued Poulsen.

"I had no clue whether they wanted to join us. I suppose they had to stay with their clubs."

But that changed after an edict from world football's governing body.

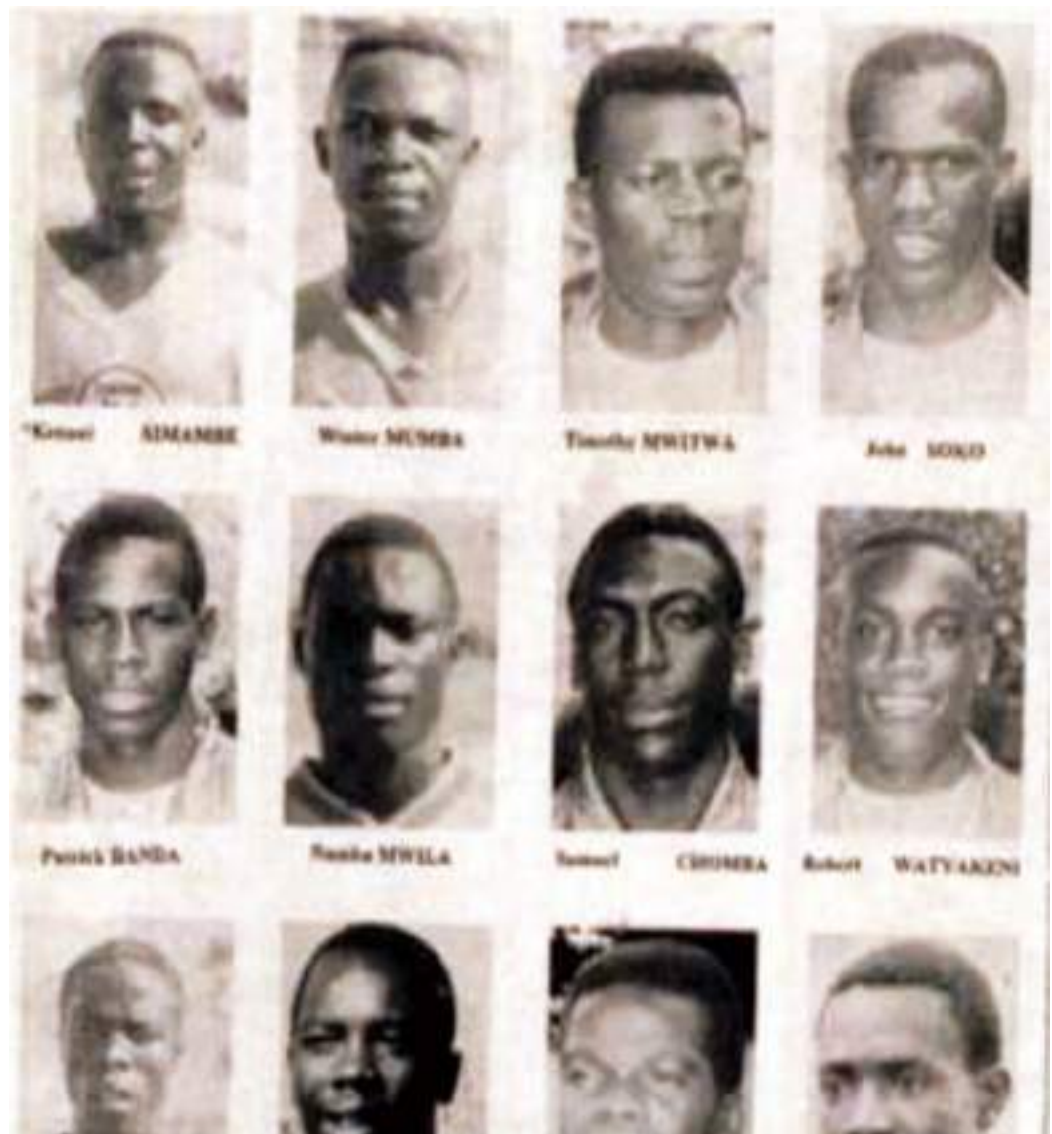
"Fifa demanded the team go

back to Zambia and play a World Cup qualifier against Morocco. That meant we were forced to cut short the camp.

"I was asked to go back with the team because the game against Morocco was within the six-week period and I was supposed to be in charge.

"Before we left Denmark, Kalusha Bwalya came with his family and watched one of the friendly games, and was ecstatic about what he had seen. The new players had made so much progress.

"He said it was his duty to be the captain and show them the way."





"We want to go all the way" – NFF boss

THE President of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), Ibrahim Musa Gusau, has informed the Ambassador of Argentina to Nigeria, Alejandro Herrero, that the Flying Eagles have a burning desire to win the upcoming FIFA U20 World Cup, Soccernet.ng reports.

Gusau made the declaration during a visit to the ambassador as the NFF looks to begin the processes that will make the Flying Eagles' trip to Argentina for the Mundial a smooth affair.

Gusau appreciated Mr. Herrero and his team for receiving the NFF delegation at short notice and expressed Nigeria's desire to make history at the championship.

The football administrator recalled the 2005 U20 World Cup final, where Argentina defeated Nigeria 2-1, and expressed his hope that the Flying Eagles would go all the way this time.

He also praised Argentina's footballing pedigree and expressed his belief that the country would provide a warm and cordial environment for all teams.

"Our two senior teams have enjoyed close contests at the FIFA World Cup level so many times, but I remember that at U20 level, we met in the Final in 2005, which Argentina won by a slim 2-1 margin in The Netherlands," Gusau said, as per Eagle Online.

"This time, we want to go all the way and we believe Argentina will provide that warm and cordial environment to achieve our target.

"I know Argentina is a great football nation and that she is fully aware of what is required before accepting the



hosting right.

"Every football fan all over the world wants to be in Argentina because of the country's pedigree.

"It will be an interesting FIFA U20 World Cup for all teams, including Nigeria."

Ambassador Herrero expressed confidence in Argentina's ability to organize an excellent tournament, despite receiving the hosting rights less than five weeks before the championship.

Herrero assured the NFF delegation that his country would give everything to deliver a smooth and superb tournament while promising that the Flying Eagles would

suffer no

The FIFA U20 World Cup finals were moved to Argentina from Indonesia, but the competition period remains the same.

The tournament will see Argentina compete in Group A alongside Uzbekistan, Guatemala, and New Zealand, while Nigeria will play Italy, Brazil, and the Dominican Republic in Group D.

The Flying Eagles will play their first two matches against the Dominican Republic and Italy in Mendoza before flying to La Plata to play Brazil on May 27.

The four host cities for the 24-nation championship are La Plata, Santiago del Estero, San Juan, and Mendoza.

Also, Golden Eaglets captain, Precious Williams, has revealed his aspirations to use the 2023 CAF U-17 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) as a platform for a promising career that will eventually lead him to play for the Super Eagles soon, Soccernet.ng reports.

The national cadet team has been known as the first step towards international football for many Nigerian youngsters, with the likes of Nwankwo Kanu and Wilson Oruma being notable graduates.

Even the current Golden Eaglets head coach, Nduka Ugbade, was a key member of the winning team during the inaugural edition of the U17 World Cup. Williams believes he can follow in their footsteps, beginning with success in Algeria.

In an interview with Cafonline, Williams, who plays at the HB Football Academy in Abuja, expressed his excitement about wearing the national team jersey and hoped to play for the Super Eagles eventually.

"It is a very special moment for me to wear the national team jersey, and I want to go from here to the Super Eagles. This is a start and I hope it continues," he said.

Meranwhile, Williams can further take inspiration from the recent success stories of Super Eagles stars such as Victor Osimhen, Kelechi Iheanacho, Samuel Chukwueze, and Taiwo Awoniyi.

They made their names at the TotalEnergies U17 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) and are currently shining on the global platform.

Williams hopes to follow in

their footsteps and also shine.

"It is a big encouragement just watching them at the highest level and knowing that they started here at the U17 Cup of Nations. It is a big encouragement for us players that we can make it too," Williams added

The 2023 AFCON tournament will commence on Saturday, with hosts Algeria taking on debutants Somalia.

Nigeria's first match against Zambia commenced yesterday at the Mohamed Hamlaoui Stadium in Constantine.

The Golden Eaglets have

qualified for the tournament a record ten times and are one of only five countries to have won the tournament twice since the start of its new format in 1995.

The team aims to achieve two main targets: qualifying for the FIFA World Cup and going for a hat-trick of titles.

Teams that progress to the semi-finals will automatically earn a slot into the next World Cup to be staged later in the year. The Golden Eaglets have won the Mundial five times before, making this achievement the least expected of the team.

Mmobuosi reaffirms interest in buying newly promoted EPL club

CONVENER of the Dozy Foundation, Dozy Mmobuosi reaffirmed his interest in buying the newly promoted EPL club from the Championship Sheffield United FC in a tweet earlier this week, writes BSNSports.com.ng.

The Nigerian-born UK businessman and tech entrepreneur stated this categorically via his official handle, with the intention of sustaining his productive relationship with the "experts and professionals" hired for the purchase logistics.

The tweet read, "I wish to state categorically that I have not withdrawn my bid to acquire Sheffield United FC. Beyond the £8.85 GBP paid to the United World, I will continue to work with the experts and professionals I hired to buy the club."

This week, Dozy had a "positive and constructive" meeting with the club's chairman Yusuf Giansiracusa and the CEO Stephen Bettis, with hopes of reaching a

mutually beneficial outcome, especially bearing the fans in mind.

Dozy Mmobuosi is also an ardent lover of football on home soil following his recent investment into the Super Cup Football Tournament scheduled for pre-season.

The foundation reportedly invested ₦1.2 Billion into this year's Super Cup tie, tagged the NPFL-Dozy Mmobuosi Foundation Pre-season

Tournament, with the winner expected to smile home with nothing less than ₦100 million in prize money.

The tournament, organized by The Dozy Mmobuosi Foundation, in partnership with the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL), is under the aegis of the Nigeria Premier Football League Limited Bsnsports.com.ng reports.



Mmobuosi

WORLD SEARCH Answer the clue and search for the word

B	U	H	J	I	N	I	K	E	Y	F	B	C
K	I	T	G	O	K	H	G	P	H	Q	I	I
B	A	R	S	H	I	M	W	D	E	H	R	D
L	L	F	F	R	Y	B	X	R	A	M	D	S
G	I	E	N	D	E	C	B	O	L	T	I	A
J	U	S	D	S	C	R	V	G	O	U	E	E
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U	V	I	E	R	R	A	M	N	Y	Q	V	F
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U	L	P	T	Q	J	M	T	I	N	B	R	O
Z	S	X	U	R	P	E	O	I	V	W	A	B

- Mutaz Essu.....(7) Qatar high jumper
- Deji.....(4) former Nigerian sprinter
- Patrice.....(6)Crystal Palace Manager
- David.....(5) West Ham Manager
- Usein.....(4) Fomer Jamaican sprinter
- Didier.....(6)Former Chelsea striker
- George.....(4)The only world best footballer from Africa
- Anthony....(6)Nigerian/British boxer
- Golf Peg (3)
- Rashidi.....(6) Nigeria's first world cup scorer
-Jo (8) Former Super Eagle handler
- Two under Par in golf (6)
- San Antonion basketball team (5)

By IBRAHIM T. LOT