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Overview of Governor Lalong's scorecard



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Since assumption of office in 2015, one of the cardinal policy thrusts of Governor Simon Bako Lalong was centered on peace, reconciliation and unity of the state. He had stated variously that his desire was to return the state to its name "Home of Peace and Tourism" because he had inherited a state polarised by ethno religious crisis and killings with tags of "No-go areas" between Christian and Moslem communities in parts of the state. PALANG KASMI writes.

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Children's Day: Challenges of the nation's education sector

YESTERDAY'S marking of Children's Day across the country, again resonates the call for Government to address the pressing problems confronting the nation's education sector. Beyond the usual yearly ritual of march pass ceremonies, It is time to look at the future of our children as the most treasured assets upon whose shoulders the destiny of the entire nation lays.

UNFORTUNATELY, the future of the horizon for these innocent lads appears bleak and uncertain considering the way and manner the education sector has been taken for granted and even suffered neglect from successive administrations right from the early eighties till date.

PERHAPS, those on the saddle of authority may have forgotten the fact that no nation attains meaningful progress without placing high premium on this one and only critical sector which is vital for human capital development and societal growth.

DESPITE SUCH, the fortunes of education over the years had dwindled so much that at this time and age, Nigerian children in some communities are still taught how to read and write under the trees or in the open space without any roof over their heads. In fact, what has bedeviled the education in the recent past accounts for the high number of out of school children, their safety, lack of access to education, absence of basic facilities, poor welfare of teachers and poor funding.

HISTORY reminds us, that we are living witnesses to the numerous attacks on helpless students in chibok, the dastardly act where students and teachers were kidnapped in Dapchi, Zamfara, Kaduna, Plateau, Niger and many other locations across the country.

TO SHOW how dire the non-availability of facilities in the nation's schools has become, a recent survey conducted by the Universal Basic Education Commission [UBEC], showed that 50 percent of schools at the basic level of education in Nigeria lack furniture. Furthermore, the deplorable situation is not limited to public primary or secondary schools, but the picture is that of ramshackle classrooms and decrepit facilities particularly in the rural areas.

INSPITE of the wealth the Government at the three tiers displayed the yearly budget and the monthly monetary allocation, but no serious impact has been felt in the sector as the situation keeps going from bad to worst.

ALTHOUGH, Funding of universities has always been a challenge for the Government, not much steps have been taken to provide solutions to funding and how to tackle the lingering agitations by the Academic Staff Union of Universities [ASUU], which is outside the framework of the establishment of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund [TETFUND], which again is just like a drop of water in the ocean.

THE rhetoric as always preached by Government of trying its best is a long-standing cliché of not living up to their responsibilities especially from the Federal, states and the 774 local Government Councils of the country. No thanks to the habit of some state Governments who apart from misappropriating counterpart funds, have refused to pay teacher's salaries and other benefits.

HOWEVER, Government is a continuum, and as the Buhari Administration steps aside, while the Tinubu administration takes over the assets and liabilities from its predecessor especially in the education sector. The expectation is for the new administration to walk the talk and do something urgent and different from that of the past administration.

OUR STAND is that, we are going to mark this day as the beginning of a new dawn for education and would be watching with keen interest the Tinubu campaign boast of never losing an election, perhaps too he would win the battle of the challenges devouring the education sector which would probably be his greatest victory.

NEWS

Supreme Court dismisses PDP's suit against Tinubu, Shettima

The Supreme Court has struck out a suit seeking the disqualification of the president-elect, Bola Tinubu and the vice president-elect, Kashim Shettima, over alleged double nomination.

The appeal was brought by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) through their counsel, Mike Ozekhome (SAN), alleging that Shettima had double nomination as senatorial candidate for Borno Central Senatorial District and vice-presidential candidate under the All Progressives Congress (APC).

But the apex court held that the PDP lacked the locus standi to bring the action, since the party was not a member of the APC.

The appeal was earlier dismissed by the Federal High

Court and the Court of Appeal for lack of locus standi and a cost of N5 million against the PDP. Dissatisfied, the party approached the apex court.

The PDP had asked the apex court to hear the matter on its merit and determine the grounds set out for the suit.

In the suit filed on July 28, 2022, the PDP claimed that the double nomination breached the provisions of sections 29(1), 33, 35, and 84(1)(2) of the Electoral Act, 2022.

PDP submitted that Shettima was still the nominated senatorial candidate on July 14, 2022 having emerged in the May primary of the APC, when he was again nominated the vice presidential candidate.

The party submitted that he withdrew his senatorial nomination on July 15, 2022,



Malami

and was by then in breach of Section 33 on multiple nominations.

However, on January 13, Justice Inyang Ekwo of the Federal High Court, Abuja dismissed the suit on the grounds that the PDP lacked the locus standi.

Unite, fight back, resist divide and conquer strategy -EI-Buba

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

The Convener, Coalition for a Better and Brighter Nigeria, Prophet (Dr.) Isa El-buba, has passionately called on the people of Plateau State to unite and fight back the enemies of the state by resisting the divide and conquer strategy of those who terrorize them.

This came in a press statement signed and made available to SUNDAY STANDARD in Jos, the

Plateau State capital recently, shortly after leading a peaceful march in the capital city of Jos and Bukuru metropolis following killings of innocent women and children in Mangu Local Government Area.

He said, "I call on the people of Plateau that it is time to fight and save our state. The whole of Plateau must unite and fight back. The divide and conquer strategy being deployed by the terrorists to isolate and

decimate the tribes on the Plateau seems to be succeeding.

"Plateau leaders and elders, should we continue to play the ostrich? It was first Tarok people, then Berom and later followed by the irigwe and Bokkos people in our very eyes and now, it is Mwaghavul today. Only God knows where next the evil axe will turn to!

"If these terrorists are not confronted once and for all, irrespective of the tribe under attack, they will not stop. I admonish you the citizens of Plateau to pray and also defend the land. We must form a strong alliance and put up a strong fight until we end this mess because injury to one is injury to all. Plateau arises! God bless Plateau State!", the prophet enthused.

He, however, disclosed that the revelation by International Society for Civil Liberties and Rule of Law (Intersociety) stated that Nigeria led the world in Christians killed for their faith in 2022 with 5,014 deaths and over 3000 Christian abductions which called for concern and concerted efforts to avert a repeat of such heart wrenching template already rehearsing to double in 2023.

"No fewer than 1,041 defenseless Christians are already hacked to death by Nigeria's Jihadists in the first 100 days of 2023 or from 1st January to 10th April 2023, as highlighted by the report. We all must gear up to resist a transition of killings in the country with austerity.

"We are once again overtaken by the resumption of killings of Christians and minority Muslims in the country, after a seeming cessation during the electioneering periods, a trend that has the tendency to continue and even escalate if we do not call attention to it and if security operations do not activate proactive measures.

"The killings in Benue State, Southern Kaduna and Zamfara States in the outgoing weeks and all other targeted killings across other flashpoint areas remain despicable and stands condemned. We cannot continue to fold our hands and watch these territories wipe us out our ancestral lands", El-buba encouraged.

Children's Day: Buhari rejoices with Nigerian kids

President Muhammadu Buhari, Saturday, urged Nigerian parents and children to hold onto the ancient truths of integrity, honesty, knowledge and hardwork in spite of the changing times, saying these landmarks remain the pillars of destiny.

This was disclosed in a statement by Femi Adesina, the Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity.

"On this special day, we are immensely grateful to God for another opportunity to celebrate our children on May 27th, 2023. Every Children's Day reminds us of the future and the necessary sacrifices and building blocks by parents, guardians, teachers, leaders, and government to secure our greatest assets on earth, the YOUNGER ONES.

As a father and grandfather, I share in the joy that children bring into our lives and the fulfillment of seeing them grow. And I also feel the pain of loss, anxiety, and frustration that comes with uncertain times, like the disruptions to families due to insecurity, which we have worked hard to contain in the last eight years.

We must not lose hope, and our faith should be rekindled in the ability of the government to safeguard the future of our lives and children. In eight years, we have focused on children, negotiating and fighting for the release of many that were taken captive, and painstakingly building intelligence on the whereabouts of others. Some have been released; more will

come, by God's grace, as the next administration continues on the same noble path," Buhari assured.

The President admonished parents to treat their children with dignity, while staying focused on discipline.

"Every child is special and should be specially treated with dignity.

"At the twilight of this administration, we are thankful for all the support we have received from parents, government officials, development partners, professionals, and religious leaders in realizing some of our targets, like the school feeding programme, resuscitation of the primary healthcare system, and protecting our schools by the security agencies.

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With
**Katdapba
Y. Gobum
On Sunday**



"The history against such 'manipulation' of the interest and wishes of House members is replete with stories of rejection of imposition. Whether it was in 1999 or in 2003, the same trend overshadowed the selection process of the Speaker. It continued during 2007 when the choice of PDP NWC Patricia Ette was rejected for Demiji Bankole; so also was the case of Aminu Waziri Tambuwal. Don't forget that it happened in the case of Yakubu Dogara and Femi Gbajabiamila in 2015. The power of the members forced the NWC of the APC to accept Femi Gbajabiamila against Ahmed Idris Wase in 2019".

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IN the last couple of weeks, there has been intense politicking about who will become the Senate President and Speaker, House of Representatives as well as other principal officers when both chambers are inaugurated. Senators and Reps members have, since winning their election on February 25, 2023 indicated interest to vie for the number three and four positions in the land.

That of the Senate may not have been problematic, as it was sure that the south was going to be the sole beneficiary. It was where it was going to be zoned to in the south that became contestable, as the South East zone was hoping it be considered for the plum job. The powers that be after the President-elect, Bola Ahmed Tinubu met with the National Working Committee of the party 'recommended' Godswill Akpabio and Jibrin Barau for the two top positions in the senate.

It is no longer news that the Muslim-Muslim ticket is responsible for the present arrangement in the Senate. Whether it is welcomed is yet to be tested, but recall that former Zamfara State Governor Abdul'Aziz Abubakar Yari now Senator-elect has since made headline challenging everyone who cares to know that he would go ahead with the senate presidency bid.

His reason: The senate presidency contest was the senators' business backed by the 1999 constitution to choose their leaders within themselves and not based on instruction from anyone. What is going to happen that day, it is going to happen based on the instructions of the constitution and not anyone'.

The press statement by the Publicity Secretary, Felix Morka on May 8, 2023 confirmed that the party's National Working Committee (NWC) has zoned the position of the Speaker to the North West and Deputy Speaker to the South East. The party endorsed Tajudeen Abbas representing Zaria Federal Constituency of Kaduna State for Speaker and Benjamin Kalu representing Bende Federal Constituency of Abia State as Deputy Speaker.

He was quoted as saying the recommendation were results of 'wide consultations' received by the party. It is true; every one of the aspirants has the right to contest for the office; but 'does it not also exude a serious discomfort that the aspirants to the speakership were not consulted, approached and effectively engaged before the purported zoning formula?' The party's preferences may snowball into a conflagration in the House of Representatives, if not handled with caution and tact.

That 'recommendation' for both chambers did not go down well with majority of the aspirants who were ignominiously treated and Nigerians who read meanings in the choice. Knowing that the atmosphere in the field was already tense, coming with a list of favourite candidates was an idea that should have been buried long before it was mooted; considering what happened in 2015, when the party just smarting from its hard won victory over the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) angled for the outgoing Speaker, Femi Hakeem Gbajabiamila; they realized too late as Rt Hon Yakubu Dogara swept the

APC and the continuing injustice in the land



carpet off their feet and became Speaker.

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The barrage of threats that followed soon after indicated that the All Progressives Congress has a crisis to contend with; as a group the group, G7; made up of all aspirants for the leadership of House in the 10th National Assembly have since rejected the party's consensus candidates for positions of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

Even before that was made public, Alliance for True Democracy in Nigeria (ATDN) through its coordinator, Hon Inalegwu Ejembi Adaje expressed displeasure and disappointment for the choice of Tajudeen Abbas and Benjamin Kalu, noting that 'if democracy must survive in Nigeria, people must make choice'.

He argued that the North West has been the most favoured (as if it is the only part of the North) since 1999 having produced four Speakers in the persons of Ghali Umar Na'Abbas, Salisu Buhari, Aminu Bello Masari and Aminu Tambuwal, while in the case of the North Central, it was yet to produce an occupant; he therefore wondered if that cannot be described as injustice.

He singled out Rt Hon Yusuf Adamu Gagdi whose contributions on the floor of the House has made him a history maker, and therefore cannot be ignored by the party and his colleagues. For equity and justice, would the party ignore a man, who in

his first three years did not just sponsor numerous bills and motions, but out of those, six of them have since received the assent of Mr. President with consequences for the development of the country and giving young men and women a livelihood.

Can Gagdi then be said to be in the same class with Tajudeen Abbas, who is hyped and credited to sponsoring about 78 bills, but are yet to even get to the gates of Aso Rock to receive presidential accent? At that, many Nigerians are questioning why the North Central zone, though crucial for the survival of the party cannot be rewarded with the position of the Speaker. Political pundits are quick to point accusing fingers at Governor Nasir el-Rufai of Kaduna State, who had openly said he was not angling to become Chief of Staff to Mr. President.

The question to ask is, why has the North West been iniquitously zoned the position of Deputy Senate President in the person Jibrin Barau from Kano State? Furthermore, is there equity and justice in the land for the North Central zone to be completely ignored as all zones have been 'allocated' one principal office position? They wondered why the North West will take two juicy positions at the expense of the North Central. Their argument is that the party chairman is from this zone.

The duo of the Deputy Speaker, Ahmed Idris Wase and Majority Leader, Alhassan Ado Doguwa in separate statements said they were against the arrangement as announced by the party on May 8, 2023. They insisted they would go ahead with their campaigns for the speakership no matter the position by the party. So also is Rt Hon Yusuf Adamu Gagdi, whose proclivity for justice has further revealed what they would do if the party does not right the wrongs.

Lending their voice on the development, Plateau Elders have insisted on a candidate from the state for the speakership, saying that is the path of equity and justice, even as the two frontline aspirants

vying for the position from the North Central geopolitical zone are from the state; each of which 'possesses unassailable credentials'.

They argued that apart from the resourcefulness of the Plateau aspirants, it is in the interest of fairness and justice that the state be given the opportunity to lead the House. How better said, considering that it aligns with the mood of the struggle for justice in the land.

If anything, the addition of the voice of Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu of Ondo State on the impasse vindicates the position of the G7, which is made up of Rt Hon Yusuf Adamu Gagdi, Hon Mukhtar Aliyu Betara, Rt Hon Ahmed Idris Wase, Hon Alhassan Ado Doguwa, Hon Sada Soli Jibiya, Hon Maraim Odinaka Onuoha and Hon Aminu Sani Jaji.

In a terse statement by Akeredolu, who is chairman, South West Governors' Forum noted that 'aside the unpretentious ambiguity in the purported statement issued by the leadership of the APC, the contents, intentions and motives of the zoning formula represent early steps aimed at attempts to cabin the hard-earned Presidency for our leader, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu by a few individuals with eyes on Aso Rock Power Buttons'.

For him and indeed most Nigerians, 'it is trite, that, it stands logic on the head that one geopolitical zone, Northwest in this regard, will be favoured with two presiding officers positions out of four while the North Central suffers the consequences for its innocence and shrewd loyalty of having none.'

As it is canvassed by G7, 'it is an insidious permutation that North East will be deprived in the face of the unsavoury generosity dispensed through two slots to a particular geopolitical zone. It is self-repudiating for one to argue therefore, that the Speaker of the House of Representatives cannot also emerge from the North East.'

Therefore, the move to zone the National Assembly leadership positions on the behest of interested

personalities with perceived closeness to the President-elect manifestly lays the dangerous foundation of distrust, needless suspicion even as it structures nothing but combination of booby traps. We must avoid all these.'

Many Nigerians have displayed their aversion against the position of the party, considering the party's stand it is possible not to come clean as opposition group, Greater Majority is not relenting in its push to surprise the ruling party if it is unaware of its vulnerability in the current dispensation. The opposition parties have a combined numerical majority in the House, which they intend to use.

Speaking the minds of Nigerians in a statement which he titled: '10th Assembly: Do not expect us to be loyal if present zoning arrangement stands, G7 Speakership candidates tell APC' and released on May 10, 2023 after their meeting with the APC NWC same day.

Rt Hon Yusuf Adamu Gagdi was emphatic and vowed to oppose any attempts by outside forces to impose a leadership on the 10th House of Representatives, describing the zoning formula as 'unworkable arrangement that reinforces injustice and enhances inequity'; the formula won't be acceptable.

Said Gagdi, 'when we elect our leaders, all of you will not be there; it is we and our conscience and the covenant of the people of Nigeria that will be in the hallowed chamber. So, it is better, it is not late, let the wrongs be righted. Unless this is done, sir, our party should not hope that our loyalty will be guaranteed at the detriment of justice, peace and fairness. We will respect justice, unity and equity in the chamber, but only if your instruction is in line with the principle of this party. Sir, do not hope that we have come here to succumb to any instruction and directive given to us'.

That was candid enough, Gagdi asked rather rhetorically, 'do we want unity, to say that the Deputy Senate President should go to the North West and the Speaker should go to the North West when in the true sense of the word, in the presidential election, North Central known to have majority number of Christians and the religious and tribal affiliations attributed to 2023 elections, yet North Central resisted the temptation, delivered four states to the President-elect, Asiwaju Ahmed Tinubu; delivered 11 senators. The North West delivered 10 with two states and North East 1 state with 10 senators and the zone that has performed like this for Mr. President will be relegated to have party chairman and perhaps as they insinuate, Secretary to the Government of the Federation; positions that the president or whosoever can scream at them and they have no locus to speak for the people for the people of North Central.'

The last of what has been heard is that APC National Chairman, Senator Abdullahi Adamu has admitted they didn't consult adequately on zoning of NASS leadership positions. What does it portend? It means that the struggle has made its impact for justice to be served on North Central zone.



How we make public officers steal

THE Nigerian public servant or those at the helm of affairs see themselves as gods. It is the weight of the responsibility, the power that goes with it and the resources at their disposal to do with as they please that first puts them in this fool's paradise.

Secondly, the realisation that everything within the stipulated parameters is under you and everything answers to you- can easily go to somebody's head. Absolute power corrupts absolutely.

There are uncountable numbers of African leaders who took the issue of their power far beyond what it should be. One of such leaders was Idi Amin, the Ugandan dictator whose reign was a reign of terror. He committed so many atrocities including gruesome murder, rape, taking anything he wanted, maltreating foreigners. In fact, he was law unto himself. He was so power drunk that he gave himself the highest military rank that anyone could attain.

Idi Amin needed no prompting from anyone to unleash the dragon. He was conceited, inconsiderate, greedy, individualistic, self-serving. Most of our leaders share some of, if not most of Amin's attributes. Everyone takes the mantle of leadership with his own expectations. First on the list is to make sure he puts a plan in motion to make sure his family and himself will never experience poverty again in their life. That is the case in Nigeria, anyway. In developed nations, it is one of their reasons to write their name in gold, that is apart from the power it avails them.

Secondly, top on their priority list is paying back or compensating their strong supporters whose actions gave them the exalted position. This is a 'must do' or else the leader would be called an ingrate.

Recently, some political analysts opened my eyes to some subtle ways some people make sure the elected leader is indebted to them. One of the things they do the moment their acquaintance is declared winner of an election is to sew up to 20 caftans and babban riga and present to the leader as a sign of goodwill. Unfortunately, some of these clothes are coming along with charms to force the one who wears it to become their puppet. It is borne out of the most selfish and wicked intentions. Such people often boast that 'Mr Governor is in our hands'. God pass man.

There was a particular case I heard of. It was reported that if not for the financial assistance rendered by a particular wealthy man, a particular governor would not have scaled through to emerge winner of the gubernatorial race. Money politics. Afterwards, when it was pay back time, no quality of contract was deemed good enough to repay Mr Good's generous action. As a result, they don't

see eye to eye.

One public servant complained that the amount of requests he gets for financial assistance on a daily basis will take millions to take care of. To be on the save side, he only helps the sick and his wife handles the hungry. In spite of that, they have been called names- that they are tight- fist-ed and insensitive to people's needs.

In his words: "Some people think we have our local government's account at our disposal to do as we please. Every kobo has to be accounted for."

A lady whose husband was once a member of the State House of Assembly said they used to start receiving visitors from the break of dawn till the setting of the sun. And the language was the same: Request for financial assistance to feed the family or pay school fees.

This lady reported that they used to eat their breakfast, lunch and dinner with the visitors. On top of it, her husband would try his best to take care of their problems. It is no wonder she was disappointed when she overheard somewhere that her husband is tight-fisted . It's like they are insatiable and they will prefer one to be corrupt to satisfy them.

So many of us celebrate former governor Dariye as a very generous man who gives money to any one he came across. That seems to be the criteria. If you want to be celebrated, throw money around, your flaws will be forgotten.

It is a common practice that the moment one makes it known that he is an aspirant, invitations for launching, fund raising and chairing occasions begin to flow. Have you noticed that it is usually during electioneering campaigns that churches begin fund raising, musicians begin album launch and so many political groups come back to life. All these entail money. We make it look as if they have to win a popularity contest in which language is money.

It is for this reason that when they ascend the throne, they tell themselves, it is payback time. To be in our good books, they have to borrow from sharks and they are often up to their necks in debt before ascending the throne.

We are all accomplices to embezzlement- the religious bodies that expect too much from our public officers to the loafers that expect them to take care of all their needs. We are all guilty of swindling our local governments and states huge sums of money because without remorse we ask our leaders to sponsor, fund, provide, take care of issues outside governance.

Until we become responsible citizens, we can never have responsible leaders. Until we allow them to follow the right path as dictated by law and their oath of office, we are never going to be taken seriously by the comity of states.

NEWS

Kogi PDP denies defection of 100 members

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE People's Democratic Party, (PDP) has debunked media reports making the round that over 100 party members from Igalamela/ Odolu Local Government Area have defected to the ruling All Progressives Congress, (APC).

The PDP Chairman in Igalamela/ Odolu Local Government, Attai Ndanusa Salifu disclosed this in a statement made available to our correspondent recently.

Salifu said the purported members received by Kogi State Governor Alhaji Yahaya Bello at the Government House was staged-

managed. He added that no members of the party from his local government has moved to the APC. He urged the general public to disregard such report, stressing that it is the handwork of mischief makers who are scared of the popularity of PDP ahead of the November governorship election in Kogi State.

According to him, PDP Ajaka Ward 1 Chairman, Anthony Abu and his Ward 2 counterpart, Achema Amodu had since received apology from one of the party members, Ndah Salifu who said they were deceived to Government House by some desperate politicians loyal to APC.

"Some of our party members from Igalamela Odolu Local Government were deceived to

have an official PDP meeting in Lokoja. Just as we see ourselves as brothers, some members of the APC called them for dialogue for the interest of the local government and Kogi State in general.

"They listened to the clarion call irrespective of their political affiliation. Surprisingly, when they got to Government House, these desperate APC politicians took them to Governor Bello, telling him that these are PDP members who have defected to APC from Igalamela Odolu Local Government. They were all shocked with this



Damagun

Gombe Govt makes truce between farmers, herders

From WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe

A high powered delegation of the Gombe State Government led by the Deputy Governor, Manasseh Daniel Jatau, has visited Kaltungo Chiefdom to broker peace between Fulani herders and Tangale farmers following a recent crisis between the two communities.

The Deputy Governor who decried the crises between the farmers and herders in Lapan, Shongom Local Government Area of the state, said it was barbaric and heartless.

The meeting which took place at the palace of the Mai Kaltungo, Engineer Saleh Mohammed and Lapan in Shongom LGA followed a fight between two persons over farmland which generated tension and subsequent clashes between the farmers and the herders.

However, the state government's visit was aimed at drawing the attention of the communities on the need for peaceful coexistence among themselves.

According to the Deputy Governor, the situation is quite lamentable that people who profess God and religion will be found perpetrating this act of wickedness against humanity

He said, "From the pictures I have seen about the barbaric acts committed in the affected

places in Lapan, it is quite unbelievable that those who committed these, claim to know God. Religion teaches us about God and humanity, but where there is no such recognition in our behaviours, we become worse than those who didn't believe in life in the hereafter".

While appreciating the Mai Kaltungo for always exhibiting his inclination to peace and unity, Manasseh Jatau vowed that government will not allow the culprits of the clashes go unpunished.

He said, "We will ensure bringing to book every one found directly or indirectly culpable and ensure they are made to face the wrath of the law to serve as deterrent to others.

"As the Chairman, Appointment, Discipline and Promotion of Traditional Rulers in the state, I vow to remove any traditional ruler(s) found to be involved in instigating, aiding or abating the crisis", he warned.

Speaking in his palace in Kaltungo Local Government Area and in Lapan, Shongom Local Government Area, the Mai Kaltungo, Engineer Saleh Mohammed said, the Tangale and the Fulani, (farmers and the herders) in the area have co-existed peacefully for so many years and wondered what came over them to be caught in the web of crises.

He said, the two persons who

development.

"They felt betrayed, as that was never their intentions when they were invited by their brothers from the ruling APC to Government House. PDP remains intact and a formidable force in Igalamela-Odolu Local Government".

Salifu noted that the PDP in Igalamela Odolu Local Government remains committed to the candidature of Senator Dino Melaye and his running mate, Hajia Habiba Deen to take over Lugard House come November 11th 2023.

According to him, the PDP will win overwhelmingly in the local government to rescue Kogi State from the alleged mal-administration of the ruling APC.

were purported to have been the genesis of the crises fought and wounded themselves and have been apprehended by the security agencies, wondering why some people took advantage of that to escalate the crisis.

In Kaltungo, the leader of Shongom Local Government Herders, Alhaji Badikko Daudu noted that they were greatly devastated by the incident but stated that since the Mai Kaltungo has always shown them concern as a father, they are ready to obey whatever he directs.

"We have lived in the Chiefdom for so long. Most of us, our parents were born in this place. If we leave this place, where do we go to? We have no any intention of relocating from here, especially that we have a father like the Mai Kaltungo who has shown us fatherly love," he emphasized.

"In Lapan, one of the community leaders, Landa Kalawa, appreciated the visit by the government and the efforts of the Mai Kaltungo for always fostering peace in his chiefdom.

He said, in almost every community, there are people who always allow themselves to be deceived by the devil, thereby creating deep hatred and crisis amongst the people. He prayed to God that something like that will never happen again in the area.

SUNDAY POLITICS

Choose your aids wisely, Kwankwaso tells Bago

From Mathew Jwantu, Minna

THE former governor of Kano State, Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso has advised Niger State Governor -elect Umar Mohammed Bago to select people with good character for his team as commissioners and other appointees who will advise him rightly in a polite manner no matter the situation if truly he wants to succeed.

Kwankwaso who was the chairman of the inauguration programme in honour of the governor-elect, gave the advice at the Inauguration lecture with theme; Addressing the challenges of socio economic development at sub national level in Nigeria. The event was held in Minna.

Rabiyu who advised the governor-elect to hit the ground running immediately after his swearing-in for the socio economic development if he must be a performing governor, revealed that lack of competence and knowledge has made some elected governors who claimed to know all to fail and end up with nothing to show in their states after four or eight years of governance.

He told the governor-elect to shun stealing and syphoning of public funds but should embark on empowering the people. Kwankwaso also advised him to invest heavily in education and security for the betterment of Niger State or he would regret his future.

The former chairman of Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC,



Kwankwaso

Professor Attahiru Mohammed Jega stated that good governance is supposed to be driven by selfless and visionary leaders to address the needs and aspirations of the populace.

He said Nigeria does not only need good governance but good democratic governance which is indispensable phenomenon in our society. He expressed worry that money has been used to undermine the Nigerian electoral process.

Professor Attahiru Jega who said bad governance is responsible for the present economic woes in the country, called for the need for public office holders to be transparent and accountable at all times.

In his remarks, the Niger State Governor-elect, Umar Mohammed Bago, pledged to surpass the expectations of

the people by raising the bar in governance. He assured them that he will operate an open door policy for a renewed Niger State.

Bago stated that the lecture has provided inputs and a foundation for renewed hope for the state, hence called for advice, counselling for a successful administration.

The Niger State Governor, Alhaji Abubakar Sani Bello called for transparency and accountability to gain the confidence of the people, this includes getting a formidable team for good governance.

He lamented over lack of capacity on the part of MDAs who are supposed to implement his policy and programmes to succeed as required, hence the need for the incoming government to ensure the building of the civil servants and political appointees to be on the same page.

THE Kogi State House of Assembly recently lifted the ban on the suspended eight assembly members and two local government council chairmen following terrorism allegations.

The lifting of the ban followed the clearance by the Department of State Security Service (DSS) which was sent by the State Governor, Alhaji Yahaya Bello in correspondence to the Assembly and read by the Speaker Rt. Honourable Prince Mathew Kolawole at the plenary.

The lawmakers include

Kogi Assembly lifts ban on suspended members

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

Daniya Rayin, Bassa Constituency, Murktar Bajeh, Okehi Constituency, Kilani Olumo, Ijumu Constituency and Moses Akande Ogori-Magongo Constituency.

Others are Mohammed Lawi Ahmed, Okene one Constituency, Atule Igbunu, Ibaji Constituency, Suleiman Attajachi Musa, Idah and Aderonke Aro, Yagba West

Constituency. While the cleared council chairmen include, Moses Olorunleke, Kabba-Bunu Local Government Area and William Ikojo, Ibaji of Ibaji Local Government Area.

Reading the correspondence from the governor, the speaker Prince Mathew Kolawole said the lawmakers and council chairmen were not indicted.

Poor governance is responsible for crisis rocking Nigeria- Jega

From Mathew Jwantu, Minna

MANY of the prevailing national security challenges in Nigeria are on account of poor management of complex diversity and poor governance, complicated by heightened mobilization of ethno-religious identities, especially political and electoral contestations. Thus, communal, ethno-religious, and even farmer-herder conflicts belong to this category of conflicts, Attahiru M. Jega, PhD Department of Political Science, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria has said Prof. Jega made this known in a keynote address at the Inaugural Lecture, organized in honour of Rt. Hon. Umaru Bago Mohammed, the Governor-elect, Niger State, at the Justice Idris Legbo Kutigi International Conference Centre, Minna, Niger State. He categorically stated that weak institutional framework for policing and general security provisioning, as well as pervasive corruption in the

judiciary have all combined to heighten these security challenges.

"Since 2009, however, relatively newer challenges have emerged with more damaging consequences on peaceful coexistence in the country, such as the Boko Haram insurgency, militancy in the Niger Delta, IPOB irredentism in the Southeast, and cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom in virtually all parts of the country, and banditry in the Northwest geopolitical zone. The number of recorded deaths from Boko Haram insurgency and kidnappings alone, rose from 4,633 in 2017, to 6565 in 2018, to 8340 in 2019, and 9,694 in 2020 (EONS Intelligence)".

He further pointed that "While the Buhari government has claimed to have degraded Boko Haram, the inability to totally defeat their insurgency, as well as sufficiently contain the other



Jega

dimensions of insecurity, which have emerged and flourished, further highlighted the crisis of governance, the collapse of the national security architecture, and the increasing failure of the state to discharge one of its main constitutional responsibility, of protecting lives and property and securing the citizens".

At this stage of our national democratic development, given the nature and character of the Nigerian state (as manifested at all levels, federal, state and local), bedeviled as it has been by a 'depressed' economy and systemic security challenges, and the disposition of its ruling elite, who have basically, generally preoccupied themselves with the pursuit of their self-serving objectives, it is indeed necessary to discuss how best to reposition the political economy towards democratic development predicated on good, democratic governance".

Nigeria needs to reposition its democratic development away from the notion of mere "good governance", towards the more substantive and desirable notion of good democratic governance. The protection, defence and promotion of citizenship rights and citizens' human dignity and human security, should be the main purpose of governance, and the overriding activity of government, presided over or led by representatives carefully chosen and mandated by the citizens, through their active participation in elections that have credibility and integrity; elected representatives who are responsible and responsive to the needs and aspirations of those who elected them.

Governor-elect charges on peace, unity

By Dorcas Pankyes, Jos

THE Plateau State Governor elect, Barr. Caleb Mutfwang has called on his citizens to embrace peace and unity and to ensure unity becomes one of their priority in the state. He said that it is time to unite in Plateau irrespective of tribe or religious differences.

He made this call when he received the delegation of Tarok Elders Forum in a

courtesy call recently, at the JD Jang Lodge, Government House, Rayfield Jos.

Barr. Mutfwang urged the people of the state to try to maintain the bond of unity in the state as we all know that without adequate security, there cannot be any meaningful development even as he is taking over government in a most challenging period, with heightened insecurity almost anywhere.

He pledged to tackle the

security challenge in the state and engage on developmental projects when he assumes office on May 29.

Earlier, the delegation of Tarok Elders Forum led by Amb. Nanpon Shen, the President, Ngwang Ishi O'Tarok pleaded with the governor-elect that the protection and preservation of lives and property should remain the cardinal and primary objective of his government.

He said the main purpose of the visit is to congratulate his excellency and his deputy for their victory at the recently concluded governorship election and wish them a successful and God driven tenure.

He further said, "When inaugurated on the 29th May, I hope we will have more time to constructively engage ourselves in various developmental projects that are of great concern to our people."

"We also hope that this line of communication between you and various ethnic communities will continue as the hallmark of your administration. This is important to ensure that your government remains constantly in touch with people at the grassroots."

Amongst the people with him were members of NIO Board of Trustees led by Arch. Kefas Lar, the Tarok Elders Forum, Executive Council members of the NIO, members of Upon oTarok from within Jos and environs and groups-women and

youths, as well as other critical stakeholders of the Tarok nation.

He said, "We expect that in not too distant future, the Tarok nation would still pay you a more comprehensive visit with our royal fathers in attendance."

'I will build a new Plateau'

BY PETER TITLE

FEW hours to his inauguration slated for Monday, the Plateau State Governor -elect, Barrister Caleb Mutfwang has promised to build a new Plateau, with equal opportunities to all, where the less privileged children can also realize their dreams and purposes in life.

Barr. Mutfwang stated this in a message signed by Gyang Bere, Special Assistant (Media) and made available to Journalists in Jos to mark the "2023 Children's Day Celebration".

The Governor -elect while congratulating the children on their special day, pledged to create a conducive environment for children to pursue their dreams and aspirations so as to enable them contribute to the development of the state and

the country as a whole.

According to him, children are special gift from God who deserve distinctive parental and societal support to enable them climb the top of their chosen careers.

Mutfwang urged parents to genuinely provide care, encouragement, support and ensure that they train their children to grow in the way of the Lord so that they can impact on the society meaningfully.

He posited that his policy thrust which premised on "The time is now", seeks to reinvigorate the educational sector and ensure optimal performance of children for the realization of a progressive Plateau.

According to him, there would be renewed hope, commitment and deliberate steps for children to grow in the state.



Mutfwang

POLITICAL FEATURE

Last days and a frenzy “governance”

By JIBRIN IBRAHIM

HERE has been a frenzy of governance activities over the past three weeks as the Buhari administration abandoned his “Baba go slow” mode of operation and got into the “let’s work as if there is no tomorrow” mode. Many new contracts are being signed daily. Ministries are getting restructured one week before the end of the administration’s mandate. Requests for approvals are flooding the National Assembly, new loans are being taken and above all, publications are being launched on the great achievements of the Buhari government. The ongoing hysteria is best symbolised by the announcement from the Minister of Aviation, who is demolishing buildings, restructuring the ministry, sacking and appointing management staff, that today, 26th May, *Air Nigeria* will come into service as it flies into the country. Don’t ask me why it should start service on the last working day of the administration; it’s all part of the frenzy of governance. I am one of those who remember that Minister Sirika told us in 2015 that the President had directed him to start a national carrier and it would be done immediately.

As President Buhari finishes his tenure, which he says would be at the end of the working day on the 29th of May, all attention would now be on his legacy. Over the past eight years, my good friend IBB (Ibrahim Bida Buhari) has inundated our class mates’ WhatsApp group with tons of narratives on the great achievements of the maker of modern Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari. IBB is a quantity surveyor and he accepts and propagates the numbers being reeled off on how the government’s agricultural revolution has ended rice importation, created jobs for the youth, revolutionised infrastructure, etc. IBB has always challenged me to seek and see President’s Buhari’s achievements and it is good to interact with people who see the other side of the argument. While I believe President Buhari does have some achievements, however the evidence I see tells me that it could



Buhari

have been so much more. As he departs from office, one important achievement is the significant gains over the past one year on security. Boko Haram, in particular, has been on the receiving end for months.

On the 25th of November 2016, this column addressed the theme of: *What happens to governance when the President won't govern*. Our Constitution places the power of the executive in one person – the president. At the same time, the Constitution, conscious of the fact that the president cannot execute the vast array of governmental processes alone, requires that ministers, advisers and heads of parastatals be appointed to help the president carry out the huge responsibility of executing government policies. At the beginning of the Buhari administration, there was a general

expectation that he would hit the ground running. This was because he used the two months between his election and inauguration to consult extensively with his political allies. Having sought power for over a decade, it was assumed that he knew exactly what he wanted to do with it. In any case, he had exercised power previously and was fully aware of the job description of the president.

Buhari got inaugurated on 29 May, 2015 and then nothing happened for a long time. Well, he did request for Senate approval to appoint 15 special advisers, which he obtained on 3 June, 2015, just five days after his inauguration. 18 months after inauguration, he succeeded in appointing only five out of the fifteen that had been approved for him. Out of the five, he sent three to the vice

president and one to the minister of Budget and National Planning. It took President Muhammadu Buhari five months after inauguration to appoint ministers. The heads of most government agencies were appointed over two years after his assumption of office.

For almost two years after coming into office, the president had no economic advisers. When he eventually appointed a team and they proposed a Plan – the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), he refused to implement it on the grounds that the Central Bank Governor, a nice man called Emefiele, had been giving him trillions of naira through “ways and means” advances, as such he did not need to take any tough economic decisions, as proposed in the Plan. Earlier this month, exactly three weeks to the end of his tenure, the president launched the Nigeria 2050 Plan. It promises to ensure that Nigeria attains a GDP per capita of \$33,328 per annum, placing the country among the top middle-income economies in the world by 2050. According to World Bank data, Nigeria’s GDP per capita was only \$2,065.7 in 2021. President Buhari said his plan has the vision of a dynamic, industrialised and knowledge-based economy that generates inclusive and sustainable development for the country. Excellent words. But his legacy would be Nigeria becoming the poverty capital of the world, not the Eldorado he is telling us would be produced by those who would come after him.

The problem with governance is that if you do not make political appointments for your first two years in office, then civil servants take all the political decisions, including the most important one of NOT MAKING ANY DECISION. Sometimes, civil servants do not want to make decisions so that they do not get noticed or disturbed as they enjoy the perquisites of power, including the most harmful one of looting public funds. When, therefore, the president does not appoint people to govern, those at the head of governmental organisations create forms of governance linked to prolonging their temporary positions. Achieving the policy goals of the government cannot be their priority because their logic is that they are there for a short time until the president decides on who should do the job on a full-time basis.

Making numerous appointments just as you are leaving government on the other hand, is depriving the incoming administration of the opportunity to choose and appoint people in line with its policy intentions. As we await the flood of information on misgovernance under President Buhari in the coming months and years, the assessment of his legacy will start in earnest. Meanwhile, I hope I can get an Air Nigeria ticket to Lagos on Tuesday and no one would tell me to go to Katsina and ask Oga Sirika.

The problem with governance is that if you do not make political appointments for your first two years in office, then civil servants take all the political decisions, including the most important one of not making any decision. Sometimes, civil servants do not want to make decisions so that they do not get noticed or disturbed as they enjoy the perquisites of power, including the most harmful one of looting public funds. When, therefore, the president does not appoint people to govern, those at the head of governmental organisations create forms of governance linked to prolonging their temporary positions. Achieving the policy goals of the government cannot be their priority because their logic is that they are there for a short time until the president decides on who should do the job on a full-time basis.

SUNDAY POLITICS

Environmental protection of Nigeria: A promise half-fulfilled

The Buhari Years: What We Ordered vs What We Got – civil society leaders reflect on the Buhari Administration and its achievements, shortcomings, and regressive steps. CHIMA WILLIAMS writes.

THE outgoing administration of President Muhammadu Buhari's environmental protection footprints in the past eight years can be evaluated under two subheadings thus:

Policies and Legislation

Within the past eight years of the outgoing President Muhammadu Buhari administration, I can say some milestones were achieved in the area of legislations and policies for the protection of the Nigerian environment.

The above assertion is premised on some of the practical steps taken by the outgoing administration from the beginning of their tenure.

In September 2016 President Muhammadu Buhari before addressing the opening of the meeting on Taking Climate Action for Sustainable Development in New York, co-hosted by Nigeria and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as one of the Side Events of the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA71), signed the Paris Agreement, where he committed Nigeria to reducing "GreenHouse Gas Emissions unconditionally by 20% and conditionally by 45% in line with Nigeria's Nationally Determined Contributions." And in November 2016 while addressing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP-22) in Marrakech, Morocco, he reiterated the pledge that Nigeria would reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by the year 2030.

In 2017, the Federal Government adopted the **Economic Recovery & Growth Plan 2017-2020** which, among other things, stated the position of the government on how to raise resources from the otherwise wasted associated gas through flaring by petroleum industry players. This will further reduce the hazardous impacts of gas flaring and increase the revenue base for the nation.

In 2018, the government enacted the **Flare Gas (Prevention of Waste and Pollution) Policy 2018**. The policy is clear that gas flaring is prohibited.

In 2021, Mr President signed into law the **Nigerian Climate Change Act 2021** which provides the strategic focus of Nigeria in combating climate change and the **Petroleum Industry Act 2021** whose long and unenviable history is in the public domain.

Despite there being issues of concern with the Climate Change Act and the Petroleum Industry Act, as an environmentalist, I will not be afraid to say that the passage of these laws with environmental protection provisions were positive acts by Mr President in the area of environmental protection and preservation within the years



Buhari



Abdullahi

under review.

The enactment of the above, showed the seriousness of the outgoing administration in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and combating climate change which is one of the key drivers of environmental degradation and havoc in Nigeria.

The above especially the **Flare Gas (Prevention of Waste and Pollution) Policy 2018**, which clearly states that gas flaring is prohibited, and the **Nigerian Climate Change Act 2021** which provides the strategic focus of Nigeria in combating climate change, are in line with the judgment in the case of *Jonah Gbemre V. Shell & Others* – a case we supported and are still supporting at the Appeal Court.

2. Practical Protection of the Nigerian Environment

Whereas we can say that the outgoing administration fared well in environmental protection policies and legislations, I dare say that cannot be said of the practical protection of the Nigerian environment. The critical failure areas include:

Implementation of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

In almost all the rehabilitation and construction of roads and railways by the outgoing administration, there were no consultations with the local residents through whose communities these will pass through let alone presentation of EIA Reports for their scrutiny and either adoption or objection in line with the EIA Act requirements.

New oil finds in the era of divestment from fossil fuel extraction: It is disheartening that in this era when the rest of the world is looking towards alternative, cleaner energy

sources, the outgoing administration supported through legislation the search for new fossil fuels / dirty energy and celebrated the new discoveries in the northern Nigeria without a clear cut mechanism of combating the negative environmental impact associated with it.

Environmental disaster management and handling profile:

As is already known, the outgoing government at all levels showed lack of capacity to handle environmental disasters that have occurred within the period of their stewardship. From the flood disasters to the gas explosions, oil spills and pipeline explosions, it was almost the same story of both lack of capacity to either contain or mitigate them.

Handling of military waste and environmental destruction in the north-east and other theatres of military activities:

The Nigerian military under the environmental lens did not do well under this administration. From the harvesting of existing timber and other forest woods, dropping of

military wares with associated chemicals in the name of identifying and flushing out marauding "insurgents" in the north-east to the "Show of Force" operations under various names in the south-east and south-west to the burning of vessels and "illegal oil refinery camps" in the south-south geo-political zones, it is clearly evident that the Nigerian environment was a major victim of Nigerian military operations under the outgoing administration.

Clean up of Ogoniland and the Niger Delta:

(i) The outgoing administration, showed energy towards the clean up of Ogoniland when that was flagged off in 2016 by the Vice President of Nigeria, Prof. Yemi Osibanjo. However, looking back almost seven years down the line, not so much has been achieved especially in terms of visibly reclaimed, remediated, recovered and restored portions of the polluted sites. Despite the very slow pace of the clean up exercise, at least there was a departure from the past where nothing was done at all for some years, even after the release of the UNEP Report on the

environmental situation of Ogoniland with recommendations spanning both short, middle and long term remedial and restoration actions.

(ii) No mention was made by the outgoing administration on the call for a comprehensive environmental audit of the Niger Delta to determine first the level of pollution within the region and propose mechanisms and processes for the recovery and restoration of the environment, citizens' livelihoods and health.

The call for the establishment of environmental restoration bonds by both divesting and new investing companies in the Nigerian Petroleum Sector was not given the due attention it deserved as one of the steps towards protecting the Nigerian environment from any petroleum operational disasters.

Flowing from the above, it is evidently manifest that it was not all celebrations in the Nigerian environmental protection milieu by the outgoing administration's policies and practices and we therefore call on the incoming administration to look at the lacunas and fill them up.

"As is already known, the outgoing government at all levels showed lack of capacity to handle environmental disasters that have occurred within the period of their stewardship. From the flood disasters to the gas explosions, oil spills and pipeline explosions to ship wrecks and explosions, it was almost the same story of both lack of capacity to either contain or mitigate them".

SUNDAY PEOPLE

BUHARI/LALONG COMMISSION PROJECTS IN THE STATE

Nigeria's President, Muhammadu Buhari, through his representative and former Nigerian Head of States, Gen. Dr. Yakubu Gowon last week commissioned projects in the state



Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong, CON (2nd left) commissioning the Cityline Press Machine at the PPC, Publishers of The Nigeria Standard to the admiration of the Acting GM, Mr. Paul Jatau, Commissioner for Information, Dan Manjang and others



MD/CEO, Plateau Minerals Development Company Ltd, Mr. Kwplong Martin Bialwan showing minerals found on the Plateau to Governor Lalong and entourage at the Solid Minerals House Anguldi, Bukuru Express Way, Jos South LGA.



British American Fly-over commissioned by Buhari



NUJ State Chairman, Mr. Paul Jatau (right) making remarks to the Governor during the commissioning ceremony of NUJ Remodeled Press Centre, Jos



Governor Lalong, CON commissioning the Riyom Water Treatment Plant flanked by the Commissioner of Water Resources and Energy, Hon. Sa'ad Ibrahim Bello



Governor Simon Bako Lalong, CON (right) acknowledging cheers from Pupils of Lalong Legacy Model, Primary School Bukuru, Jos South LGA during the commissioning of the school



Commissioner of Health, Dr. Ninkong Lar (right) explaining some things to Governor Lalong during the commissioning of the General Hospital and Trauma Centre, Riyom LGA



Governor Lalong, CON (right) being received by the Commissioner for Secondary Education, Hon. Elizabeth Wapmuk and executive Secretary, PSUBEB, Prof. Matthew Sule at the Lalong Legacy Project

LEGISLATIVE business is said to be serious business and as such, having the basic knowledge and prerequisite of how things work is not out of place. With the inauguration of the tenth assembly just around the corner, it is imperative for the members-elect of the Plateau State House of Assembly to fully equip themselves and be ready for the huge task ahead. What better way to do this, than for them to undergo a one-week orientation workshop.

With the theme 'Building a Robust Assembly for Sustainable Democracy', the workshop is intended to educate the new lawmakers on the basic rudiments of the legislature. The intensive programme drew competent resource persons, all of whom are serving members of the House, as well as the clerk and deputy clerk who each presented papers on various topics of interest. To show its seriousness and ensure that all participants do not get distracted, the workshop was held at the Kini Country Guest Inn in Akwanga, Nassarawa State.

For the speaker Rt. Hon. Abok Nuhu Ayuba, availing themselves the opportunity to serve the state is the best decision they would ever make even as he reminded the new members of the heinous task ahead. He seized the opportunity to congratulate the members-elect, while at the same time admonishing them to maintain the sanctity and integrity of the legislature as a third arm of government so as to save the decaying democracy in the state. Describing the legislature as the backbone of democracy, Ayuba agreed that there was need to develop the capacity of the new members for a robust, vibrant and decisive legislative business.

In his paper presentation titled 'Functions of a Legislature', Clerk of the House Ponven Wuyep described the legislative arm of government as the spirit of democracy where freedom of the people is exercised without any hitch. According to Wuyep, the new legislators must come to terms with the fact that their powers do not extend to project execution but lobbying to draw the executive's attention to project needs in their various places of interest. Hon. Philip Peter Dasun on the other hand, took on the different 'House Standing Orders' guiding the operation of new members, particularly during sitting or plenary.

For Hon. Pirfa Tyem, he believes that in sustaining democracy, legislators must

be independent and free from interference from other arms of government, and by this the principle of checks and balances will be upheld. His presentation on 'Regulations Guiding Public Funds' stressed the importance of managing public funds through any public institution. He also laid emphasis on understanding the various provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the House Standing Orders.

Meanwhile, the members -elect under the platform of the People's Democratic party



As tenth Plateau Assembly gets underway



Tyem



Dasun



Members -elect of the 10th Assembly

(PDP), recently paid visits to commiserate with the victims of attacks in Mangu and Riyom Local Government Areas.

The PDP caucus comprising of both old and new lawmakers in the state assembly was led by Hon. Timothy Dantong, representing Riyom constituency who is a ranking member of the House. They first visited Mararaba Kantoma and the headquarters of Maghavul Development Association in Mangu Local

Government Area where the displaced victims from the different communities are currently taking refuge.

The members thereafter, proceeded to Kwi in Riyom Local Government Area to sympathize with the community leader over the attack in his area.

According to Dantong who spoke at all the places visited, the caucus' visit was necessitated by what happened and thus, thought it

wise to commiserate with all affected families. He also gave an assurance of the state tenth assembly's commitment towards working assiduously in restoring lasting peace on the Plateau.

The need for the people to be resilient in defence of their communities was again brought to the fore. The lawmaker and leader of the team pointed out that as a responsible assembly which will always stand by its people, it was expedient that the PDP

caucus in the House visited its people over an orchestrated carnage that occurred while they were attending an orientation workshop outside the state.

On their part, both members elect for Mangu South constituency Hon. Bala Fwangje and his Mangu North East counterpart Hon. Sani Idris, who were disgusted by the killings prayed God to put an end to the circle of vicious attacks on all communities across the state. From the community leaders responses, it was clear that the attacks were targeted at the people with the deliberate attempt to stop them from going to their farms.

That of Kwi especially, maintained that his community was under siege.

After narrating series of incidences his area had suffered from aggressors, he advised that the federal government must as a matter of urgency stop the recurrence of attacks or risk famine in the coming year. Though the new lawmakers made personal contributions to support victims of the attacks, member representing Mangu South constituency Hon. Bala Fwangje assisted his people with food stuffs, toiletries and other relief materials.

SUNDAY MAGAZINE



An overview of Governor Lalong's scorecard

Since assumption of office in 2015, one of the cardinal policy thrusts of Governor Simon Bako Lalong was centered on peace, reconciliation and unity of the state. He had stated variously that his desire was to return the state to its name "Home of Peace and Tourism" because he had inherited a state polarised by ethno religious crisis and killings with tags of "No-go areas" between Christian and Moslem communities in parts of the state. PALANG KASMI writes.

THIS sad scenario led to the establishment of the Plateau Peace Building Agency (PPBA), Plateau Forgiveness day, and other structures to re-build trust among citizens to harmonise inter-ethnic and inter-religious harmony.

After working to create confidence and reduce the high level of suspicion, Lalong's administration worked to revamp the economy of the state by wooing investors, encouraging the return of sports tourism which brought about sports enthusiasts from within and outside the country for the yearly Governors Golf Tourney. Lalong's support for sports spurred back Plateau football team on its feet and Plateau united resumed tops on the on the ladder. The established peaceful atmosphere in the state also attracted the return of the yearly Jos Polo tournament, cultural festivals of various ethnic groups, and booming commercial activities. The state was able to host national conferences of various bodies including NAFEST, Nigerian Bar Association National Conference, among others. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic affected the state, but the government at the state level led by Governor Lalong was proactive in handling the spread of the virus to a minimal level, compared to other states which had high infection rate statistics.

Another philosophy of the Lalong led government was its stance on completing inherited abandoned projects of his predecessors, alongside initiating new ones. This practice according to Lalong was to reduce wastage of the state's resources. Lalong embarked on the 'Lalong Legacy Projects', which was spread across all the state. Although he was not able to compete all, some of the structures have come in handy and have been utilised as a facility for take off the newly approved Federal Polytechnic Nyak Ajikamai, in Shendam Local Government, and the

NSCDC training staff college in Lamingo among others.

9 months to the end of his tenure, Lalong embarked on a project which is the Dualization of the British American Junction Road, and construction of the fly over bridge, but it was described as a tall dream, by many critics who said it can never be completed before he leaves office. However, the project was completed and commissioned by President Muhammadu Buhari.

With the tenure of Governor Lalong's rescue administration coming to an end on May 29, 2023, here is a summary of some of the Governor's achievements during his 2-term tenure from 2015-2023.

Physical infrastructure and sustainable environment

In this sector, there was the completion of Mararaban Road inherited from previous administration, completion of Secretariat flyover bridge inherited from previous administration, completion of Bukuru Kugiya, Angwan Doki road, Jos South.

Lalong Commissioned the NEWMAP 6.86 Erosion Control project, Munchongopyen, Jos South Local Government, part of a World Bank project that was supported with counterpart funds of the state. A similar project covering a distance of 5.3km was equally established in Mangu LGA to address flooding, erosion and other environmental challenges.

The Governor initiated and completed the construction of British American Flyover and Dualisation to Lamingo Junction Roundabout and installation of street lights, construction of the ultra-modern Plateau High Court Headquarters Complex Jos which has 9 courtrooms, conference rooms, libraries, Judges Chambers, furnishings, and associated services, alongside the Alternative Dispute Resolution court/center referred to as Multi-

door Court House, next to the Jos new High Court Complex.

The commissioning of the two Courts was performed by the Chief Justice of Nigeria, represented by President Court of Appeal, Justice Monica Dongban-Mensem. She expressed happiness that the Judiciary in Plateau State now has a befitting accommodation to replace the pre-colonial structure that had been built for over 60 years. The Plateau Publishing Corporation, publishers of the Nigerian Standard Newspapers also got a boost with the establishment and commissioning of the City line Printing Press and CTP Machine which has the capacity of producing about 40,000 copies per hour.

The Lalong led rescue administration also did the Remodeling, Construction and Fencing of Magistrate Court West of Mines Jos, construction of Shendam Bye-pass, Internal Road Networks and Bridges, remodeling and Construction of NUJ Secretariat Complex Jos, installation of street lights across the Jos-Bukuru Metropolis (over 90km), construction of Rantya Road network Jos South LGA, construction of Wild Life-Rafiki Junction-Miango Road, reconstruction of 40 township roads within Jos-Bukuru road, rehabilitation and asphaltting of 29 urban roads under Operation Zero Potholes, construction of Longvel Yelwa-Mato Junction-Taraba border road, construction of Kalong Bridge and road approaches, Shendam LGA, and completed abandoned Conference Hall (Named after Victoria Gowon), Fuel dumb and other facilities at the New Government House, Little Rayfield Jos.

There was equally the construction of Mangu-Gindiri-Lere Road with spur to Tongzong-Chanso & Gindiri Schools, Mangu LGA, ongoing Construction of Federe-Fobur-Angware Road (27km) Jos East LGA,

construction of Rukuba-Miango-Farin Lamba with Spur at Dochai and School of Accountancy, construction of Europharm, Diye, Dakwol & Zarmaganda-Mazaram Road Network, Construction of Jos-Maza-Angware Road (10km) Jos East LGA, ongoing Construction of Langtang-Garkawa-Yelwa-Shendam road with spur to Lalin (70km), completion of Dualisation of Old Airport-Rayfield-Government House with Spurs to Giring and Chang'opyang Jos South LGA, construction of Mararaba Demshin-Shimankar Road, Shendam LGA.

Construction of Demshin-Angwan Dadi-Kalong-Nyak Road, Shendam LGA, construction of Shinkwan-Tunkus Road (Shendam Bypass) Shendam LGA, ongoing Construction of Kuba-Tenti-Manguna Road (66km) Bokkos LGA, ongoing Construction of Lohmak-Gazum-road with spur at Kumkwam, Langtang North LGA, construction of Ajikamai Road network, Shendam LGA, construction of Kukari and Fwawwei road network Rayfield, Jos South, construction of Angwan Rogo Network with a Bridge linking Hawan Idi/Alfi Kazaure, Jos North LGA, and construction of Roads Network at Danserina, Tina Junction to Dutse Uku, Yan Shanu Street, St. Michael, Baptist Church Road, Tsarki Street, Yar Kasuwa Road, Rikkos and Main Market Road, Jos North..

The rescue administration did the construction of Amma Street, Mallam Kure, Fatima Church, Apata, Gangare, Rikkos, Dilimi Roads Network in Jos-Bukuru Metropolis, Jos North, construction of Road Network at Utan, Jos North, construction and rehabilitation of Angwan Rukuba Eto Baba road.

Water and sanitation

Resuscitation and Rehabilitation of Shendam Water Treatment Plant, resuscitation and Rehabilitation of Langtang water works, rehabilitation of Yelwa Water Works, construction of a new Water Treatment Plant and Distribution Network system in Riyom,

Tahoss and Rahoss, provision of over 128 Hand Pump Boreholes as well as rehabilitated 34 others and 14 Solar Panel Boreholes across various communities in the State, and construction of mini treatment plants and supply of 5.5KVA generator and minimal reticulation, with water kiosks in Kalong, Shimankar, Demshin, Bakin Kogi, Fang, Sopp, Tom Gangare, Tse as well as transmission of water pipeline from Yelwa to Ajikamai.

Policies in the water sector saw the governor sign into law and gazette the Plateau State Water Sector Law which gave rise to four agencies which includes Jos Water Services Corporation; Plateau State Municipal Water Supply Agency; Plateau State Water Regulatory Commission; and the Plateau Rural Water Supply Agency. Passed and gazetted the Plateau State Energy Corporation Law to establish an agency to harvest investment into the energy sector of the State especially in the rural areas.

Peace and Security

The Lalong led government restored substantial peace to Plateau State and created confidence among citizens by establishing the Plateau Peace Building Agency, the first of its kind in Nigeria to drive understanding, reconciliation, forgiveness and synergy in dispute resolution, established the Plateau State Inter-Religious Council, reinvigorated Operation Rainbow and strengthened intelligence gathering using the community driven approach and early warning systems, built and commissioned Operation Rainbow Surveillance Centre at Dutse Uku (Jos Jarawa) equipped with surveillance equipment and a watchtower, Recruited and deployed 529 Police Constables for Community Policing and purchased and distributed operational vehicles to security agencies.

The Lalong administration

Continued on Page 31

NEWS

KG trains law officers on VAPP Law

From AMEDU JOSEPH,
Lokoja

KOGI State Government through the office of Public Defender and Citizens' Rights Commission (PDCRC) has trained critical stakeholders for full implementation of Violence Against Persons and Prohibition (VAPP) Law in the state.

The training was organised by PDCRC in collaboration with the Savannah Centre for Diplomacy Democracy and Development (SCDDD), and Mercy Corps Nigeria.

Speaking at the workshop in Lokoja, the Director General of PDCRC, Barr. Abdullahi Zakari, commended Gov Yahaya Bello for signing the VAPP Law, as well as the state's Attorney General for Justice for his commitment to the reality of the law. Zakari said that the signing of the VAPP Law in Kogi meant that the governor had once again demonstrated his commitment to ensuring a violent free state.

"The governor has further demonstrated in his usual manner that an atmosphere of violence does not augur well for a development.

"His Excellency has proved that when there are issues of crises and violence in both private and public life which the law seeks to protect, the rights of the people would be trampled upon.

"So, the governor has done it perfectly well to join the comity of states by signing the law to ensure a violent free private and public life across Kogi State", Zakari said.

According to Zakari, the participants are professionals carefully selected from various relevant institutions in the state which include: Ministry of Justice, PDCRC, NBA, Police, NSCDC, Magistrates FIDA, among others.

He said that the two-day training workshop was very significant to PDCRC because it was the first step the commission was taking to empowering professionals vested and entrusted to enforcing the law.

The director general added that the workshop would ensure seamless and full implementation of the VAPP Law in Kogi, and also afford them the opportunity to key into the international best practices.

He noted that the PDCRC remained the State's Agency responsible for providing access to justice, legal aid, enforcement and protection of human rights in the state.

Zakari disclosed that Kogi PDCRC has had over 50 cases pending before the High Court across the state, saying 25 of those cases had been successfully concluded and about eight of the defendants had secured



Bello

their liberty.

Also speaking, the Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Kogi State, Ibrahim Sani Mohammed SAN, commended the Office of the PDCRC for the initiative.

According to him, the objective of the law among others is basically to protect the human person from physical and psychological abuse, to preserve his dignity and liberty and to punish acts targeted at degrading or harming the physical being of man. "There is no doubt that the intent behind VAPP Law is indeed grandiose, the only challenge pending, in my view, is how to understand and apply its provisions, the

bulk of which are novel, and yet to be tested in our criminal justice system.

"The VAPP Law prohibits all forms of violence against persons in private and public life and provides effective remedies for the victims while making provisions for punishing the offenders in the State.

"It is expected that this workshop will examine the novel provisions on certain crimes like rape, domestic violence, physical injury and other offensive conducts.

"The importance of this workshop is geared towards equipping relevant stakeholders in our criminal justice system with the requisite knowledge on the operation of the Law cannot therefore be over emphasized,"

Mohammed said.

The attorney general who was represented by Oyetunji Ojutaiye, an Asst. Director in the Ministry, urged the participants to seize the opportunity to equip themselves with all the invaluable tools at the workshop, whether as magistrates or prosecutors. On his part, the Executive Director, SCDDD, Amb. Sani Bala, said the training was aim at building the capacity of law officers and other critical stakeholders involved in the implementation of VAPP Law in Kogi.

Bala urged the participants to pay rapt attention at the training so as to understand the content and context of the VAPP law, and assimilate the procedures for implementation.

He stressed the need for participants to acquire more knowledge on practices and other procedures that would ensure full implementation of the law in order to promote peace and justice in Kogi.

"At the end of the 2-day training, we expected that all the participants would have clear understanding of what the law is all about.

"They will also know the limitations of the implementation and the equipment in terms of facilities, exchange of ideas and access to sources of information and guidance so that they can effectively implement the VAPP Law in the state," Bala said.

One of the participants, Barr. Lilian Ajuma Okolo, commended the PDCRC and other collaborating partners for organising the training, saying it would go a long way to empowering professionals then for effective implementation of the VAPP Law in the state.

APM petition against Mutfwang's victory dismissed by tribunal

From
DORCAS PANKYES

THE Governorship Election Petition Tribunal sitting in Jos has dismissed the petition filed by the Allied Peoples' Movement (APM) seeking the cancellation of the April 18, 2023 Governorship election won by Governor-elect, Barr. Caleb Mutfwang. This ruling has been described as a landmark in Plateau politics.

In a statement issued by Gyang Bere, Special Assistant on Media to the Plateau Governor-elect on Friday, Barr. Mutfwang dedicated his victory to God and the people of Plateau who entrusted him with their mandate during the polls.

Barr. Mutfwang praised the panel presided over by Justice R. Irele-Ifijeh for its determination to dispense justice, noting that the petition was dismissed for lack of diligent prosecution. He explained that the Petitioner and their lawyers failed to appear in court despite being served with a hearing notice.

Upon application by lawyers to INEC, Mutfwang



Ariwoola

Caleb Manasseh and PDP, the petition was dismissed, and cost of one million naira only was awarded against the petitioner in favor of each respondent, relying on paragraph 18 (1) (4) of the First Schedule of the Electoral Act 2022.

Barr. Mutfwang recalled that APM had dragged INEC, Mutfwang Caleb Manasseh of the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) to court, challenging his declaration by INEC after the

conduct of the Governorship election in Plateau State.

As a firm believer in the rule of law, Barr. Mutfwang is determined to strengthen the bonds of unity and friendship across Plateau communities for a progressive state. He urged citizens to channel their energy towards productive ventures to rebuild and restore the lost glory of Plateau State

Events of last WEEK

Insecurity my greatest headache as Nigeria's president – Jonathan

Former President Goodluck Jonathan on Friday identified insecurity as his worst nightmare during his time as Nigeria's leader

Labour Party to call 50 witnesses in petition challenging Tinubu's election

The Labour Party and its presidential candidate, Peter Obi, will call at least 50 witnesses to testify in their petition challenging the election of the All Progressives Congress (APC) candidate, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, at the presidential election petition tribunal.

Afe Babalola challenges Tinubu to pursue debt forgiveness for Nigeria

A Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Chief Afe Babalola, on Sunday, charged the incoming administration of Ahmed Bola Tinubu to pursue debt cancellation with multi-lateral lenders

Over 70% of food taken from Nigeria rejected abroad – NAFDAC

The Director-General of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Prof. Mojisola Adeyeye, said on Saturday more than 70 percent of food exported from Nigeria was rejected abroad.

Court adjourns Kanu's suit against DSS to June 20

The Federal High Court, Abuja, on Monday, fixed June 20 for the adoption of the process in the suit filed by the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Nnamdi Kanu, against the Department of State Services (DSS).

Africa requires \$2.7trn to finance climate change needs – Adesina

The President of the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group, Akinwumi Adesina, said on Monday Africa would need about \$2.7 trillion by 2030 to finance climate change.

Tinubu meets ex-British PM, Tony Blair, ahead of inauguration

The President-elect, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, on Tuesday met with former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, at the Defence House in Abuja

Buhari approves allocation of houses to 1994 AFCON-winning Super Eagles squad

President Muhammadu Buhari has approved the allocation of houses for the 22 members of the 1994 African Nations Cup-winning Super Eagles squad at the National Housing Estates in the state of their choice.

Buhari requests Senate's approval for payment of N226bn, \$556.8m, £98.5m judgement debts

President Muhammadu Buhari has requested the Senate's approval for payment of \$566,754,584.31, £98,526,012.00, and N226 billion judgement debts.

Bill seeking compensation for victims of ENDSARS scales first reading in Senate

A bill on the compensation for victims of the October 2020 ENDSARS protest in the country scaled the first reading in the Senate on Wednesday.

Banks to issue 'multipurpose' debit card as National ID in Nigeria

The Federal Government has directed commercial banks to issue debit cards that would serve as National identity cards to Nigerians

Nigerians deserve no less, President-elect Tinubu pledges to redress issues

President-elect Bola Tinubu promised on Thursday in Abuja that he would uphold the faith that President Muhammadu Buhari and millions of Nigerians had placed in him

Appeal Court orders ex-presidential candidate to pay N40m for trying to stop Tinubu's inauguration

The Court of Appeal, Abuja, on Thursday, ordered the former presidential candidate of Hope Democratic Party, Chief Ambrose Owuru to pay a fine of N40 million for filing a frivolous suit.

Ninth National Assembly one the most productive in Nigeria's history – Buhari

President Muhammadu Buhari on Thursday described the Ninth National Assembly as one of the most productive in terms of output and outcome in the country's history

DSS warns against alleged plot to disrupt Tinubu's inauguration

The Department of State Services (DSS) says it has uncovered alleged plans by "subversive elements" to disrupt the May 29 inauguration plans in some parts of the country.

Supreme Court dismisses PDP's suit against Tinubu/Shettima

President-elect, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu and Vice President-elect, Kashim Shettima, secured another legal victory on Friday, as the Supreme Court dismissed the suit seeking their disqualification as candidates of the All Progressives Congress (APC).

Diezani sues AGF, EFCC for alleged defamation, demands N100bn in damages

A former Minister of Petroleum Resources, Diezani Alison-Madueke, has sued the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF) for alleged defamation at the Federal High Court, Abuja.

FG unveils Nigeria Air, targets 35 aircraft in five years

The Federal Government on Friday unveiled the country's national carrier, Nigeria Air, at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja

Compiled By FWANJI GO'AR

SUNDAY FEATURE

Eliminating barriers to women's participation in politics

A significant democratic weakness that threatens the validity of the modern democratic ideal is the underrepresentation of women. Therefore, parity democracy and the advancement of women in decision-making are major areas of work. Equal representation of men and women in decision-making roles is implied by the term 'parity democracy'. Hanan Najeeb Abdussalam, writes.

NIGERIA, a nation recognized for its thriving democracy and rich cultural variety, has made considerable advancements throughout the years. However, hurdles still exist that prevent women from being fully represented and contributing to politics.

The active participation of women in politics in Nigeria is still hampered by cultural norms, patriarchal systems, resource constraints, violence, and a lack of support within political parties. Notwithstanding ongoing difficulties and gender inequities in the political environment, women in Nigerian politics have made great progress in recent years.

Following are some crucial points regarding women in Nigerian politics.

Representation: Women have historically had little representation in Nigerian politics, despite the fact that it is the most populated nation in Africa. To boost the number of women in political leadership roles, however, initiatives have been made. Nigeria currently has a low proportion of women in the National Assembly, with 4% of seats in the House of Representatives and 6% of Senate seats held by women as of the September 2021 cutoff date.

Political Parties: The engagement of women in political parties is essential to their involvement in politics. There are provisions for promoting gender equality and encouraging women's participation in many political parties' constitutions in Nigeria.

These provisions haven't, however, always resulted in substantial representation in party structures and decision-making processes.

Women's Organizations: Several advocacy and women's organizations have been trying to expand the number of women who participate in politics in Nigeria. For women who want to run for political office, these organizations offer training, mentoring, and support. Additionally, they support changes in legislation that would advance political equality for women.

Women have several obstacles and difficulties when trying to get involved in Nigerian politics. Among these are patriarchal structures, limiting access to financing and resources, violence and intimidation, and a lack of support inside political parties.

The underrepresentation of women in political leadership roles is influenced by several variables. Strong cultural and societal norms are a major barrier to women's political participation in Nigeria. Traditional gender roles frequently limit women to the home and discourage them from participating in public life. Prevalent



preconceptions keep up the idea that politics is a field dominated by men, discouraging women from pursuing careers in politics.

Expanding women's political presence requires challenging these stereotypes and advancing the notion that they can lead successfully. Women's participation in politics in Nigeria is severely hampered by the patriarchal structure of the country.

Men tend to hold more power inside political parties and institutions, which leads to an imbalance of gender in positions of decision-making. Women's opportunities to advance to significant roles are constrained by discriminatory behaviors and biases.

Political systems must change in order to overcome these obstacles. Funding and resources are essential for mobilization and political campaigns. However, there are substantial obstacles

for women in this area. Women are at a disadvantage since they have less financial resources and lack the networks needed for effective campaigns.

Women can be empowered to overcome financial obstacles and actively participate in political processes through improving access to financial support, mentorship programs, and training opportunities. Threats, intimidation, and violence are commonplace for women in Nigerian politics, both during elections and once they are in office.

Women are silenced and intimidated using physical violence, abusive language, and online harassment. Such behaviors undermine women's confidence and safety by fostering a hostile environment that deters women from entering politics.

Fostering an inclusive and secure political environment requires strengthening legal frameworks and

putting policies in place to protect women from assault.

For anyone wishing to enter politics, political parties provide an essential forum. Sadly, women frequently experience hostility and a lack of support in these parties. Women are marginalized by male-dominated systems and decision-making processes, which limits their opportunities to hold leadership positions.

To give women in politics equitable chances, inclusive party structures, gender equality advocacy, and affirmative action policies must be put in place. Progress has been made recently despite the ongoing obstacles that prevent women from participating in politics in Nigeria.

Gender equality in political leadership must be attained by initiatives to confront cultural norms, take on patriarchal systems, improve access to resources, and boost support inside political parties. All stakeholders must work together to remove these hurdles, including policymakers, political parties, civil society organizations, and the general public.

Encouraging women to take an active role in politics not only improves democracy but also ensures different viewpoints, inclusive governance, and long-term prosperity for Nigeria. Nigeria can develop a political environment in which women's voices are amplified and their potential for leadership develops by collaboratively tearing down these barriers.

Hanan Najeeb Abdussalam, Mass Communication Dept, Skyline University Kano

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AS a representative of the people, how often will you make time to communicate with your people? How much of an effective listener and doer you are will be determined by your communication skills as a leader.

Leadership is the oil that lubricates the wheel of leadership. It is the cord between the led and the leader. As such, any political or organizational leader who wishes to be successful would do well to understand the fine art of communication. The art of speaking or oratory, the art of listening. These are important in encoding and decoding the messages between the leader and the led. No wonder communication is taught in school as a course. No wonder it is a profession. The leader who can encode his message in a language that will be easy for his followers to understand is a wise leader. He is even wiser if he can cultivate the art of decoding and understanding what his followers are trying to communicate. It is in doing this that the leader can understand the needs of the led and provide solutions to his communal or constituency problems. The following excerpt from the Centre for Creative Leadership from an article titled "15 Tips for Effective Communication in Leadership", explains the good relationship between leadership and communication, the benefits and tips on how to communicate.

Good communication is a core leadership function and a key characteristic of a good leader. Effective communication and effective leadership are closely intertwined. As a leader, you need to be a skilled communicator in countless relationships at the organizational level, in communities and groups, and sometimes on a global scale in order to achieve results through others. Leaders must be able to think with clarity, express ideas, and share information with a multitude of audiences. They must also handle the rapid flows of information within the organization and among customers, partners, vendors, and other stakeholders and influencers.

Why Is Communication Important in Leadership?

Communication is more complicated than the simple mechanics of sending and receiving information — when leaders harness the ability to communicate well, they translate important data quickly and accurately. Communication is one of the most important skills a leader can have. It takes purpose and intention to implement effective communication. You must know how and when to communicate and select the appropriate mode for your audience. Whether writing, conversing, presenting, or facilitating, leaders must excel at communication in all of these modes. It's the only way to meet people's individual needs and enable important human connections.

Important Facts About Communication for Leaders

1. Authenticity counts — a lot.

Be honest and sincere. Find your own voice; avoid using corporate-speak or sounding like someone you're not. Let who you are, where you come from, and what you value come through in your communication. People want,

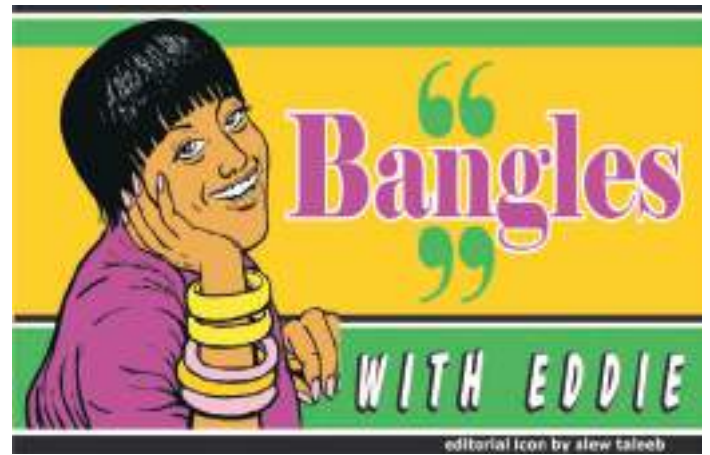
respect, and will follow authentic leadership. Forget about eloquence — worry about being real. Don't disguise who you are. People will never willingly follow someone they feel is inauthentic.

2. Visibility is a form of communication.

If you want to communicate well, be accessible. Emails and official missives aren't enough. Be present, visible, and available. Getting "out there" — consistently and predictably — lets others know what kind of leader you are. People need to see and feel who you are to

This is even more important when communicating in a virtual setting.

4. Illustrate through stories: When you tell a good story, you give life to a vision, goal, or objective. Telling good stories creates trust, captures hearts and minds, and serves as a reminder of the vision. Plus, people find it easier to repeat a story or refer to an image or quote than to talk about a mission statement, strategy document, or project plan. This is key when communicating the vision. Your ability to create and communicate a compelling, authentic, and bold



Leadership and communication



feel connected to the work you want them to do. Find ways to interact with all of your stakeholder groups, even (and especially!) if communicating in a crisis.

3. Listening is a powerful skill.

Good communicators are also good listeners. When you listen well, you gain a clear understanding of another's perspective and knowledge. Listening fosters trust, respect, openness, and alignment. Active listening is a key part of coaching others. Allow people to air their concerns. Ask powerful questions that open the door to what people really think and feel. Pay close, respectful attention to what is said — and what's left unsaid

15 Critical Tips for Leaders to Communicate More Effectively

Our Top Communication Tips for Leaders

1. Communicate relentlessly: Communicate information, thoughts, and ideas clearly — and frequently — in different media. Keep processes open and transparent and find ways to help smooth the path of communication for your team, employees, or organization. Shed all traces of detachment and arrogance and take the time to talk to your people.

2. Set clear expectations: In every relationship, our behavior is guided by a set of rules or social norms — and in a professional setting, these norms tend to go unspoken. Be intentional about establishing clear expectations and team norms at your organization, whether you're sending an email to your entire team, leading a group discussion, or having a one-on-one conversation with a direct report.

3. Simplify and be direct: Say what you mean. Be direct. Don't hide behind complexity or pile on a ton of information. Direct communication can be the most important type of communication.

story will also help you bolster your leadership brand.

5. Be prepared: Poor communication in the past might mean your audience resists what you have to say today. Do your homework. Start familiarizing yourself with the context around an issue, and any alternative viewpoints and perspectives about it, before you initiate communication. If you're met with resistance or presented with a different position, you'll feel more prepared to address and overcome objections and communicate more effectively.

6. Know your audience: Different stakeholders may have different concerns. The tactics you use to influence one group might not be the best approach for the next. Tailor your influencing strategy for the particular person and consider their personality, goals, and objectives, as well as their roles and responsibilities. For example, someone who is highly rational may be more easily swayed by a logical appeal than an emotional one.

7. Reinforce intent with body language: Showing positive body language like eye contact, nodding, and other relaxed gestures can inspire team members and make them feel more comfortable communicating with you. A simple head nod or smile can go a long way to show you're paying attention and that you care, and little gestures like this can add up, slowly helping you to build rapport and collaboration and transform your organizational culture, too.

8. Read the room: Watch your audience closely for nonverbal signs of engagement or disengagement, confusion or understanding, etc. and adjust your message and style accordingly. You can do this literally during in-person

meetings, and you can even "read the room" in virtual settings by looking closely at others' faces on the screen and by soliciting feedback.

If people are understanding your communication and aligned with your message, you may get lots of eye contact, see nodding heads, observe audience members leaning forward or demonstrating other body language that suggests alignment with your message. If you see listeners leaning back, with arms crossed, and bored or confused expressions on their faces, then you may need to adjust your message or delivery style.

It's helpful to pause occasionally to let people ask questions and check for understanding, giving your listeners a chance to respond or seek clarification, etc. Stay flexible so you can continually notice how your communications are landing with your audience, and adjust based on the signals they send.

9. Ask good questions: If good leaders listen more than they speak, the right conversation prompts are crucial. The best leadership questions get right to the heart of things, cut through complicated situations, and identify levers that will really make a difference. Asking non-directive inquiries can also unlock insights — which is why asking powerful questions is key to coaching your people.

10. Listen and encourage input: Seek out, and then listen to, individuals from all levels of the organization — from the key stakeholders who have a lot of opinions you need to consider, to the new employees who may be reluctant to voice concerns. Let team members know they are valuable, show empathy toward them, and create psychological safety so people feel comfortable speaking up. It will show those you

lead that you care about both them and the organization.

Also, be okay with silence. Encourage the other person to offer ideas and solutions before you give yours. Do 80% of the listening and 20% of the talking. Demonstrate an interest in, and respect for, your colleagues — this builds trust and makes the emotional connection that's so important for effective leadership.

11. Take feedback seriously: Asking for honest feedback from your team or employees can foster a positive stream of communication, and it helps build trust overall. This tactic can also make your team feel more respected, giving them a chance to have their voices heard. If you take their feedback seriously, you will grow as a leader and enhance your skillset. However, if you ask for and then don't incorporate their feedback, the opposite is true — it could lead to a loss of trust and alignment. Following through with action steps will reinforce the message and show that you truly heard and understood the other person's concerns.

12. Affirm with actions.

While effective leaders master the art and craft of language, speak clearly, and present logical and compelling arguments, skilled leaders also know that communication goes beyond words. If people hear one thing from you but see another, your credibility is shot. People need to trust you. Your behavior and actions communicate a world of information — so focus on alignment and be clear on the messages you send even when you aren't saying anything.

13. Initiate the tough, but needed, conversations: Difficult conversations, whether with a client or direct report, are an inevitable part of any workplace. It's tempting to ignore conflicts, but effective leaders must be able to address concerns as they arise. Be sure to approach any difficult conversation from a neutral perspective and explore both sides before coming to a conclusion. Work to problem-solve by inventing options that meet each side's important concerns, and do your best to resolve conflicts through open communication.

14. Involve others before developing a plan of action: The work doesn't stop when the communication ends. Take whatever you've learned in the exchange, synthesize it, and present your plan to the appropriate stakeholders. Generating buy-in and making sure that everyone is on the same page before executing on strategy will be key to achieving organizational goals.

15. Remember your reputation: Never compromise your

WE are beginning new series titled, ***I Shall Not Want***. These words kept ringing in my spirit for some time now- *I shall not want*. You see, some of us who came up early in the things of God have gone through all kinds of things; we have taken a lot of garbage on the way. Such that it is hard sometimes when the Word of God comes we have to unlearn so many things. Sometimes, it's even hard for us to believe that God is really good. And when the blessings of God begin to flow, somehow, one thing will be telling you "don't worry, as you're getting too happy now, God will just allow something to happen now so that you'll come back and begin to seek Him." But that's a lie of the devil! It's wrong!

Sometimes, some just begin to happen to you and you're afraid, you're wondering will this thing be sustained? It will be sustained! You won't get back into that rot! I am here to declare to you the Word of the Lord- You shall not want! Your wanting days are over!

However, before we get deeper into this study, you must be willing to paralyze your religion. You must be willing to destroy your religious thinking cap and render your religious glasses permanently disabled. I hope I can vex your theology and end it today. I hope I can burn it to ashes and divorce you from it forever! I hope I can expand your faith today because the only limit on man's experience of the goodness of God is man's capacity to receive it.

I recall the story of a certain rabbi who said from his writings in interpreting the ancient Hebrew writing of God being good, made this statement in the light of the theology of God's goodness that the only limit on man's experience of the goodness of God is his capacity to receive it. That means that God will give you as much as you can receive, and your ability to receive is your cup. When the Bible says **"My cup runneth over"** is your ability to receive; to **open your mouth wide and fill it**. Your mouth is typifying or showing an example of your capacity or ability to receive. And capacity is the function of understanding. The more you know God, the more you understand Him, the more you can express yourself in Him.

Now Psalm 23:1, we know this very well, **The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want**. I understand that 'shall' is one of the strongest, if not the strongest word in the English language- **shall not want**.

Blessed be the name of the Lord.

The reason why I shall not want is because the Lord is my shepherd. Now, this is not a Psalm that you quote merely as part of your prayer programme. I understand that men often become religious when they are in problems. But the purpose of Psalm 23 and Matthew 26 is

Lord Jesus as Lord and Saviour or as Saviour. It is for you to make up your mind to live under His Lordship, His tutelage. You must submit yourself to His yoke. His yoke will give you the desires of your heart, because in the first place, you don't even know what you want. He created you. He wired you. His plan for your life is better than the best



I shall not want (1) Becoming the sheep of His sheepfold



not to recite when we are in danger. The purpose is to show or teach us principles. We understand prophetically that Psalm 23 is a prophetic statement of the believer's earth's walk. The believer's life on earth is captured by the Psalmist in Psalm 23. It is actually the picture of a redemptive walk with God on the earth. Psalm 23 is the picture of the believer's life on earth. So on this earth, the Lord, by God's design and desire is for as long as we are on this earth for the Lord to be our Shepherd. Praise the name of the Lord!

Now the first word in that Scripture is very heavy- **The Lord**, not the Saviour, but the Lord. You see many Christians have entered into 'the Saviour department' of Jesus but they have barricaded 'the Lord department.' When he said, "the Lord" he's talking about 'Master', 'Controller'. So some people who have no right to claim that scripture are claiming it. That scripture is not for every child of God. Well, it is potentially for every child of God. The moment you come into the family, you are ready for it. But the actualization of it is not just for anyone that confesses the

plan you can dream of for your life. He has your highest interest at heart, your greatest good. When people tussle with the Will of God is because the foundation is wrong. They don't understand that God is a good God.

There was a time in my life I used to struggle with God's Will because my foundation in Christ was not solid. I used to have this idea that if something was going to be the will of God then the ultimate test that is the will of God is that you don't like it. So the moment you don't like it, the more God is testing you. The more you can do what you don't like to do, the more you know you love Jesus. I believe that some theologians took an isolated case with Jesus at Gethsemane and want to form a whole brand of theology with it. But that is so unlike it. In fact, do you know that some of

the greatest pointers to your destiny are your passions, your potentials? Do you know that your *giftings* are supposed to be the things that come easiest to you? That is how God has wired you and is a pointer to your destiny.

The point I'm trying to make is that you can doing the will of God for your life can be easy when you acknowledge His as 'the Lord' of your life. If He's your Lord, He will decide for you what church you should belong to. He'll decide for you so many other things in your life. He must be your Lord if you want to enjoy the ministry of the Shepherd.

Jesus Christ is the Shepherd. A shepherd is one that tends to sheep. That means that if you want to enjoy His ministry you must be a sheep, one that is easily swayed when led by its shepherd; one that is easily molded than bent. When He

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The moment you come into the family, you are ready for it. But the actualization of it is not just for anyone that confesses the Lord Jesus as Lord and Saviour or as Saviour. It is for you to make up your mind to live under His Lordship, His tutelage. You must submit yourself to His yoke.

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says, "forgive" you forgive. When He says "give", you give. When He says "tithe", you tithe. When He says "submit to pastoral authority" you submit to pastoral authority.

Sheep submitted to a shepherd are the ones that Psalm 23 is talking about. Can you see why Satan preys on so many of God's people? It's because so many of God's people are not the sheep that they ought to be. They do their own thing. Glory to the name of the Lord! So if you want to come into the realm of "I shall not want", sign up to be a sheep. Say: **Lord, I am a sheep of your sheepfold.**

Psalm 100:1-5 says, **Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.** So it's important for every one of us to be a sheep. Verse 4 says, **Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.**

God's faithfulness is forever. His truth endures to all generations. That means He has given to all generations His truth as an inheritance. And as long as you have His truth, you're headed for the top. In fact to tell you the truth about it- you're a **mountain top dweller**. Mountaintop is where you dwell! You are a dweller on the height. Truth will take you to the height. Truth is the high road of life. His truth will separate you. Jesus says **Sanctify them by my truth. Thy word is truth.**

It may seem as though many have gone ahead of you. It may even seem as though you are marking time with some. But if you're on the path of truth, everyday you're getting stronger. You're gaining strength. But they that are not on path of truth, one day will have to come right back to the beginning and begin to build on truth.

To be continued...

INTERNATIONAL



US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, left, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley hold a press conference following an online meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group at the Pentagon in Washington, DC

US says Russia cannot win in Ukraine

Russia's former President Dmitry Medvedev said the war in Ukraine is likely to last decades with bouts of fighting and truces.

RUSSIA will not achieve a military victory in Ukraine and Kyiv's forces are unlikely to push back all Russian troops from their territory any time soon, the United States's highest-ranking military official has said.

"This war, militarily, is not going to be won by Russia. It's just not," General Mark Milley, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, said on Thursday.

Russia's original strategic objectives, including toppling the government in Kyiv, "are not achievable militarily", Milley told journalists after the conclusion of a virtual meeting of dozens of countries that are members of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, which is also known as the Ramstein group.

There are also hundreds of thousands of Russian soldiers in Ukraine, which would make Kyiv's objective of recapturing all territory lost to Moscow's forces unlikely "in the near term", Milley said.

"That means fighting is going to continue, it's going to be bloody, it's going to be hard. And at some point, both sides will either negotiate a settlement or they'll come to a military conclusion," he said.

Milley's assessment adds to a number of forecasts that the war in Ukraine appears set to drag on, with neither side positioned to win a clear-cut victory and no negotiations currently taking place.

Russia's former President Dmitry Medvedev, a key ally of President Vladimir Putin, also said Moscow's war in Ukraine could continue for decades.

According to comments published by Russia's RIA news agency on Thursday, Medvedev described an ongoing conflict involving years of fighting with Ukraine, interspersed with multiple years of truces before fighting renewed.

"This conflict will last a very long time, most likely decades," the RIA news agency cited Medvedev as saying during a visit to Vietnam.

"As long as there is such a power in place [in Kyiv], there will be, say, three years of truce, two years of conflict, and everything will be repeated," said Medvedev, now the deputy chairman of Putin's powerful Security Council.

Known for regularly making hardline comments on Ukraine and those considered Moscow's enemies, Medvedev said earlier

this year that a Russian defeat could trigger a nuclear war.

Tensions between Moscow and Washington continues to grow as the US spearheads the push for international support and military aid for Ukraine, including coordinating arms supplies from dozens of countries. In an apparent policy U-turn, the US last week announced it would support giving Ukraine advanced US-made F-16 warplanes.

In total, Ukraine's supporters have provided nearly \$65bn in security assistance to the country, US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin said at the press conference on Thursday.

On Thursday, Kyiv's supporters "discussed plans for training Ukrainian pilots on fourth-generation fighter aircraft, including the F-16," Austin said, speaking alongside Milley, noting that "planning and executing this training will be a significant undertaking".

Austin said the Dutch and Danish defence ministers are working with the US on jet fighter training for Ukraine and that Norway, Belgium, Portugal and Poland have already offered to contribute to the initiative.

In addition, he said the allies

would set up a fund so other nations could contribute to the overall effort.

Commenting on the F-16 fighters, Milley cautioned that they were not going to be "the magic weapon".

"There are no magic weapons" – not the F-16s or other weapons, he said, noting that 10 F-16s could cost \$2bn, including maintenance.

"The Russians have a thousand fourth and fifth-generation fighters, so if you're going to contest Russia in the air, you're going to need a substantial amount of fourth and fifth-generation fighters," he said.

F-16s have a future role as part of Ukraine's air capabilities but it is "going to take a considerable length of time to build up an air force that's the size and scope and scale that would be necessary".

Air defence systems are still the weapons that Ukraine needs most in the broader effort to control the airspace, he said.

The US is poised to announce up to \$300m more in military aid for Ukraine comprised mainly of ammunition, two officials told the Reuters news agency. The package is expected to contain more Guided Multiple Launch

Rockets (GMLRS) for HIMARS launchers as well as other ammunition.

The Institute for the Study of War, a Washington DC-based think tank, said that "a long war" is not a Russian goal but a means of adapting to the situation in Ukraine after its plan for a swift victory failed. Russia's ability to sustain an extended military campaign in Ukraine is not assured, while a "long war" would allow Russia the time and space needed to rebuild its military forces, the institute said.

"Ukrainian counteroffensives will deny the Kremlin a breather to replenish its resources, will further deplete Russia's offensive potential, and eventually enable Ukrainian forces to expel Russia from Ukraine," the ISW said.

"The Kremlin's 'long war' narrative reflects Putin's intent to rebuild Russia's large-scale warfighting capability. But it is also an information operation aimed to peel the West away from Ukraine. This information operation builds on previous Russian efforts, such as ceasefire narratives and nuclear blackmail," the ISW added.

Source: Al Jazeera

INTERNATIONAL



Erdogan

Turkish presidential run-off leaves Syrians uncertain

TURKS prepare to head to the polls for a presidential run-off, millions of Syrian refugees in the country are watching anxiously, uncertain about how the outcome could shape their future.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and opposition leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu will face off Sunday in the second round of the vote after neither secured a majority in the first on May 14. Erdogan won 49.5 percent and Kilicdaroglu 44.9 percent.

Immigration has been a central issue in the elections. The campaign has seen several opposition politicians pledging to expel refugees and migrants while the government has highlighted its plans to press ahead with what it calls "voluntarily" repatriations of Syrians.

According to the United Nations, Turkey has taken in 3.7 million refugees, more than any other country in the world. In the year leading up to the polls, pressure grew on refugees and migrants, in particular Syrians, during an economic crisis with soaring inflation, a plunging lira and a deepening cost-of-living crunch.

The situation has left many Syrians in Turkey deeply worried about their future in the country. Erdogan currently resides in Istanbul.

According to the United Nations refugee agency, the vast majority of refugees in Turkey - 3.6 million - are Syrian living under "temporary protection status". About 200,000 Syrians have been given Turkish citizenship since the Syrian war erupted in 2011, according to government figures.

While Turkey initially welcomed the refugees, provided shelter and access to education with billions of euros in European Union funding, anti-refugee sentiment has grown in recent years, and refugees have become scapegoats for Turkey's economic troubles, which has occasionally led to violence.

Muhammad Siddik Yasar, who runs the Tarlabasi Solidarity Association, a refugee solidarity group in Istanbul, said anti-refugee sentiment sharpened in the run-up to the elections.

"Being a refugee means that you are here today, but you

have no guarantee for tomorrow," he told Al Jazeera. "People are asking us what to do. They are afraid that racism will increase after the election. I will increase after the election. I have been working with Turkish and Syrian refugees for many years, and I've never seen anything like this year," he said. The rising anti-refugee sentiment manifested itself at the ballot box in the first round of the elections as nationalists delivered a strong performance, notably the far-right nationalist presidential candidate Sinan Ogan, who won an unexpected 5.2 percent of the vote.

Ogan ran as the candidate of the ATA (Ancestral) Alliance, led by the anti-migrant, ultranationalist Victory Party. He has since endorsed Erdogan. Facing opposition attacks on immigration, the government has pushed ahead with talks with Damascus in what appears to signal a warming of ties.

This month, the foreign ministers of Turkey, Syria and Iran met in Moscow as part of the Kremlin's efforts to broker a rapprochement between the Turkish and Syrian governments after years of antagonism over Syria's war and multiple Turkish military operations in northern Syria. For his part, al-Assad has demanded that Turkey withdraw from the territories under its control in northwest Syria. The talks were held as several regional leaders have moved to normalise ties with al-Assad. In mid-May, Syria was readmitted to the Arab League after its membership had been suspended for more than a decade. Besides moves towards a potential rapprochement, Erdogan's government has pushed up with its plan for refugees to "resettle voluntarily" in areas in Syria under Turkish security control.

Ukraine claims Russia planning 'massive' incident

UKRAINE'S defence ministry has warned that the Zaporizhzhia plant, which lies in an area of Russian-occupied southern Ukraine, is the Europe's biggest nuclear power station, which is under the control of Russian forces, in a bid to thwart the expected counteroffensive by Ukraine to retake its territory captured by Moscow.

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disaster could occur amid rising military activity around Zaporizhzhia. "Russians are preparing massive provocation and imitation of the accident at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant in the nearest hours," the Ukrainian defence ministry's intelligence directorate said on Friday.

"They are planning to attack the territory of the ZNPP [Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant]. After that, they will announce the leakage of radioactive substances," the intelligence directorate said in a statement and later on social media channels. Reports of radioactive material leaking from the plant would cause a global incident and force an investigation by international authorities, during which all hostilities would be stopped, the directorate said. Russia would then use that pause in fighting to regroup its forces and better prepare to stop the Ukrainian counteroffensive, the intelligence service said.

Experts say that reports of a radiation leak at the plant would be followed by immediate evacuations, which could be extremely complex in a war zone. According to experts, for many people, the fear of being contaminated by radiation could also be more dangerous than the radiation itself. Last week, witnesses said Russian military forces were enhancing defensive positions in and around the nuclear power plant ahead of Ukraine's anticipated counteroffensive. In preparation for the planned radioactive incident, Russia had disrupted the scheduled rotation of inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), who are based at the plant, Ukraine's intelligence directorate said. The report of a planned incident at Zaporizhzhia was repeated in a tweet by Ukraine's representative to the United Nations in New York, Sergiy Kyslytsya, who said the events could unfold "in the coming hours". The directorate statement did not provide any proof to support its claims and the Vienna-based IAEA, which frequently posts updates on the situation at the power plant, has made no mention of any disruption to its timetable.

Kyiv and Moscow have repeatedly accused each other of attacking the plant. In February, Russia said Ukraine was planning to stage a nuclear incident on its territory and pin the blame on Moscow. Moscow has also repeatedly accused Kyiv of planning "false-flag" operations with non-conventional weapons, using biological or radioactive materials.

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Russian soldiers at the entrance to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant during a visit of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to the region

United Nations backs Sudan envoy

UNITED Nations chief Antonio Guterres said he was "shocked" by a letter from Sudanese army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan reportedly requesting the replacement of special envoy Volker Perthes.

Perthes and the UN mission in Sudan have been the target of several protests by thousands of military and other supporters who repeatedly accused him of "foreign intervention" and demanded his dismissal.

"[Guterres] is proud of the work done by Volker Perthes and reaffirms his full confidence in his special representative," a statement from UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said late on Friday. "The secretary-general is shocked by the letter he received from General al-Burhan."

Sources within Sudan's foreign ministry told Al Jazeera that Perthes will not be allowed back into the war-torn country. Perthes is currently in New York City where he briefed the UN Security Council on the situation in Sudan earlier this week. No information is available on when he was due back in Sudan, where authorities have not given out visas to foreign nationals since the war started.

Al-Burhan accused Perthes of widening divisions in the country by excluding voices who should have been involved in the transition to a civilian government.

Al-Burhan's army is currently at war with his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan "Hemedti" Daglo who commands the powerful paramilitary Rapid Support Forces.

The rival factions are currently in the fifth day of a one-week ceasefire brokered by the United States and Saudi Arabia, during which they have repeatedly accused each other

of truce violations.

Neither the army nor the UN has released official copies of al-Burhan's letter, which reportedly requested the dismissal of Perthes as Guterres' envoy to Sudan. It was the latest in a series of moves by al-Burhan, who last week officially sacked Hemedti as his deputy in the ruling sovereign council, pooled hardline military supporters into his inner circle, and is now seeking to reinforce army ranks.

Observers say the UN mission's presence in Sudan has been problematic for the military since the conflict in Darfur during the 2000s and the 2021 coup.

"The Sudanese regime for a long time has never really accepted the role of the UN. Mr Volker Perthes' departure is not really a surprise. He knew the

future in Sudan was rather bleak for himself," said Aicha Elbasri, a former spokeswoman for the African Union-UN mission in Darfur.

Sudan's defence ministry on Friday called on "army pensioners ... as well as all those capable of bearing arms" to head to their nearest military command unit and "arm themselves in order to protect themselves," their families and their neighbours.

A statement later in the day walked back the call to just army "reservists" and "pensioners".

The recent fighting across Sudan has killed more than 1,800 people, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project.

More than one million people have been displaced within Sudan in addition to 300,000 who have fled to neighbouring countries, the UN says.



Guterres



Nigeria Idol winner gets N35m as top 10 emerged

The Top 10 dey here



MULTICHOICE Nigeria, producers of Nigerian Idol, have selected top 10 participants in the eighth season of the popular music reality show. It witnessed recalled that the Executive Head of Content and West Africa Channels at MultiChoice Nigeria, , announced the reality music talent show recorded a 10 per cent increase in the number of entries compared to the previous editions. Last season, the show received over 10,000 audition entries. The resources, energy and originality put into the show each season have attracted more contestants each year, leading to an impressive increase in entries. Nigerian Idol has always been a platform for aspiring musicians to showcase their skills to the world. According to Tejumola, the last seven seasons of the show have been a source of entertainment and healthy competition for the contestants, leading to the emergence of well-deserved winners. It will also be recalled that last year, Progress Chukwuyem emerged as the winner, walking away with the sum of N30m prize. This year's winner will receive N35m and other prizes worth millions of naira. The Season 8 judges' panel boasts of some top entertainers in the music industry, including Oladapo Oyebanjo, aka D'Banji; Simisola

Kosoko, aka Simi; and creative industry entrepreneur, Obi Asika. The show's host, IK Osakioduwa, is also backing with his witty banter and energy. The show which premiere on April 23, started with the recorded auditions. The live shows will premiere today May 28 as the contestants battle it out for the ultimate prize until a winner emerges on July 16.

Marrying Chioma best decision I ever made - Davido

NIGERIAN singer, David Adeleke, aka Davido, has revealed that marrying his better half, Chioma Avril Rowland, is the best decision he has ever made. The talented music act made this known in an interview with TheBeat ATL, a radio station in Atlanta. While praising her culinary skill, the singer added that his wife is like an extension of him and a good match. Davido also revealed that he has known her for almost 20 years. "Me and my wife, we grew up together. Basically, we went to school together. "We met in school and we are just so used to each other. She is like a part of me. "You definitely have to get somebody that understands you. And, with me and my wife, we are just perfect. There is nothing that she does that is crazy. It is just a good match. "First year in college, I met her. Best decision I've ever made. I've known her for almost 20 years, she is a good cook," he stated. The duo met at Babcock University, however, their relationship came to light after Davido dedicated a song titled 'Assurance' to her in 2018. In September 2019, the singer announced their engagement and they got married in 2022.



THE SOW WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Living

Personal secrets you should never tell anyone

HAVE you ever told someone more they need to know?

No, but after having a phone conversation, you think you should have said less.

All things being equal, you are not alone. This is only for you, so don't read it anyone else.

The truth is that a lot of us have a bad habit of wearing our hearts on our sleeves. Even people who don't know us will be able to see us. We don't need that at all. Secrets are what make life taste good, all things being equal, so we don't really need them. Keeping a clear separation between your personal life and your professional life is a difficult (but important) skill to master. You must be very careful about who you share your secrets with, because not everyone wants to be nice.

Importantly, you should be careful so that the small things in your own life can't be used to hurt you. It's good to have a basic list of personal information you should never give to other people. In case you don't know how to make your own rundown, we're here to help you out! Indeed, we've added a few insider facts that you should always try to keep to yourself, no matter how strong the desire is to share them with everyone.

As Joan Collins says, "The secret to having an individual life is not answering too many questions about it."

The following is a list of things. Is there 6 things you shouldn't tell your friends?

1. In the past, I was angry.

We all have bad stories about our own lives that we can tell about people we don't like. It may be hard for you to think of those classmates or former partners who made you angry years ago, but maybe you still do. There's no doubt about it. In every case, it's best to let go of these feelings and look into them as little as possible. This is true for you as well as for other people, because



pessimism is bad for you. To feel and to pay attention. People like to talk to people who are positive and have interesting stories to share, not people who worry about people they don't know. Relinquish anything that's making you stressed. Try to focus on the present, and you'll see that more and more people will be eager to talk to you.

2. Material things

Obviously, some things in life are worth more than they cost. It's true that sometimes we can't help but brag about the new car we just bought or the new phone we just bought for a low price. Parks and Recreation may not tell you this, but your partners don't want to know about how you've been taking care of yourself. It can make you look like you're too focused on how much money things are worth instead of how important they are. The best frill is being unobtrusive. You should try to spread it all over your talks.



3. Goals for the Future

You might think it's crazy, but there is science behind the fact that you're more likely to reach your long-term goals if you don't tell anyone else about them. At the point when you tell others what you want to do in the future, you almost feel like the satisfaction of achieving the goal has been taken away from you. Accordingly, you don't work as hard to get it. As long as you don't talk about your goals, though, you have a much better chance of getting them done. What's more, when you've done that, you can tell the whole world about it.

In this case, your income

Only people who work at your bank should be able to find out more about how much you make. It's not a good idea to talk about

money in public because no one can tell what anyone else's financial situation is. It might look like you're bragging about something that doesn't have any real value. Cash, as well as information about accounts, can break up relationships in a bad way. When your financial situation is made public, people start to look at you in different ways without you being able to stop them. That way, you won't be in a situation where you don't know how much you're getting paid.

5. Great things have been done.

Some people say that good deeds always bring good luck. That's true, but if you start bragging about it, it changes into a completely different story. You should never be afraid to do well.

In this way, you're taking away the good you've already done. Many of the world's best humanitarians aren't well-known for a good reason. There should be more attention paid to those you're helping and less to yourself when you do something kind.

6. Problems in the family

If it's your distant family or your close family, keep the issues under wraps, no matter who they are. Try not to get people's trust mixed up. As someone who is close to these people, you've been told about these secrets. They haven't let you tell them to everyone in your group of friends, though. They had faith in you, and breaking that faith is the most terrible thing you could do. Be aware of what others know that you don't. Because of this, you can expect them to treat you the



EVERYBODY'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Living

Should I get married or not?

A marriage is a divinely ordained opportunity for two people to come together and maximise their strengths while minimizing their weaknesses for their better good.

Choosing a marriage partner is clearly one of the most serious decisions you will ever make since your choice will influence your success in virtually all other aspects of your life. This decision needs to be made with utmost care and caution, repeatedly seeking guidance from the Lord.

When people marry for the wrong motives they are not able to fulfill their roles in marriage, as they have a self-centered, receiving focus, rather than the other-centered, giving focus prescribed by God. Knowing that God's direction is critical if we want to make the right choice, let's look very briefly at a few reasons not to get married.

Escape from home or other unpleasant situations.

Whilst we may experience challenging situations at



home or sometimes feel lonely being single, getting into marriage as a means of escape will not provide a solution to the challenges. The choice to get married is far too important to be left to chance so don't let other circumstances or unpleasant situations determine how you make this crucial decision.

Looking for self worth or a sense of achievement.

There is a God sized hole on the inside of us all that only God can heal or fill. Our identity is only in God and looking for a marriage to give self worth will ultimately result in disappointment as our partner is not designed by God to meet all our needs, God is the only one that can fill these holes and meet these needs.

An unplanned pregnancy

ourselves to develop healthy future relationships.

Sympathy for the other person.

God has a plan for every life and getting into marriage because we think the other person will be devastated if we break up with them is not His plan. A broken relationship is always better than a broken marriage with far more distressing effects on all parties concerned.

Response to peer pressure.

Thinking 'everyone is getting married so I need to get married' is not a good idea. God has a partner for you and waiting on God for His perfect will sometimes



Rushing into marriage means it may take longer because of an unplanned than you think but God pregnancy may result in makes all things beautiful in more heartache. Having its time.

The need to depend on someone financially or emotionally.

Getting married to find someone else to depend on important that we seek God to meet our financial or emotional needs is not Gods plan for us. Although a major

On the rebound after a broken relationship.

is the financial and Having unresolved issues emotional support that from a previous relationship spouses can be to each and then heading straight other. However, God alone is into another one is never a our ultimate provider and good idea. Every relationship our source. Our partners that is broken requires cannot meet all our needs so healing from God and if we look to them, we are restoration for both parties bound to be disappointed.

or we make it difficult for **Source:Tightknots.**





Reality Bites

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IDF: How killings is endangering families in Nigeria

THE International Day of Families (IDF), annually held on May 15, celebrates the importance of families and the work started during the International Year of Families.

The day also promotes the importance of a healthy and well-balanced family and importance of a healthy and well-balanced family.

Usually, around the world, a wide range of events are organized at local, national and international levels which includes workshops, seminars and policy meeting for public officials; exhibitions and organized discussions to raise awareness of the annual theme; educational sessions for children and young people; and the launch of campaigns for public policies to strengthen and support family units. In some countries, tool kits are created to help people organize celebrations aimed at a particular section of the population, such as school children or young adults.

This is because family as a unit, forms the society and the composition of the population of a nation.

The International Day of Families is a global observance and not a public holiday, proclaimed in 1994 by the United Nations. This was a response to changing social and economic structures, which have affected and still affect the structure and stability of family units in many regions of the globe.

The International Day of Families, on May 15, is an occasion to reflect on the work started during 1994 and to celebrate the importance of families, people, societies and cultures around the world. It has been held every year since



International Day of Families consists of a solid green circle with an image in red. The image consists of elements of simple drawings of a heart and a house. This indicates that families are the center of society and provide a stable and supporting home for people of all ages.

Nigerian families endangered by killings

As important as the family is to the development of any society, Nigeria is facing a great challenge that threatens the

existence of families.

Unlike in developed nations where there is stability in areas of security, food security, housing, water and sanitation, job Security health and social stability, many families in developed countries, including Nigeria are threatened by the absence of these factors.

Violent killings happening across Nigeria is not only affecting the family structure but causing high mortality rates on the population. There is also ethnic and clan cleansing of

families in such killings when families are wiped off during attacks.

A common phenomenon is how daily news headlines carries media reports of attacks, casualties and how many lives are lost, injured or record of losses during such violent crimes, attacks and killings.

The violent killings in many parts of Nigeria is a threat to the existence of the family structure and unit, and this is worrisome.

Many lives have been lost and wasted but this must end. Men and fathers who are bread winners and a source of protection to their families have been killed. Women and children are not spared, they are killed during attacks on communities, likewise the aged. Mothers as care givers are raped, and killed creating a vacuum in the family and reducing the survival rates of the children she leaves behind.

Aside that, homes and shelters are being burnt and destroyed making families displaced to resort to taking refuge in Internally Displaced Persons camps (IDP), where they begin to survive in very harsh living conditions. Most times, without interventions from government, NGO's or well spirited individuals and bodies, what to eat becomes a challenge to them in such IDP's.

An estimated statistics from the recent Mangu attacks in Plateau State, perpetrated by suspected herders based on various reports puts figures of

those killed at over 100, with women and children said to be worst hit.

Casualties have also been recorded in Riyom, Barkin Ladi, and Bokokos Local Government attacks, and this has become a very worrisome trend. Despite early warning signals, there

Parts of Nigeria's North central, North east and North western, states and other states are also affected by violent killings perpetrated by herders, bandits, Boko Haram and kidnappers.

Why urgent intervention is needed.

With the manner people are getting displaced and killed on a daily basis in the country, the survival of the family unit is greatly affected.

The number of widows, widowers and orphans is increasing, decimating the structure of happy families.

Government should nip this great challenge in the bud and answer burning questions like what is the cause of the killings, why is it not ending but increasing, who are those behind the killings, who are the sponsors of the heinous acts?

It is sad that while other countries are developing and going digital, sending teams to space to do explorations, creating the latest technological innovations that is putting them on the world map, and creating new cities on islands, Nigeria is still listed among nations whose existence is threatened by insecurity.



EVER'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Health

Healthy fruits women should eat often

WOMEN are blessed with a dynamic personality. They are busy in their jobs, managing household, maintaining relationships, and still manage to look gorgeous. They have their tough days too - dealing with mood swings, cramps, energy drains and headaches can be daunting. Moreover, as women age, the nutrition rules change - they get stricter. Some vitamins (like B12, C and D) and minerals (especially iron and calcium) become even more important with time.

This all may seem little overwhelming, but there is one simple way to ease things a little: healthy diet. Higher intakes of vitamin C and linoleic acid and lower intakes of fats and carbohydrates are associated with better skin-ageing appearance. The study also stated that promoting healthy dietary behaviours may have additional health benefits in women. Therefore, to match the nutritional needs, it becomes important to maintain healthy eating habits, which may help prevent bone and muscle loss, fend off ailments like diabetes, breast cancer, and heart-related problems, plus preserve eyesight and protect skin.

Cherries

Cherries are known to combat several health problems that are common in middle age like gout and arthritis. Plus, they are a rich source of antioxidant anthocyanin that boosts energy. Eat a dozen cherries or drink a glass of unsweetened juice three or four times a week. Better still; eat fresh cherries with yogurt to ensure absorption of the beneficial vitamins.

Tomatoes

Tomatoes are an excellent source of the antioxidant lycopene. They



to digest, which helps you keep satiated and prevents you from bingeing on other fattening and sugar-laden foods. In the long run, this aids in weight loss."

Avocadoe a 13 to 22 percent lower risk of coronary disease than those who didn't bite into the crunchy fruit.

Avocados are not only pleasing to taste buds; they can be a woman's best friend too. This delicious-tasting fruit is packed with healthy monounsaturated fats that can help lower LDL cholesterol (the bad fat that clogs arteries) and soothe a growling tummy.

So ladies, what are you waiting for? Start filling your stock with these fruits to enjoy all these benefits. **Source: Medicalnews.com.**

are known to protect women against the formation and spread of cancer cells, moreover,

preventing heart-related disease. According to a study published in the Journal of Nutrition, women consuming greater amounts of lycopene are more likely to look younger. Additionally, higher lycopene intake is also associated with a healthier dietary pattern. There . To make the most of lycopene antioxidant, consume cooked tomatoes, as it is the most convenient way to benefit from lycopene..

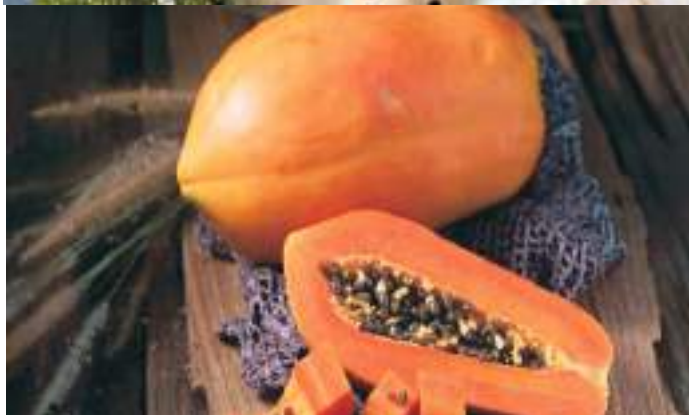
Papaya

Papaya is packed with various health benefiting properties. It is a rich source of vitamin A, C, folate and different phytochemicals. It contains papain, a compound that can cure indigestion and other glycaemic index tract sicknesses. Compared to its other counterparts, papaya has a higher amount of beta-carotene. Sweet-tasting papaya is the perfect solution to problems like diabetes, heart diseases, bloating, etc. This delectable tropical fruit can be used ripe, unripe or dried.

Guava

Guava provides 228.3 grams of vitamin C in just 100 grams of serving as per the United States have proven that guava helps improve blood sugar levels and reduces insulin resistance. The high levels of potassium and soluble fibre contribute to the betterment of heart health. It is also known to reduce the intensity of the pain during menstrual cramps. To improve mental health, eye sight, complexion and metabolism, the consumption of this little fruit can do wonders.

Apples



BUSINESS WORLD

IMF tasks new govt on revenue generation, debt reduction

THE International Monetary Fund (IMF) has urged the incoming government of President-elect, Sen. Bola Tinubu to take steps to increase the country's revenue base.

The Resident Representative, IMF Nigeria Office, Ari Aisen, who said this during a virtual forum on the Nigerian debt situation, also advised the incoming government to drastically reduce dependence on debt to fund expenditures.

According to Aisen, to resolve the debt issues of Nigeria you need to concentrate on revenue and expenditure.

He said that the debt situation had deteriorated because the Federal Government was spending more than it was actually getting in revenues.

"How do you reduce the spending needs of the government? That should be the question.

"It is really about fiscal discipline. People should not permanently spend beyond what they generate in revenue because it becomes unsustainable.

"Eventually some people will come and ask for their money back and some will refuse to give further loans," he said.

Aisen said that the critical thing to do was for countries to be able to rely more on their own revenue to finance their own expenditure.

"That is the autonomy and the Independence that we like to see our member countries rely on," he said.

Also speaking, Vahyala Kwaga, a Senior Research and Policy Analyst at BudgIT, a Nigerian company that provides social advocacy using technology, urged the incoming government to address the distortion between fiscal and monetary authorities.

According to Kwaga, there is a lot of money being pumped into the economy and this has its impact.

"The Ways and Means is another lump sum of money that affected the economy significantly in the sense that it compounded the problem of inflation.

"A lot of these monies, according to the president, were used for infrastructure projects. Some were also given to the state governors as bailouts," he said.

He urged Nigerians to also beam their searchlights on the state governors and their fiscal behaviours.

"The federal system that Nigeria operates allows the centre to provide monies for the states. The question is, how prudent are these monies expended when they are given to the states?



Georgieva

"The transparency and accountability problem we have in the use of funds is extremely problematic at the level of states," he said.

He tasked the legislature to rise up to its responsibility by curbing abuse of process by the executive as witnessed in the Ways and Means Advances.

According to Kolawole Oluwadare, Deputy Director, Socio-Economic Rights And Accountability Project, an NGO, the issues are less about whether the borrowings are lawful or not.

"It is more about the use of the loans. Both the issues of borrowing and the use of loans are related.

"That is why the Fiscal Responsibility Act has provided clearly that borrowings by the government should be strictly for capital projects.

"The Act also provides that government should undertake a cost-benefit analysis among other requirements before any borrowing is done," he said.

Monday Usiade, Director, Market Development Department at the Debt Management Office, said that the office had a responsibility to manage Nigeria's debt.

According to Usiade, the DMO receives approval from the authorities based on the difference between revenue position and expenditure, and the actual amount to be borrowed.

"We are at the service of the country, and our job is to look at

the best ways, options, sources and all that we can put together to fund the government as approved by the authorities," he said.

He added that the DMO was transparent in carrying out its functions.

He urged the incoming government to be more concerned about how to narrow the gap between expenditure and revenue so as to limit borrowings.

Meanwhile, economic experts at a recent American Business Council (ABC) Economic Update charged the incoming administration to embrace strategies aimed at tackling

Nigeria's debt overhang for economic growth and development.

Dr Yemi Kale, Chief Economist, KPMG, said that the focus should be on the Consumption, Investment, Government Expenditure, Exports and Imports (CIGXM) economic indices to fully harness the potential of the country's economy.

Kale said under the CIGXM, Nigeria must begin to boost consumer purchasing power, enhance ease of doing business, provide the right infrastructure, increase public investment and enact fund usage transparency.

He added that the country must increase export tentacles, enhance competitiveness, promote income substitution and address large debt burden and debt servicing ratio to ensure long-term economic

sustainability. "Since 2013, Nigeria's public debt has increased by almost seven folds and inflation and high debt servicing costs are factors that have raised debt levels.

"Although debt to the Gross Domestic Product remains relatively low at less than 40 per cent, arbitrary borrowing from the Central Bank of Nigeria to cover budget deficit has undermined fiscal prudence. "The income administration must curtail excessive borrowing by raising revenues from both oil and non-oil sources and engage in prudent budget practices," he said.

He urged the incoming government to implement fiscal restraint, enhance revenue production through taxation changes, diversify the economy, and successfully control governmental expenditure to lower the debt load and foster economic growth.

Also, Mrs Mokutima Ajileye, the Managing Director, P&G Nigeria said the country's manufacturing sector needed the certainty and predictability that came with stable and long-term government policies to increase the sector's contribution to the GDP.

According to her, the sector is frustrated by the fact that policies keep changing, timelines for some policies are unrealistic and the foreign exchange rate are uncertain.

"The manufacturing sector needs to be able to plan business on certainties and it is important to bring industry players into the room when making policies," she said.

NAN reports that Nigeria's total public debt stock as of Dec.31, 2022, stands at N46.25 trillion (103.11 billion dollars).

This is according to a statement issued by the Debt Management Office, DMO, in Abuja.

The DMO said the total public debt stock of the country consisted of the domestic and external debts of the federal government and the sub-national governments.

The sub-national are the 36 state governments and the Federal Capital Territory, FCT.

The comparative debt stock for Dec. 31, 2021, is N39.59 trillion (95.77 billion dollars)

The DMO said in terms of composition, total domestic debt stock stood at N27.55 trillion (61.42 billion dollars), while total external debt stock was N18.70 trillion (41.69 billion dollars).

"Among the reasons for the increase in total public debt stock were new borrowings by the Federal Government and sub-national governments, primarily to finance budget deficits and execute projects.

"The issuance of promissory notes by the federal government to settle some liabilities also contributed to growth in the debt stock," the DMO said.

BUSINESS WORLD

Aregbesola decries dominance of foreigners in oil sector

MINISTER of Interior, Rauf Aregbesola, has called on Nigerians to take ownership and fully domesticate every aspect of the oil and gas industry in the country.

He said it is the time for indigenous companies to begin investing in acquisitions, technology, processing and research in all aspects of petroleum, currently dominated by foreign firms.

The minister gave the charge at the 2023 Nigerian Oil and Gas Opportunity Fair, held at the Nigerian Content Tower Conference and Exhibition Centre, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

According to a communique signed by his Media Adviser, Sola Fasute, he said the industry as the mainstay of the nation's economy needs domestication to ward off the dependency syndrome and allow locals be on the driver's seat of their local economy.

Noting that foreign investors are also key players that must be attracted to aid results and boost returns, Aregbesola opined that research into petroleum utilisation and maximization should also be encouraged by indigenous companies to generate the knowledge base for the country's specific needs in the sector.

He also stressed the need for Nigeria to adapt a 25-year alternative power template, that would be driven by gas, so as not to be stamped by the electric motor transition of the West.

We should not only take our own destiny in our hands, we should dominate the oil and gas market in sub-Saharan Africa.

"We should be able to supply refined petroleum



Aregbesola

products to our immediate neighbours and other African countries. We should also leverage on gas to produce electricity for domestic consumption and export. We will be making 10 times revenue on finished products than on primary products, which will create more wealth and prosperity for the nation.

As the world begins a transition to electric motor vehicles, Nigeria should adopt gas as the transition energy for the next 25 years, and not be stampeded by the West into

Diezani slams N100bn defamation suit against EFCC, AGF

A former Minister of Petroleum Resources, Mrs Diezani Allison Madueke, has slammed a N100 billion libel and defamation suit against the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Attorney General of the Federation (AGF).

The suit, marked CV/6273/2023, and filed on Friday, May 26, at the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, the former Minister, who is also seeking a restraining order against the EFCC and AGF from further defamation, asked the court to order the

the electric car bandwagon. "We should convert the existing motor vehicles to be using gas, which we have in abundant supply. Nigeria has about the third largest natural gas reserve in the world. We should take maximum advantage of it for our national interest," he urges.

Buhari improved budget cycle, infrastructure

MINISTER of State, Ministry of Budget and National Planning, Prince Clem Agba, has credited the outgoing

development.

regime of the President, Major General Muhammadu Buhari (ret'd.), for improving the nation's budget and infrastructural

development. Speaking at his end-of-tenure press conference in Abuja, Agba stated that the Buhari regime recorded milestones in the budget cycle, infrastructure and healthcare delivery. He said that beginning with the 2020 budget, the regime was able to establish a stable, predictable January to December budget cycle, which was sustained for four consecutive years. The minister of budget and planning also stressed the need for integrated rural development, which he said was key to solving urban area problems, explaining that provision of opportunities in the rural areas would stem the tide of rural-urban migrations that had the potential of creating slums in the urban areas. Agba mentioned that the regime had a good score in areas of improved budgetary processes, improved procurement process and its fight against corruption. But the regime failed to fulfil its promise to bequeath a transparent and open procurement process to Nigeria after eight years in office despite creation of the Nigeria Open Contracting Portal which has failed to take effect till date. As regards the Nigeria Open Contracting Portal which is yet to take effect, Agba said it was due to technical issues, a reason the administration has always given.

defendants to tender a public apology, which would be published in THISDAY Newspaper and two other national dailies. Filed on her behalf by her team of lawyers, led by Mike Ozekhome (SAN), Diezani accused the EFCC and the AGF of deliberately maligning her person on the EFCC's portal, where she was portrayed as a "common criminal" and of a "dubious and doubtful character", "untrustworthy, unethical and a corrupt politician, who promotes the evil culture of stealing from the Federal Government of Nigeria, and of corrupt enrichment", amongst others.

According to Diezani, EFCC and the AGF had on December 16, 2021, in a publication titled, "Diezani: EFCC uncovers additional \$72.8 million in Fidelity Bank", maliciously wrote, authored and/or caused to be written, authored, or published to the whole world at large of and concerning the Claimant, through the 1st Defendant's online official website through which they falsely and maliciously described the Claimant as a common criminal, who looted public funds belonging to the Federal Republic of Nigeria for her

THE Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation has said it would soon completely liquidate the 179 microfinance banks whose licenses were recently revoked by the Central Bank of Nigeria.

Recall that the apex bank had early this week revoked the licences of 179 microfinance banks in the country, as well as four primary mortgage banks and three finance companies.

The Coordinator of NDIC Kano zonal office, Shehu Usman, made the disclosure at a lecture organised by the corporation to commemorate the 2023 Financial Literacy Day held at Rumfa College in Kano on Thursday.

He said the apex bank had since forwarded the list of the affected banks and those of the four primary mortgage banks and three finance companies to the corporation for final liquidation.

He noted that the responsibility of the

NDIC to liquidate micro-finance banks revoked by CBN

corporation is to ensure the protection and guarantee of the financial disposition of Nigerians adding that is the reason they are cooperating with the CBN to achieve such missions.

He used the occasion to warn bank customers against depositing or

lodging their money in any bank that does not have the sticker of the corporation.

want to use this opportunity to warn bank customers to desist from keeping their money in any bank but only those institutions that are insured.



Emefiele



Diezani

BUSINESS WORLD

Group to equip youths through undergraduate entrepreneurship

Undergraduate Alumni Foundation, An initiative to better the lives of African youths and empower them financially known as Undergraduate Alumni Foundation (UAF), has been launched across universities in Nigeria and Africa in general, writes SAM WILSON.

IN the last few decades, Africa has faced a myriad of challenges as a continent, including food scarcity, an increase in unemployment, graduates roaming the streets looking for jobs not even remotely connected to their courses of study, inflation, insecurity and others.

Despite all the hard times, we've also seen some good times with great youths taking up the mantle of leadership, grabbing opportunities to make the economy better and making a living for themselves.

Founder, UAF, Mr Oseyomon Ighodaloh said the organisation is aimed at youthful inclusion in society across Nigeria and Africa. "The idea behind the foundation is to empower undergraduates with the necessary skills and tools needed to propel them to greater heights while answering the age-old question 'what next' that most graduates have after their higher academic studies.

"The UAF provides undergraduates with this support as a way to curb unemployment, accelerate economic wealth and social value, and encourage economic growth.

"This is because we believe our universities and colleges are the building blocks for Africa's next solid entrepreneurs, world leaders and global shapers with the potential to grow and shape the economy."

He added: "The foundation has several components, including a funding/business grant programme, a mentorship programme, an annual business event, a food drive and an accommodation drive, which are explained in detail on our official website, www.undergraduatealumnfoundation.org.

Ighodaloh also informed that the foundation takes a cue from the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by



dabbling into SDGs 1 (no poverty), SDG 2 (zero hunger) and SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth).

"Our vision is to be the foremost organisation driving economic growth and development among Africa's undergraduates, raising successful business owners and entrepreneurs, who will generate social and economic wealth by contributing to the economy through the private sector."

In his illustration, Ighodaloh said: "Imagine an undergraduate attached to a successful professional (mentor) in his field,

with a mandate to groom the undergraduate until he/she becomes successful in the respected field.

"Now imagine this successful candidate compelled to do the same for another undergraduate and the system repeats itself in successive cycles. Now, imagine the number of success stories we will be celebrating after two, three or five years."

He further explained that this system can be likened to the 'Igbo apprenticeship system', where a more experienced businessman adopts and trains a

novice to become a successful business crop.

Ighodaloh, who is also a philanthropist and businessman, hinted that the system also reflects one of the foundation's core beliefs, 'UBUNTU' – I am because we are. Here we believe that truly, it takes a village to raise a child.

"As members of the general public, your participation is required in several aspects as the foundation opens its doors to its first recipients in the year 2022 and it will begin with three major aspects. One, the UAF Business funding scheme for undergraduates features a non-refundable seed grant open to them in the first school we would be starting with.

Second, the UAF Mentorship scheme and third, the Undergraduate Business Conference (UBC).

He said contributions in terms of financial support and publicity are highly needed and would be well appreciated.

The foundation bases some of its principles on 'giving back' to the system which is why its doors are open to donations from individuals, alumni, organisations and lots more.

Through the student assistance scheme, the foundation is looking to have impacted at least 50,000 students in the next five years.

In addition, the foundation hopes to absorb at least 10,000 students into its entrepreneurial

and mentorship programme in the next five years.

"After a series of deliberations, the team has come to a consensus agreement that our target for beneficiaries shall be undergraduates that are in Year 1-3 (for a 4-year course) and Year 1-4 (for a 5-year course)," says the founder.

Ighodaloh said it is to enable the undergraduates to benefit from their studies and also participate in this initiative.

"The task ahead is enormous. We call on successful professionals in all walks of life to join the initiative as volunteers and mentors.

"On donations, however, the general public is encouraged to donate to their alumni institutions as we plan to have this initiative across all institutions of the federation. However, more information on how to donate will be provided to the general public via our website and social media channels."

The foundation aims to transform the private sector, making more room for the inclusion of undergraduates in the employment terrain and turn reducing the rate of social vices that youths engage in as a result of unemployment.

Ighodaloh said: "Together, I believe, we can help raise the next Elon Musk, Bill Gates and Folorunso Alakija towards a better economy."

Source: The Guardian

"Now imagine this successful candidate compelled to do the same for another undergraduate and the system repeats itself in successive cycles. Now, imagine the number of success stories we will be celebrating after two, three or five years. He further explained that this system can be likened to the 'Igbo apprenticeship system', where a more experienced businessman adopts and trains a novice to become a successful business crop. Ighodaloh, who is also a philanthropist and businessman, hinted that the system also reflects one of the foundation's core beliefs, 'UBUNTU' – I am because we are. Here we believe that truly, it takes a village to raise a child."



Tina Turner, magnetic singer of explosive power, is dead at 83



HAILED in the 1960s for her dynamic performances with her first husband, Ike, she became a sensation as a recording artist, often echoing her personal struggles in her songs.

Tina Turner, the earthshaking singer whose rasping vocals, sexual magnetism and explosive energy made her an unforgettable live performer and one of the most successful recording artists of

all time, died on Wednesday at her home in Küsnacht, Switzerland, near Zurich. She was 83.

Her publicist Bernard Doherty announced the death in a statement but did not provide the cause. She had a stroke in recent years and was known to be struggling with a kidney disease and other illnesses.

Ms. Turner embarked on her half-century career in the late 1950s, while still attending high

school, when she began singing with Ike Turner and his band, the Kings of Rhythm. At first she was only an occasional performer, but she soon became the group's star attraction — and Mr. Turner's wife. With her potent, bluesy voice and her frenetic dancing style, she made an instant impression.

Their ensemble, soon renamed the Ike and Tina Turner Revue, became one of the premier touring soul acts in Black venues on the so-called chitlin' circuit. After the Rolling Stones invited the group to open for them, first on a British tour in 1966 and then on an American tour in 1969, white listeners in both countries began paying attention.

Ms. Turner, who insisted on adding rock songs by the Beatles and the Stones to her repertoire, reached an enormous new audience, giving the Ike and Tina Turner Revue its first Top 10 hit with her version of the Creedence Clearwater Revival song "Proud Mary" in 1971 and a Grammy Award for best R&B vocal performance by a group.

In the context of today's show business, Tina Turner must be the most sensational professional onstage," Ralph J. Gleason, the influential jazz and pop critic for The San Francisco Chronicle, wrote in a review of a Rolling Stones concert in Oakland in November 1969. "She comes on like a hurricane. She dances and twists and shakes and sings and the impact is instant and total."

But if the Ike and Tina Turner Revue was a success, the Ike and Tina Turner marriage was not. Mr. Turner was abusive. After she escaped the marriage in her 30s, her career faltered. But her solo album "Private Dancer," released in 1984, returned her to the spotlight — and lifted her into the pop stratosphere.



Hilda Baci's Cook-a-thon breaks another world record

CHEF Hilda Bassey Effiong, aka Hilda Baci, has succeeded in breaking a second world record with her recent attempt to break the Guinness World Record for the longest cooking period.

The Cook-a-thon has, so far, exceeded a staggering 4.8 billion views worldwide.

This was confirmed by a media intelligence report published by P+ Measurement Services.

The report, which conducted a comprehensive media performance audit on the event, highlighted the sponsorships, sentiment, reach, and media share across different countries.

It revealed that digital media played a pivotal role in promoting awareness and engagement, accounting for over 87% of the event's traction, while traditional media contributed 13%.

Social media platforms were abuzz with mentions of the cook-a-thon, further amplifying its global reach. The report indicated that Nigeria accounted for 67% of the media coverage, followed by the United States with 15%, the United Kingdom with 4%, Ghana with 3%, and Canada with 1%. Other countries displayed varying levels of interest and coverage.

Notably, the analysis demonstrated that the sentiment surrounding the event was overwhelmingly positive, garnering an impressive 85%.

This positive sentiment can be leveraged by Hilda Baci to build brand loyalty and enhance engagement with her audience. The remaining 15% of sentiment, classified as negative, indicated that any concerns or issues raised during the event were promptly and effectively addressed.

According to the report, the audience reach of 4,812,704,500 is a testament to the popularity and success of the Cook-a-thon media engagement.

The traditional media gained 13% and the digital media gained 87% based on the media types analysed. The high percentage of online media mentions also suggests that digital media played a significant role in driving awareness and engagement about the event.

"The Amore Gardens, the top sponsor, received 18% of the media attention, followed by Uber with 14%, BaigeWallet came in third with 13%, and Arla and Woodscope in lower positions with 10% and 9%, respectively. Noting that media prominence doesn't necessarily equate to the level of financial or logistical support provided by each sponsor. It reflects the volume of media exposure and visibility they received during the event period."

Hilda Baci's Cook-a-thon has undoubtedly captivated the global audience, breaking records and positioning her as a prominent figure in the culinary world.



SUNDAY NEWS

GOVERNOR Simon Bako Lalong of Plateau State has on Saturday May 27th 2023, sworn in a new Head Of Service (HOS) in the state.

She is Barr. Mrs. Rauta Joshua Dakok and she takes over from Engr. Sunday Hyat who has retired from service having reached the retirement age and also served a 4 months extension granted him by the Governor.

Among personalities that witnessed the swearing in was Deputy Governor, Prof. Sonny Gwanle Tyodden, Permanent Secretaries, Government functionaries, traditional rulers, Miskhaham Mwachavul, Da John Horse, the Tsum Pyem, Charles Mato Dakat among others.

Before the swearing in at New Government House, Rayfield Jos, the Governor had earlier announced her appointment through a

Lalong swears in new Head of Service

By PALANG KASMI

statement signed by his Director of Press and Public Affairs appointment.

He commended the outgoing HOS for the committed and meritorious service he rendered to the state.

Lalong said based on her track record of service, the appointment of the new HOS is well deserved because she has risen through the ranks to earn the position.

He urged her to put in her best, play a strategic role, and be a mentor to the state civil service. He also urged her to serve the people and support the incoming government to succeed.

He described himself a gender sensitive governor adding that the appointment should be seen as a milestone to the women



Barr. Dakok

folk.

The new HOS, Dakok took the oath of office, promising to be free and fair to all and serve the people as required by the law.

In her acceptance speech,

Dakok dedicated her appointment to the will of God stating that based on the experience she has gathered in the Civil Service, during the COVID-19 era, and in other sectors of

government where she served, she has the required experience to do the job.

She promised to work for the development of the state, and do her best to uplift the civil service.

Until her appointment, Barr. Rauta Dakok was the Permanent Secretary, General Administration in the office of the HOS

A graduate of Law from the University of Jos in 1988, Barr. Dakok started work with the Plateau State Government in 1990 as State Counsel.

She rose steadily holding various positions to reach the peak of the civil service where she served as Permanent Secretary in various Ministries.

They include Civil Service Commission; Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs; Budget and

Economic Planning; Finance; as well served as the Solicitor General and Permanent Secretary Ministry of Justice.

She also served in several Committees, Boards and was involved in many crucial assignments of at the State and National levels.

Apart from serving previously as Vice Chairman of the Nigerian Bar Association in Plateau State, she is an active member of the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), and once chaired FIDA Plateau State Chapter.

The Governor also performed the official commissioning of Plateau State Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment (AGILE) Project, a girl-child social intervention project jointly sponsored by the World Bank, Federal and state Government.

CHANGE OF NAME

<p>ALAGBE</p> <p>I, formerly known as ALAGBE VICTORIA OLAJITRE, now wish to be known and address as ALAGBE VICTORIA TEMILADI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DADAI</p> <p>I, formerly known as DADAI PIAPSON HYCENTH, now wish to be known and address as DADAI HYCENTH PIAPSON. My correct date of birth is 12/12/1990 not 12/12/1984. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>TSOK</p> <p>I, formerly known as HANNATU TSOK YADUMA, now wish to be known and address as HANNATU TSOK AUDU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>HOPE</p> <p>I, formerly known as SANI ABDUL, now wish to be known and address as HOPE MIKE JAJA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>OLUWAGBEMIGA</p> <p>I, formerly known as SALEH YUSUF OLUWAGBEMIGA, now wish to be known and address as OLUWAGBEMIGA JOSEPH SUNDAY. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SULEMAN</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABDULAZIZ ABUBAKAR, now wish to be known and address as SULEMAN ABDULAZIZ ABUBAKAR. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>ADIGHE</p> <p>I, formerly known as ADINIYA AYHU, now wish to be known and address as ADIGHE SUNDAY ALIBIDI. My correct date of birth is 15/08/1985. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MERCY</p> <p>I, formerly known as MERCY ONYIYECHI ANI, now wish to be known and address as MERCY ONYIYECHI EMEKA-OGIDI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>AYUBA</p> <p>I, formerly known as DAFUR JANET LUTHER, now wish to be known and address as AYUBA JANET IZANG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ABAKPA</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABAKPA MARY, now wish to be known and address as ABAKPA MARY ONYEMOWO. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>JWANCHIN</p> <p>I, formerly known as JWANCHI MURNA PAUL, now wish to be known and address as JWANCHIN MURNA JWANCHIN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>UMAR</p> <p>I, formerly known as UMAR HAWAU, now wish to be known and address as UMAR HAUWAWU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>AJJI</p> <p>I, formerly known as ATANG ESTHER SAMUEL, now wish to be known and address as AJJI ESTHER SAMUEL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DANJUMA</p> <p>I, formerly known as DANJUMA JACOB MWANJEL, now wish to be known and address as DANJUMA JOAB MWANJEL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MUHAMMED</p> <p>I, formerly known as MUHAMMED SALISU, now wish to be known and address as MUHAMMED SALIHU JIBRIN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DAJOK</p> <p>I, formerly known as PAJOK NYAM, now wish to be known and address as DAJOK NYAM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NANFWANG</p> <p>I, formerly known as NANFA YANGRIAAG, now wish to be known and address as NANFWANG YANGRIAAG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>FLORENCE</p> <p>I, formerly known as FLORENCE DUNG BITRUS, now wish to be known and address as FLORENCE YOP DUNG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>TAANGAHAR</p> <p>I, formerly known as MICHAEL TONY, now wish to be known and address as TAANGAHAR TONY KATOR. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NOAH</p> <p>I, formerly known as NOAH GRACE ADAMU, now wish to be known and address as NOAH GRACE OTITI. My correct date of birth is 09/02/1995. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>OKOLI</p> <p>I, formerly known as KELECHI OKOLI OKOLI, now wish to be known and address as OKOLI PATRICK KELECHI. My Correct date of birth is 17/05/1980 not 27/02/1980. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ODEY</p> <p>I, formerly known as ODEY PRESCILLA EMMANUELLA, now wish to be known and address as ODEY PRESCILLA EMMANUELLA ONAYO'CHE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SAMUEL</p> <p>I, formerly known as GWOM SAMUEL, now wish to be known and address as SAMUEL GWOM DUNG. My correct date of birth is 01/08/1975. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SHUT</p> <p>I, formerly known as REBECCA EZEKIEL GWOM, now wish to be known and address as SHUT REBECCA SATI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>AYUBA</p> <p>I, formerly known as AYUBA MARTHA CHUNDUNG, now wish to be known and address as AYUBA MARTHA. My correct date of birth is 09/01/1973. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MATHEW</p> <p>I, formerly known as CHRISTOPHER EGBO MATHEW, now wish to be known and address as MATHEW EGBO CHRISTOPHER. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>IBRAHIM</p> <p>I, formerly known as TAFINTA GRACE AWANYA, now wish to be known and address as IBRAHIM GRACE DANLADI. My correct date of birth is 28/01/1988. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>HOSEA</p> <p>I, formerly known as YAKUBU MAKURUNDU, now wish to be known and address as HOSEA YAKUBU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>JOHNWESLEY</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOHN FILAH WESLEY, now wish to be known and address as JOHNWESLEY FILAH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ELSIE</p> <p>I, formerly known as ELSIE GWANCIT LAKAN EMOLE, now wish to be known and address as ELSIE GWANCIT LAKAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>EROCHUKWU</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOHN EROCHUKWU, now wish to be known and address as EROCHUKWU DAVID UKWU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>LEDOU</p> <p>I, formerly known as LEDOU NDUKODON, now wish to be known and address as LEDOU NDUKODON MUSA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>FATIMA</p> <p>I, formerly known as FATIMA YUSUF, now wish to be known and address as FATIMA YUSUF SAID. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>IJAI</p> <p>I, formerly known as IJAI THLAMA PAKPA, now wish to be known and address as IJAI THLAMA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SALE</p> <p>I, formerly known as SALEH A SALEH, now wish to be known and address as SALE SULE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>UGWUOKE</p> <p>I, formerly known as ONYEKACHUKWU UGWUOKE, now wish to be known and address as OGWUOKE ONYEKACHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>NASIR</p> <p>I, formerly known as NASIR ABDULRAUF SULAIMAN, now wish to be known and address as NASIR ABDULRAUF IBRAHIM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>IBRAHIM</p> <p>I, formerly known as IBRAHIM SALE SALISU, now wish to be known and address as IBRAHIM SALE WORMI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DUNG</p> <p>I, formerly known as DUNG AGNES ZAKKA, now wish to be known and address as DUNG HAPPY ZAKKA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>THIS SPACE IS FOR SALE</p>	<p>THIS SPACE IS FOR SALE</p>	<p>THIS SPACE IS FOR SALE</p>

News

The Church providing direction to citizens-Lalong

By Dumah Randong

GOVERNOR Simon Lalong of Plateau State said the Church was the conscience of the society and as such, it should not relent in providing the direction to the citizens.

He also urged Christians and the Church to rise in defense of what is right and not to adopt the I don't care attitude to issues that affects their rights in the country.

Governor Lalong who spoke through his Deputy, Professor Sonni Tyoden at the 103rd General Church Council, GCC, the highest decision making body of the Church of Christ in Nations, COCIN, holding from the 22nd -26th, May, at the Church's Head-Quarters in Jos.

In what could be described as a valedictory speech, governor Lalong stated that his administration will be interacting with the Church for the last time and appreciated the increasing participation of the Church on national issues urging it to continue to speak up not until things were not the way they wanted.

Governor Lalong maintained that the Church should not remain quiet when it was suppose to talk and called for the same synergy between his administration and the Church be extended to the incoming government.

He described as unfortunate, the recent killings in Mangu LGA, noting that it has posed a greater challenge not only to Plateau State but the country and said all hands must be on deck to end the crisis.

In a Welcome speech, COCIN President, Rev Dr Amos Mohzo noted that the security and economic challenges in the country have affected every aspect of the nation's life and said it was incumbent upon Nigerians to work together towards finding lasting solution.

While speaking on the state of the nation, the COCIN President said incessant killings, kidnapping, and destruction of property by Fulani terrorists in communities across the country, particularly in Southern Kaduna, Bokkos, Mangun, Barkin Ladi Riyom in Plateau and other states were a source of concern.

The attacks according to him were targeted at Christians and blamed the government for failing in its responsibility to ensure the safety and security of all citizens regardless of their religion, ethnicity, or any other factor noting that the recent attack on Communities in Mangu LGA where many innocent people were brutally butchered and church/houses burnt to ashes as a calculated move and condemned in its totality.

The government, he said must address the root causes of these attacks including the issue of land grabbing by Fulani terrorists and take steps to ensure peaceful coexistence between all Nigerian communities despite religious differences and said in line with the Church's theme for the year, which is seeking the peace of the land, all must work together as a nation to address the issue and make the country safe and secure for all.

He urged the Traditional rulers to wake up to their responsibility as leaders of their respective Communities by ensuring a harmonious coexistence within Communities and expressed readiness of the Church to collaborate with the traditional institution to bring sanity to the Communities.



The COCIN President who spoke extensively on the progress of the Church, said it has resolved to strengthen mission activities in South-South and South-East adding all the Provincial Church Council, PC's and some groups in the Church have agreed to send pastors to the mission fields while on Mission to Nation, he said church in the United Kingdom was doing well with Rev Kefas Tang'an as the overseer.

He said the Church plans to visit its mission field in Tanzania before the end of the year just as he disclosed that the Church is to review the criteria for the creation of new Regional Church Council, RCC, this is as a result of the new RCCs created. It plans to set up its telecast this is in view of the technological advancement taking place and called on the church workers to work towards the realisation of this objective.

On the Karl Kumm University update, Mohzo disclosed that the National Universities Commission, NUC has given

approval for a Faculty of Science and Computing Gindiri and directed that the 2022/2023 academic session be commenced at the Permanent site of the University in Vom.

He added that the Board of Trustees of KKU resolved that the Remedial Program will commence Science and Computing at the Second Campus, Gindiri and the light of this, the GCC meeting will discuss and resolve against the previous authorisation to commence the second campus if they could meet the requirements.

In a Goodwill message, TEKAN General Secretary, Very Rev Moses Ebuga described COCIN as a committed member of the bloc.

On their part, the Agwom Izere, Isaac Wakili and the Mishkaham Mwaghavul, John Hirse commended the church for preaching the gospel.

They called for relentless prayers in the face of the current genocide taking in the state and

PDP denies defection of 100 members in Igalamela/Odolu LGA

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE People's Democratic Party, (PDP) has debunked media reports making the round that over 100 party members from Igalamela/Odolu Local Government Area have defected to the ruling

All Progressives Congress, (APC).

The PDP Chairman in Igalamela/Odolu Local Government, Attai Ndanusa Salifu disclosed this in a statement made available to Our Correspondent on Wednesday. Salifu said the purported members received by Kogi State Governor Alhaji Yahaya Bello at the Government House was staged managed adding that, no members of the party from his Local Government has moved to the APC.

He urged the general public to disregard such report stressing that, it is the hand work of mischief makers who are scared of the popularity of PDP ahead of the November Governorship election in Kogi State.

According to him, PDP Ajaka ward 1 Chairman Anthony Abu and his Ward 2 counterpart Achema Amodu had since received apology from one of the party member Ndah Salifu who said they

were deceived to Government House by some desperate politicians loyal to APC.

"Some of our party member from Igalamela Odolu Local Government were deceived to have an official PDP meeting in Lokoja. Just as we see our self as brothers, some members of the APC called them for dialogue for the interest of the Local Government and Kogi State in general. "They listen to the clarion call irrespective of their political affiliation. Surprisingly, when they got to government house, this desperate APC politicians took them to Governor Bello, telling him that this are PDP members who have defected to APC from Igalamela Odolu Local Government. They were all shocked with this development.

"They felt betrayed, as that was never their intentions when they were invited by their brothers from the ruling APC to Government House. PDP remains intact and a formidable force in Igalamela-Odolu local government".

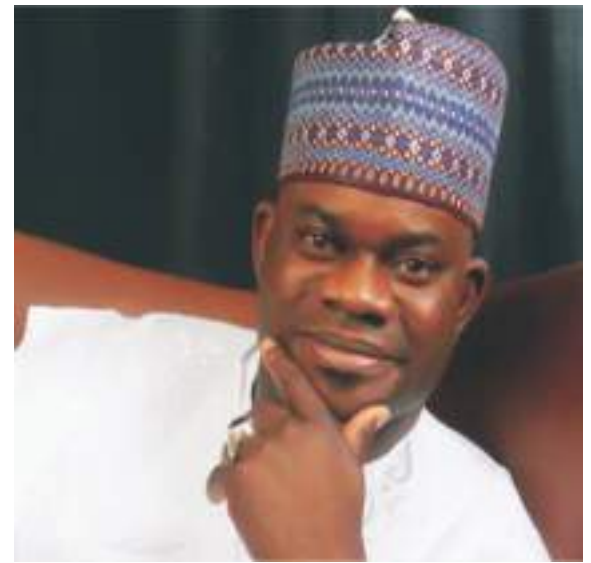
Salifu noted that the PDP in Igalamela Odolu Local Government remains committed to the Candidature of Senator Dino Melaye and his running mate Hajia Habiba Deen to take over Lugard

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE Kogi State House of Assembly on Wednesday, lifted the ban on the suspended eight assembly members and two local government council chairmen following terrorism allegations. The lifting of the ban followed the clearance by the Department of State Security Service (DSS) which was sent by the State Governor, Alhaji Yahaya Bello in correspondence to the assembly and read by the Speaker Rt. Honourable Prince Mathew Kolawole at the plenary. The lawmakers include Daniya Rayin, Bassa constituency, Murktar Bajeh, Okehi constituency, Kilani Olumo, Ijumu constituency and Moses Akande Ogori-Magongo constituency. Others are Mohammed Lawi Ahmed Okene one constituency, Atule Igbunu, Ibaji constituency, Suleiman Attajachi Musa, Idah and Aderonke Aro, Yagba West constituency. While the cleared council chairmen include, Moses Olorunleke, Kabba-Bunu local government area and William

Kogi Assembly lifts ban on suspended 8 members

Ikojo, Ibaji of Ibaji local government area. Prince Mathew Kolawole said the speaker of the assembly said the Reading the correspondence lawmakers and council chairmen



Bello

Gombe Govt make truce between farmers, herders

Willie Attah, Gombe

A high powered delegation of the Gombe State Government led by the State Deputy Governor, Manasseh Daniel Jatau, has visited Kaltungo Chiefdom to broker peace between Fulani herders and Tangale farmers following a recent crisis between the two communities.

The Deputy Governor who decried the crises between the Farmers and Herders in Lapan, Shongom Local Government Area of the State, said it was barbaric and heartless.

The meeting which took place at the Palace of the Mai Kaltungo, Engineer Saleh Mohammed and Lapan in Shongom LGA followed a fight between two persons over farmland which generated tension and subsequent clashes between the Farmers and the herders.

However, the State

Government's visit was aimed at drawing the attention of the communities on the need for peaceful coexistence among themselves.

According to the Deputy Governor, the situation is quite lamentable that people who profess God and religion will be found perpetrating this act of wickedness against humanity

He said, "from the pictures I have seen about the barbaric acts committed in the affected places in Lapan, it is quite unbelievable that those who committed these claims to know God. Religion teaches us about God and humanity, but where there is no such recognition in our behaviours we become worst than those who didn't believe in life in the hereafter".

While appreciating the Mai

Kaltungo for always exhibiting his inclination to peace and unity, Manasseh Jatau vowed that Government will not allow the culprits of the clashes go unpunished.

He said, "We will ensure bringing to book every one found directly or indirectly culpable and ensure they are made to face the wrath of the law to serve as deterrent to others.

"As the Chairman, Appointment, Discipline and Promotion of Traditional Rulers in the state, I vow to remove any traditional ruler(s) found to be involved in instigating, aiding or abating the crises", he warned.

Speaking in his Palace in Kaltungo Local Government Area and in Lapan, Shongom Local Government Area, the Mai Kaltungo, Engineer Saleh Mohammed said, the Tangale and the Fulani, (farmers and the Herders) in the area have coexisted peacefully for so many years and wondered what came over them to be caught in the web of crises.

He said, the two persons who, were purported to have been the genesis of the crises fought and wounded themselves and have been apprehended by the security agencies, wondering why some people took advantage of that to escalate the crises.

In Kaltungo, the Leader of Shongom Local Government Herders, Alhaji Badikko Daudu noted that they were greatly devastated by the incident but stated that since the Mai Kaltungo has always shown them concern as a father, they are ready to obey whatever he directs.

"We have lived in the Chiefdom for so long. Most of us, our parents were born in this place. If we leave this place where do we go to. We have no any intention of relocating from here, especially that we have a father like the Mai Kaltungo who has shown us fatherly love" he emphasised

"In Lapan, one of the community leaders, Landa Kalawa, appreciated the visit by the Government and the efforts of the Mai Kaltungo for always fostering peace in his Chiefdom.

He said, in almost every community there are people who always allow themselves to be deceived by the devil there by creating deep hatred and crises amongst the people. He prayed to God that something like that will never happen again in the area.

Governor-elect appoints Chief Press Secretary

From JOHN FWAH Kaduna

THE Governor - Elect of Kaduna State, Senator Uba Sani has approved the appointment of Muhammad Shehu Lawal as his Chief Press Secretary.

A statement issued and personally signed by the Governor - Elect indicates that the appointment takes effect from May 23, 2023.

Muhammad Shehu Lawal brings to the service more than 10 years of significant and relevant experience in strategic communication, political communication, image management, conflict resolution and peace - building, and monitoring and evaluation.

He holds the Masters in International Affairs and Diplomacy (MIAD) from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Masters in Conflict, Peace and Strategic Studies from Kaduna State University, Kaduna, and Bachelor of Science (Political Science) Degree from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. He also

Local Government to rescue Kogi State from the alleged mal-administration of the ruling APC.

obtained certificates in Interfaith Conflict Resolution and Conflict Analysis from United States Institute of Peace, Washington DC, as well as a certificate in Monitoring and Evaluation from the Global Health Learning Centre, Baltimore, USA.

Muhammad Shehu Lawal served as Special Assistant to the Executive Governor of Kaduna State on Political Matters from 2019 to 2023. He played a key role in the design and execution of the media and communications strategies of the Kaduna State APC Campaign Council and the North West APC Presidential Campaign Council.

The Governor - Elect urged the appointee to device effective strategies for publicizing of government activities, interfacing with the media and relevant agencies, and positively projecting the image of the incoming administration. He wished him Allah's guidance in the discharge of his new assignment.

NEWS

Lalong tasks Church as conscience of society

By DUMAH RANDONG

GOVERNOR Simon Lalong of Plateau State said the Church was the conscience of the society and as such, it should not relent in providing the direction to the citizens.

He also urged Christians and the Church to rise in defense of what is right and not to adopt the I don't care attitude to issues that affect their rights in the country.

Governor Lalong who spoke through his deputy, Professor Sonni Tyoden at the 103rd General Church Council, GCC, the highest decision making body of the Church of Christ in Nations, COCIN, holding from the 22nd -26th May, at the Church's headquarters in Jos.

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Governor Lalong maintained that the Church should not remain quiet when it was supposed to talk and called for the same synergy between his administration and the Church to be extended to the incoming government.

He described as unfortunate, the recent killings in Mangu LGA, noting that it has posed a greater challenge not only to Plateau State but the country and said all hands must be on deck to end the crisis.

In a welcome speech, COCIN President, Rev Dr Amos Mohzo noted that the security and economic challenges in the country have affected every aspect of the nation's life and said it was incumbent upon Nigerians to work together towards finding lasting solution.

While speaking on the state of the nation, the COCIN President said incessant killings, kidnapping, and destruction of property by Fulani terrorists in communities across the country, particularly in Southern Kaduna, Bokokos, Mangu, Barkin Ladi, Riyom in Plateau and other states were a source of concern.

The attacks according to him were targeted at Christians and blamed the government for failing in its responsibility to ensure the safety and security of all citizens regardless of their religion, ethnicity, or any other factor. He noted that the recent attack on communities in Mangu LGA where many innocent people were brutally butchered and churches/houses burnt to ashes was a calculated move and condemned it in its totality.

The government, he said must address the root causes of these attacks including the issue of land grabbing by



Lalong

Fulani terrorists and take steps to ensure peaceful coexistence between all Nigerian communities despite religious differences. And said in line with the Church's theme for the year, which is seeking the peace of the land, all must work together as a nation to address the issue and make the country safe and secure for all.

He urged the traditional rulers to wake up to their responsibility as leaders of their respective communities by ensuring a harmonious coexistence within communities and expressed readiness of the Church to collaborate with the traditional institution to bring sanity to the communities.

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Sayawa community get new chieftom

SAYAWA community in Bauchi State of Nigeria has been given the necessary touchstones for them to achieve their decades old demand for self-determination through the creation of their chieftom as recommended by the Justice Babalakin Judicial Commission of Inquiry for the Tafawa Balewa crisis of 22nd April, 1991.

The Tafawa Balewa Town Development Association which spelled out the criteria, outlined them to include due process to be followed by the government as was done by the Isa Yuguda administration in 2011.

The association said also that "No part of other people's land would be included in the chieftom without consulting them, while other tribal groups should be given the option to be in the chieftom or Bauchi Emirate.

He said in a statement made available to the press recently

He said the Church plans to visit its mission field in Tanzania before the end of the year just as he disclosed that the Church is to review the criteria for the creation of new Regional Church Council, RCC. This is as a result of the new RCCs created. It plans to set up its telecast. This is in view of the technological advancement taking place and called on the church workers to work towards the realisation of this objective.

On the Karl Kumm University update, Mohzo disclosed that the National Universities Commission, NUC has given approval for a Faculty of Science and Computing Gindiri and directed that the 2022/2023 academic session be commenced at the Permanent site of the university in Vom.

He added that the Board of Trustees of KKU resolved that the Remedial Programme will commence Science and Computing at the second campus, Gindiri. In the light of this, the GCC meeting will discuss and resolve against the previous authorisation to commence the second campus if they could meet the requirements.

From Abbas Gungura, Bauchi

that lives and properties of innocent neighbours were not destroyed as was done in 1991, 1995, 2001 and 2011 when hundreds of innocent lives were massacred and properties worth hundreds of millions of naira were destroyed.

The statement signed by the association's chairman and secretary, Shu'aibu Salej Umar and Yunusa Ado respectively said that their members have made it abundantly clear for the umpteenth time that they have no objection to the Sayawa having their chieftom.

It could be recalled that the Justice Babalakin Commission of Inquiry had in 1991 during its proceedings identified and listed some of the culprits in the Tafawa Balewa mayhem when it recommended for full investigations and

BAUCHI State Governor Bala Mohammed has on Thursday dissolved all members of his cabinet that include Commissioners and Special Advisers.

The governor who dissolved the cabinet through the Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Barrister Ibrahim Kashim, while briefing journalists on the outcome of a valedictory session of the State Executive Council meeting at the Council Chamber of the Government House, Bauchi appreciated their immense contribution to the development of the state which he said he was proud of.

Others affected are Senior Special Assistants, Special Assistants, Personal

Governor Bala dissolves cabinet

From Abbas Gungura, Bauchi

Assistants and other political appointees heading various Ministries, Departments and Agencies of government.

The governor said the SSG, Chief of Staff and the Principal Private Secretary retained their positions till after inauguration on the 29th of May 2023.

Bala Mohammed, however, thanked the outgoing cabinet members and all other political appointees for a job well done job which resulted to positive contributions towards the successes achieved by his administration in the first tenure that served as a yardstick for his re-election as



Mohammed people's oriented governor.

Pilot Sewing Championship establishes workshops

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE Incentivised Pilot Sewing Schools' Championship 2023 (SSCP23) has provided a platform for establishing and equipping sewing workshops in three selected schools in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Dr. Nimota Akambi, board chairperson of the organisation made available to our correspondent the positive impact of the programme which is part of its empowerment scheme.

The SSCP23 was initiated by a non-governmental organisation, Ladi Memorial Foundation (LMF), supported and sponsored by UNESCO, FCT Education Secretariat and other relevant partners.

The essence of the Incentivised SSCP23 was to strengthen stakeholders and governments' support for Vocational Education and Training (VET) through the establishment of workshops in schools.

Over 1000 youths majorly from Junior Secondary Schools (JSS), Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) and out of school youths from ages 12 to 20 participated in sewing competition across the six (6) Area Councils in the FCT at the second stage of the competition.

The third stage, tagged: "Championship Finals and Up-skilling Sewing Boot Camp", was a 5-day fully residential workshop for the 54 best contestants from the 6 FCT Area Councils which took place on April 23-29, 2023, where winners of various categories emerged.

Speaking at the award ceremony in Abuja, the Board Chairperson of NSSEC, Dr Nimota Akanbi, shared experience on skills development in other countries, saying skills remained the bedrock of sustainable economic growth.

He emphasised the need for the initiative to be sustained and promised that NSSEC would support scale up in 2024 as a national championship event for all 36 states and FCT.

Also speaking, the FCT Education Secretary Hon. Sani El-Katuzu appreciated all the supporting partners and LMF for the impactful initiative which had brought together all FCT education secretariat departments.

He noted that the SSCP23 had kept everyone fully engaged over the past five month - project implementation with the 5-day championship finals and Up-skilling Sewing Boot Camp and Awards ceremony as climax.

El-Katuzu who also received the championship award, noted that the SSCP23 was supported as a FCT budgetary activity in 2023 and assured of repeated implementation by the FCT.

El-Katuzu stressed that the SSCP23 would complement government efforts in the achievement of TVET actualization of job creation to significantly alleviate poverty in the society.

He called for more collaboration with the private sector to promote and complement government efforts in the achievement of Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET).

"This programme will be sustained to encourage the youth to use their leisure time wisely to learn marketable trades and skills that will provide economic support and lifelong educational development and poverty alleviation," El-Katuzu stated.

On his part, the Secretary General, Nigerian National Commission (NATCOM) for UNESCO, Dr Olawale Olagunju, said the organisation was happy to be part of the project and hoped that more of such initiative would come on board to empower the youth.

According to him, when LMF first presented the concept note for the SSCP23 initiative, he observed it was lofty, out of the box initiative with far reaching impactful benefits with rippling effects. Hence NATCOM UNESCO buying into it and recommending it for UNESCO funding under the UNESCO 2022/2023 Participation Programme.

He said that the SSCP23 had delivered fully on the pledged outcome, stakeholder engagements, promised equipping of schools workshops and student-preneurship equipment's, TVET sensitization, advocacies, among others.

The Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Education (FME), Mr Andrew David Adejoh, received the SSCP23 Star Award for the FME and the SSCP23 Star Individual Partner Award.

Adejoh, who was represented by Mr Osinaike, Department of Science & Technical Education.

In her remarks, the LMF's Executive Director, Mrs Rosemary Ojochenemi Osikoya, said three schools got over 30 sewing machines and workshop equipment.

NEWS

Two-day prayer and fasting declared in Taraba

From Victor Gai, Jalingo

A two day prayer and fasting has been declared by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Taraba towards the success of the May 29 inauguration and God's protection for the incoming government and the state in general.

In the itinerary of events issued to the media on Thursday, a Jumat prayer would be held for the inauguration while a Christian service will take place on Sunday.

The CAN in Taraba has however followed up with announcements all over the airwaves in Taraba for Christians to undertake on a prayer and fasting beginning from Friday 26 May to Sunday May 28.

Already, a valedictory session has been held earlier in the week by Governor Darius Ishaku but the cabinet has not yet been dissolved, **The Nigeria Standard** has learnt.

The Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Iliya Bekyu has confirmed to **The Nigeria Standard** that the governor has not handed over to the



Ayokunle

Governor-elect, Agbu Kefas. About the security arrangements for the event, the police in Taraba has assured of a hitch free event and that they are acting on the intelligence report by the DSS that some states are prone to crisis.

"We have deployed men to cover the venue, in and out

and we have also posted men on patrols within the town and environs.

"We are going to experience a hitch-free event. Intelligence prepares us to deploy our security architecture and to make sure we don't take things for granted," police spokesman, Abdullahi Usman hinted.

Police beefs up security ahead of inauguration

From Abbas Gungura, Bauchi

THE Bauchi State Police Command has fortified the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa Stadium for a seamless inauguration ceremony ahead of the Gubernatorial Inauguration scheduled to take place on Monday, May 29th in Bauchi State.

According to a press release on Friday, 26th May 2023 signed by the Bauchi State Police Public Relations Officer, SP Ahmed Mohammed Wakil, specific plans have been formulated for the inauguration ceremony, outlined in the operation order, ensuring heightened protection while accommodating guests, well-meaning Nigerians, and the international community in

witnessing this significant event.

The statement said, "Collaborating closely with all levels of government, private sectors, the Nigerian Armed Forces, and other security agencies, we are committed to ensuring the safety and security of all citizens. Our collective objective is to facilitate a commendable and seamless inauguration ceremony on May 29, 2023.

"The Bauchi State Police Command has mobilized its operational and human resources to establish a robust security arrangement. Adequate personnel have been assigned to safeguard the Government House/VIP Lodges, provide security in and around the stadium,

monitor the state's borders, and oversee entry and exit points, as well as critical government installations. The deployed operatives include members of the Nigeria Police, Bauchi State Command and other tactical squads, such as the Police Mobile Force (PMF), Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU), Special Protection Unit (SPU), Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD) CBRN, SIB State Intelligence Bureau, NPF Medical, NPF Mounted Troops, and K9 units, among others. Additionally, the Command has deployed all available patrol vehicles and highly efficient drones for aerial surveillance within the state and its surroundings. Furthermore, the Command's Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) will be stationed at strategic locations around the state.

"Police and other security personnel will be positioned along the routes to and from the inauguration grounds. Rigorous safety measures will be implemented for individuals entering the venue, including screenings and searches, while traffic control will be efficiently managed in collaboration with the protocol sub-committee of the transition committee, ensuring seamless traffic flow.

"The Inauguration Ceremony in the state has received special attention, as the Commissioner of Police has directed all Area Commanders, Tactical Commanders, Divisional Police Officers (DPOs), Head of Departments, and other

THE Commander 12 Brigade, Brigadier General Isang Akpaumontia, has paid courtesy visits to two Kogi Paramount Rulers: the Ohinoyi of Ebiraland, HRM Dr. Ado Ibrahim; and Obaro of Kabba, His Royal Majesty, Oba Solomon Oladele Owoniyi at their

Palaces in Okene and Kabba respectively.

In his separate remarks at the two Palaces, General Akpaumontia, said the familiarization tour was an opportunity to discuss critical issues with stakeholders, institutions, especially traditional rulers within Kogi State.

According to the Brigade Commander, 'security is a collective responsibility', and therefore assured the good people of Kogi State of his resolve to ensure peace is

New Commander 12 Brigade visits monarch

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

maintained in Kogi at all times.

General Akpaumontia further disclosed that his visit was to also to pay homage to the monarchs as a mark of respect as well as to seek for royal blessings and prayers while discharging his duties.

In his response in Okene, the Ohinoyi appreciated the presence of the Nigerian Army in Ebiraland saying that it had drastically reduced the terrorism and other social vices.

The traditional ruler expressed his desire and readiness to support, collaborate and synergize with the Nigerian Army.

In his response in Kabba, the

Obaro of Kabba, said that since the establishment of the military presence in Kabba, there have been peace as spate of kidnapping had reduced drastically.

He urged the Brigade Commander to also maintain continued high cordial relationship with the relevant stakeholders and the people.

Both paramount rulers expressed their gratitude to the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt. Gen. Farouk Yahaya, for the august visit and for the honour bestowed on them.

The highlight of the visits was the presentation of souvenirs and gift items to the monarchs in line with the tradition of the palace and a group photograph.

Stakeholders throw their weight behind AWDF/WRAPA

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

STAKEHOLDERS drawn from both cultural and faith based setting in Jos, who have put their heads together to deliberate on the implementation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Model

Law and Re-passage of Gender and Equal Opportunity (GEO), have unanimously thrown their weight behind the submission of WRAPA

This position came up when the Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA) with the support of AWDF, organised a two-day town hall meeting aimed at creating more awareness and increasing the knowledge of relevant stakeholders, held at the conference hall of City Lodge Hotel Jos, the state capital.

Declaring the two-day meeting open, the Senior Programme Officer of WRAPA, Muhammad Ibrahim Mifada, said they have trained religious and community leaders and would want to hear from them their resolutions as stakeholders who were directly involved in the implementation of VAPP Law.

He commended the commitment of the religious and community leaders in trying to settle VAPP issues and implored participants to throw away any religious or ethnic sentiments that might arise when there were conflicts and treat it as a deliberate action of the enemies of Plateau.

Mifada, said, "One of the objectives of the programme was to drive the implementation of innovative strategies or action plans earlier committed to by the state and non-state actors on the implementation of VAPP Law in Plateau State and to intensify efforts and increase pressure on the state government for the re-passage of the Plateau

State GEO Bill".

Responding, His Royal Highness, Sarkin Mista-Ali (District Head), Danladi Akinga Kasuwa, of Bassa Local Government Area, Plateau State, called for the availability of the law so that it would help them rely on it when issues of Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) appeared before them.

He said, "It was because of this that I have appointed two women leaders, one each from the Christian and Muslim, in my cabinet so that women issues can be handled by them. We know it will reach a point where the court and police will refer some of these cases to we the community and religious leaders because we live with them".

On her part, the Plateau State Director of the National Orientation Agency (NOA), Mrs. Karen Tabetta Pam-hworo, said the law has a positive purpose and should not be abused. She called on the community and religious leaders to put pressure on the 10th Assembly in the state for them to pick up the re-passage bill before the Plateau State House of Assembly.

It would be recalled that Governor Simon Bako Lalong, of Plateau State has on May 19, 2022 signed into law the VAPP Law and directed for re-passage of Gender and Equal Opportunity (GEO) Law by the two-third majority of the House of Assembly members. However, women leaders from the two faith promised to stepdown the awareness to members in their localities.



Alkali

SUNDAY MAGAZINE



An overview of Governor Lalong's scorecard

Continued from Page 10

harmonized operations of all community watch groups, vigilante associations, hunters and similar bodies, collaborated with Humanitarian Dialogue to hold peace consultative meetings in Northern and Southern Plateau with extension to Kaduna State which was climaxed at Kafanchan, purchased and Commissioned 50 Hilux Vans and 200 Security motor cycles to boost security in Plateau State, established the Plateau Day for Forgiveness and Reconciliation commemorated every 7th February, passed and signed into law the Anti-Land Grabbing law in 2020, sent a bill of Ranching to the House of Assembly to curb farmer herder clashes, passed and signed into law Anti-Kidnapping and Cultism Law, passed and signed Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Bill into law, spurred a Peace Accord signed between Berom and Fulani and another Peace Accord signed between Irigwe and Fulani.

The peace efforts of the governor was able to break the barriers of "No-go" areas in communities, a cliché created as a result of the ethno religious conflicts witnessed in the state.

Good governance

The Government established the Treasury Single Account (TSA), created the Efficiency Unit (EU), set up the Liquidity Management Committee (LMC) and these policies earned Plateau State to be adjudged the second least corrupt State in Nigeria by the 2nd Corruption Survey Report released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in 2019.

Other feats recorded by the rescue administration was the restoration of 2 First Class; 6 Second class; and 10 Third Class Chiefdoms, creation of 285 Districts across the State, implementation of Autonomy for the Legislature, Judiciary and Executive arms of Government including the state winning the Open Government Partnership Global Award for Transparency and Accountability in Extractives in Seoul South Korea (1st in Africa beating Kenya and Morocco).

There was the restoration of 32 Missionary Schools back to Voluntary Organisations earlier taken over by Government, establishment of the Plateau State Infrastructure Promotion and Regulatory Agency. Government acquired Treasury House

Old CBN Quarters for use as Office of the Accountant General

Economy, Innovation, Entrepreneurship and job creation

Governor Lalong's administration set up the Plateau Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (PLASMIDA), trained over 100,000 youths in various skills and empowered them to start various businesses, produced the overall winner of maiden MSME National Award Jerry Mallo 2017, produced another Overall Category Winner Luka Pam Bot in the 2018 MSMEs National Award, produced another winner in 2019, Mafeng Woodcraft.

Government established the One Stop Investment Centre (OSIC) to facilitate the establishment of businesses, acquired Inland Container Terminal Heipang and lobbied for the designation of Yakubu Gowon Airport Heipang as International Cargo Airport, and paid over 300m Compensation and removed legal obstacles for Connection of electricity to the Central and Southern Zones. The Plateau State Inland Revenue Service was structured to boost the State Internally Generated Revenue.

Lalong Legacy Projects (LLP)

Construction of world class schools and hospitals in the three senatorial districts, these comprise of 9 primary schools, 6 secondary schools, and 6 hospitals

Healthcare

The Lalong administration embarked on construction of new Hospitals in Barkin Ladi, Mangu and Shendam LGA, completed and equipped abandoned Trauma Hospital Riyom LGA, completed and equipped abandoned General Hospital, Kwall, Kanke LGA, completed and equipped abandoned General Hospital Mabudi, Langtang South LGA, completed renovation and equipping of the Plateau Specialist Hospital Jos including the remodeling of structures to accommodate the newly acquired ultra modern Hospital equipment which include Superstar MRI Machine, 64 Slices CT scanner, 4D Ultrasound Scanner and Digital X-Ray Machine among others. The completed project was commissioned by former Nigeria's Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, who represented President Mohamadu

Buhari.

There was the accreditation of some courses offered by the Colleges of Health Pankshin and Zawan, installation and equipping of Ultra-modern E-Library facilities at the College of Health, Zawan.

Other successes recorded in the health sector include the construction and remodeling of the Plateau Primary Healthcare Development Agency, establishment of Plateau State Contributory Health Insurance Management Agency (PLASHEMA), establishment of Plateau Drugs, Medical Commodities Management Agency, completion of Plateau Specialist Hospital Administrative Building and Laboratory

Workers welfare, salaries, pensions and gratuities

On assumption of office in 2015, the rescue administration paid inherited salary arrears of 8 months from the past administration, paid 4 months withheld wages under no-work-no-pay policy by the immediate past administration and sustained an up to date in payment of salaries every month which earned the governor Lalong the nick-name "Governor Alert" by the workers. He received award of excellence for welfare of workers by the Joint Unions of State Owned Tertiary Institutions in Plateau State (JUPTI), is Up-to-date in payment of pension to retirees, although he is leaving the government on May 29 with salary arrears of three months.

Governor Lalong received an Award by the National Executive Committee of NULGE for good governance and prompt payment of salaries including 4 months no work, no pay for Local Government Workers in Plateau State. He did recruitment and replacement of staff in various MDAs, facilitated home renovation loan to over 2,500 civil servants, and flagged off Construction of Workers Estate in Miango, Bassa LGA.

Agriculture

Government partnered with AfDB-funded Agricultural Transformation Agenda Support Programme, constructed infrastructure such as potato processing centres, market stalls and technology centres under the Potato Value Chain Support Project (PVCSP), reactivated the Bokkos Fertilizer Blending Plant to provide high quality fertilizers, earmarked Wase and Kanam

Government Grazing Reserves for Pilot ranching under the National Livestock Transformation Programme (NLTP) of the Federal Government.

The administration constructed Potato Tissue Culture Laboratory in Mangu LGA, re-acquired the BARC Farms Zallaki previously sold, procured 1,500 irrigation Water Pumps distributed to farmers in the 17 Local Government Areas, profiled and empowered 150 farmers for wheat and barley production in Plateau State.

Education

Payment of Backlog of Scholarships to Students of Law School and other Tertiary Institution, accreditation of 17 courses at the Plateau State University, Bokkos (PLASU), organised 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th and 7th convocation of PLASU, released millions of naira for infrastructural development at the Plateau State University.

He carried out infrastructural Development at the Plateau State Polytechnic, Barkin Ladi and accreditation of courses, ensured about 4,800 primary school teachers were recruited and trained across the State, sponsored and paid scholarships of 28 indigenous students at the Egyptian Maritime Academy, Alexandria, recalled over 2,000 sacked teachers by immediate past administration, lobbied for several TETFund projects at the Plateau State University Bokkos (PLASU), Plateau State Polytechnic and other tertiary institutions, and the establishment of 5 new faculties of Health Sciences, Environmental Science, Law and Agriculture at the Plateau State University (PLASU).

The Lalong government Constructed 639 Primary and Junior Secondary school classrooms across the 17 Local Governments, renovated 724 classrooms, fenced 16 schools, renovated many Examination Halls, Built 84 toilets in various schools, procured and distributed 55,985 Tables and Chairs for Primary and Junior Secondary schools and achieved the accreditation of courses at the College of Education Gindiri and organise a Combined Convocation for six sets of students for the first time in 15 years

The Rescue Administration was able to restore Diploma programmes at the College of Arts, Science, and Technology Kurgwi, establish Government Colleges in Shendam and

Pankshin in addition to renovation of Technical College Bukuru, and organise first Convocation for graduands of College of Agriculture Garkawa after many years

Transport

Governor Lalong's administration facilitated 50% percent grant for the Plateau State Council of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) for the procurement of 80 Units of Ford Galaxy Buses, purchased the Bus Terminal at Tafawa Belewa Street Jos from Nasarawa State Government, embarked on processes for establishment of Plateau State Road Traffic Administration and Vehicle Inspection Authority, purchased and commissioned 14 New Brand Hilux Vans for smooth operation of VIO in Plateau State, established Computerized Vehicle Inspection Service Centre Jos

Sports

As a sports lover, former football star, and golf enthusiast, Governor Lalong led Plateau United to its Nigerian Professional Football League Trophy 2016/2017 season. Under Lalong's Administration, Plateau played in the CAF Champions League twice.

The Governor Constructed Green in Lamingo and Rayfield Golf Courses to make the golf pitch meet global Standards and attract national and international tournaments.

Lalong's commitment to sports qualified Plateau United to the African Champions League 2022 after coming second in the 2022 Nigerian League. The annual Sponsorship of Plateau Governor's Professional Golf Tournament with Local and International participation, in a standard pitch.

There was also substantial construction work carried out at the Zaria Road New Stadium with the Dressing Room, pitch and others completed and put into use, and attracting national and international matches.

Parts of the last assignment of Governor Lalong as he hands over power to the Governor-elect, Barr. Caleb Mutfwang, on Monday, May 29 included commissioning of the Simon Bako Lodge, at Government Lodge, Rayfield Jos, and a valedictory session which he held with members of his State Executive Council on Friday, May, 26, 2023.

METRO-FOCUS

What makes Abuja rickle

By AISHA SAIDU, Abuja

THE land now called Abuja was originally the south-western part of the ancient Habe (Hausa) kingdom of Zazzau (Zaria). It is populated for centuries by several semi-independent tribes. The largest of the tribes was Gbagyi (Gwari), followed by the Koro and a few other smaller tribes. In early 1800s when Zaria fell to Fulani invaders, Muhammed Makau, fled south with some followers and his brothers- Abu Ja and Kwaka. Abu Ja succeeded Makau in 1825.

Abuja became a major commercial centre where goods were exchanged by long distance traders. The inhabitants successfully fought off the Fulani and were not conquered as the neighbouring lands were. In 1902, Abuja was occupied by the British colonial army. The British reorganised the kingdoms and called them "emirates" which means "kingdoms" in Arabic. Until 1975, it remained a quiet part of Nigeria.

The problems associated with the capital being in Lagos, as mentioned earlier, led to the search for a new capital that year. Abuja was selected from amongst 33 possible sites. The criteria used for selection included: centrality, healthy, climate, land availability and use, water supply, multi-access possibilities, security, existence of resources, drainage, good soil, physical planning convenience and ethnic accord. The Emir of Abuja at the time, Altai Suleiman Bara, was asked to meet with his Emirate Council to approve contributing four of the five districts to Abuja to become the new capital. The council was divided as some districts considered it too much of a sacrifice; but at the end, they approved the request from the Federal Government. Thus, the Abuja in Niger



State contributed 80% of the land of the territory, Plateau State (Now Nassarawa State) contributed 16 percent of the South east territory and Kwara State (now Kogi State) contributed about four percent of the south-west territory.

The Emirate was then asked to give up the Abuja for the Federal Capital Territory. Again the council was divided. In the end, they agreed believing that the name of the emirate would become

famous throughout the world. The previous town of Abuja was renamed Suleja after the then Emir of Suleiman Barau and "Ja" the last syllable of the first emir's name.

Another interesting historical fact is that in the Gbagyi (or Gwan) language, the word "Aso means "success" or "victory" According to tradition, the original inhabitants of the region lived at the base of the rock for centuries without

being conquered. The rock was a refuge as well as mystical source strength. Asoro "(Aso Koro)" the name of the one of the local areas, therefore, means "people of victory." In addition, the term "Aso Rock" is increasingly being used to refer not only to the physical structure of the most imposing rock in the area, but also as a symbol of government power and a nation.

Abuja is located in the centre of Nigeria, within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Abuja is a planned city, and was built mainly in the 1980s. It officially became Nigeria's capital on 12 December 1991, replacing Lagos, though the latter remains the country's most populous city. At the 2006 census, the city of Abuja had a population of 776,298, making it one of the ten most populous cities in Nigeria.

Abuja has witnessed a huge influx of people into the city; the growth has led to the emergence of satellite towns such as Karu Urban Area, Suleja, Gwagwalada, Lugbe, Kuje and smaller settlements to which the planned city is sprawling. The unofficial metropolitan area of Abuja has a population of well over three million and comprises the fourth largest urban area in Nigeria, surpassed only by Lagos, Kano and Ibadan.

Some decades after it's creation as the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja is transforming into one of the mega cities of the world. Today the consistent transformation of this territory has enticing people particularly fun seeker both within and outside the country.

In Abuja some of these recreational areas those quite on the high side also provided comfortable avenues for these fun seekers who spend hours catching fun after a day's work.



SUNDAY PEOPLE

BUHARI TAKES TINUBU ON TOURS OF PRESIDENTIAL VILLA





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Attitude lamination: see but not seen

THE attitude of drivers has to compliment the safety features fitted to their car and not be overshadowed by them. Safety design and equipment of cars should never replace our own obligations of just prudence and duty of care. We have the ability to judge all road situations, anticipate the movement of others and prioritize our safety continually. Inanimate objects like airbags don't compete on our level, yet because we have them fitted, our level of complacency may rise due to their presence. Stand by any road side and observe drivers on their driving demeanor and the answer will only concur.

Sit on any of today's family hatchbacks and compare it to what was available less than ten years ago. The interior design of today's state of the art automobiles should immediately welcome you into their mobile living rooms. Quality carpets, supportive seating, nice décor, good lighting, good ventilation complete with factory fitted stereo system, all for your maximum pleasure and comfort. Indeed, since we transcended from primordial transportation system to modern motorized transportation system, our mental and physical dexterity has greatly improved alongside our ability to build quite phenomenal trans-global motor transport. Powered windows and mirrors, assisted steering and anti-lock braking systems from the standard equipment on most cars.

The fact that each and every car has a laminated front windscreen has long subsided into significance. The hairline cracks that appear in windscreen hit by foreign objects are generally accompanied by expletives and derogatory terms regarding the perpetrator. No one ever gives thanks to for the lamination that prevents the said object from entering the car and inflicting grievous bodily harm on the occupants. The side and rear windows offer no such lamination.

The recent trends of creating Darth Vader's cars by the post purchase fitting of darkened film to the car windows is fraught with danger. While such lamination has an undoubted security value, this can be totally surpassed by the danger of restricted vision to the driver.

As a nation, we are often preoccupied with the weather. Our sometime terrible weather has great demands on the driver to get and maintain a clear view in the typical Nigerian weather. It rarely makes a difference whether it is dry or rainy season as both have their unique challenges.

Looking through clear glass is onerous enough, yet people have shot themselves in the legs by devising extra sensory perception by their ability to ride around at night peering through shaded windows, akin to driving in darkness wearing sun shades. It is rather alarming how sexy designs have now superseded all other safety considerations. Techno phrases now in vogue include: Anti-lock braking system (ABS), Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD), Electronic Stability Programme (ESP), Emergency Brake Assist (EBS), Supplementary Restraint System (SRS), Automatic Stability Control (ASC). Etc. let's analyze the Airbag (SRS) briefly.

Supplementary Restraint System (SRS) Airbag

Written and embossed on most airbag systems, the key word here is 'supplementary'. Airbags are only as good as the driver's deportment and the additional use of seatbelts. Drivers who sit too close to the steering run the risk of injury if the airbag activates. Remember the contact with the airbag should occur when the bag has fully inflated and just prior to deflation. Seatbelts in most new cars will pull tight in an impact, forcing the driver/ passenger into the seat thereby ensuring that all-important safety space between them and the inflating airbag. Always adjust headrests to their proper position cupping your head as you lean back. In a nutshell, airbags are only supplementary and designed to be used alongside seatbelts.



NEWS

Gombe approves N2.8bn for fertilizer, N1.8bn for compensation

From WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe

GOMBE State Government has approved the sum of Two Billion, Eight Hundred and Thirty Seven Million (#2,837,037,000.00), Five Hundred Thousand Naira for the procurement of Five thousand metric tonnes of fertilizer for the 2023 farming season.

Addressing Journalists shortly after the State Executive Council meeting which was presided over by the State Governor, Muhammad Inuwa Yahaya, the State Commissioner for Information, Mr Meshach Audu Lauco said Government is working on flagging off the sales of the fertilizer to farmers at a subsidized price very soon.

However, giving more details, the Commissioner for Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Mohammed Magaji Gettato said the brand of the fertilizer is NPK 20-10-10 which is a higher version of the NPK 15-15 distributed last year.

He explained that the fertilizer has already been supplied to the State awaiting blending by TAK Agro, the company managing the state owned fertilizer blending plant.

On the issue of subsidy, the commissioner said the Governor will make it known during the flag off of the fertilizer distribution expected to begin between the 1st and 29th of June this year.

Also approved during the SEC meeting, was the sum of One Billion, Eight Hundred and Five Million, Fifty Two Thousand, Four Hundred and Seventy Five Naira, Fifty Kobo (#1,805,052,075.52k) for the payment of compensation to property owners affected by road construction in Kaltungo, Bajoga, Gombe, Tumfure and Ashaka Townships.

The State Commissioner for



Inuwa

Lands and Survey, Usman Jafun Biri said the compensation will cover not only private properties but also public properties such as, light, water and other utilities.

The commissioner advised land owners to always seek the approval of constituted authorities before putting up structures, saying the money earmarked for compensation can be use for the construction of more roads to serve the interest of the people.

Also speaking on approvals under the purview of his Ministry, the Commissioner of Health, Dr Habu Dahiru, explained that the Executive Council approved the upward review of the contract sum for the construction of the School of Nursing and Midwifery to the tune of Five Hundred and Twenty Three Million, Three Hundred and Eighteen Thousand, Five Hundred and Sixty Six Naira.

He said the review of the initial contract sum of One Billion, Fifty Million Naira becomes necessary due to the astronomical rise in the prices

of construction materials at both the local and international markets.

While giving an overview of activities in his Ministry, the Commissioner of Works, Engr Abubakar Bappah said the administration of Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya has, in the last four years, awarded many road projects spread across the State.

He revealed that the immediate past administration in the state left behind 19 yet to be started road projects for which Governor Inuwa Yahaya has completed 11 while 5 are ongoing.

On the network one hundred kilometers of roads in each of the 11 Local Government Areas of the State, the works commissioner explained that at least a total of 60 kilometers have been covered in each of the local government areas.

Engr. Abubakar Bappah added that the present administration in the State is equally proactive on repairs and maintenance of wash aways and construction of bridges to link hard to reach communities across the State.

Kogi Assembly lifts ban on suspended 8 members

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE Kogi State House of Assembly on Wednesday, lifted the ban on the suspended eight assembly members and two local government council chairmen following terrorism allegations.

The lifting of the ban followed the clearance by the Department of State Security Service (DSS) which was sent by the State Governor, Alhaji Yahaya Bello in correspondence to the assembly and read by the Speaker Rt. Honourable Prince Mathew Kolawole at the plenary.

The lawmakers include Daniya Rayin, Bassa constituency, Murktar Bajeh, Okehi constituency, Kilani Olumo, Ijumu constituency and Moses Akande Ogori-Magongo constituency.

Others are Mohammed Lawi Ahmed Okene one constituency, Atule Igbunu, Ibaji constituency, Suleiman Attajachi Musa, Idah and Aderonke Aro, Yagba West constituency.

While the cleared council chairmen include, Moses

Olorunleke, Kabba-Bunu local government area and William Ikojo, Ibaji of Ibaji local government area.

Reading the correspondence from the governor, the speaker Prince Mathew Kolawole said the lawmakers and council chairmen were not indicted.



Bello

SUNDAY FEATURES

Hilda Baci: Exemplar of resilient Nigerian spirit

On May 15, 2023, at Amore Gardens, Lekki, Lagos, Hilda Baci, whose real name is Hilda Bassey Effiong, effectively broke the Guinness World Records for the longest cooking by an individual. As her ardent throng of supporters cheered her on, in the fanfare that the attempt became, she continuously cooked for 100 hours and 40 minutes. AUSTYN OGANNAH, writes.

ALTHOUGH she initially planned to cook for 96 hours, enough to surpass the previous record set by Lata London in September 2019 when she cooked her name into fame by completing her cooking marathon for 87 hours, 45 minutes, Baci was motivated to extend her attempt and surpass it by over 13 hours. What was immediately obvious was the irrepressible Nigerian spirit of dogged determination to beat the odds, to excel regardless, to thrive despite everything stacked up against survival and to emerge from it all, smelling of roses.

Questions are being asked whether it is indeed possible for a person to stand and cook for a period of 4 days nonstop, taking only two hours to rest within a 24-hour period. I have also pondered this and asked myself if it is truly possible. That is, however, a topic for discussion on another day.

I would love to ask the producers a few questions. There has to be some skills and techniques involved to survive the ordeal of being on one's feet for that period of time. But to capture the analogy of Baci's successful attempt as a commentary on the Nigerian spirit, that the Afrobeat legend, Fela Anikulapo Kuti picturesquely captured in his lyrics "Suffering and Smiling", it will be instructive to grasp the Herculean effort it demanded and the toll it took on her.

She attributed her success to five years of preparation, running a restaurant, and participating in a jollof face-off competition, which she won. These, she claimed, supplied her the wherewithal to withstand preparing 200 meals, which she served to approximately over 4,000 people.

The meals included various rice dishes, pasta, porridge, mashed potatoes, soups, cold dishes, and side servings to go with them all. The carnival nature of the attempt and the free food attracted even more people as she gained significant attention on social media, with nearly three million Google searches while it went on.

To remain within the requirements of the attempt, Baci made sure to cook all the meals by herself without any external help. To showcase Nigerian food to the world, she focused on mostly local dishes. And to demonstrate her gratitude for the incredible level of support she received from those who turned up to keep her going, day and night, and the brands that made it all happen for her, she expressed her unreserved appreciation at her first public appearance, while insisting that she followed



Baci

all the rules and did not cut corners in creating the experience she envisioned for herself when she made up her mind to attempt the record.

Although pushing to a 100 hours was not in her plans for the attempt, she revealed that she was convinced by her friend and brother to make it a round number. Still nothing spelt Nigerian more in everything she accomplished than the further revelation that the challenges she faced after only six hours made her consider giving up on that very first day. What kept her going, she said, was the strength she drew from her family, friends, fans, and followers who supported her throughout the journey.

As with the majority of Nigerians who put up with the vagaries of life and are undaunted in the face of the most debilitating obstacles, Baci acknowledged the role of God and people's strength in keeping her going, especially during her most difficult moments in those gruelling 100 hours.

Baci's mother, Mrs. Lynda Ndukwe, the CEO of Calabar Pot, is another manifestation of the Nigerian drive towards set goals. As the old block from which Hilda is a chip, she expressed immense pride in her daughter's accomplishment, stating that it was a testament to the values and upbringing she instilled in Hilda and her six siblings. It bore witness to the significance of familial support and the fruition of inculcated values within the Nigerian matrix.

The country is seeing further examples of how unwavering determination can break records, establish reckoning,

immortalise names and set new records. Baci's story, as many other stories across the country which scarcely make it to headline news and never become viral online sensations, inspire us to celebrate the passion, resilience and hard work that characterise the Nigerian spirit.

Despite the challenges faced by Nigeria, this May 2023 serves as an opportunity for the nation to showcase its strengths. Whether residing in affluent areas like Lagos, Rivers or Abuja, or playing pivotal roles in trading arenas, such as the Kasuwar Kwari Clothes Market in Kano or the Zaki Biam Yam Market in Benue, Nigerians can aspire to live more beautiful and prosperous lives by achieving further success.

Nigerians possess unique qualities, nurtured by lofty aspirations, undying quests for knowledge, and unparalleled diligence. They embody the spirit of audacity and perseverance, refusing to give up even in the face of failures and hardships. Against all odds, Nigerians defy limitations and emerge as successful global brands in tandem with the oft-used aphorism "Naija no dey carry last."

Recently, Napoli's Victor Osimhen, helped the Serie A side end their 33-year Scudetto drought. His goal contributions and leveller in a 1-1 draw against Udinese sent Naples into wild jubulations. It marked his 22nd goal, surpassing the record set by Cameroonian legend Samuel Eto'o as the African with the most goals in a single Serie A season. Days later, Osimhen further solidified his greatness by surpassing Liberian icon George Weah's

record of 46 goals in 114 Serie A games, scoring an incredible 47 goals.

Not long after that, Tiwa Savage, the Afrobeats Queen, made history on May 6, when she performed at the coronation concert of King Charles III and Queen Camilla at Windsor Castle, London. This momentous occasion marked the first time a Nigerian artist performed at a royal coronation, elevating Savage's global stature and showcasing the immense talent within Nigeria's music industry.

Now Baci has added to that lore by breaking barriers in the culinary world with this Guinness World Records attempt, further highlighting the ingenuity and determination of Nigerians in various fields. These are testaments of the unwavering spirit of Nigerians.

Despite moments of despair, insults and obstacles, Nigerians are known to persevere and emerge victorious. Wherever they go, people recognise this never-say-die mentality that drives the Nigerian to excellence. Even if we sometimes forget due to the status quo at home, events such as these, serve as valuable reminders that individuals of all backgrounds, and brackets have it in them to never give up on their dreams.

Nigeria boasts icons in various fields, including politics, religion, academia, sports, entertainment and business, whether recognised in the Guinness World Records or by esteemed publications like Time Magazine, or in the small spaces they call their own, who have exemplified dignity, passion and determination,

propelling Nigeria to international acclaim and typifying this spirit.

As Nigerians at home or in the Diaspora, we cheer for our compatriots, contributing to Nigeria's reputation as a nation that dares greatly. And, we know that this spirit resides in us.

Another salient point in Baci's attempt was the overwhelming support she received that did not care for tribe, ethnicity, religion or any of the countless stratification employed to cause divisions. It tells of another side of the Nigerian story, that as a people, we are more united than politics will make us believe. Wherever there is an occasion calling for unity, the standard Nigerian response is breathtakingly heart-warming. Every time! We must learn from this and build on it in every other aspect of our continued existence as one country. Nigeria will go very far when we look past our differences and hold on to everything that makes us the loving, kind, supportive Nigerians we know we can be.

Events like these, for Baci, Savage, Osimhen, remind us that our blood, spirit and indomitable mindsets can propel us to success anywhere in the world. Regardless of age, ethnicity, religion, or background, their stories and our own personal stories, serve as a powerful reminder that success is attainable for all.

With over 250 ethnic groups, diverse religions, political differences and cultural beliefs, Nigeria's strength lies in its audacity. Nigerians remain undeterred by obstacles and immune to limitations. Whether in politics, religion, academia, sports, entertainment, or business, Nigerians continue to inspire and blaze trails, breaking records and making Nigeria the envy of the world. The rest of the Nigerian population, whether at home or in the Diaspora, champion these achievements and contributes to the nation's progress.

Baci's potential inclusion in the Guinness Book of World Records for her cooking marathon is another moment of valuable lessons for Nigeria during its transition period and for its leaders. Nigeria must embrace exemplary leadership at all levels and undergo a national mentality shift from consumption to production.

Baci's dedication, sacrifice and determination serve as an inspiration for young Nigerians and demonstrate the rewards that come from hard work. As Nigeria faces critical challenges, it is essential for leaders to emulate Baci's commitment and adopt a new leadership ethos focused on progress and development.

SUNDAY SPORTS

Man City striker wins Premier League player

Manchester City's Erling Haaland has become the first player to win the Premier League player and young player of the year awards in the same season.

The 22-year-old striker's 36 goals have seen him break the Premier League record for most goals in a season.

Overall, he has scored 52 goals during the campaign.

"I am honoured to have become the first player to win both awards in the same season - thank you to everyone who voted for me," said Haaland.

Haaland, who received the most combined votes from the public and a Premier League panel, joined City from Borussia Dortmund last summer and has helped the club win a third successive top-flight title.

He has already been named the Football Writers' Association (FWA) men's footballer of the year.

"It has been an incredible first season in the Premier League and lifting the trophy last weekend in front of our fans at the Etihad was a very special moment for me," added the Norway international.

City are also on for the Treble as they will face Manchester United in the FA Cup final on 3 June before playing Inter Milan in the Champions League final on 10 June.

"These awards would not have been possible without my amazing team-mates, the manager and all of the staff at the club who help me perform on the pitch," said Haaland.

"Now we have two more finals to go and we want to finish the season strong."

Erling Haaland posted an image of his battle wounds picked up in Manchester City's 1-1 draw at Brighton on Thursday.

Julio Enciso's superb strike salvaged a draw for the Seagulls after Phil Foden fired the Premier League champions ahead.

The result ensured Brighton will play Europa League football next season for the first time in their history.

And judging by Haaland's legs, Roberto De Zerbi's side were willing to go to war to claim an impressive sixth-placed league finish.

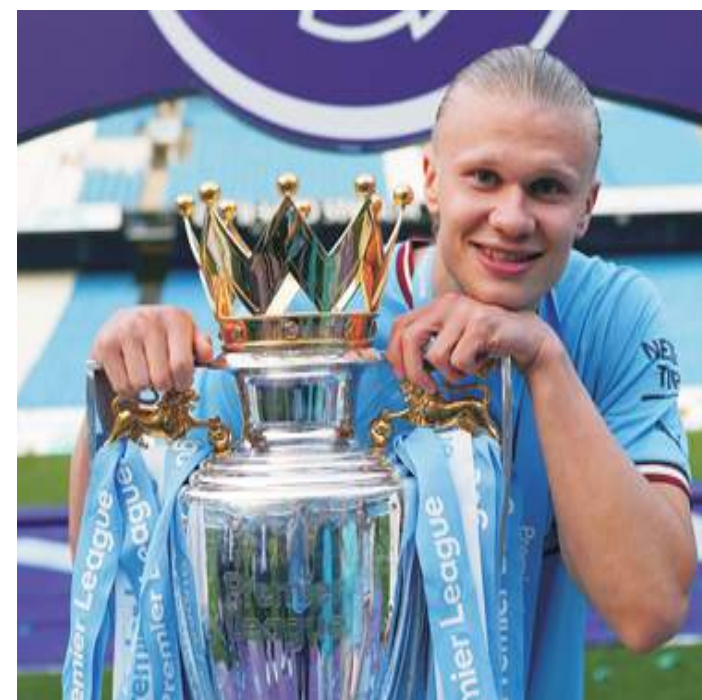
The Norwegian striker took to Instagram following the clash at the AMEX Stadium to show off a pair of Nike trainers.

But it was the nasty looking cuts to his right leg that drew more attention than his new kicks.

Haaland posted the image alongside the caption: "Love these" accompanied by two fire emojis.

It remains to be seen whether his wounds will make him a doubt for Sunday's final game of the season at Brentford.

It was a rare off-night in front of goal for the City striker who could only muster up one shot on target during the 90 minutes.



He did, however, provide the assist to allow Foden to open the scoring in the 25th minute.

It has been an incredible first Premier League campaign for the 22-year-old who has netted a staggering 52 goals in 51 games across all competitions.

Haaland smashed Alan Shearer and Andy Cole's long-standing record high of 34 goals in a Premier League season, registering 36 so far.

With the league title already sewn up, the striker is two games away from completing a historic Treble.

A win over Manchester United in the FA Cup final and Champions League success against Inter next month could also see the Norwegian stake a strong claim for this year's

Ballon d'Or.

Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola believes much of the club's success this season is down to the efforts of Rodri - not star striker Erling Haaland.

The Premier League giants are approaching the end of what could be an historic campaign for the club.

City are on the verge of winning their third consecutive Premier League title and set to play in the finals of both the Champions League and FA Cup.

Haaland's 52 goals across all competitions have heavily contributed to their dominance this season.

However, Guardiola has highlighted one player in particular who has been a fundamental source of success for the treble chasers.

Speaking after they thumped Real Madrid 4-0, he said: "What a year [for Rodri]."

"Everyone is talking about Haaland, but without him [Rodri] this would not have been possible."

"He has become the best midfielder we have, it has been an imperial year. We are very happy, very much."

Rodri has made 52 appearances for City this season, and has started all but one of the 34 Premier League games he's been available for.

He was part of the dominant midfield that brushed aside 14-time Champions League winners Madrid on Wednesday night.

Rodri is likely to remain a key starter for Guardiola's side for their remaining games of the season.

Up next for them is a home clash against Chelsea and should they win, or Nottingham Forest beat Arsenal the evening before, they will be crowned Premier League champions.

An FA Cup final against Manchester United will be the first of two clashes in June, with the showcase against Inter the week after being their final test of the season.

Manchester City will finally look to get their hands on the Champions League trophy when they meet Inter Milan in the final next month.

The Citizens have dominated English football since Pep Guardiola has taken charge but have never managed to win Europe's greatest prize.

City have reached the final and the semi-final in the tournament's last two iterations but now couldn't wish for a better opportunity.

The Etihad outfit thrashed

reigning champions Real Madrid 5-1 on aggregate and could still complete a historic treble - if they win the FA Cup final the previous week.

City will now face Inter after the Italian giants overcame their inner-city rivals AC Milan 3-0 over two legs to set up an intriguing clash.

The Nerazzurri sit third in Serie A but are three-time Champions League winners - last winning the competition under Jose Mourinho in 2010.

The 2022/23 Champions League final will take place on Saturday, June 10.

It will be played at the Ataturk Olympic Stadium in Istanbul, with kick-off scheduled for 8pm UK time.

talkSPORT will have live coverage from Turkey, with Adrian Durham serving as your presenter.

Commentary will be provided by Jim Proudfoot and former Manchester City manager Stuart Pearce.

Noel Gallagher promised on talkSPORT to watch City's European final with the club's supporters branch in San Diego.

While on White and Jordan, Citizens fan Christie, who is the chair of San Diego's branch of City's official supporter's club, called in at 4.30am PDT with an offer Gallagher couldn't refuse.

The Oasis icon replied: "Good morning! I think my reputation precedes me, Simon's reputation is far worse."

"I didn't have plans, but I do now! You'll have to give me some kind of address. 'I'd love to come and watch it with you lot, it'll be great!'"

SUNDAY SPORTS

World Cup: Flying Eagles set for showdown with Brazil

THE Nigerian U-20 national team, the Flying Eagles, have completed their relocation from Mendoza to Buenos Aires for their upcoming crucial group stage match against Brazil.

The Flying Eagles' successful venture in Mendoza saw them clinch victories in their opening two matches of the FIFA U-20 World Cup.

The Estadio Malvinas Argentinas in Mendoza provided an exhilarating backdrop for Nigeria's impressive performances.

In their inaugural match, the Flying Eagles soared to a 2-1 triumph over the Dominican Republic.

They continued their dominance in their subsequent outing, securing a resolute 2-0 win against Italy, courtesy of goals masterfully crafted by Salem Fago and Jude Sunday.

The resounding victories earned Nigeria an unassailable six points, guaranteeing their advancement to the knockout stage of the tournament.

Now, the Flying Eagles will face five-time winners Brazil in their final group encounter. The highly anticipated match will take place at the renowned Estadio Unico Diego Maradona in La Plata.

After a shock 3-2 loss to the Italians in their opening group game, Brazil sent a message to the Flying Eagles that they are back in business by demolishing Dominican Republic 6-0 to boost their chances of qualifying to the knockout stage.

Six different players netted for the South American powerhouse, namely Savio, Marcos Leonardo, Jean Pedroso, Giovane, Marlon Gomes and Matheus Martins.

A disciplined and well-organized Nigeria side maintained their one hundred percent start to the tournament with a 2-0 victory over Italy.

If Brazil beat Nigeria today and Italy register a win against Dominican Republic, three teams would finish on six points and goal difference would be used as the tiebreaker.

"The World Cup is very difficult and our group is very balanced. Nigeria already has six points. It was worth a lot for the difference," Brazil U20 head coach Ramon Menezes was quoted as saying by Globo.

"Now it's time to recover these players, and it shows the difficulties of this decisive game, and football doesn't even have time to celebrate.

"We already have a trip, we have to train to play a



great game on Saturday."

Group D table-toppers Nigeria have a goal difference of +3, Brazil +5, Italy -1 and Dominican Republic -7.

If Nigeria avoids defeat against the Brazilians, they

Koepka claimed major glory in Oak Hill

THE Charles Schwab Challenge is taking place on the PGA Tour this week and PGA Championship hero Michael Block will be part of the action.

As the brilliant Brooks Koepka claimed major glory in Oak Hill last Sunday, many people were also cheering on club professional Block.

The 46-year-old was superb throughout the week, claiming a 15th placed finish and an invite to the Charles Schwab among other accolades.

He'll join another stellar field including defending champion Sam Burns and world number one Scottie Scheffler in Texas.

Burns beat his good friend Scheffler in a playoff last year to clinch the title and there will be plenty of top names eyeing glory this week.

The tournament is being held from Thursday, May 25 to Sunday, May 28.

It will take place at Colonial Country Club in Fort Worth, Texas. The course is a par 70 and measures 7,209 yards in length.

Play in the opening two rounds will begin at 1pm UK time while play gets underway at 2pm UK time over the weekend.

talkSPORT 2 will have live commentary of all the action on each day of the tournament.

The Charles Schwab is one of only five invitational events on the PGA Tour alongside the Genesis, the Arnold Palmer, the RBC Heritage, and Memorial.

It has a smaller field than normal tournaments and can offer places to players such as PGA Championship hero Block.

Scheffler headlines the field while Viktor Hovland, Max Homa, Jordan Spieth and Tony Finau are the other top-ranked players.

Justin Rose, Zach Johnson, Chris Kirk, Kevin Kisner and Rory Sabbatini are among the former winners of the

will clinch the coveted top spot in Group D.

The Flying Eagles are eagerly looking forward to the challenge and are determined to continue their scintillating run in the U-20 World Cup.

tournament who are back to try and claim the trophy again.

There were a total of 120 players involved, but that has been cut to 72 for round three.

Club pro Block has a sneaking suspicion his life has changed forever thanks to his sensational performance at the PGA Championship.

"This week's been absolutely a dream," Block said. "I didn't know it was going to happen, but I knew if I just played my darned game that I could do this.

"It just happened to be that I was in the 2023 PGA Championship at Oak Hill, and I had Rory McIlroy in my group.

"I wasn't coming down the stretch to win, but at the same time, Sunday at a major with the crowd here at Rochester was unreal.

"My life's changed, but my life's only changed for the better. I've got my family. I've got my friends. I've got the people that really love me and care about me here. It's an epic experience.

"I'm just a club



Block

BRAZIL will play friendlies against two African nations as part of an anti-racism campaign in support of their Real Madrid forward Vinicius Junior, who has been racially abused in Spanish League games this season, the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) said on Friday.

The five-time world champions will face Guinea in Barcelona on June 17 and Senegal in Lisbon three days later.

The CBF has also launched a national campaign against racism in Brazilian league matches starting this weekend following the racist insults 22-year-old Vinicius suffered in a LaLiga match at Valencia on Sunday, the 10th such episode against the player that LaLiga has reported to prosecutors this season.

With the slogan "There is no game with racism," the CBF aims to extend the fight started in 2022 under its

professional, right? I work. I have fun. I have a couple boys that I love to play golf with. I have a great wife. I have great friends. I live the normal life.

"I love being at home. I love sitting in my backyard. My best friend in the world is my dog. I can't wait to see him.

"But, yeah, it's been a surreal experience and I had this weird kind of sensation that life is going to be not quite the same moving forward, but only in a good way, which is cool.

"I want to get more phone calls. I want to get more exemptions. I want people to start calling me and saying, 'we want you in our event because it makes it better'. That's great to me."

Charles Schwab Challenge 2023: Betting with talkSPORT BET

Scottie Scheffler - 10/3
Harry Hall - 10/3
Harris English - 9/2
Emiliano Grillo - 8/1
Byeong Hun An - 14/1
Justin Rose - 16/1
Robby Shelton - 22/1
Adam Schenk - 22/1
Max Homa - 30/1

Brazil to play two African nations in anti-racism campaign

new president Ednaldo Rodrigues, who pushed for changes in legislation that saw the football authorities and Brazilian justice system apply more severe punishments against racism in stadiums.

"We want Brazil to lead the fight against racism worldwide," Rodrigues told Reuters in an interview in March.

The CBF worked closely with Vinicius on the details surrounding the two friendlies as it wanted to be sure the player was comfortable with the matches being held in Iberia and the Real Madrid winger supported the idea, sources said.

With the CBF still looking for a new national team manager, Brazil will again be coached by caretaker Ramon Menezes, who will leave the Under-20s for a day during the World Cup that is currently being played in Argentina to announce on Sunday in Rio de Janeiro the squad for the Barcelona and Lisbon friendlies.

Rodrigues told Reuters in March that Real Madrid manager Carlo Ancelotti would be an obvious choice for the vacant Brazil post if he was available at the end of the European season.

However, last week the Italian said he would honour the last year of his contract at the Bernabeu.



Soccer Football - LaLiga - Valencia v Real Madrid - Mestalla, Valencia, Spain - May 21, 2023 Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior gestures towards a fan after witnessing abuse as Valencia's Jose Gaya and Cenk Ozkacar attempt to restrain him

Archer out of the Ashes as England squad

A recurrence of a stress fracture to his elbow means he will miss this summer's Ashes with the news confirmed as part of the England Test squad announcement for the Ireland Test man in June.

He will now spend time with the England and Sussex medical teams, who will work on his injury management.

Jonny Bairstow has returned to the England Test squad after recovering from a fractured leg and dislocated ankle.

Bairstow suffered a freak injury while playing golf that has ruled him out for a number of months.

He replaces wicketkeeper Ben Foakes, who was omitted from the 15-man squad all together.

Warwickshire seamer Chris Woakes returns for the first time since March 2022, and if selected, this will be his first Test appearance on home soil since August 2020.

After taking a break from the tour of New Zealand, Durham fast bowler Mark Wood is back in the squad.

Ollie Pope has also been made vice-captain for the match at Lord's starting on June 1.

Commenting on the selected squad, ECB Managing Director for England Men's Cricket, Rob Key, said: "We are looking forward to the summer ahead and getting into the swing of things, starting with a good

test against Ireland.

"It was a seriously tough decision to leave Ben Foakes out of the squad. He has been excellent for England in the last year, but Jonny Bairstow is one of the best players in the world whose performances last summer epitomised what we are about.

"It has been a frustrating and upsetting period for Jofra Archer. He was making good progress until a recurrence of the elbow injury, which kept him out for an extended period previously.

"We wish him the best of luck with his recovery. I'm sure we will see Jofra back to his best and winning games for England, whatever the format. Hopefully, sooner rather than later.

"I would like to wish the players every success, especially those returning after some time away."

Full squad to face Ireland
Ben Stokes (Durham)
Captain

James Anderson (Lancashire)
Jonathan Bairstow (Yorkshire)

Stuart Broad (Nottinghamshire)
Harry Brook (Yorkshire)
Zak Crawley (Kent)
Ben Duckett (Nottinghamshire)

Dan Lawrence (Essex)
Jack Leach (Somerset)
Ollie Pope (Surrey)
Matthew Potts (Durham)
Ollie Robinson (Sussex)
Joe Root (Yorkshire)

SUNDAY SPORTS

Who wins Lara, Wood 2?, Lopez-Conlan, more prediction

Mauricio Lara and Leigh Wood do it again on Saturday in Manchester, plus MUCH more this weekend! Mauricio Lara and Leigh Wood will go head-to-head once again this evening just a few months after the Mexican claimed the WBA featherweight title.

HOWEVER, the rematch has been thrown into controversy after rumours emerged that Lara was struggling to make weight. Then after a high weight check, the British Boxing Board of Control told the 25-year-old it wouldn't be safe for him to try and make the 126lbs limit.

As a result, the Mexican came in at 129.8lbs, 3.9lbs heavier than Wood and the WBA have removed his belt.

Wood is now at a huge disadvantage but can still reclaim the title if he wins, so the bout is going ahead after Lara agreed to a second weigh-in to prove he hadn't massively rehydrated.

Lara beat Wood by knockout in the seventh round of their first clash in February, hitting his opponent with a devastating left hook that ended the battle.

The Brit was ahead on the scorecards at the time and looked to be heading for the win in his hometown before being knocked down and his trainer, Ben Davison, throwing in the towel.

As such, they ruled that he would not be able to come in any lighter than 128.5lbs.

In normal circumstances, a fighter coming in overweight would be stripped of his world title, leaving it vacant unless he is beaten in the fight by the challenger who would then take it.

However it was initially unclear if Lara would lose his WBA featherweight belt by default as he argued that he was not allowed the opportunity to make the 126lbs limit.

He ultimately came in at 129.8lbs on Friday and the WBA then ruled that he should be stripped.

The WBA's statement read: "Mauricio Lara lost the World Boxing Association (WBA) featherweight belt after not being able to make

weight today. However, Leigh Wood will be able to opt for the title."

Meanwhile, Wood has made the championship limit and came in at 125.9lbs - clearly putting him at a disadvantage, but meaning that he can still win the world title if he wins the fight.

There is jeopardy that the fight may not take place as Wood's trainer Ben Davison has indicated he may pull his man out.

Promoter Eddie Hearn explained: "Over the last couple of days obviously with both fighters making championship weight, at the BBBofC check weight on fight week they weren't happy with Lara's weight at the time.

"They eventually made the decision that Lara cannot weight less than 128.5lbs on the scales.

"They were happy with Wood's weight and he is allowed to make championship weight, he can win the world title on Saturday night.

"As we know normally if a championship fighter doesn't make championship weight they will lose the belt on the scales and the belt will become vacant."

Wood's trainer Davison reacted: "Realistically this shouldn't be happening, should it?"

"It's a disgrace to be honest. It's an absolute shamebles

"Leigh was already on championship weight by the time we know what weight he [Lara] is looking to come in at..."

"We're gonna have to have a look at the situation and go from there.

"I can't sit here and say we 100 per cent rule out the fight not taking place tomorrow. I can't say that.

"It's a discussion I've gotta have with Leigh."

We've got a lot of action this weekend in boxing, with Mauricio Lara and Leigh Wood meeting in Saturday's headline fight.



So who wins? We've got our picks in for seven fights in total!

Mauricio Lara vs Leigh Wood 2
Scott Christ (47-22)

I picked Leigh Wood in February. I think it was about as good as he can fight. But Ben Davison and Wood really wanted this rematch immediately, because Wood thinks he can beat this guy. And I do, too, up to the point where Wood has to avoid Lara's fight-changing power for an entire 12 rounds.

I just don't think Wood has the ability to do that. For six, for eight? Yeah. For 10? Maybe. For 12? I don't see it. But it can happen. All Wood has to do to win is box impeccably for 36 minutes and get Lara so tired he can't really land much of anything in the double digit rounds. Maybe even go super ugly with it, grab-and-hold through the final danger rounds if you're confident a lead is built.

That's all he has to do! But I think Lara's going to come harder, sooner than before, and will look to test that confidence Wood has in himself. Lara TKO-5

Back in February, I predicted Lara to win in the 9th round. Leigh Wood was working his plan and navigating Lara's power very well for half the fight, then he suddenly wasn't, then he was done.

I can't really think of a reason to reverse my pick based on what we already saw. Wood probably can't afford a defensive lapse at any point for 12 full rounds. Lara just needs one good combination to completely redefine the fight. Wood could go for a finish of his own, but mixing it up that way just feeds into Lara's advantages. I'm still keen to see it, again, but I think we get a similar result, again. Lara TKO-9

Patrick Stumberg (53-16)
There's no question that Leigh Wood was in total control of the first fight before disaster struck. He had Lara hurt, frustrated, and bizarrely timid, and it's easy to argue that he's only a handful of adjustments away from executing that gameplan correctly this time around.

The issue there is twofold. For one, Wood's style demands a ton of confidence; he's not a great defensive fighter, meaning his power and chutzpah have to limit his opponents' output to keep him safe. With that booming left hook so near in his rearview mirror, it's an open

question whether he can still push forward with the sort of relentlessness needed to defuse Lara. For two, it's hard to get over the fact that the most limited and least-effective Lara we've seen to date still managed to knock Wood into next week.

I see this one ending quicker than the last. Lara knows he can take Wood's best shot and that the opposite isn't true; expect a higher output from "Bronco" that leads to a stoppage inside the first half. Lara KO-5

Luis Alberto Lopez vs Michael Conlan
Scott Christ (46-22)

Think this is going to be an ugly fight, but oddly entertaining in its way. What I honestly expect is a fight that I score close for Lopez where Conlan limps to the finish line after building a solid lead in the first half, and then Conlan gets disputed scores. Conlan MD-12

Wil Esco (53-15)

Here's the thing, this fight really has the potential to be a fun one that could go both ways. Luis Alberto Lopez is really all-action, and has a bit of a wild style that sort of reminds me of Julio Cesar Martinez in terms of the mentality and approach. The problem is he fights with his hands down even more than Martinez and he isn't the slickster he thinks he is in the ring. Against someone with a deep amateur background such as Conlan, I think Conlan is going to take advantage of the deficiencies with his better technical ability.

The real question for me will be whether or not Conlan can put a dent in Lopez, because if Lopez can consistently walk through his punches, he's going to be in trouble. I suspect Conlan will have enough to maintain sufficient respect even if he can't force the stoppage. And even though Conlan has shown some vulnerabilities himself, I think he guts this one out. Conlan UD-12

John Hansen (49-19)

I was originally on live coverage for this fight, and Scott apologized when he gave me the assignment. That's not to say it's a bad fight, but it does look like a pretty lousy show in terms of the home viewing experience.

Conlan has a history of losing steam, focus, motivation, or some combination thereof. Lopez is an oddball style guy that's tough to prepare for, and he's handled fighters with a profile similar to Conlan already. I can't really see Conlan knocking him out, but I can easily see Conlan

struggling with Lopez early, fading in the back half, and losing a medium to wide decision. Even with a friendly home crowd and potentially friendly home judging, I think Lopez takes the cards. Lopez UD-12

Patrick Stumberg (53-15)

Lopez is one of my favorite breeds of fighter: the kind that makes you go "how the hell is this working?" There's something extremely endearing about the way he bludgeons people with his chin held high, just waiting for an overhand right to launch it 300 yards down the fairway. I genuinely worry for his health as he runs into a top-tier puncher like Mauricio Lara, but I like his chances here. As good a craftsman as Conlan is, aggressive opponents have been a bugbear for him, from Ionut Baluta to Leigh Wood. If Lopez keeps his foot on the gas, and there's no reason to think he won't, I'm not convinced Conlan can play keep-away long enough to reach the friendly judges.

Conlan does admittedly hit harder than his finishing record would suggest and Lopez has a Joycian disinclination to protect his brain, but I like "Venado" to drag Conlan into a firefight that "Mick" can't win. Lopez slowly takes control as Conlan's legs slow down, ultimately clubbing him into submission down the stretch. Lopez TKO-9

Quick Picks!

Lawrence Okolie vs Chris Billam-Smith

- Scott: Okolie UD-12
- Wil: Okolie UD-12
- John: Okolie UD-12
- Patrick: Okolie UD-12

Alexis Rocha vs Anthony Young

- Scott: Rocha TKO-8
- Wil: Rocha TKO-8
- John: Rocha KO-5
- Patrick: Rocha TKO-7

Melvin Jerusalem vs Oscar Collazo

- Scott: Jerusalem UD-12
- Wil: Collazo UD-12
- John: Jerusalem UD-12
- Patrick: Collazo TKO-8

Jack Catterall vs Darragh Foley

- Scott: Catterall TKO-8
- Wil: Catterall UD-10
- John: Catterall UD-10
- Patrick: Catterall UD-10

Terri Harper vs Ivana Habazin

- Scott: Harper SD-10
- Wil: Harper UD-10



SUNDAY SPORTS



Spanish soccer's inaction over racist abuse of Vinícius Jr.

It's one of the world's most watched soccer leagues, featuring some of the planet's greatest players. Except, this week, nobody is talking about the 'beautiful game' after the shameful racist abuse of Real Madrid star Vinícius Jr. sent LaLiga into crisis management mode.

It was only after the 10th reported incident of racist abuse aimed at Vinícius during a La Liga match since 2021, this time in Valencia on Sunday, that Spanish football and the country's legal system finally clicked into gear.

Seven arrests were made by police on Tuesday alone, Spain's football federation (RFEF) launched a new anti-racism campaign and ordered the partial closure of Valencia's stadium and LaLiga formally called to be given sanctioning powers to better fight racism.

LaLiga told CNN it does not have the authority to impose punishments on clubs or fans. Instead, it must pass investigations into incidents of racist abuse onto local prosecutors, who deal with

them as legal cases.

But what caused this sudden flurry of activity after incident No. 10 when nine previous incidents of racist abuse seemingly were not enough to spark meaningful action?

The answer, according to one former marketing chief, is money and reputation.

For the first time, Vinícius – one of the world's most talented and recognizable players – insinuated that his future may not lie in the Iberian nation, while Spanish media was abuzz with suggestions that these incidents would hinder Spain's joint 2030 World Cup bid – with Portugal, Morocco and Ukraine – an event that could be worth billions of dollars to the country.

Ricardo Fort, the former Head of Global Sponsorships at Visa and Coca-Cola, said brands that have sponsorship agreements with LaLiga may even start reconsidering these deals.

"The sponsors, if they are doing their job, have their PR teams monitoring how much they are involved in the conversation or how often their brands are being

mentioned on social media and in the press," Fort told CNN Sport.

"They probably have a statement ready to go if they feel they have to do it, but they are most likely holding that back to use only if it's very, very necessary. All of them are trying to stay away from engaging the conversation, not to be associated with the problem.

"Behind the scenes, they are also calling the people they have to manage their relationships at LaLiga, to ask them to provide updates and to figure out what is their plan. Some of the CEOs may be questioning their marketing teams, whether or not this is something that is sustainable or if they should continue to be associated with LaLiga."

"Why are we associated with this?" Fort likens the current situation in Spain with the fallout of the FIFA corruption scandal in 2015.

Swiss police at the time made several arrests during a raid of a hotel where FIFA executives were staying, with numerous high-ranking officials indicted on charges of money laundering, fraud and racketeering in arguably the biggest scandal to ever hit global soccer.

The investigation eventually led to a number of powerful former soccer chiefs pleading guilty and receiving prison sentences.

At the time, Fort was working for Visa – one of FIFA's main sponsors – and says there is "a lot of pressure" from numerous parties on organizations like FIFA and LaLiga in crisis management situations like these.

"You have the press calling to ask for a statement, you have investor relations, so big holders of stocks of all these companies asking questions," Fort says.

"You have board members that are calling the CEO to ask what the company is going to do, you have – depending on the case – employees saying: 'Why are we associated with this?'"

At a meeting with its sponsors in Zurich, Fort says FIFA laid out its plan to form an independent ethics committee. However, when the CEOs of FIFA's sponsors were not appeased by the plan, they phoned then president Sepp Blatter to demand changes in management.

"I know that the CEO of Coca-Cola at that time, Muhtar Kent, called Sepp Blatter and said: 'Sepp, it's time to leave,'" Fort recalls. "So this is the kind of thing that if the solution is not on the horizon, some CEOs may do this."

"There is a loss of confidence in the ability of LaLiga to manage the crisis and find solutions," Fort adds. "Now, if I was a sponsor, I would demand changes in management and that starts with the president."

Earlier this week, the head of the RFEF, Luis Rubiales, criticized LaLiga president Javier Tebas, who got involved in a back-and-forth with Vinícius on Twitter after Sunday's match.

"Directors are not here to get involved in engagements on social media, we're here to try and solve problems – and this footballer was attacked very seriously," Rubiales said.

"I think Javier Tebas is not prepared, equipped or interested in solving the problem," adds Fort.

While removing the president from an organization is "not very effective in driving the solution" to the situation, Fort explains, it at least shows sponsors that the organization is "willing" to make big changes.

"That's important," he says. LaLiga was not immediately available for comment when contacted by CNN, but Tebas issued an apology on Wednesday, saying he "didn't mean to attack Vinícius."

"But if people in Brazil understood it that way I have to apologize," he told ESPN Brasil. "That wasn't my intention. I expressed myself badly, at a bad time ... but I did not intend to attack Vinícius."

Diplomatic incident
The fallout from the incident at Valencia's Mestalla stadium on Sunday even took a diplomatic turn when Brazil's president, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, and other government officials became involved.

The Brazilian minister of racial equality, Anielle Franco, said on Monday that she had already called the Spanish Public Prosecutor's Office and Spain's deputy prime minister to investigate, while Brazil's justice minister, Flávio Dino, tweeted about the possibility of "extraterritoriality" – applying Brazil's laws in Spain – if Spanish authorities fail to protect Vinícius.

The incident even drew comments from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, who said the incident at the

Mestalla Stadium "is a stark reminder of the prevalence of racism in sport."

"I call on those who organize sporting events to have strategies in place to prevent and counter racism," he added.

A spokesman for the US State Department also condemned the racists chants made against Vinícius, labeling them "horrific."

Fort estimates that many of the sponsorship deals LaLiga has could run between \$5 million and \$10 million per season; a "sizable" amount, he says, but certainly not a "meaningful" financial impact given LaLiga's revenues.

According to Reuters, LaLiga expects the total value of its business to increase from \$26 billion to nearly \$38 billion in seven to 10 years.

What can "really damage" LaLiga, however, is the continuing impact on its reputation, which would be made worse by sponsors canceling their deals with the league, according to Fort.

"If a recognized brand drops out because they don't trust LaLiga's commitment to combat racism, I think that's going to have repercussions for them the next time they're signing contracts for broadcasting or sponsors," Fort says.

It can also provide a boost to competitors, too, with other European leagues using LaLiga's mess to their advantage.

On Tuesday, the CEO of Italy's Serie A, Luigi De Siervo, said the league will take a "zero tolerance" approach to racist fans, according to Reuters.

"If you are Serie A or Ligue 1 or the Bundesliga, you are going to talk about racism in every sale speech that you're going to do in the next few years," Fort says.

"You're going to tell your prospects that, unlike other countries, you don't have a problem of racism. I think this is going to hurt LaLiga commercially."

"We don't know the extent, but I think it's going to happen over time – and they may not lose money. They know that they may not have lower revenues, but they will grow slower than they could have grown otherwise."



5 talking points as Premier League ends today

THE English Premier League, EPL, enters its final day (38th match day) this weekend with the expectation of more drama.

The final Premier League matches will take place on Sunday evening across England, and the matches will be played simultaneously.

Manchester City are already crowned champions of England, while the likes of Arsenal, Manchester United and Newcastle United all booked their place in next season's Champions League after securing a top-four spot.

Liverpool and Brighton booked their place in the Europa League after confirming their position as 5th and 6th, respectively.

Southampton have already been relegated from the league as they finish in 20th position.

But there are still a lot of talking points as the 2022/23 Premier League season ends on Sunday.

1. Battle for Europa Conference League qualifiers:

Who between Aston Villa, Tottenham Hotspur and Brentford will take the ticket for the Europa Conference League?

Aston Villa have 58 points, Tottenham have 57 points and Brentford have 56 points after 37 matches.

Aston Villa will face Brighton, Tottenham will



Man City have already won one trophy out of a possible treble

tackle Leeds United and Brentford will face Champions Manchester City.

Among the three teams, Aston Villa stands a better chance of collecting the Europa Conference League ticket should they win their game against Brighton.

Tottenham must win their game against Leeds and be hoping Aston Villa loses against Brighton to qualify for the competition.

Brentford, on the other hand, will have to win their game against City and

hope both Aston Villa and Tottenham lose their matches.

2. Relegation survival battle:

Who will survive relegation between Everton, Leicester City and Leeds United?

Everton currently sits in the 17th position with two points above the relegation zone.

The Toffees have 33 points, while Leicester City are in 19th position with 31 points and Leeds United occupy the 19th position with 31 points after 37 games. Two out of the three

teams will have to join Southampton to be relegated to the Championship.

However, Everton need to beat Bournemouth on Sunday at Goodison Park to survive relegation.

Leicester City and Leeds United also need three points when they face West Ham United and Tottenham, respectively, to stand any chances of avoiding relegation but will hope Everton loses against Bournemouth.

3. Will Manchester City's dominance continue next season under Pep

Guardiola?

Who can challenge Manchester City for the Premier League title next season?

Pep Guardiola's side have already lifted the Premier League title for this season last week.

They won the title race against Arsenal. Their only strong challenger this season was Arsenal.

However, will the likes of Manchester United, Newcastle, Liverpool and Chelsea beat Man City to the title next season?

Only time will tell, as Guardiola's men have won

the English top-flight league five times in the last six years.

4. Can Erling Haaland add to his goals tally?

Haaland is currently the top scorer in the Premier League this season, with 36 goals from 33 Premier League matches.

The Norwegian currently holds the title for the top scorer in a season in the history of the Premier League.

However, will Haaland extend his goal tally when Man City face Brentford in an away tie on Sunday? Man City fans will be eager to see their talismanic striker score at least two more goals to wrap up the season.

5. Frank Lampard's managerial career under scrutiny as big work awaits Mauricio Pochettino at Chelsea:

Will Lampard ever manage another Premier League club in the future? Lampard's time as Chelsea's caretaker manager was a disaster. The Englishman has won 1 out of his ten matches in charge of the team. Lampard will lead Chelsea to face Newcastle United on Sunday in what would be his last game in charge of the team as Pochettino will take over as the new permanent manager at the end of the season.

It is yet to be seen if Lampard will get another managerial job in the Premier League after his awful time as Chelsea's interim coach.

Guardiola jokes Man City stars

PEP Guardiola joked the Manchester City players and staff 'drank all the alcohol in Manchester' during their raucous title celebrations.

City handed the Premier League trophy after beating Chelsea 1-0 at the Etihad and it was merely a warm-up for a night or two

on the tiles.

Guardiola praised his players for being able to shake off their hangovers to prepare to face Brighton on Wednesday, a game they drew 1-1.

Asked how he celebrated the title win, Guardiola said: "At 10.30pm, I was in bed with my wife.

"I was exhausted. I watched Match of the Day and then I slept like a baby. But I know the players did what they have to do.

"When you win the Premier League you have to celebrate. They did it with the families, they enjoy a lot.

"The next morning, it was just sauna time. And the day after - yesterday - we talked a little bit in the afternoon: 'Guys you have to be ready, energy, for Brighton.' And they did it.

"I was a little bit worried about how much we drop [from] what we had done over the last four, five, six months ... 40 hours ago we drank all the alcohol in Manchester.

"But the team was there and that's why I am very pleased. Because I don't want the team to drop before the FA Cup and

Champions League finals.

"We showed why we are the best team in England. I'm very pleased with the way we still are as a team after being champion."

Of course City's season is far from over, with the final game of the Premier League season to take place this weekend against Brentford.

They'll then face Manchester United in the FA Cup final on June 3, before taking on Inter Milan in the Champions League final a week later in the hope of securing a precious treble.

Fans have poked fun at Pep Guardiola for saying he watched Manchester United win the treble at the Camp Nou 'as a little boy'.

And it's easy to see why the mis-step was picked up on, as the Manchester City manager was 28 years old when the match took

place.

Guardiola was in fact in his final years at Barcelona when United completed their famous comeback win over Bayern Munich to seal the only ever European treble by an English team.

His City side are looking to repeat that feat with the Premier League title already secured and finals in the FA Cup and Champions League still to come.

And when asked about how difficult it will be to take down United and Inter Milan in the next two finals, Guardiola got his timelines mixed up.

"I start to think about the treble and if we are able to go to Istanbul with the two titles in the pocket, now I can consider that OK, we won one title we could do it," Guardiola began.



Guardiola