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NNPC jerks up fuel price again



Kyari

Petroleum pump price rose to N617 per litre at various outlets of the Nigerian National

Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) in Abuja yesterday.

The development comes months after the oil company approved an upward review in the pump price of petroleum nationwide.

President Bola Tinubu had, in his inaugural address on 29 May, announced the removal of fuel subsidy.

Following the announcement, the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) directed its outlets nationwide to sell fuel between N480 and N570 per litre, an almost 200 per cent

increase from the initial price below N200.

The hike immediately triggered an increase in transportation fares and prices of goods and services by various percentages.

The source observed Tuesday morning that NNPCL outlets in the Central area of Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory, adjusted the pump price of petroleum to N617.

A resident, James Arpashe, said: "I just bought fuel for N617 in the NNPC located at the central business area this morning."

At several other outlets in Wuse area of the capital

city, this newspaper confirmed that the pump price equally jumped to N617 as motorists and commuters grumble

amid the uncertainty.

In Akute, Ogun State, the pump price was adjusted to N568 at the NNPC outlet as motorists scrambled to get fuel.

NNPCL spokesperson, GarbaDeen Muhammad, told our source that the company would provide clarity on the issue shortly.



Deputy Speaker, House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Benjamin Kalu with the member, House of Reps, representing Jos South/Jos East, Hon. Dachung Musa Bagos at the Airport in Kaduna to attend the reception in honour of the 10th Speaker, House of Reps, Rt. Hon. Abbas Tajudeen in Kaduna State recently
Photo: DANLADI DUK

Unite, defend Plateau against enemies -Mutfwang

By PETER TITLE

Governor Caleb Mutfwang of Plateau State has admonished Plateau people to stand together irrespective of tribe and faith in defending the state heritage against the enemies confronting communities in Mangu, Barkin - Ladi, Riyom and other Local Government Areas of the state.

He made the call on Sunday during the thanksgiving service organised by the former Speaker of the Plateau State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Ayuba N. Abok, where he thanked God for seeing him through the Ninth Assembly.

The event which took place at the Church Of Christ In Nations (COCIN), Jos Jarawa, was well attended. In his speech during the programme, the governor said "It's time for Plateau people to unite on a common front in preserving the state. We must forget the mistakes of the past where various ethnic groups were left alone to confront calamities that befall their communities".

Mutfwang described the former Speaker and Special Adviser on Legislative Affairs

as a dogged, courageous and resilient young man who fought for peace and unity of Plateau State.

He commended Rt .Hon . Abok for taking special time to thank God for preserving him throughout his tenure saying who ever thank God, He always open more doors of opportunities for them.

The Governor said, " Let me encourage us, it is not time to be careless, it's time for us to



Mutfwang

unite as a people. It is time for us to stand shoulder to shoulder with one another, this land that God has given us, He gave us for a purpose. We will prosper in the land that He has given us. We should continue to pray for the Bible says ' Watch and Pray '.

The former Speaker, Rt. Hon. Nuhu Ayuba Abok expressed gratitude to God for finding him worthy to serve Plateau as Speaker. He pointed out that without God, he would have been consumed by challenges of all sorts.

He noted that as Speaker, he took decisions in the interest of Plateau and pleaded for forgiveness wherever he stepped on toes of others, adding that it was not deliberate.

The celebrator revealed that the former Governor of Plateau State, Senator Jonah David Jang met the state debt burden of about N 80 billion and took it to N107 billion while the immediate past Governor, Simon Lalong who met it at N107 billion, lifted it to N307 billion where he called for fervent prayers for the present governor to succeed in the midst of the daunting

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Unite, defend Plateau against enemies -Mutfwang

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challenges. Former COCIN, Vice President, Rev. Dr. Obed Dashan (Rtd), who took his text from the book of Psalm 103 versus 1-6, and 1 Thessalonian chapter 5 verse 16 with the theme "Giving thanks in all circumstances", encouraged believers to hold firm unto God and give thanks

to Him in all circumstances. The Agwom Izere, Da Isaac Wakili appreciated Governor Mutfwang for gracing the occasion and for his victory at the recent concluded polls. The royal father encouraged the governor and people of the state to remain firm, courageous and resolute in the midst of current security challenges.

Farmers reject CBN's role in Tinubu's food security plan



For Nigeria to attain food security, maximise its agricultural value chain opportunities and create jobs for its teeming youth population, it must first address lingering problems limiting productivity and eliminate corruption in its intervention programmes, farmers say.

The farmers, who reacted to the recent declaration of President Bola Tinubu's blueprint for attaining food security and the declaration of state of emergency, urged the federal government to exclude the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) from the control of any intervention fund for the sector. Tinubu plans to deploy savings from the fuel subsidy removal into the agricultural sector to revamp the sector and also grow its contribution to 70 percent in the long term.

But farmers in Africa's biggest economy noted that for this to happen, intervention programmes must be transparent, properly implemented and institutionalised in the Bank of Agriculture to ensure real farmers are beneficiaries to drive impact.

"The control of CBN in interventions must be removed if truly this administration wants to record success. It must also eliminate corruption in its programmes," Jude Obi, president of the Association of Organic Agriculture Practitioners of Nigeria, said in a response to questions.

"The administration must address lingering problems limiting productivity. Without this, it will just be like the other plans we have had in the past," Obi said.

The apex bank has been heavily criticised for poorly managing the Anchor Borrowers Programme – the principal initiative of the last administration to attain food

security. The failure of millions of farmers to repay loans extended to them by apex underscores the weakness in the intervention initiative with the country's yield per hectare still low when compared to its African peers. "I sincerely hope that the President's plan will bring about the attainment of food security," said Ibrahim Kabiru, national president of All Farmers Association of Nigeria.

Kabiru urged the government to reappraise the CBN intervention programmes for the sector to ensure transparency and proper implementation.

Intervention programmes should be institutionalised and managed by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture in collaboration with various farmers' associations, not with the apex bank, he said.

Successive governments have pushed forth several agricultural intervention programmes and policies in the quest for food sufficiency, but many have yielded little or no result, making them fall short of expectations.

Most policies and programmes have constantly focused more on supporting farmers with finance – which has been marred by a high rate of corruption rather than addressing lingering issues such as insecurity and infrastructural gaps among others that have continued to limit productivity for decades.

Nigeria's food system today faces enormous challenges that make it difficult to provide affordable and nutritious food to the majority of the population.

"Nigeria has been given subsidies on fertiliser all through its life span yet it has amounted to nothing. This is principally because the government has failed to address issues of insecurity,

THE convener of Coalition for Better and Brighter Nigeria [CBBN], Prophet [Dr] Isa El-Buba, has charged security forces to match words with actions and uncover those insurgents who invaded over two hundred [200] Plateau communities and occupied them illegally and guarantee the return of the rightful owners back to their ancestral lands.

He gave the charge

Stop covering up for insurgents -El-Buba

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

recently, while addressing journalists at the World Press Conference on the unabated killings on the Plateau organized by CBBN in Jos, the Plateau State capital following series of unprovoked attacks on Mangu, Riyom, Barkin-Ladi and Jos-South Local Government Areas communities.

The CBBN convener said, "CBBN finds it imperative at this time to wade in on the unfortunate resurgence of blood bath and well organized killings in especially villages in Mangu, Riyom, Barkin-Ladi and Jos-South Local Government Areas of Plateau State.

"In the last four months, close to a thousand persons, mostly women and children have been

massacred and butchered during overnight unprovoked attacks and houses burnt down, including foodstuff, food barns and seedlings.

The CBBN strongly condemns this barbaric, despicable and heart wrenching killings and destructions.

"While commending the considerable efforts of security stakeholders in the state, I also want to put it to security and defense formations that you are not doing enough. You may say you are doing your best but it is obviously not good enough, since it is not able to halt the killings and fish out perpetrators.

The Prophet, therefore, called on all community stakeholders to remain sensitive and share timely actionable intelligence with



El-Buba

boots on ground." I reiterate my stand that citizens must defend themselves in the face of unwarranted provocation from alien terrorist elements to uphold the inalienable right to life. All hands must be on deck to defeat this ongoing onslaught of innocent citizens on the Plateau".

Mutfwang promises to grow economy

By PETER TITLE

The Executive Governor of Plateau State, Barrister Caleb Mutfwang says he remains resolute in exploring the huge solid mineral deposits the state is blessed with in order to grow the economy despite the crisis bedeviling the state.

He made this assertion when he visited the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Mines and Steel Development, Dr. Mary Ogba in her office in Abuja.

Governor Mutfwang reiterated the commitment of his administration to the collaboration with the Federal Government to

develop the solid minerals sector and reclaim the abandoned mining sites scattered across the state to make them useful for agriculture, recreation and tourism.

He explained that modern techniques of mining exploration would be adopted in line with the federal government

guidelines to generate revenue that would be beneficial to the people of Plateau State. And assured critical stakeholders in the solid mineral sector of his administration to enter into mutual benefitting partnership to explore minerals in the state for the greater development of the

people. Mutfwang further posited, "In the Nigerian Mining Corporation (NMC), there are some of the assets which were left untouched, especially in NESCO, which is the first Hydro Electricity Generating Company which the Mining Corporation had about nine percent of the shares.

"Although the company is not doing well now and if we can enter into discussions under the Public Private Partnership (PPP), we will be able to bring together all the shareholders to see what we can make out of it for the benefit of the state".

The Managing Director, Plateau Investment and Property Development Company (PIPC), Mr Danlami Jelka described the mining sector as one of the key drivers of the economy of the state under the present administration.

The MD noted that Governor Mutfwang was willing to work in collaboration with the Federal Government and the Impact Nigeria Alliance to make the mining sector more productive and habitable for citizens of the state.

Director, Mines Environmental Compliance, Dr. Okono Vivian and Deputy Director, Public Private Partnership, Salamat Umar said Plateau has the highest abandoned mining sites that require reclamation.

According to them, a study conducted by the ministry indicates that Plateau has over 700 of the 1260 abandoned mining sites across the country. They added that Plateau has been enlisted among states to have such sites reclaimed this year.

NUJ donates relief materials to Mangu attacks victims

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

PLATEAU State Chapter of the Nigeria Union of Journalists [NUJ], has donated relief materials worth hundreds of thousands of naira to the Mwachavul Development Association [MDA] for onward distribution to the victims of the incessant unprovoked attacks who are currently in Internally Displaced Persons [IDPs] camps in Mangu Local Government Area.

Presenting the relief materials to MDA through the Chairman, Mangu Victims Support Committee, Chief Musa Pwol, the state NUJ Chairman, Mr Paul Jatau, said, this was their little way of demonstrating the union's heartfelt condolence to the Mwachavul nation following the unfortunate series of attacks on innocent people of the area.

Describing how worrisome the situation was, the chairman said whoever had visited the scenes of these attacks and has seen what happened, would definitely feel the same pains as them.

Earlier, while receiving the members of the NUJ on a courtesy visit, the Mishkaam Mwachavul, Da John Putmang

Hirse, CON, thanked the Union for the show of love to Mwachavul nation, describing it as a great day for the nation that journalists despite their tight schedules squeezed time and resources to support victims of these attacks.

He said, "Mwachavul people have been peaceful, that is why you can see different nationalities living and carrying out their businesses without any problem. But the story is different today. Almost all the villages have been deserted because lives and property have been destroyed.

"We urge you to rise up to your responsibilities to see that peace returns to the local government area by reporting the truth so that permanent peace will return to Mwachavul land.

On his part, the National President of Mwachavul Development Association [MDA], Sir Joseph Gwankat, said, Mangu is a commercial centre and the economic lifeline of the state and country, hence these attacks would affect the economic activities that would expose the state to hunger because the destruction of farm

products were still ongoing.

He disclosed that the enemies of his people who are Fulani herdsmen have built up huts in the rocks and attack at will without any arrest being made. According to him "what is happening in Mangu is not religious because we have been living together with muslim brothers peacefully for decades. So, Fulani herdsmen are just enemies", he enthused.

Chairman, Mangu Victims Support Committee, Chief Musa Pwol, said the donation has indeed lightened their burdens.



Jatau



Business & Economy

Something fishy in our waters

It is a scientific fact that water and oil do not mix, but in the complex and complicated world of criminal enterprise, this natural law does not apply. It is becoming evident that in Nigeria's crude oil theft industry, there is an inexplicable convergence of interest against the interest of the country. This has gone on for too long, hurting our economic calculations as a country. DAKUKU PETERSIDE writes.

A massive vessel, "MT Tura 11", laden with 800 metric tonnes (erroneously stated as 800,000 litres) of stolen crude oil, was intercepted on Escravos Sea in Delta State by operatives of Tantita Security Services Limited. They handed over the vessel to the military Joint Task Force (JTF) Operation Delta Safe troops.

The JTF personnel allegedly set the bunkering vessel ablaze on Warri River after the ship's captain confessed that the ship was laden with crude oil. Could the recent arrest and subsequent setting ablaze of a vessel used for oil theft be a case of a complex web of organised economic crime or failure of law enforcement?

The facts of this case are as intriguing as the entire landscape of oil theft, maritime crime, and environmental degradation in the Niger Delta. This operation has caused considerable unease among stakeholders in the oil and gas industry, maritime space, law enforcement and ecological conservation activists. It raises a lot of fundamental questions with no answers in sight.

First, is the burning or destruction of vessels transporting stolen crude oil the best approach to fighting the crime? This entails destroying evidence that would aid investigation and prosecution.

The hasty destruction of the oil theft vessel raises questions about due process in the fight against what may be considered a complex economic crime against the state. In every crime investigation system and process, the instant destruction of evidence leaves a trail of further suspicion.

There are elements of concealment of a wider crime that a more thorough and discreet investigation will reveal. This vessel had been arrested severally in connection with crude oil theft and released.

We are unaware of any arrest and prosecution connected with these previous incidents. The JTF had, in October 2022, destroyed a vessel, MT Deima, allegedly carrying stolen crude. Burning vessels used for crude oil theft is now a common practice and a pattern of a deterrent.

The Defence Headquarters' defence to this noxious practice is a certain executive order given by former President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2003. However, in 2019, facilitated by Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Nigeria's National Assembly passed the



Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences Act (SPOMO Act), which provided the legal framework to deal with this kind of issue, including provisions for asset forfeiture and disposal of proceeds.

Second, will burning crude oil at sea not exacerbate the already severe environmental degradation in the Niger Delta? Elementary science has taught us that it will lead to air and marine pollution, degraded mangroves, and oceans, and destroyed biodiversity and vegetation.

In this instance, the burning of 800 MT of crude, if it took place, will have far-reaching and long-lasting effects on the environment and the communities dependent on it. The cleaning up of the environment could take several weeks. While addressing the issue of stolen crude should remain crucial, environmental protection must remain a priority.

Third, on the issue of law enforcement, with multiple maritime intelligence gathering technology available in the country, such as Nigerian Navy's "Falcon Eye", NIMASA's "C4i" and NPA's "C3i", how come none was able to detect a tanker vessel as big as MT Tura 11 or MT Deima?

Does it not raise curiosity that it took a security contractor rather than the Navy or other security agencies to intercept and arrest the rogue vessel? Is this a case of conspiracy, complicity or just abdication or dereliction of duty? When juxtaposed with the allegation of Mujahid Asari Dokubo of a compromised military, it calls for deep investigation,

interrogation, and introspection.

There are obvious vested interests, and things are unravelling. And one wonders whether this operation has anything to do with the N48 billion per annum pipeline surveillance and security contract. Is there a "Wangerisation agenda" in the crude oil pipeline contract?

This incident provides an opportunity for a holistic review of our approach to fighting oil theft in the country. The criminal violation in oil theft has been a concern for years. This is despite the existence and presence of the Navy in the suspected theatres.

Getting to the bottom of this criminal enterprise requires more than the arrest of one errant vessel. It requires a thorough investigation to establish the missing links between the arrested vessel and other activities in the past.

A few issues are for consideration. Should we not consider asset forfeiture and disposal instead of burning, which is barbaric, crude, unhealthy and toxic? Have we considered recovery and repurposing the stolen crude for legitimate use? What level of interagency collaboration do we have in the fight against crude oil thieves? From the overall layout of the narrative, it is obvious something is fishy.

Crude oil theft is a significant challenge in Nigeria, and tackling it requires a systematic and bespoke approach involving various stakeholders. We need to articulate some strategies to

address this economic malady.

Some of these strategies are in place now, but their functionality could be better since they have not eradicated the scourge of oil theft in Nigeria. Efficient and effective implementation is a crucial success factor.

Activities such as enhancing security measures in oil-producing regions are crucial. This includes increasing patrols, establishing dedicated security forces, and deploying technology such as surveillance systems and drones to monitor pipelines and oil infrastructure.

Cooperation between the Nigerian Navy, NIMASA, the Nigerian Police, and other security agencies is essential to combat oil theft effectively. Besides, engaging with local communities in oil-producing regions is vital for addressing the root causes of crude oil theft.

Also, protecting pipelines from tampering and illegal tapping is crucial. Implementing technologies like pipeline monitoring systems, pressure sensors, and leak detection systems can help promptly identify and respond to unauthorised activities. Regular inspections and maintenance of pipelines are necessary to ensure their integrity and reduce vulnerabilities.

Furthermore, strengthening legal frameworks and imposing stricter penalties for oil theft can act as a deterrent. Enforcing existing laws and regulations effectively, prosecuting perpetrators, and confiscating

assets obtained through illegal activities can help combat oil theft. Also, enhancing governance and promoting transparency in the oil sector is essential to tackle oil theft.

Collaboration is key to effectively addressing crude oil theft in Nigeria. Collaborating with international partners to address the transnational nature of oil theft is crucial. Sharing intelligence, best practices, and technical expertise can help Nigeria in its efforts to combat oil theft.

Finally, collaborating with financial institutions can help track and disrupt the financial networks associated with crude oil theft.

It is important to reiterate that strategies and actions of the past have not worked, and this new administration must desist from following them. Now is the time for a new bold approach to tackling the menace of crude theft. The systems that allow such impunity are entrenched and will be difficult to uproot.

This calls for a deliberate intervention from Nigeria's highest point of leadership. The President must send a clear message that he will not accept the stealing of even a drop of our crude oil, and those behind such atrocity must stop or face the wrath of the law no matter how highly placed they are.

It is a national embarrassment for news of crude oil theft to pervade the local and international space. Nigeria must protect its resources at all costs.



Business & Economy

VCDP, NAIC, inspect beneficiaries' farmlands in Kogi

IN furtherance of sustaining the livelihoods of farmers, Kogi State Value Chain Development Programme (Kogi VCDP) has since signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Corporation (NAIC) in order to insure farmlands of beneficiaries in the state.

Aware of incessant menace of flood occurrences in the state with untold hardships and attendant devastating effects on rural farmers, Kogi VCDP in its wisdom linked the farmers to the Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Corporation

The farmers cut across five benefitting local government areas of Ibadji, Lokoja, Kabba, Ajaokuta and Olamaboro.

Speaking during the inspection visits recently, the State Manager of NAIC, Mallam Sani Umar, said that the farms' inspection exercise was very critical as it enabled the corporation to confirm the sizes of the farmlands insured and the viability of the farms.

Umar added that the exercise would also enable them to take the coordinates of all the farms insured under NAIC.

He noted that NAIC is to ensure that the interest of farmers are protected against disasters such as floods and other natural occurrences.

He commended the farmers for their willingness in paying their Premiums to access the packages under NAIC.

According to him, NAIC insurance covers equipment, assets and other properties



Bello

which form part of the total farm investments at competitive commercial rates.

Also speaking, the State Programme Coordinator Dr. Stella Adejoh, who was represented by Mr Reuben Joshua, the VCDP Rural Finance Officer, expressed optimism on the ability of NAIC to promptly intervene in the event of flood in the state.

He stressed that the gesture would serve as big relief to farmers whom their farmlands were always affected by flood every year.

In their separate comments, the Farmers appreciated the VCDP for partnering with NAIC to protect their farmlands and proceeds in the event of floods, describing it as a big relief.

'Import tax removal to boost car importation by 15%'

By DORCAS PANKYES

LICENSED Customs Agents have projected a 15% increase in car importation following President Bola Tinubu's decision to remove the Import Adjustment Tax.

The founder of the National Council of Managing Directors of Licensed Customs Agents, Mr. Lucky Anihero, stated that the removal of the tax would likely lead to a boost in car imports, although the impact may be tempered by the fluctuating exchange rate.

Anihero explained that the exchange rate has been affected. So, the boost in car importation won't be much. We are looking at between a 10% to 15% boost because the exchange rate would actually reduce importation.

He further highlighted that the removal of the tax would increase the movement of vehicles into the country, particularly for vehicles with 2,000 cubic capacities upwards. The measure is expected to stabilize the system and enhance the

importation of vehicles, which is crucial for Nigeria's transportation needs.

The Acting National President of the Association of Nigerian Licensed Customs Agents, Mr. Kayode Farinto, commended the president for the removal of

DG NIPPS commends cooperative society for vision

By HOSEA NYAMLONG

DIRECTOR General (DG), National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru, in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State, Prof. Ayo Omotayo has applauded the exco of the NIPSS Multi-Purpose Co-operative Society Limited for their tremendous visionary and proactive transformation of the society over the years.

Omotayo expressed this while declaring open the 8th Annual General Meeting (AGM), of the Co-operative Society that was held on Saturday at the Unity

NCAA suspends Max Air domestic operations permit indefinitely

By DORCAS PANKYES

THE Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) has suspended the operations of Max Air, one of the airlines in Nigeria, indefinitely.

In a letter: NCAA/DG/AIR/11/16/363, NCAA directed the suspension of Parts A3 and D43 with regards to the operation of Max Air's Boeing 737 aircraft type with immediate effect.

Parts A3 deals with the airline's Aircraft Authorisation and D43 deals with Aircraft Listing of

By Dorcas Pankyes

IN a recent development, Nigeria's secret police, the Department of State Services (DSS), has charged Godwin Emezie, the suspended Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), to court. The move comes after an Abuja High Court issued an order to either charge Emezie to court or release him within one week.

According to DSS spokesman, Peter Afunanya, in a statement released recently, this action was taken in compliance with the court order. He mentioned that the DSS had previously applied for a court order to detain Emezie in relation to a criminal investigation in 2022.

Although the former CBN boss had obtained a restraining order from an FCT High Court, he was arrested by the DSS in June 2023 based on suspected new criminal infractions. One of these infractions serves as the basis for the current prosecution.

The DSS assured the public of professionalism, justice, and fairness in handling this matter,

DSS charges suspended CBN Governor to court



Emefiele

emphasizing that they will fulfill their duties within the confines of the law.

The case against Godwin

Emefiele is expected to proceed in court, and more details about the specific charges and legal proceedings are yet to be revealed.

the Operations Specifications issued to Max Air Ltd.

By implication, the airline's domestic operations would be halted pending when the regulatory agency lifts the suspension.

This suspension is coming barely hours after a Nigerian journalist, David Hundeyin warned of an impending air disaster, alerting Nigerians to the problems some airlines including Max Air were contending with.

He had recently reported

how a Max Air Boeing 737-3H4 with the tail identifier 5N-MHM took off from a Nigerian airport at about 12:15 with nearly 100 passengers onboard could have crashed, although this flight actually made it to Yola Airport and the passengers disembarked safely.

"The passengers on the Sokoto-bound flight were never told exactly what happened, neither were the disembarking passengers on the Abuja-Yola flight informed that they had just survived what could easily have been their last-ever journey. In fact, it is only after reading this story that these passengers will realise just how close they came to death in a Jet-A1 fireball somewhere in the Sahel," he had said.

"The Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) hereby suspends Parts A3 (Aircraft Authorisation) and D43 (Aircraft Listing) of the Operations Specifications issued to Max Air Ltd. with

regards to the operations of the Boeing B737 aircraft type in your fleet."

"With the above suspension, you are to immediately suspend the operations of all Boeing B737 aircraft in your fleet.

"The Authority's action is due to the several occurrences that involved your Boeing B737 aircraft as listed hereunder," read the letter signed by Director, Operations Training and Licensing, Captain Ibrahim Bello Dambazau, for Director General of Civil Aviation, Capt. Musa Nuhu.

"The occurrences listed in the letter include the Loss of Number 1 Main Landing Gear (MLG) wheel during the serious incident involving a Boeing 737-400 aircraft, registration marks 5N-MBD which occurred between Take-off at Yola Airport Adamawa State and on landing at Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja Nigeria on 7th May, 2023;

the vehicle tax and called on the government to also review the 7% port development levy.

Farinto emphasized the importance of introducing palliatives to alleviate the challenges caused by forex difficulties, and he

expressed hope that the government would take steps to alleviate the suffering of the people.

He also noted that market forces now determine foreign exchange rates, indicating a shift away from fixed rates.

Hall of the institution.

He said that he has the confidence that more constructive ideas would be deployed by the new exco in taking the society to a greater heights.

The DG who was ably represented by Mr. Nimfel Cirman, a Senior Research Fellow of the institution, added that he was impressed by the selfless service and commitment of the Executive members to the members.

He urged the leadership of the society to do more to sustain the society's legacy that is known over the years.

Earlier in a speech by the

president of the society, Mr. Christopher Berim Maxwell, he gave an account of his stewardship under review.

He stated that the country's dwindling economy has affected many businesses of the society, resulting to low interest rate on investment.

Maxwell added that the digitization of the co-operative activities is about 90 percent completion and very soon business transactions would commence online.

In a goodwill message from the Director of Ministry of Commerce and Industry,

Plateau State, Mr. Ayuba Azi and the President of Plateau State Co-operative Federation of Nigeria (PLASCOFED), Mrs. Hannatu Mershak, they commended the exco for sustaining the society in ensuring that AGM are held every year since inception and also appreciated members for keeping their trust and faith on the leadership of the society thus far.

The executive is made up of ; Mr. Christopher Berim Maxwell as president returned elected, Mr. Joseph Itse, Vice President returned elected,

Mr. Akor Innocent Obande, General Secretary elected, Mallam Baba Muhammed Usman, Assistant General Secretary/PRO elected, Mr. Ikumawoyi Moses, CNA treasurer elected, Patrick Esther Fom, CNA, Financial Secretary elected and Barr. Shekinah Pam, Legal Adviser returned elected.

However, Oyefi tasks the new exco to discharge their duties to the best of their abilities.

Highlights of the event was the presentation of gifts to their members that have retired after after a meritorious service to the institution.



Business & Economy

Monthly N8000 cash transfer: A movement without motion?

The recent approval by the Senate of the request by President Tinubu for the borrowing of \$800m from the World Bank has been raising concerns among Nigerians. The angst is not just about the danger of further increasing the stockpile of our already unsustainable debt level but also of whether borrowing for consumption – in this case borrowing to enable the government transfer the sum of N8,000 per month over six months to 12 million poor households – is the best way of cushioning the inflationary impacts of the removal of fuel subsidy and flotation of the Naira on the poor in Nigeria. JIDEFOR ADIBE writes.

IT should be recalled that President Bola Tinubu in a letter to the Senate explained that the loan would be used to scale up the national social safety net programme. He also claimed that the monthly social cash transfer would have "a multiplier effect on about 60 million households".

There are several issues that are embedded in this discourse:

One, the discourse on social protection triggered largely by the conditional cash transfer of N5,000 per month to some households under the Buhari government, is a worthy conversation. This is especially so given the increasing incidence of poverty in the country at a time the traditional social safety nets such as the extended family system are becoming weaker as the society becomes more individualistic. The Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, established on August 21 2019 via an executive pronouncement by President Buhari, we were told, received a monthly transfer of N500bn from the CBN. There are ongoing controversies over its programme design, in particular how it chose its poor households, and whether its alleged cash transfers really got to its intended targets.

Two, that the Tinubu government should sustain the conversation on social protection is also in order. There are three issues that especially miff most Nigerians in the new conversation about social protection: the first is trying to tie it to cushioning the inflationary impact of the removal of subsidy on Premium Motor Spirit (fuel) and the flotation of the Naira. The second is that the money for the proposed cash transfer has to be borrowed from the World Bank and the transfer is to last for only six months. The third is the lack of empirically verifiable impact assessment of the four-year cash transfer programme by the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs which allegedly has been engaged in such transfers since 2019. For any social protection programme to have the buy-in of the populace, there must be clear evidence that it is capable of delivering on its promise. A 2016 book jointly published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Children's Fund and Oxford



Tinubu



University Press, entitled 'From Evidence to Action: The Story of Cash Transfers and Impact Evaluation in Sub-Saharan Africa', made this point very eloquently.

According to the book, for "impact evaluation to be effective in influencing policy in a given context, they need to be embedded in the ongoing process of policy and programme design. Much of the policy impact lies in the credibility of the programme created by having an evaluation as well as a learning environment where implementation and design issues are addressed. Programmes can thus be promoted and directed in a manner in which evidence is brought to bear as needed in the process of decision making". Not only do we not have any impact assessment of how far the disbursements to the Ministry of

Humanitarian Affairs impacted on poverty reduction, the number of Nigerians falling into the absolute poor bracket has paradoxically been increasing despite the programme.

The World Bank for instance informed us that more than four million Nigerians fell into the absolute poverty trap in the first six months of the year (with another 7.1 million set to join if the impact of the removal of subsidies is not well managed). Besides, the Ministry has been less than transparent in its operations. For example, it claimed to have spent over N500m in school feeding and conditional cash transfers in Ogun and Lagos states as well as in Abuja (hardly among the poor areas of the country) during the COVID19-lockdown.

Three, giving conditional cash transfer of N8000 per month to 12 million households amounts to moving subsidy from one

item that potentially benefits all demographics to subsidizing one demographic that may probably not be the worst hit by the inflationary impacts of removing subsidy on fuel because most of the very poor Nigerians live in rural areas, not very far from their farms, and do not depend substantially on markets for their social reproduction. While I believe that the subsidies on PMS have become unsustainable, I am equally of the view that effectively checkmating the fraud in the subsidy regime and drastically reducing the level of the subsidy (rather than removing it in its entirety) will be more productive. For instance, maintaining a level of subsidy on PMS and fertilizer will also mean subsidizing food, manufacturing (because most depend on generators) and the Middle class (who are the most productive segment of the population). Maintaining a level of subsidy on PMS will cascade throughout the entire value chain of the country and therefore better than trying to narrowly target a particular demographic.

Four, while the Tinubu government has done relatively well in trying to run an inclusive government (compared to Buhari) and has received deserved accolades

for that, he risks squandering the honeymoon he seems to be enjoying from most Nigerians if he fails to appreciate the depth of the hardship in the country and that what is needed are measures that will boost production, create employment and make life more tolerable for most Nigerians rather than cash transfers that seem to have been not properly thought through. More importantly, the President must avoid being captured by some political jobbers who seem to believe that every criticism of his programmes are coming only from the opposition or a certain ethnic demographic. That was precisely what some aides made the Buhari government believe when the likes of Femi Adesina labelled such people 'wailing wailers'. Ironically today, despite Buhari's modest achievements in the field of providing infrastructure and using personal diplomacy to secure top positions in some international organisations for some Nigerians, the 'wailing wailers' seem to have been vindicated. Even before he fully exhausted his tenure, Buhari repeatedly said he was tired and was looking forward to be as far away from Abuja as possible once he handed over power to a successor.

Five, Nigerians appear to be enduring the unprecedented hardship caused both by the removal of fuel subsidy and the flotation of the Naira for a number of reasons: first is a general belief that the country was already in an extremely bad economic shape under Buhari and that Tinubu had no hand in it. Second, is given the way Tinubu has been hyped as a political strategist and economic visionary who transformed Lagos state, people continue to believe that he may have a magic wand that would quickly turn the hardships into gains for most Nigerians – to shame his critics. After all, is not the JAGABN, who outwitted his powerful traducers to emerge the APC's presidential candidate in spite of the hurdles placed on his way and went ahead to win the election (or be declared the winner by INEC)? If Tinubu fails to turn things around quickly, there will most likely be a crisis of expectations and a feeling of another hope betrayed – with snowballing effects.

Politics

Witnesses testify against Bali's nomination

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

TWO witnesses in a petition filed by former Governor Simon Bako Lalong, of the APC challenging the declaration of Senator Napoleon Bali, of the PDP as winner of the Plateau-South Senatorial District, have testified before the Election Petition Tribunal sitting in Jos that the declaration by INEC was unlawful.

Appearing as PW3 before Justice Tukur Muhammad-led Election Petition Tribunal Committee, the Deputy Chairman of PDP in Kwall-Mudeng Ward of Qua'an-Pan LGA, Plateau State, Namis Muhammed said, he was not aware of the claimed second congresses by some unknown faction.

He pointed out that "As far as I am concerned and as a stakeholder of PDP, I am not aware of any second state congresses held to my notice.

"I have my membership card and I picked Nomination Form to contest for the position of Treasurer and had duly

paid administrative charges. I have the receipt of my payment with me here. I have gone round the eleven (11) Wards for 11 members to sign the form as specified in the party Constitution and subsequently submitted the original to the party office.

"Ever since then, I have not heard any information that there will be a second conduct of state congresses even as a stakeholder. But to my greatest surprise, I heard INEC displaying Napoleon Bali's name as the sole PDP Senatorial candidate for the February 25 election and thereafter declaring him as winner of the election, even when PDP does not have a structure in place in the state", he narrated.

Muhammed described the declaration of Bali by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as winner of the election as unlawful and wrong against the wishes of the electorate because PDP only exists at the

federal level and not Plateau State, since they have no substantive party executive structure in the state.

On his part, while testifying before the tribunal as PW4, one Wumanna Bako, of the APC said, the acceptance of Napoleon Bali's nomination as the sole candidate of the PDP by INEC was unlawful and a disregard to the court injunction and ruling of Federal High Court, because INEC was not supposed to accept the nomination knowing quite well the provisions of Nigeria's Electoral Law.

"We felt there was no need for my party to challenge the displacement of PDP candidate in the court, because we respect the earlier court position and ruling".

However, Counsel to the petitioners, Barrister SS Obande, told the tribunal that they still have ten witnesses to present when the tribunal sits subsequently.

The case was adjourned to July 21, 2023 for further hearing.

By PAULINE DALLONG

HEARING in the petition between the Speaker, Plateau State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Moses Thomas Sule and the past Majority Leader who is member representing Mikang Constituency, Hon. Naanlong Gapyil Daniel resumed last Saturday at the Elections Petition Tribunal sitting in Jos, the Plateau State capital.

Naanlong had filed a petition against the Speaker at the tribunal, challenging his declaration as winner in the last election to represent Mikang Constituency in the state assembly.

The former member had in his petition, joined the People's Democratic Party (PDP) on which platform Sule contested the election, and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as defendants in the case.

According to a report made available to the NIGERIA STANDARD by the Press Secretary to the Speaker, Mr. Peter Tongshep, Naanlong had during the hearing brought forth a witness through his lead Counsel, S.S Obende,

PLHA Speaker vs Naanlong' hearing resumes at tribunal



Sule

with the view to substantiate his claim that PDP lacked the constitutional prerequisite to participate in the last elections.

However, the witness, Mr. Ponkap Daniel, who at the start of his testimony before the tribunal claimed he was a bonafide member of the PDP from Tunkus Ward, later admitted to not having the party's membership card to substantiate his earlier claim.

The former Majority Leader, who contested and won election to the state assembly in 2015 on the platform of the PDP, but shortly after assumption of office defected to the then ruling All Progressive

Congress (APC), is now challenging the victory of Sule on constitutional grounds amongst others, that the PDP did not have a properly constituted state party structure that could provide the constitutional leverage to participate in all the elections conducted.

In their respective cross examinations, the lead counsels to both INEC and the PDP, N.S Obimaje Esq. and S.Oyawole Esq., articulated their questions in simplicity with a view to establishing the authenticity of his membership of the party vis-a-vis his familiarity with the party's constitution, but the responses of Mr. Ponkap was rather unconvincing.

The witness who had also told the tribunal that he was very familiar with the constitution of the PDP, later declined knowledge of some sections in the party's law book, when he was asked if he had read the content of part 50 of the PDP's legal document, a section which spells out clearly the organ of the PDP saddled with the responsibility of nominations and presentations of candidates for all elections on behalf of the party.

Testifying further, Ponkap said he was not aware of any repeat congress organised by the PDP, in compliance with a court judgment. He added that he obtained a nomination form of the party to contest for a position in his ward, and that he had waited all this while for the party to fix a date for the congress.

Even though the petitioners were prepared to present a second witness before the tribunal, it was not possible as the tribunal had to adjourn sitting till the 21st of July 2023, for continuation of hearing since the day's sitting had stretched to late hours of the day.

Benue Gov's spokesman attributes appointment to goodwill

CHIEF Press Secretary to the Governor of Benue State, Sir Kula Tersoo has said, his appointment as spokesman to Governor Hyacinth Alia was a demonstration of the governor's genuine love for the people of Ushongo Local Government Area.

Kula stated this recently at St. Joseph Catholic outstation Ityavkase, Mbaanyam in Ushongo LGC during a thanksgiving mass organized by Hon. Murphy Torbuva to thank God for appointing Sir Tersoo Kula as Governor Alia's Chief Press Secretary (CPS) as well as the emergence of the member representing Mbagwa State Constituency, Hon. SaaterTiseer as Majority Leader of the 10th Benue House of Assembly.

The CPS charged his people to always defend Governor Alia and his policies, saying that for the governor to have remembered the local government with such a strategic appointment in his early days in office, it was an indication that he has the local government at heart. He promised to synergise with the Majority Leader to bring dividends of democracy to the people.

On suspension of the twenty three council chairmen in the state, Mr. Kula said it became necessary for the council

From TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi

chairmen to step aside through suspension to enable the state assembly to carry out a seamless investigation into alleged cases of misappropriation committed by the chairmen.

On his part, Majority Leader of the Benue State House of Assembly, Hon. SaaterTiseer said he was overwhelmed by continued love shown to him by people of Mbagwa, promising that he will do his best to represent their interest.

Also speaking, the state governor, Rev father Dr. Hyacinth Alia represented by his Chief of Staff, Paul Biam said he met the state in a terrible condition, emphasizing that although the rebuilding process was going to be tasking but expressed the hope that he will not give excuses to the people of the state.

In a remark on behalf of state assembly members who graced the occasion, the Speaker Hon. Aondona Dajoh thanked people of the area for remembering to thank God for using Governor Alia to elevate some of their children.

The speaker further charged people of the

state to support the current crop of leaders to deliver good governance.

Earlier in a sermon, the priest in charge of St. Stephen's parish Lessel, Rev. Fr. Moses Shawon

admonished the congregation to always act in truth and sincerity, saying that was the only way the society will become a better place for all.

Dogara urges lawmakers to salvage Nigeria's democracy

From ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

RT. Honourable Yakubu Dogara, who was the former Speaker of House of Representatives from 2015-2019, has urged state assembly lawmakers to salvage the country's democracy from recession.

The former Speaker who represented Bogoro, Tafawa

Balewa and Dass Federal Constituency, Bauchi State, made the appeal while speaking at a 1-day Technical Session for Speakers of State Houses of Assembly organized by PERL-ECP in collaboration with the Conference of Speakers at Transcorp Hilton, Abuja recently.

Speaking on the topic, 'Effective Leadership for

Emerging Legislatures: Lessons, Challenges, Opportunities and Recommendations, the former speaker prayed that the lawmakers will find courage to take up their places as the guard rails of Nigeria's democracy in order to salvage it which according to him, is said to be in recession at the moment.

"Always remember the saying that, 'liberty is as rare as it is fragile, wedged uneasily between tyranny and anarchy'. You must never allow the executive to drop an elbow on our democracy's throat", he said.

Dogara further said, "Until you make the legislature grow in strength in relation to the executive and other parties, history will not be kind to you".

"For you to be said to be an effective leader, obstacles that deter others must spur you on", Dogara asserted.

Yakubu Dogara charged the state assembly members to, irrespective of how they emerged, spare no effort in checking the executive's excesses and holding the executive to account.



Dogara

Politics

Pressure group endorses former gov for ministerial nominee

From Abbas Gungura, Bauchi

PRESIDENT Bola Ahmed Tinubu has been called upon to as a matter of necessity and political importance, consider the one and only most popular former governor of Bauchi State, Mallam Isa Yuguda as the state ministerial nominee.

The call was made by the state coordinator of a political pressure group, known as Disciples of Jagaban (DOJ) Bauchi State Chapter, Alhaji Hussani Suleman.

The coordinator pointed out that Mallam Isa Yuguda stands tall among all other names being touted in Bauchi State, considering his political weight and popularity.

Another plus for him, he said is the significant role he played in the 2023 general elections to ensure that Bola Ahmed Tinubu got the required percentage in the state and other states of the North-East sub region.

He explained that as a former minister in the ministries of Transportation and Aviation, and two term



Tinubu

governor, Isa Yuguda was tested and trusted and therefore, has what it takes to be the representative of the people of the state in whatever capacity, especially ministerial position.

"The choice of Yuguda by the political organisation (DOJ) is due to the fact that he has transformed many of the citizens of Bauchi State when he was the

governor of the state. And till date, he has no second in terms of popularity if it comes to individual capacity and mobilization", he said.

Hussaini Suleiman added that "The group wishes to categorically state that Yuguda is the best among the contenders including Dr Musa Barbayo, Amb. Yusuf Maitama Tugga, Bala Jibrin, among others.

By DONTINNA EZEKIEL

LABOUR Party (LP)'s candidate in the February 25 election representing Barkin-Ladi/Riyom Constituency in the National Assembly, Engr. Fom Dalyop, (aka Santos), has closed his case before the Election Petition Tribunal, Jos, Plateau State, as star witness of PDP confirmed the rulings of Court of Appeal and dismissal of suit at the Supreme Court against the authenticity of the party's Executive Council structure.

Counsel to the petitioner, Barrister Edward Pwajok, informed the Tribunal recently, shortly after cross examining the witness following letter in notice earlier filed to committee and both Counsels indicating the closure of their case to enable the 1st and 2nd Respondents open their defense and subsequently present their witnesses.

While cross examining the witness, Barrister Panshak Dakyen, Esq, who happens to be the Deputy Legal Adviser of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the witness confirmed to the tribunal that the ruling of the Court of Appeal and that of the Supreme Court against the authenticity of the State Executive Council, was relying on the suit by erring party members.

He testified that it was as a result of September 2021

LP closes case as PDP witness confirms apex court's ruling



Abure

Court of Appeal ruling that necessitated the reconstitution of the same committee by his party to conduct another State Congress which he contested for the position of Deputy Legal Adviser and won.

The witness revealed to the tribunal that the erring faction led by Hon. BitrusKaze, participated in the state congress elections which was monitored by Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the losers through Hon. Kaze who contested for the Chairmanship, congratulated the winners and there was no suit challenging the outcome.

State Executive Council which the witness formed part of.

He also asked if there were no delegates list and results of the elections containing names and scores of those who contested with the winners indicated in the document filed before the tribunal. But the witness argued that he was not the maker of the result and delegates sheets and cannot provide same.

Earlier, Counsel to the 1st Respondent, Barrister Pius Akubo, SAN, applied for the adjournment of the case to enable his witness for the sake of fair hearing, put something in order, but was overruled by the tribunal and the hearing was stood down before returning.

However, the case was adjourned to July 7, 2023 to enable 1st, 2nd and 3rd Respondents open their defense.

Also adjourned to July 13, 2023 respectively, were cases between Hon. Vincent Bulus Venman, of the APC and Hon. Beni Lar, of the PDP as well as the former Plateau State Speaker of the House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Yakubu Sanda, of the APC and Hon. Rejoice Attew, of the PDP.

However, there was mild drama as when the cross examining Counsel, Edward Pwajok, SAN, questioned the authenticity of the party's structure given the Court of Appeal's ruling in favour of PRP candidate on May 6, 2022 which was later dismissed by the Supreme Court when the party tried to use the back door?

Counsel, therefore, put it to the witness that with the outcome of ruling in Appeal Court and the dismissal of appeal before the Supreme Court, it was a clear indication of a fact that it was disbanded

Ododo to consolidate on Bello's initiatives

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

GOVERNORSHIP candidate of the All Progressive Congress (APC), Ahmed Usman Ododo, has promised to consolidate on the initiatives of Gov. Yahaya Bello when elected as governor in the November governorship poll in the state.

Ododo gave the assurance at the official unveiling of "Okun United for Ododo Project 2023", held in Kabba, Kabba-Bunu Local Government Area.

Ododo said his government by the grace of God, would consolidate on all the initiatives of His Excellency, Gov. Yahaya Bello in all sectors of the economy.

Ododo, who was represented by Kogi Commissioner for Education, Science and Technology, Hon. Wemi Jones, FCIB, said his

government would recognise all the people who would contribute to his emergence as governor.

"I appreciate the Okun race and am quite aware that Okun people are brilliant, intelligent and highly educated.

"Okun people are egalitarian in nature and highly principled that can never be taken for granted. I will never take Okun nation and the entire Kogi West for granted.

The APC candidate, therefore appealed to Okun people to give him their total support, so that on Nov. 11, the votes that would come from Kogi West will be massive, and even surpass Kogi Central votes where he comes from.

Speaking on his capacity, the commissioner assured the APC candidate and his running mate, that the people of Kogi West would

deliver massive votes for Ododo/Joel come Nov. 11 governorship election in the state.

Jones congratulated the people of Kogi West, particularly Okunland for the arrival of Kogi State University Kabba.

"I want to assure you like I always do, that the university that God has given to Okunland at this time through Gov. Bello is not political, but a university that would thrive.

He assured that the governor would matriculate the first set of students into the school before he vacates office for Ododo in January 2024.

Dignitaries at the event were: APC Chairman, Abdullahi Bello, Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Dr. Folashade Ayoade; Speaker, Kogi House of Assembly and other members; Commissioners and other top government officials.

Kogi guber polls: 'Ethnic agenda won't fly'

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

SENATOR Attai Aidoko Ali has said that politics of ethnic agenda will never fly in Kogi State as members of the opposition parties are increasingly joining the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) and endorsing Hon Ododo Ahmed Usman, the APC gubernatorial candidate.

Senator Attai Aidoko stated this when he led the entire People's Democratic Party (PDP) structure from Olamaboro Local Government Area to Governor Yahaya Bello to formally join APC.

Governor Bello while receiving them recently, commended the group for their courageous decision to join the ruling party and contribute to the state's development.

He reiterated his commitment to maintaining an inclusive government, where both long standing and new APC members are

afforded equal opportunities to work towards the overall welfare of the people.

The governor emphasised the significance of fostering unity among ethnic groups within the state.

Acknowledging the division that existed along ethnic lines when he assumed office, he expressed satisfaction that the current administration had been able to successfully unite the people towards a common goal, considering this unity a lasting legacy.

Senator Attai Aidoko Ali, speaking on behalf of the delegation, stressed that the current agenda before the people was national political Integration, wherein individuals could actively participate in prominent roles that would bring honour and glory to the state.

The senator emphasised the need for a broad-based coalition that transcends party and ethnic lines in order to achieve the overall

progress and development of Kogi State. from narrow-minded agendas.

Furthermore, Senator Aidoko criticized the unwavering support and proponents of ethnic agenda, expressed their commitment to stand firmly behind the governor at all times.

He highlighted Governor Yahaya Bello's influential position within the ruling party at both the federal and state levels, asserting that Bello serves as the ideal catalyst to integrate Kogi into the mainstream of national political participation.

Senator Aidoko argued that Kogi should no longer take a passive role in Nigeria's national political development, given the ruling party's electoral successes in the state since 2015.

While commending the defunct Action Congress Governor Bello for his administration's achievements, Senator Aidoko urged him to steadfastly pursue his vision for a greater Kogi State, free as well as other key party stakeholders.



Ododo

IMAGES

MUTFWANG RECEIVES PROF. IZAM AND HIS TEAM

Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang recently received on courtesy call the National President, Nigerian Institute of Building, Prof. Yohana Daniel Izam and his team at the new Government House, Rayfield, Jos



Plateau State Governor, Barr. Mutfwang (left) responding to the message by the National President, Institute of Building, Prof. Izam (right)



Deputy Governor (right) with other government appointees at the courtesy call



Cross section of members of Institute of Building from different states that accompanied Prof. Yohana Daniel Izam



Barr. Mutfwang (left) receiving conference uniform from Prof. Izam



National President of the Institute (right) signing the visitors book



Prof. Yohana Izam (right) putting heads together with Governor Caleb Mutfwang



Deputy Governor, Hon. Josephine Piyo (right) flanked by SGS, Arc. Samuel Nanchang Jatau (middle) and CoS, Engr. Jeremiah Satmak



Governor Caleb Mutfwang, National President of Institute of Building, his members and Government Officials in a group photograph

Photos: DANLADI DUK

Politics

Promoting peace, democracy through election observation

Globally, elections have not only become a commonly accepted means to legitimize governance institutions, it is also considered as the main pillars and backbones of democracy. Though democracy largely remains the form of recognised government in West Africa, analysts have identified elections as one of the major factors that trigger violence and insecurity in the sub-region. EMMANUEL OLONIRUHA writes.

ACCORDING to a publication, "Electoral Commissions in West Africa – a comparative study (Second edition)", published in Nigeria by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in 2011, in countries of the West Africa, elections have been a primary conflict generating factor.

The publication co-authored by Mr Mathias Hounkpe and Prof. Ismaila Fall, states that close to two decades after the commencement of transitions to democratic regimes and succession of electoral cycles, elections still remained questionable and prone to crisis in several new democracies in West Africa.

They states that: "tensions leading to confrontations which threaten the stability often arise during the preparation of elections, while conducting elections, and after election results have been declared.

"As a matter of fact, be it upstream where stakeholders do not agree with the rules which govern the electoral process or the modalities for the organization of elections, or downstream where candidates who lost elections view the outcome of elections as not being a true reflection of the will of the electorate and choose to contest the results of polls."

Bearing in mind the consequences of election triggered violence on peace and democratic development, governments and democratic institutions including political leaders and other stakeholders in West Africa considered it a priority to ensure elections in the sub-region are not only credible but also peaceful.

Some of these institutions include the Africa Union (AU), Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS), West Africa Elders Forum (WAEF), and Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA).

These institutions and groups have always deployed election observation missions to countries where elections are holding in the sub-region to ensure that the elections conform to global standard and that the will of the people prevail.

The latest of this was the Sierra Leone general election conducted on June 24. The election was the nation's fifth and third fully self-administered poll since the end of the civil war in the country in 2002.

Though the country has 17 registered political parties, 13 candidates including a female contested the presidential election, in the landscape majorly dominated by the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) and the All-People's Congress (APC).

The incumbent President, Julius Maada-Bio of SLPP was declared winner of the election by the Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone (ECSL) having scored 1,566,932 (56.17 per cent) of the total valid vote cast, while his closest rival, Samura Kamara of APC polled 1,148,262 (41per cent) of the total votes.



Former Presidents Obasanjo and Jonathan

The 59-year-old President Maada-Bio was subsequently sworn in for his second and final five-year term.

Though the opposition candidate rejected the election result, the country has remained largely calm in spite of the heightened tension ahead of the polls.

According to reports, the country's electoral environment was characterised by heightened tension, incidents of violence in some parts of the country as well as high levels of misinformation, disinformation, fake news and hate speech mainly conveyed via social media platforms and radios.

Also the electoral context was reported to be characterised by mistrust of the ECSL by some political parties with regard to its neutrality.

According to preliminary report by the Africa Union Election Observation Mission (AUEOM) to Sierra Leone "Campaigns in some parts of the country were marred by politically motivated violence spurred by the general mistrust especially between the SLPP and the APC.

"Violence incidents included torching of party offices and physical attacks, resulting in injuries and a reported death in

Free Town," the preliminary report stated.

A report by the Communications officer of the Goodluck Jonathan Foundation (GJF), Mr Wealth Ominabo, who served at the WAEF secretariat, also highlighted the polarisation of campaign and the sensitivity surrounding political parties colours and symbols in the country.

In Sierra Leone, red is the official colour of the APC, while green is associated with the SLPP.

Ominabo noted how this restricted choice of attire by diplomats who were on election observation mission in the country to avoid signaling political preferences.

"The situation escalated to the point where students in schools were reportedly victimised and punished for wearing colours associated with political parties," he said.

To many analysts, the calmness enjoyed in Sierra Leone after the election was not without the interventions by some power blocks and influential elders including the WAEF, who played mediation role in the country before, during and after the election.

WAEF is a former leaders and statesmen in West Africa, established by the Goodluck Jonathan Foundation (GFJ) with the objective of promoting preventive diplomacy as a means

of reducing electoral-related tension and violence in Africa.

Since its establishment in 2020, WAEF has deployed its mission for elections to Nigeria, Gambia and recently Sierra Leone.

Beyond its engagements in Sierra Leone, WAEF is also scheduled to carry out a similar mission to Liberia, two nations that are expected to hold general elections in 2023.

Just like it did in Nigeria and Gambia, to ensure that the election in Sierra Leone was peaceful and successful, the forum in April 2023 deployed a pre-election fact finding mission led by former President Olusegun Obasanjo to the country.

The team which also includes former President Goodluck Jonathan and former Vice President of The Gambia Fatoumata Tambajang interfaced with major political leaders and other key stakeholders in the country as a means of deepening the confidence and trust of the citizens in the electoral process.

Also in June the WAEF deployed an Election Mission to Sierra Leone led by the forum Chairman, Jonathan to encourage and support a peaceful democratic transition in the country.

The team also has former Burkinabe prime minister and one-time president of the Economic Community of West

African States (ECOWAS) Kadre Ouedraogo and staff from the WAEF secretariat as members.

Jonathan on his arrival in Freetown urged citizens of Sierra Leone to approach the election with utmost patriotism by prioritizing the nation's peace and stability and refrain from acts capable of undermining the nation's democracy.

Jonathan emphasised the importance of the election to the region urging all stakeholders to ensure a credible and peaceful outcome.

Jonathan-led team was reported to have had series of consultative engagements with different political actors and key stakeholders in Sierra Leone, including leadership of the political parties, the candidates, the ECSL, security agencies, the diplomatic community, civil society groups, and the media.

Jonathan during the engagements with stakeholders emphasised the need for candidates and their supporters to prioritise peace and the interests of the country.

Drawing from his personal experiences, Jonathan reiterated his political philosophy, reminding politicians that no ambition is worth the bloodshed of any citizen.

Immediately after the announcement of the election result, WAEF and other international observer missions in Sierra Leone called for calm in that country.

They urged citizens to desist from inflammatory rhetoric capable of jeopardizing the nation's peace and undermining the democratic process of the country

The missions made the call on Wednesday in a joint statement by the heads: Jonathan for WAEF; Hailemariam Dasalegn Boshe for African Union; Mohamed Ibn Chambas for ECOWAS, and former Vice President of Nigeria Yemi Osinbajo for Commonwealth.

The Heads of Missions urged all Sierra Leonians within and outside the country to refrain from any inflammatory language that could lead to violence, loss of lives and destruction in the country.

As the intervention role of the election observation groups has continue to promote credible elections and peace in West Africa, political analysts have urged WAEF, AU, ECOWAS and other stakeholders to sustain the deployment of their election observation mission to Africa countries during their election cycles.

This valuable tool they believe would continue to help in improving the quality of elections, building public confidence in the electoral processes as well promoting peace and economic stability in the sub-region.

NAN features

News

Redouble efforts in tackling Plateau, Zamfara security challenges - PDP Governors' Forum

By PETER TITLE.

THE Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Governor's Forum has joined others in expressing strong concern over the deteriorating security challenges bedeviling Plateau and Zamfara States where lives and properties were destroyed.

As a result, they called on security agencies to redouble efforts in addressing the situation so that the callous killings and destruction of lives and properties would be stopped.

Senator Bala Mohammed, the Executive Governor of Bauchi State, who is the Chairman of the Forum disclosed this while briefing journalists at the end of their inaugural meeting held at the Akwa Ibom Governor's Lodge, Asokoro Abuja, recently. He said the forum was really touched over the incidents in the two states.

According to him, all the PDP governors had expressed their concern on the deteriorating security concern in the country especially, the destruction of lives and properties in Plateau, Zamfara among others. And advised the Federal Government and security agencies to rise up to the challenges so as to bring the situation under control.

Gov. Mohammed explained that in the interim, the forum would cooperate with the federal government on issues concerning the welfare of



Mutfwang

Nigerians and good governance while striving to maintain the independence and autonomy of the forum through offering constructive criticism where necessary.

The Chairman further revealed that the meeting resolved to work together and unite the forum so as to be a force to be reckoned with.

The PDP governors tasked the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), and security agencies to allow free conduct of elections in Bayelsa, Kogi and other states scheduled for November 2023.

According to him, "The aim of the forum is to provide a platform to review issues, policies, programmes and achievements of member

governors across the PDP states".

Our correspondent reports that the Executive Governor of Plateau State, Barrister Caleb Mutfwang was among the PDP governors that attended the meeting.

PLATEAU State Deputy Governor, Mrs Josephine Piyo has urged women in Nigeria and Plateau State in particular to seek legislation that would better their lives in the society.

Piyo gave the charge when the Standup for Women Society (SWS), a non-religious and non-political organization with a national and international spread geared towards the cause of women and children, paid her a solidarity visit at the Old Government House, Rayfield, Jos, recently.

The Deputy Governor who described women as the backbone of the society, decried the lack of support among fellow women seeking for political offices as responsible for their political emancipation.

She observed since 1999, women have not been able to meet their 35 percent affirmative action due to lack of support for each other. Piyo observed that aside from their dwindling political fortunes, they have also been subjected to all forms of ill treatment including domestic violence.

She explained that women were good managers but

Seek legislation that would better your lives - Piyo

By DUMAH RANDONG

that they shouldn't expect their male counterparts to fight for their right until they come together and fight for their course.

Piyo who was elated by the visit, appealed to women to support the Barrister Caleb Mutfwang's administration to deliver on its mandate to the people of the state. She also commended the governor for choosing her as his Deputy, assuring that she will not disappoint the women.

Earlier, Chairperson, Standup for Women Society, Plateau State Chapter, Mrs. Grace Gora had explained that they were on a solidarity visit and appreciated the governor for the choice of a woman as his deputy.

She disclosed that the organization was non-religious and non political with the Sole aim of bringing together all women at the grassroot who are left without care, and to give meaning to their lives.

While pledging to support the government, Gora

however called on it to join hands with SWS to train the women especially the indigent ones in skill acquisition as well as encouraging them to air out their views.

The organization, she said plans to form a cooperative society to act as a platform to give out soft loans to women after empowering them with skills. Gora also advocated for stringent laws against domestic violence.

She sympathized with government over killings in Mangu, Barkin Ladi and Riyom LGAs and encouraged the governor not to be deterred by these enemies of peace in the state.

Also on a solidarity visit were a coalition of PDP Female Youths in the state who came to identify with the government on their emergence at the polls.

Led by the state Coordinator, Comrade Kaneng Pam who pledged their continued loyalty and support to the Mutfwang's administration in the state.

Develop your Alma mater- Alumni association tells members

From MUSLIUDEEN ADEBAYO, Ibadan

THE African Church Grammar School Apata, Ibadan Old Students Association has called on the alumni of the school to come together and develop the school.

Representative of the Acting National President of the association, Chief Segun Osibote made this disclosure during the handing over of a block of 6-room toilet facility constructed by 1985 set

for the use of the students and staff of the school.

The event which witnessed donation of sporting materials to the school by the 1985 set was attended by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Elder Delani Binuyo, principal of the school, Mrs. Tiamiyu Mojisola Olatomi and other alumni



Osibote

of the school.

The event took place at the premises of the school on recently.

Osibote while speaking called on alumni of the school to come together and develop the school.

He commenced the set for the gesture.

Osibote said "I want the old students to come together and develop the school. And I beg the representative of the governor that they should come to our aid.

"One thing is to renovate or execute a new project like this, another thing is for the students and staff to maintain it. The school has many challenges, but the old students need to come together to develop the school".

President of the 1985 set, Mr. Olujide Taiwo while speaking urged the staff and students to ensure proper usage of the facility.

"We are here to commission the toilet for the use of the students and staff.

"And to donate some sporting materials to the students to assist them in developing their talents. And to donate some books, accounting textbooks to the school.

"It is a six room toilet facility. They should maintain the facility".

Other speakers among whom are the Permanent Secretary, teachers and alumni commended the set for the good things they brought to the school.

Gov. Bello condoles Ata'Igala over brother's death

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

GOVERNOR Yahaya Bello of Kogi State has condoled with the Ata'Igala and President of the Kogi State Council of Chiefs, His Royal Majesty Alhaji Mathew Opaluwa Ogwuche-akpa II, on the death of his elder brother, Prince James Faruna Opaluwa.

Prince James Faruna Opaluwa passed away on Saturday after battling an illness.

A statement by the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Mohammed Onogw described the late James Opaluwa as a dedicated community leader and a humble individual who devoted his life to the service of God and humanity.

Bello emphasized the significant contributions made by the deceased to the progress and development of his community, highlighting the impact of James Opaluwa's selfless

service and his unwavering commitment to uplifting the lives of those around him.

The governor encouraged the Ata'Igala and the family of late James to find solace in the remarkable life led by his departed brother, noting that he will be remembered

Economist enumerates challenges affecting businesses

From JIDAUNA YANUNG Abuja

CHAIRMAN of Amaecom Conglomerate, Marcel Ofomata, has identified multiple taxation, naira devaluation and low quality products as some of the challenges affecting businesses in the country.

Ofomata told journalist in Abuja, at the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the company, that the ports have become a place where corrupt government officials milk importers dry, lamenting that most businesses have packed up because of the trend.

While advising the regulatory agencies to double up in tracking substandard goods entering the country, he said the situation has

for the cherished memories he has left behind. Governor Bello offered prayers to God, seeking eternal rest for the soul of James Opaluwa and strength for His Royal Majesty and the bereaved family to cope with the

irreparable loss. Mr James Faruna Opaluwa Oguce Akpa, the great pillar and icon in Aju - Amacho dynasty was a retired Programme Manager, Nigeria Television Authority (NTA).

He died at the age of 69.

country. "So whatever comes into this country is competing with you. If you look at the products, they are not even worth competing with you. It is a big challenge.

"Another problem is the Naira value which is depreciating. It is making life miserable for us. Most of our friends who are in the same business have actually closed shop because they could not continue with such exchange. "But we have been able to stand tall. If I meet President Bola Tinubu, I will tell him that times are hard. The exchange rate is too high. He should look into it. He should look into our ports.

News

NGO tasks schools on teaching girl-child menstrual hygiene

By JIDAUNA DARING

THE Executive Director, Sound Abilities for Vulnerable Women Initiative (SAVWIN), Miyausa Wayuta Mshelia has emphasized strongly the need for teachers both in primary and secondary schools to put more efforts in teaching the girl-child on menstrual hygiene management while in school.

Mshelia stated this during an advocacy sensitization on menstrual hygiene management visit to Otana Integrated School, Jos and Baptist Science Gramar School Jos, last Thursday and Friday.

She said that the purpose of the visit was to advocate and sensitize the schools community on the need to take the issue of girls' menstrual hygiene management serious, particularly on the use of pads during their menstrual period, so as to protect them from getting infection as a result of ignorance.

Mshelia noted that lack of affordable sanitary products and facilities for girls and women put them at a disadvantage when it comes to education especially when they are young as it affects their mobility and productivity as women.

She maintained that lack of clean and healthy sanitation, such as toilet and running water means that girls often do not have anywhere to change or dispose their pads safely in privacy at school. This needs to be addressed.

According to Mshelia, the aftermath effect of using dirty rags, old unfit cloths for periods can cause reproductive system infections, such as bacterial vaginosis which can progress to pelvis infection or urinary tract infection, itching and peeling of the thigh, painful sores all affects the girl-child attendance rates in school.

She added that, having



Mshelia

said that these infections can spread to the pelvis thus making it difficult to conceive or cause pregnancy issues such as pre-term labour which sometimes lead to an early birth.

"For girls with disabilities, the case is even worse with 9/10 persons living below the poverty line. Many girls with disabilities cannot afford to buy a pad or sanitary towels on a monthly basis. As a result, many of them can't attend schools during their monthly flow".

She said, to address these challenges and knowledge gaps, SAVWIN, a Non-governmental organization (NGO) that focuses on educating and empowering disabled women, girls and children as well as catering for the aged (elderly) through advocacy training and action; steps in.

Mshelia explained that SAVWIN in Plateau State in collaboration with Development Exchange Centre (DEC) are currently carrying out the Rags 2 Pads Project which aims at ensuring that rural adolescent girls get increasing rate of school retention and improve their hygiene through the distributions of reusable sanitary pads. They trained on the local production of the re-usable pads which they can use and sell for an income.

She said that the project would also train adolescent girls with disabilities on production of re-usable sanitary pads and train teachers on reproductive health and menstrual hygiene of girls with disabilities among others.

SAVWIN also solicits for collaboration with the two schools so as to further increase the rate of school retention and improve the hygiene of adolescence girls with disabilities and provide accessible menstrual health information for girls with disabilities among others.

Mshelia also challenged men to get involved in talking to their daughters on menstrual hygiene management in order to safe the future of the girl-child. She added that the organization is highly on top gear in teaching the young girls on how to stand and defend themselves at all times.

Our correspondent reports that the stakeholders of the two schools were excited with the advocacy sensitization which they said would go a long way in securing the future of the girl-child, particularly when it comes to menstrual hygiene management, and both assured SAVWIN of their various schools readiness to support the advocacy programme.

Kidnappers of two traditional rulers in Bauchi arrested

From **ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi**

BAUCHI State Commissioner of Police, CP Auwal Musa Mohammad, has confirmed the Command's arrest of some suspects in connection with the recent kidnapping of two traditional rulers in the state.

The Police Commissioner stated this in Bauchi recently when answering questions from journalists

at the end of his first interaction with newsmen in Bauchi.

"We have taken so many steps to address the problem of insecurity in the state. We have arrested some suspects in connection with the activities of hoodlums in the area and the area is now calm. The Command will focus on intelligence-led and community-oriented policing towards fighting crime and criminality in the

state", he said.

The state police boss commended the media for its role as bridge-builders between the police and the general public, adding that it is a distinct call to duty which signifies a great responsibility to protect lives and property in Bauchi state and Nigeria at large.

Auwal said collective and individual responsibilities are required to achieve the general objectives of securing lives and property.



Stemming food insecurity

Food insecurity can be defined as the inability to have access to sufficient food, or food of an inadequate quality to meet one's basic needs. Nigeria in the recent past has been exposed to food insecurity not because there is a lack of provision of quality foods but due to the inability of the various communities to have access to their ancestral lands to engage in agricultural activities to produce foods for their daily consumption.

Since the return to democracy in 1999, the country has been exposed to food insecurity even more because of the wrong political policies of some politicians which have pitched the people against the political class. Even though there were pockets of disagreements leading to crises situations but the return to democracy with the consequent freedom of expressions that came about with democracy made it even worst.

Political sharia as described by the then President Obasanjo reared its head in a hitherto multi religious and peaceful Zamfara State where failed and corrupt politicians hid under the canopy of religion to divide the once peaceful people for reasons best known to them. This, in turn, led to the flourishing of so many disparate religious views that were not healthy for the growth and development of the society. Boko Haram, banditry, kidnappings and a whole lot of other crimes became a constant companion of the people and these led to the destruction of the structure of the society and the dislocation of food production cycles. Citizens now had to pay for protection to access their lands and this affected not just their agricultural outputs but their ways of lives thus leading to food insecurity.

Fast forward to many years later, food insecurity has become even more glaring considering the many crises that span the whole country. No part of Nigeria is spared from the monster of hunger that stares everyone in the face, yet no deliberate actions are being taken to stem the glaring danger that is eminent and is a threat to everyone in the society. The last administration at the Federal level showed a lack of will to deal with some of the teething problems which pitched herders against the farmers for reasons one cannot pinpoint. Some point to nepotism and a gradual scorched earth policy to favour a particular ethnic conflagration while others attest to a lack of ideas in statecraft. This has done a lot of damage to the cohesion which was once the hallmark of our society and which has whittled down trust amongst the various ethnic nationalities.

Take Plateau and Benue States and the Southern parts

of Kaduna for example, these areas which have been the glue and the food baskets between the southern and northern parts of the country have not known peace since the return to democracy in 1999. Everything possible has been done by non-state actor to dislocate the structures and the peace of these areas and the entire country has been put on the edge of the precipice. The absence of peace in these key agricultural zone portends grave danger for the entire country. Something therefore needs to be done quickly to stem the tide and return peace to the areas. Mangu in Plateau State which is the maize and Irish potato hub of the country has been under siege not only that area but BarkinLadi, Bokkos, Riyom and the surrounding environment have been held captive by a marauding gang who do not mean well for the state and the country.

The new government at the centre thus has a lot to do to repair the damage of the past. It must hit the ground running if

the tide of destruction must be curbed. Thankfully, some good news has been filtering in from the interviews so far granted by the new defence helms men. They have been quoted to say there will be no negotiations with bandits. That would serve to dissuade those who think that they can indulge in crime and criminality and turn round to arm twist the state into negotiating with them. Besides if the fight is taken to the insurgents the message that it would not be business as usual would have been sent to them. And, ensuring that the displaced are returned to their ancestral lands and secured must take centre stage. Ways must be sought to settle herders in such a manner that they would not interfere with the agricultural circle of the farmers. A business module should be worked out and implemented to make the business more profitable. Afterall, the number of cattle found in the entirety of Nigeria is not as large as that found in the Netherlands neither is anywhere near that found in the United States of America nor Argentina. But no one has heard that there have been infractions between farmers and herders in these countries. This is because they have been able to create business models that have taken care of their herders and made cattle rearing even more profitable.

The Tinubu administration must therefore have the political will to face headlong this festering problem which has stunted our growth and dealt serious blows in the country's bid to attend development. It must also change the approach of government to agribusiness. Fertilizers an important component in the agricultural value chain must be provided on time and at the onset of the rainy season not when the season is far spent. Also, fertilizer manufacturing should be encouraged so that the soil can be more productive as a situation where instead of improving the soil kills it is unacceptable.

Those who brought the two religions to us have since realized that if they do not manage their activities well, they are not going to make any headway. Dubai is an example. All investments are channeled to this desert just because they have shown a willingness to change their story. We are no longer our brothers' keepers. We have become very individualistic and self centred and no longer care what happens to our neighbours. We build mega churches and Mosques at the expense of industries. We cannot pray our way out of poverty in the name of religion, we need to change and change for the better.

All we hear is that we need to pray. But I ask, pray to whom and for what? We cannot wish banditry away neither can we pray away the biting poverty that is consuming our land. We cannot wish away herder/ farmers clashes but have to put in place deliberate measures to curb them. God will not come down from heaven to change the course of our history for us, we will have to do that by ourselves. Unless we show Him a willingness to work for change, He cannot help us. He has given us all the enablement to succeed but we have refused to use them. Look around us and see how blessed we are yet nothing is working. Roads, absent. Electricity, zero. Infrastructure completely non-existent yet we fight ourselves over nothing on behalf of God?

News

Governor Mutfwang visits service chiefs

BY PETER TITLE

The Executive Governor of Plateau State, Barrister Caleb Mutfwang recently paid a courtesy visit on the Chief of Defence Staff, Major - General Christopher Musa and the Chief of Army Staff, Major - General Taoreed Lagbaja in Abuja, where he solicited for swift intervention in arresting the deteriorating security situation in Mangu, Barkin - Ladi, Riyom and other Local Government Areas in the state.

Governor Mutfwang whose first port of call was the Defence Headquarters, congratulated the Chief of Defence Staff on his appointment by the President of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu and expressed hope that he would bring to bear his wealth of experience in tackling the security challenges confronting Plateau State and Nigeria as a whole.

He said, "We are here on behalf of the government and people of Plateau State to congratulate the Chief of Defence Staff on your well deserved appointment and also appraise the security situation on the Plateau. Knowing how professional you are, we are optimistic that you would bring your wealth of experience to bear in dealing with the situation on the Plateau, so that we can have early resolution of the bad situation on ground".

According to Governor Mutfwang, the state declared a curfew some days ago to arrest the deteriorating situation and was optimistic that the General Officer Commanding 3rd Armoured Division has moved his operational base to Mangu Local Government Area to tackle the situation head long.

The Chief of Defence Staff, Major - General, Christopher Musa who warmly welcomed the governor, expressed sadness over the deteriorating security situation in the state and assured that everything possible would be done to bring the situation under control.

Gen. Musa urged Plateau people to remain peaceful and law abiding, adding that they are working round the clock to discharge their constitutional responsibility of protecting the territorial integrity of Nigeria.

He said, "The General Officer Commanding has moved his operational base



Mutfwang

to Mangu Local Government Area. And Plateau which is known as "Home of peace and Tourism, "we will do everything possible to achieve peace and tranquility in Plateau State". Governor Mutfwang while at the Army Headquarters also congratulated the Chief of Army Staff, Major - General Taoreed Lagbaja on his well deserved appointment and solicited his collaboration in protecting lives and properties of people in the state.

The governor reiterated, "We are hopeful that under your leadership, the Nigeria Army would deliver on the expectations of the Nigerian

people, that the territorial integrity of the nation would be preserved so that peace and security of the nation would be enhanced".

In his response, the Chief of Army Staff thanked the Governor for the visit and said that more attention would be given to Plateau State to arrest the violent attacks in the troubled areas.

General Lagbaja explained that, the Army would deploy the non kinetic approach by convening stakeholders meeting to address the deteriorating security situation in the state.

Mutfwang promises to name SEC members soon

BY PETER TITLE.

The Executive Governor of Plateau State has said he would name his executive council members soonest. Just as he charged the newly appointed Chairman, Commissioners one and two of the Local Government Service Commission (LGSC), to discharge the responsibilities bestowed on them with utmost trust so as to earn the confidence of the staff and the generality of the people of the state.

According to him, the local government system was in a dire need of reformation, stressing that they were carefully chosen to put the system in order and correct the ills that had eaten deep into the local government administration.

Governor Mutfwang gave this charge during the inauguration of the Chairman and Commissioners of Plateau State Local Government Service Commission (LGSC), on Monday at the Banquet Hall, Little Rayfield, Governor's Office, Jos.

He said the inauguration became necessary because of the importance attached to the local government system as the LGSC are the operators of the system.

The governor thanked civil servants in the state for calling off the strike which according to him, had crippled the day-to-

day running of government activities. He urged them to be committed to their duties.

The governor directed the newly inaugurated officials to resume immediately, pointing out that there was no time to be wasted but to go into business in earnest.

Responding on behalf of the inaugurated officials, Chief Simon Tangni thanked the

Willie Attah, Gombe

THE Bauchi Field Office of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), has ended a two day brainstorming session with some selected journalists from the North east and Abuja on the survival prospects and importance of the first 1,000 days of a child's life.

During the two day session, held at Emerald Hotel Gombe, UNICEF resource persons and the journalists identified the first 1,000 days of the life of a child between conception and the child's second birthday as a critical period that underscores the survival of the child.

According to scientifically proven evidence, the 1,000 days of a child from conception, presents an opportunity to lay solid foundation for the child's life time development.

However, despite the significance of the first 1,000 days due to varying factors, millions of children, mostly in the developing world, including Nigeria, do not access the basic elements they require for a solid first 1,000 days.

The media dialogue was therefore intended to create awareness for journalists on the importance of the first 1,000 days to child survival and thriving as well as highlight to the media, the peculiar threats to a healthy 1,000 days of the child.

According to Tushar Rane, the Chief UNICEF Field Officer, Bauchi, in a virtual appearance, the first 1,000 days of a child is crucial for physical development and brain growth and a woman's

Infant child health: UNICEF partners journalists



Yahaya

nutrition during pregnancy, presented by Professor Umar breast feeding as well as Ali Pate, Vice-chancellor of the baby's nurturing care in the Federal University, Kashere, first two years is extremely important for a healthy future.

Mr. Tushar Rane emphasised to invest in technology, that poor nutrition in the first 1,000 days of a child causes irreversible damage to the child's growing brain and body, stressing that maternal and child nutrition and health organizations.

According to him, "since the ability to grow, media is an important

"If a child is not properly breastfed or given the proper nutrition early, a case of stunting sets in which have potential consequences", Mr Rane pointed out and also stressed that nurturing care in early life is very important.

In a paper titled, "the media behavior change and development linkage",

and make positive public impact to influence change and behavior peculiar threats to healthy first 1,000 days of a child's life so that the public and stakeholders can rise up to the occasion according to the threats.

At the end of the dialogue, the journalists were taken to the field for an on the spot assessment of the situation on ground in five health care facilities within Gombe, the State capital, to see the reality of the situation.

Chief Simon Tangni was inaugurated as Chairman, Honourable David Racha, Commissioner one, while Rt. Hon. Joyce Ramnab as Commissioner two in that order.

Pay your Zakat to reduce poverty level- MAN

From Musliudeen Adebayo, Ibadan

MUSLIM Association of Nigeria (MAN) has appealed to rich Muslims in the country to pay their Zakat (charity) as at when due.

The association noted that this is necessary in order to reduce the level of poverty in the country.

Payment of Zakat is the third pillar of Islamic religion.

The association noted that this will help to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor in the country.

MAN Chairman, Ibadan branch, Alhaji Rahman Olawale Abdul Ganiy made these disclosures in Ibadan recently.

He spoke after the distribution of the proceeds of Zakat (charity) to thirty

five (35) beneficiaries from Lagos and Oyo states.

AbdulGaniy, who spoke with our correspondent, explained that the beneficiaries were given cash, sewing machines, school fees, healthcare materials and other empowerment materials during the 8th edition of Zakat distribution.

He called on rich individuals to ensure the payment of their Zakat so as to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor.

He appealed to the regular contributors not to relent and to those that have not been doing so to come on board by paying Zakat or Sadaqa.

He said, "I want to appeal to the well - to - do individuals to always pay their Zakat. We will distribute it among the

poor. This will help us to reduce the level of poverty. The government cannot do everything.

"There are many benefits of Zakat. Payment of Zakat is the third pillar of Islam. It helps us to purify our wealth when we pay it. It also helps to reduce the level of poverty. It helps to ensure redistribution of wealth".

Alhaji Bayo Oyero, who is one of the BOT members of MAN while speaking, advised other Muslim organizations to emulate the practice so as to eradicate poverty in our society especially among Muslims. He called on other Muslim associations to join the queue.

The Chairman of MAN Zakat and Sadaka Administration Programme (MANZAP), Alhaji

AbdulLateef Adisa, remarked that the process that led to the selection of the beneficiaries was thorough and born out of devotion to present the most qualified candidates.

Imam Mubashir Adeleke Lawal in his lecture that centred on the importance of Zakat in eradicating poverty among Muslims, advised Muslims that are qualified to pay Zakat to fulfill the obligation being the third pillar of Islam.

Chairman of the occasion, Alhaji Amidu Adedokun, used the opportunity to call on the beneficiaries to wisely use the Zakat benefits to better their life so that they can also pay Zakat or Sadaka in future in return for the welfare assistance".

Foreign Commentary

Who will be Senegal's next president?

MackySall's decision to not run for office in 2024 has calmed Senegal but raised questions about his successor and democratic progression. NICK ROLL writes.

A 2016 constitutional referendum barred presidents from serving more than two five-year terms but Sall, elected four years earlier, had long maintained that he was eligible to stand for another mandate. The new law, he argued, effectively reset the clock on his term limits.

His long-running refusal to specify whether he would run in the February 2024 polls, and legal quagmires entrapping some of his political opponents under disputed circumstances, helped fuel deadly protests during his presidency.

But while Sall's announcement brings relief for pro-democracy activists and citizens alike across the West African country, it also throws February's election wide open.

"The decision by MackySall to not be a candidate is unprecedented," said BabacarNdiaye, a political analyst and research director at the Dakar-based West Africa Think Tank (WATHI). "The outgoing president, MackySall, is going to organise the election, and won't be a candidate. And in Senegal, we've never had that. We've always had an election where the incumbent president was running for another mandate."

Already in the race is IdrissaSeck, the runner-up to 2019's presidential vote, and whose Rewmi party had joined Sall's ruling Benno BokkYaakaar (BBY) coalition after last year's parliamentary elections. Also running is AminataTouré, who previously served as Sall's prime minister. But while both of those candidates served with Sall in government, they've left to pursue their presidential



Senegal's President MackySall in Fatick, Senegal on February 24, 2019

ambitions.

Seck has painted his candidacy as being based on "more jobs and income, more food and food security, as well as equitable access to basic services" – the type of issues the country's next president will face no matter who wins in 2024.

Despite Senegal posting solid economic growth in recent years, analysts and voters told Al Jazeera that a lack of jobs for the country's burgeoning youth population will remain a top – and difficult – priority for the next administration.

For his part, the president told the media that he delayed his announcement in order to avoid becoming a "lame duck". He also said that, had some sort of "threat" put the country's stability in doubt, it might have

been wise for him to run again.

But analysts speculate that the fact that he doesn't yet have a designated successor might lead to Sall mulling another run.

Alassane Ouattara, president of Ivory Coast, also promised not to seek a third term in 2020 – only to turn around to do so after the death of his party's candidate, Amadou Gon Coulibaly. Senegalese opposition politician Birame Souleye Diop was charged in court this week for suggesting Sall might poison his future political successor and then run himself, "Ouattara-style."

This close to the Senegalese election, there are unlikely to be further major defections from BBY, said Maurice Soudieck Dione, associate

professor of political science at Université Gaston Berger of Saint-Louis.

"By not running for another mandate, President Sall will put the coalition Benno BokkYaakaar in a more politically comfortable position," Dione said. Without time to fracture amid multiple presidential bids, it's more likely BBY will coalesce around a single candidate.

Current Prime Minister Amadou Ba and Economic, Social and Environmental Council President Abdoulaye Daouda Diallo, among others, are said to be possible BBY contenders.

The son of ex-president Abdoulaye Wade, Karim, and former Dakar Mayor Khalifa Sall were both convicted under Sall's tenure – actions disputed by their supporters as politically motivated. But they are likely to jump into the fray as well, as a "national dialogue" process is expected to reinstate their eligibility to run for the presidency, Ndiaye said.

Hanging over the election is the fate of Ousmane Sonko – the fiery opposition leader who has tapped into disillusionment with Senegal's political elite to gain a huge following among the country's youth, themselves often unemployed or underemployed.

His conviction in June for "corrupting youth" was lighter than expected – he had originally been charged with rape, in a trial that fuelled massive protests and harsh government crackdowns, with supporters saying the case had been fabricated to politically sideline him. He came in third place in 2019, but his eligibility to stand in the 2024 race remains in doubt.

Observers and voters worry that a race where Sonko is barred from running would bring about more protests.

"MackySall renounced a third run because of internal and external pressure," including from protests, said Samba Thiongane, a Sonko supporter in Dakar. "If he had declared his candidacy, that would have been the end of the republic."

"The problem with the presidential elections is that if the elections are not inclusive, the next president will have even more problems than MackySall, because he won't be legitimate," Thiongane added. "There's a very palpable risk things go awry before or after the elections."

Yet some think that, with Sall out of the race, some of the fury that filled the protests around Sonko's trial and

conviction might dissipate.

"The president has done a lot," including building roads and highways, and raising government workers' salaries, said Nuru Sow, a nurse in Kaolack and BBY supporter.

"Even a lot of Senegalese who were against MackySall are of the opinion they will vote for the (candidate) who MackySall chooses" to succeed him, Sow said. "They weren't against MackySall – they were against the third mandate."

Sall stepping aside after two terms is on the one hand a confirmation of Senegal's established democratic consolidation: Senegal's first two presidents, Léopold Sédar Senghor and Abdou Diouf, served for two decades each. As opposition parties were given more freedom under Diouf, and following his defeat at the ballot box in 2000, democracy's roots began to more firmly take hold.

Those roots have since been stress-tested repeatedly. Diouf's successor, Abdoulaye Wade, also ran for a third term in 2012. He was defeated by Sall, an irony Sall's detractors were keen to point out amid his yearslong reluctance to commit to two terms. (Wade had employed the same controversial accounting Sall did, arguing constitutional revisions had reset his term limits.)

In Sall's 12 years in office, Senegal dropped from "free" to "partly free," in global democracy rankings from the Washington-based NGO Freedom House. Over the same era, Senegal dropped from a "flawed democracy" to a "hybrid regime", as per the Economist Intelligence Unit's 2022 Democracy Index.

And yet, those flaws, as well as the deaths of protesters killed by security forces or the jailing of journalists and opposition politicians under his tenure, might soon be forgotten by an international community that was happy to see him decide to stand down. Already, the United States has said he set an "example" for the region, sometimes described as a "coup belt". In an interview with French daily Le Monde, Sall even appeared to hint that he might make a good fit at the United Nations.

As it stands, Sall is the first Senegalese president to voluntarily limit himself to two terms. Given the mass of protesters that assembled demanding he do so, he likely will not be the last.

SOURCE: AL JAZEERA

"But analysts speculate that the fact that he doesn't yet have a designated successor might lead to Sall mulling another run. Alassane Ouattara, president of Ivory Coast, also promised not to seek a third term in 2020 – only to turn around to do so after the death of his party's candidate, Amadou Gon Coulibaly. Senegalese opposition politician Birame Souleye Diop was charged in court this week for suggesting Sall might poison his future political successor and then run himself, "Ouattara-style." This close to the Senegalese election, there are unlikely to be further major defections from BBY, said Maurice Soudieck Dione, associate professor of political science at Université Gaston Berger of Saint-Louis."

Foreign News

Mysterious object found on Australian beach

THE Australian Space Agency has launched an investigation into whether a mysterious cylindrical object that washed up on a remote western beach is space junk from a foreign rocket.

The barnacle-encrusted device, which is about the size of a small car, was found on Sunday at Green Head, a town about 250km (155 miles) north of Perth, the capital of Western Australia. Curious locals gathered to pose for photos before police arrived and cordoned off the area.

The agency said that it was in contact with other space agencies to identify the object, which appears to be partly made of a woven material.

"The object could be from a foreign space launch vehicle and we are liaising with global counterparts who may be able to provide more information," it said.

European Space Agency engineer Andrea Boyd said her colleagues believe the item that washed up from the Indian Ocean fell from an Indian rocket while launching a satellite.

"We're pretty sure, based on the shape and the size, it is an



The cylindrical object was found on July 16, 2023, at Green Head, Western Australia

upper-stage engine from an Indian rocket that's used for a lot of different missions," she told the Australian Broadcasting Corp.

There was no immediate comment by the Indian Space Research Organization.

Whoever launched the object into space would be responsible for its disposal.

"There is a United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, and they have an Outer Space Treaty that everyone has signed, saying that whoever launches something into space is responsible for it right until

the very end," Boyd said.

Australian National University astrophysicist and cosmologist Brad Tucker was quoted as saying by The Associated Press news agency that the object "definitely does look space chunky".

Western Australia Police said in a statement that a government chemical analysis had determined the object was safe and "there is no current risk to the community."

Authorities had earlier treated the device as hazardous and urged the public to stay away.

THE leaders of 26 Indian opposition parties are meeting to firm up their strategy to take on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party in the general election due next year.

Top opposition leaders including the Congress's Sonia Gandhi and Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal are participating.

Reports say the group may also pick a leader for the coalition.

This is the second big meeting of the opposition in the run-up to elections.

They are discussing issues such as seat-sharing - how many seats each party would contest - and a common programme for the election in the two-day meeting being held in Bengaluru city (formerly Bangalore) in the southern state of Karnataka.

But taking on the BJP - which won more than 300 seats in the 543-member Lok Sabha (the lower house of India's parliament) in 2019 - will be a formidable challenge even for a mostly united opposition.

The BJP governs around 15 states (India has 28 states and eight federally administered territories) either by itself or as part of a coalition. It is India's richest

Indian opposition leaders in Talks to replace Modi



Some reports say Sonia Gandhi (left) may be named president of the united front

political party with a declared income of 19.17bn rupees (\$233.67m; £178.4m) in 2021-22. And its biggest strength in a national election is the popularity of Mr Modi, who has been able to sway even voters who may have chosen a different party in state polls.

Meanwhile, opposition parties are grappling with their own challenges.

Rahul Gandhi, leader of the Congress party, was disqualified as an MP in March after he was convicted and sentenced to jail in a defamation case related to comments made about Mr Modi's surname at an election rally in 2019. Unless his legal appeal is successful, he cannot contest next year's election.

Many of the opposition parties are also at loggerheads with each other in states such as West Bengal and Delhi due to differing political ideologies.

Some, like the Nationalist Congress Party, are battling internal defections, while others are trying to deal with a lack of unity among senior state leaders.

However, observers say

that a strong anti-BJP sentiment is uniting the opposition, pushing them to look past their differences.

On Tuesday, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge tweeted that the intention of the meeting was "not to gain power for ourselves" but to "protect democracy, secularism and social justice".

West Bengal Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee called the meeting a "fruitful" exercise and said that "constructive decisions" would be taken in the meeting, the outcomes of which "may be good for the people of the country".

Reports say that Sonia Gandhi may be chosen as the coalition's president, but there is no official confirmation yet.

Meanwhile, the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance was also set to hold a meeting of 38 allies on Tuesday in the capital Delhi.

On Monday, BJP president JP Nadda had criticised the opposition meeting, saying its foundation was based on "the politics of selfishness".

No fast results in offensive, warns Ukraine's Syrskyi

"WE'D like to get very fast results, but in reality it's practically impossible," says the man overseeing Ukraine's renewed offensive in the east.

We meet Gen Oleksandr Syrskyi at a secret location beside the command vehicle he uses to visit his troops and keep an eye on the battle. On top is a powerful machine gun. Inside, a large screen displays multiple live video feeds of the battlefield from hundreds of drones.

Look up Gen Syrskyi online and you will see him described as "the most successful general of the 21st Century so far".

He led the defence of Kyiv at the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine last year. He was the mastermind behind Ukraine's surprise and successful counter-attack in Kharkiv last summer. Now, he's head of

military operations in eastern Ukraine - one of the two main axes in Ukraine's counter-offensive.

We watch a feed of the heavily shell-scarred fields around Bakhmut, where some of his troops are trying to take back ground. I ask him if it's his goal to recapture the city? He smiles and says: "Yes, of course. I try to do it."

But even he admits that, more than a month since it started, Ukraine's long-awaited offensive on multiple fronts is going slower than many had hoped.

He says in the east, just like the south, the area is saturated with mines and defensive barriers. The Russians, he says, have many strongholds:

But Gen Syrskyi believes Ukraine still has one distinct advantage.

That's in stark contrast to Russia's military hierarchy, which appears to be

suffering from infighting, with senior officers being removed from command.

Gen Syrskyi is lionised by those around him, who admire his commitment, determination and cunning. Relaxation is a daily session in the gym. He sleeps for just four-and-a-half hours a night.

To the south and north of Bakhmut, Ukraine says it has retaken nearly 30 sq km (about 12 sq miles) of territory from the Russians.

Ukraine's deputy defence minister, Hanna Maliar, told us that Russian forces in the city would soon be trapped. But artillery shells were still raining down on one Ukrainian position we visited just 3km from the city.

Alex, one of the soldiers from Ukraine's 57th Brigade, describes the situation as "tense".

He points to a large crater created by a Russian artillery shell from earlier that morning. It landed just a few metres from his trench.

Shortly after, we too had to run for cover.

Far away from the shelling, commanders in a deep bunker are co-ordinating the efforts to recapture Bakhmut.

Two months ago, when I was last here, Ukraine was losing ground and in danger of being encircled. Now, the tables have turned.

Col Oleksandr Bakulin, commander of the 57th Brigade, tells me it's now the Russians who are in trouble.

He says he doesn't

underestimate his enemy, but that the regular Russian troops he now faces are not like Yevgeny Prigozhin's Wagner mercenaries who eventually captured the city earlier this year.

Moving forward, albeit slowly, he says has also boosted morale so "the losses are easier to bear".

For the first time on the eastern front, the numbers of Ukrainian forces now match those of Russian troops - about 160,000. However, Ukraine is still outgunned by Russian artillery.

Could the dynamics change with the arrival of US-supplied cluster munitions, which contain dozens of small bombs that can be sprayed out over a wider area? More than a hundred countries have banned them.

He also acknowledges they're a controversial weapon: "If the Russians didn't use them, perhaps conscience would not allow us to do it too."

Gen Syrskyi confirmed that US cluster munitions had now arrived in Ukraine and would be ready to use within days. We saw the US-supplied M777 howitzers, which will fire the shells, already in position around Bakhmut.

The general says the city's recapture would have more than just symbolic value. He argues Bakhmut is also of strategic importance - as the gateway to other key cities in the region.



Gen Syrskyi (L), seen here with President Volodymyr Zelensky, is leading Ukraine's renewed offensive in the east

DR Congo ex-leader rejects harbouring Islamist rebels



Mr Kabila (R) said the false accusation made by Mr Museveni (L) was ridiculous

"THE false accusations of President Museveni, who is one of the main destabilisers in the region, are simply ridiculous and aim to distract the Congolese people and divide them," Mr Kabila told the Reuters news agency.

Last year a top UN court ordered Uganda to pay

the Kinshasa government hundreds of millions of dollars in reparations for atrocities committed during a war in eastern DR Congo.

The latest row comes a month after ADF rebels were blamed for killing more than 42 students at a school in western Uganda.

Feature

Biodiversity protection on the Plateau

The mystery of biodiversity, its composition and interactions is beyond our understanding but since humans are the main culprits who often cause damages to the environment through harmful activities, solutions to restoration of same is in the hands of humans. Godwin Moses. Writes

BIODIVERSITY refers to enormous variety of life on earth. It includes every living thing plants, bacteria, animals and humans, and a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable.

The need for conservation of biodiversity has become a global concern. Attitudinal change towards protection of the environment is a good place to begin this expository. We must be ready to act beyond paying lips service. Everyone needs to play their roles as individuals, group, families and government.

Objective assessment and holistic review of policies, founding and administration of robust environmental laws are key. Other fundamental roles include raising (cultural, social) consciousness and awareness amongst people living in these rich biodiversity areas and the use of effective strategy in the enforcement of legal codes (laws) and sanctions. Multidisciplinary synergy among critical stakeholders at all levels from relevant sectors can enhance climate resilience, protect lives (biodiversity) and livelihoods, and deliver socio- economic benefits too.

The tropical region of the world is known to harbour a high percentage of the world's biodiversity. African alone holds about 20% of the world's bird species total of which 90% are African endemic (Dowsett & Forbe-Watson, 1993). Large species are found in the tropics, including 93% of 902 threatened forest birds (Birdlife International, 2000).

Situated in tropical zone, Plateau State is located in Nigeria's middle belt, between latitude 8°24'N and longitude 8°32' and 10°3' East with an area of 26,894 square kilometres. Its altitude ranges from 1,200 metres (about 400 feet) to a peak of 1,824 metres above sea level in the Shere Hills range near Jos. Though situated in tropical zone, higher altitude means that Plateau State has a near temperature of between 18°C and 22°C, Harmattan winds cause the coldest weather between December and February. The warmest temperatures usually occur in the dry season months of March and April. The mean annual rainfall varies from 131.75 cm (52 in) on the southern part to 146 cm (57 in).

It has rich biodiversity and mountainous areas in the north of the State with captivating rock formations. Bare rocks are scattered across the grasslands, which covers the Plateau. Years of Tin mining have also left the area strewn with deep gorges and lakes. The state harbours high density of humans in north central of the country, most of which tend to be ignorant of these natural resources.

Over 300 species of bird have been recorded in Amurum Forest Reserve, located 15km north-east Jos Plateau, including two of



Nigeria's endemic bird species (restricted to Nigeria), the Rock Firefinch (*Lagonosticta sanguinidorsalis*) and its brood parasite the Jos Plateau indigobird (*Vidua maryae*). The Jos indigobird is a small bird about 12cm in size, discovered in 1968. The bird is black finches, with pale bill and not indigo in colour.

These birds are found in Panshanu Pass. Taboru Hill near Jos and Kagoro. They birds cannot incubate their eggs; they depend on other birds-usually lays its eggs in the nest of Rock Firefinch which helps incubate the eggs of the Jos indigobird. The population of the Jos indigobird is said to be decreasing.

Loss of biodiversity in Plateau State can be attributed to natural disaster or activities which include farming, fuel-wood collection, building of infrastructure, pollution, and logging. Other activities are hunting for caged bird trade, egg- collection and cultural use.

As the duo of illegal logging and deforestation persist, some reptiles and birds sought for shelter in people's homes as a result, defacing buildings particularly high-rise buildings with faeces, this had caused Locals to resort to the use of poisonous substances to get rid of such unwanted creatures. Deforestation under the guise of fuel-wood collection is no justification for such an increase rate of felling (immature) trees without replacements in our communities. This unacceptable practice is fast depleting the (forest) trees and biodiversity.

There is need for State actors to refocus and strategies to meet up with SDG's goal No.13, and also making biodiversity conservation a priority. The statutory mandates of the concern Ministry, department and agencies or other gate keepers as regards forest management and reserves are clear. However, functional forestry department require a well-trained and motivated human resources and financial commitment for efficient operations.

The role of environmental laws and enforcement cannot be overemphasized therefore, both State and non State actors should pay closer attention to environmental laws.

The State legislative alms should liaise with relevant government establishments, environmental professionals, and civil society groups (CSO) to strengthen or amend 'Obsolete' environmental laws, and other primary laws in respect to licencing of loggers and sanctions to reflect current realities. Sanctions, penalties or punishments to be meted to those who contravene such laws should be stiffer or intense. The law if deployed without compromise can mitigate environmental degradation and pollution that is causing loss of biodiversity in the State.

Also, there is need to promote awareness of biodiversity issues across all media platforms through unique program of education and public outreach. This will empower people to bring urgent information to the frontline responders including community leaders for necessary action to safeguard biodiversity. The use of educational campaigns and sensitization

slogan such as 'Investment in the environment, is an investment in our health' should be heard everywhere. The idea is to cause a paradigm shift from being passive to being active. The media as an effective tool for mass mobilization and education should be leverage on to change the mind-set of the populace.

Farmers should encourage and assisted to deploy the use of modern technology in farming and land clearing as well as control use of pesticides, herbicides, preservatives and other chemical in such a manner that environmental friendly farming activities are being practice with minimal environmental degradation so as to prevent erosion, pollution, deforestation, desertification, loss of biodiversity and other adverse impact of climate change.

As a State, we must fall back to improve our development control policies and begin to do the needful as the frontiers of infrastructural development and urbanization increases. Development control measures should be holistically enforced rather than compromised when private property developers or government infrastructural development such as roads and many others are erroneously or

deliberately pushed or cited on green area or forest reserves.

Similarly, there is no better approach to issues of deforestation than robust afforestation. State actors as well as Partners should not only take the lead but be seen as practically committed and involved in consistence planting or re-establishment of forest in strategic areas in urban and rural communities as guided by baseline studies. The enforcement unit of relevant authorities must ensure to implement policies like the one which require persons directly or indirectly involved in legal or illegal felling of every single tree to plant three in same vicinity.

Globally, leaders and professionals are in the forefront of the fight to safeguard the planet- environment from the adverse impact of climate change. In Plateau State our traditional leader as well as opinion leaders should equally act in that regard. Such leaders must roll off their sleeves and deliberately get involve by personally setting the pace through design and support of a measurable and attainable work plan aim at creating awareness to ensure that large percentage of the people understood the need to take care of the environment and the dangers of failure to protect biodiversity in their respective domains. And periodically taking stock or an overview of the journey so far on what the community has done right or has failed to do right since they have a key role to play as the custodians of the people.

Again, we need to remain focused and continue to emphasize the fact that birds are useful indicators of the state of the environment and are key species for education and public awareness. This may be because of their high mobility, which make it easy for them to move from an unsuitable area to another. Bird serving as indicators if protected can lead to the protection of the biodiversity. The conservation of the species therefore, will lead to conservation of other biodiversity



THE NIGERIA STANDARD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Health

Ways to stop decrease in bone density

WHEN you break a bone as a kid, it's no big deal – you get a cast, your friends sign it, and in a few weeks you're all healed up. As you get older, your bones weaken, and your body doesn't bounce back from an injury the way it used to. Instead, a small fall that once resulted in a scraped knee could lead to a broken arm or hip.

Osteoporosis is a serious medical condition when your bones begin to lose density as you age.

Your Risk of Osteoporosis

As you get older, your risk of osteoporosis increases. According to the International Osteoporosis Foundation, 1 in 3 women and 1 in 5 men will experience an osteoporotic fracture after the age of 50.

For women, your risk of developing osteoporosis is significantly higher around the time of menopause. During menopause, your body goes through many changes – including a drop in your estrogen levels.

"In addition to the role estrogen plays in reproduction and the development of sexual characteristics, it also helps to keep your bones strong,". "When these levels drop, your bones can become more brittle and make you more at risk for fractures."

Keeping Bones Strong

While osteoporosis is more common in women older than 65, it is still important to keep your bones healthy throughout your lifetime to slow bone loss.

Quit bad habits. Certain lifestyle habits can affect your bone health. Smoking and frequently consuming alcohol can both decrease your bone density. Cutting these habits out of your life is not only good for your bones but is also good for your overall health and well-being.

Try weight-bearing exercises. Staying active is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. Include a variety of types of workouts into your routine to



get your whole body into shape. Weight-bearing activities – such as walking, tennis and aerobics – can help maintain bone mass.

Get more nutrients. Calcium and vitamin D are essential for building strong bones. It is recommended that women younger than 50 should get 1,000 mg of calcium and 800 International Units (IU) of vitamin D per day. Women older than 50 need 1,200 mg of calcium and 1,000 IU of vitamin D. Try eating

foods that are good sources of calcium such as milk, cheese, certain kinds of fish and green leafy vegetables. Many breads and cereals are fortified with vitamin D, as well. If you worry your diet isn't providing enough of these nutrients, talk to your doctor about taking a supplement or consulting with a dietitian for a nutrition plan.

Schedule a bone density scan. A bone density scan is a low-dose X-ray of your hips and spine that measures the calcium and other minerals in your bones. While it is recommended to routinely start screening at age 65, your doctor may suggest earlier bone density screenings if you're at high risk because of family history or long-term use of medications that decrease bone density, such as corticosteroids.

Osteoporosis has very serious effects that often aren't spotted unless you have a bone density scan or break a bone.

If you're a woman over 50 who has fractured a bone before, or if you are 65 and haven't broken a bone or had a bone density test before, talk to your doctor about being referred to a bone health clinic. Meeting with a bone health expert can help you identify factors that could increase your risk of osteoporosis. A treatment plan can be put together for you based on your initial bone health evaluation..

Source: *FeelWell*



EVER'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Parenting

Learn to discipline children the right way

By **BETH ROYBAL**

HOW can you provide discipline to your child so that they can function well at home and in public? Every parent wants their children to be happy, respectful, respected by others, and able to find their place in the world as well-behaved adults. Nobody wants to be accused of raising a spoiled brat.

Discipline is the process of teaching your child what type of behavior is acceptable and what type is not acceptable. In other words, discipline teaches a child to follow rules. Effective discipline uses many different tools, like positive reinforcement, modeling, and a loving and supportive family. Sometimes, punishments are also an effective tool-but that doesn't mean that good discipline is mostly about punishments.

Parents run up against barriers when trying to teach good behavior.

Your responsibility as a parent is to help your child become self-reliant, respectful, and self-controlled. Relatives, schools, churches, therapists, health care professionals, and others can help. But the primary responsibility for discipline rests with parents.

An authoritative parent has clear expectations and consequences and is affectionate toward their child. The authoritative parent allows for flexibility and collaborative problem solving with the child when dealing with behavioral challenges. This is the most effective form of parenting.

Discipline Techniques

What you choose may depend on the type of inappropriate behavior your child displays, your child's age, your child's temperament, and your parenting style.

Reward good behavior: Acknowledging good behavior is the best way to encourage your child to continue it. In other words, "Catch him being good." Compliment your child when they show the behavior you've been seeking.

Natural consequences: Your



child does something wrong, and you let the child experience the result of that behavior. There's no need for you to "lecture." The child can't blame you for what happened.

Logical consequences: This technique is similar to natural consequences but involves describing to your child what the consequences will be for unacceptable behavior. The consequence is directly linked to the behavior.

Taking away privileges: Sometimes there isn't a logical or natural consequence for a bad

behavior -- or you don't have time to think it through. In this case, the consequence for unacceptable behavior may be taking away a privilege. For example, if a middle schooler doesn't complete their homework on time, you may choose to take away television privileges for the evening. This discipline technique works best if the privilege is:

- Related in some way to the behavior
- Something the child values
- Taken away as soon as possible after the inappropriate behavior (especially for young children)

Time outs: Time outs work if you know exactly what the child did wrong or if you need a break from the child's behavior. Be sure you have a time-out location established ahead of time.

Time outs often work best with younger kids for whom the separation from the parent is truly seen as a deprivation.

Corporal (physical) punishment, such as spanking, isn't recommended.

Tips for Maintaining Discipline

Guide your discipline techniques to fit well with your child's temperament. The key to effective discipline is to understand who your child is, especially their temperamental style, and use your discipline to help them achieve their potential given those talents and tendencies. But your goal should not be to turn them into someone they are not.

Communicate your discipline

plan. Discipline techniques shouldn't come "out of the blue," especially if you're trying something new. To children who are old enough to understand, during a planned discussion (not in the heat of the moment) explain the technique, why you are using it, and what you hope it will accomplish. Older children may be included in choosing which rewards and consequences would be appropriate.

Be respectful of your child. If you show your child respect -- even when disciplining your child -- your child is more likely to respect you, other family members, and other people in their life. If you "lose it" or overreact with disrespect, apologize. Behave the way you want your child to behave.

Be consistent. Any technique will fail if you don't follow through or enforce consequences consistently. If you say, for example, that toys will be off limits for a week, then take them away if the offending behavior continues.

Don't break your discipline rules by giving in during public exhibitions of bad behavior, such as a child throwing a tantrum while shopping. If you give in to the child's demands, the tantrums will continue.

Try to keep your goals and your techniques consistent over time. If more than one adult is responsible for the child's discipline, be sure you agree about the approaches you will use.

When it's done, it's done. After the consequence is over or the time has been served, don't ask for apologies or continue to lecture about the behavior. Help your child return to an appropriate activity.

Look for the "why" behind behaviors. If you notice a pattern of inappropriate behavior, part of the solution is to look for "whys." For example, perhaps your child is upset about something else, such as a friend moving away. Maybe your child had a bad day at school. Perhaps your child feels stressed about family problems. Maybe they are tired or hungry.

These explanations don't excuse the behavior, but trying to understand why it happens can help you and your child find ways to prevent it from happening again and again.

Know When and Where to Go for Help

Give yourself a break. Even if you have the best discipline techniques and parenting style, there are some days when nothing seems to work. Or perhaps you've had a bad day, too. Developing skills for positive discipline takes a lot of practice and a lot of time. If you feel you have made a mistake, be honest. Apologize to your child and explain how you plan to change your response the next time.

There may be times when you don't know what to do to next. Or you may not know how to change from what you're doing now to something that will be more effective.



Editorial

MACBAN'S utterances of breeding chaos must stop

THE recent outbursts, incitement and falsehood being spread by the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria [MACBAN], just at the heels of the latest killings and razing down of many communities in Mangu Local Government Area by herders, calls for more serious and desperate measures on the part of security agencies.

APART from making damaging allegations on the State Security outfit, Operation Rainbow for taking sides in quelling the attacks, the Association in its attempt to distort facts and rewrite the history of the state, claimed that the Fulanis settled in Plateau State as their ancestral land even before the arrival of dominant tribes like the Beroms and the Mwaghavul tribes.

PERHAPS, the reason for these recurring decimal of attacks now suggest that the motive cannot be farfetched neither can it be a coincidence considering the concentration, sophistication and orchestrated nature of bloodletting around Beromland and now Mwaghavuland.

UNFORTUNATELY, the state has over the years witnessed a cycle of attacks based on the sinister mindset of some evil and heartless characters that has claimed thousands of innocent lives including children, aged men and women leaving those communities in ruins with hundreds finding shelters at various Internally Displaced Peoples [IDP] Camps in various parts of the state.

HISTORICALLY, the receptiveness of the natives in Plateau State coupled with the later missionary discipline that saw many embracing the modern religious tenets of being their neighbour's keeper, encouraged people to coexist with people no matter where they came from. This became an attraction to many leisure or business minded people who always see the state as a peaceful destination for people to visit or settle which has been sustained till date.

HOWEVER, with the change in mood and with the interest of the aggressor who now wants the land at all costs, using all methods and agendas to execute an evil plan of occupying farmland for grazing or at worst, feeding their animals on planted crops of farmers, the only way to achieve such was through the barrel of the gun which they succeeded in ravaging various communities across the state where the invaders in most cases hire foreign mercenaries for their dastardly acts.

NO DOUBT, this act of wanton attacks, killings, raping of women and maiming is a heinous crime against humanity which should not be justified under any guise by any association including MACBAN whose unguarded utterances lately is already heightening tension and further threatening the peace and tranquility of the entire state.

MACBAN, must by now be reminded in clear terms that the world has moved on, as the state's population has taken over the so called grazing routes while global warming has also taken its toll on many rivers and ponds, at the same time, nature is no longer kind to the environment where the primitive method of breeding animals is still being maintained.

FURTHERMORE, Macban and its members must adopt the ranching system like in any other civilized climes instead of engaging farmers in clashes over land for grazing and its ranting with non-existent history to justify their atrocities.

THEREFORE, it is absurd and curious that the latest attacks have in the recent times taken a different dimension where in particular, Mangu has become the main target of attacks while MACBAN is playing the innocent and blaming the state Government of being biased.

OUR STAND is ,the Federal Government should close ranks with the Plateau State Government and other stakeholders in those localities by deploring all necessary intelligence gathering mechanism in identifying the remote causes of these attacks and also those behind them, with a view to fishing out both the sponsors and the culprits and if found complicit, justice must be served. This is the time now to say, enough is enough.

EXAMINATION is regarded as the means of measuring the level of knowledge or cognitive ability of students within a specified period of time.

Unfortunately, examination of different levels have caused a lot of problems to some people due to their various engagement corrupt practices tagged; examination malpractice'. This is indeed a problem that requires urgent attention because the importance of examination in any other forms cannot be over emphasized. Such is the only way one's ability or capacity can be assessed.

Today, the spate of examination malpractice seems to be very rampant in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions which to a large extent affects the standard or quality of education of our students in the country.

Some of the causes of examination malpractice include; Poor preparation for examination, poor conductive environment, bad parental and peer group influence.

The implication of examination malpractice is that the

The effects of examination malpractice

students will lose the ability to depend on his or her personal knowledge acquired and therefore finds a shortcut to cheat which at the long run the certificate acquired may not be defended by the individual. This trend affects not only the individuals included but a complete back to the society.

The adverse effect is the fact that the nation will have to depend quacks who may not actually be suitable for certain positions or responsibilities in life or in the society.



I wish to therefore, seize the opportunity to appeal to the Government to review the present examination process by setting standards so as not to scare the students sitting for examinations.

Secondly, examiners must also understand that they are only testing the ability of the student and not setting a trap for failure. Perhaps that may be a recipe for a better time ahead and a training point in our education system.

In my view attaching

so much attention or importance to paper qualification may be the likely reason why there is the craze to past examination at all costs. It is time for government to also look at one's personal skills above certificate and these would in my opinion reduce or even do away with the negative trend of examination malpractice in our country.

Ezekiel James Nyam, I.T Student of Plateau State Polytechnic Jos Campus.

My traffic experience in Jos

JOS the Plateau State capital is gate way to some states in the North East, especially for commuters traveling from Abuja, on their way to Bauchi, Yobe, Gombe and Adamawa States.

For the past 11 months, the road has been a construction site with all usable paths of the road now blocked which has given way to 80ky on the fly over being constructed.

This has however affected both travelers and commuters alike. The only alternative route now is for vehicles to divert their route and because of that, there's a regular traffic jam along the junction especially with the volume of motorist and tri cyclist all struggling their way

to their destinations.

Another worry on the traffic holdup is usually how to contend with heavy duty trucks that usually ply the road.

Unfortunately this same route is used to convey goods to different parts of Jos city centre and also the only used by residents of millionaire quarters Tina Junction and Angwan Rukuba who used that road to convey their children to school on a regular basis.

One can therefore understand the confusion, the time lost and the health hazards associated with going through the British American Junction for each passing day.

Travelling to the Jos University Teaching Hospital (JUTH) is always a huge problem for those heading towards that direction.

I therefore wish to appeal to the Plateau State government to a matter of urgency collaborate with the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) with the V.I.O unit, the police to restore sanity law and order for those who always choke up the road which is not only narrow but poses senses danger for the users who always have to contend with one lane due to the expansion of the other lane of the road.

Another appeal is for government to expedite on action on the work so that

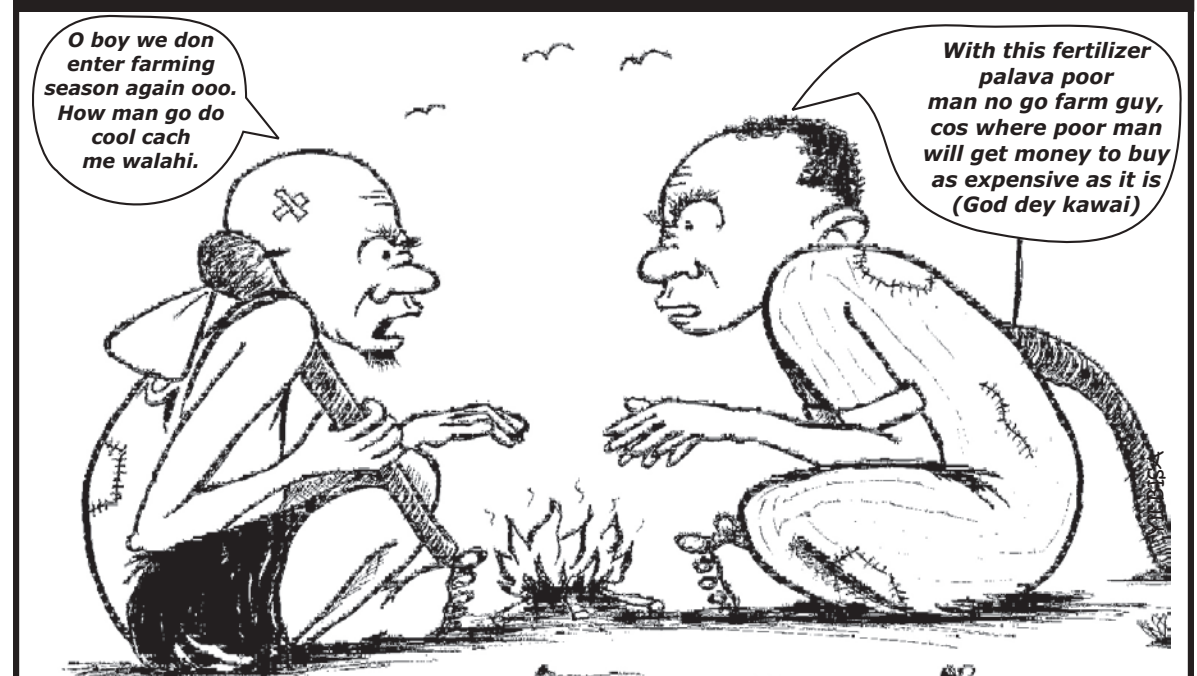
people using the road can go back to their normal lives on a smooth dual road.

While appreciating the government for this bold initiative, it is expected that the government should be mindful of the suffering, and the burden people usually encounter as the result of the construction work.

I also want to suggest that alternative routes should be opened in order to ease the challenges so that the masses can also appreciate and reap the dividends of democracy of the present administration in the state.

Jemiamah Othniel Wakili is an I.T Student University of Maiduguri.

Standard Cartoon



Opinion

This dynamic interplay of monetary policy

ONE of the fascinating aspects of writing about banking regulation is the remarkable realisation that conventions are undergoing a remarkable transformation right before our very eyes. This realisation often ignites a sense of surprise, prompting a natural inclination to explore deeper into the subject.

As I penned this piece, I found myself precisely experiencing the emotions I described earlier. I am immensely grateful to the editor for providing me with this platform to share my thoughts. However, let's set aside these sentiments for now and shift our focus to the subject at hand.

Let me start by saying that banking conversations are consistently centred around the ongoing debate regarding the use of monetary policy to control inflation and the confidence placed in employing macroprudential tools to mitigate excessive risks. These topics remain at the forefront of discussions in the sector and continue to captivate the attention of industry experts and stakeholders alike.

The background to my article today stems from the series of significant banking failures that occurred in Europe during the spring of 2023, involving prominent regional banks such as Silicon Valley Bank (SVB), Signature Bank, and First Republic Bank. In this endeavour, my objective is to highlight the merits of understanding key concepts and how they can effectively address the risks posed to financial stability.

To achieve this objective, I will begin by outlining the fundamental principles of "macro-pru" (a common term used to refer to macroprudential policy) that serve as the foundation for effective macroprudential policymaking. I will then briefly set out some crucial aspects of fostering effective

BY KINGSLEY O. OMEIHE

collaboration between monetary and macroprudential policies.

And I will conclude by providing insights into the practical implementation of macroprudential approaches and the specific recommendations associated with them. Through that, I hope to set out some strategies necessary for successful macroprudential policymaking.

The most basic and straightforward question that arises is: What do these concepts mean and imply?

Monetary policy primarily revolves around the actions taken by central banks to regulate the money supply, interest rates, and credit conditions in an economy. Its core objective is to achieve price stability and promote sustainable economic growth. Central banks use various tools, such as adjusting interest rates, open market operations, and reserve requirements, to influence borrowing costs, control inflation, and stimulate or moderate economic activity.

On the other hand, macroprudential policies, by definition, refer to financial policies that are specifically formulated to safeguard the stability of the financial system. The primary objective of these policies is to prevent substantial disruptions to vital financial services, which play a critical role in fostering stable economic growth. Their purpose is to proactively identify and address risks within the financial system, thereby minimising the likelihood of systemic crises and ensuring the smooth functioning of key financial institutions and services.

While monetary policy primarily targets price stability and economic growth, macroprudential policy concentrates on financial system stability and mitigating systemic risks. They work in tandem, with

monetary policy providing a broader economic framework and macroprudential policy focusing on the stability and resilience of the financial system. Cooperation and coordination between these policies are crucial to ensure a balanced and robust financial environment.

Take the case of Nigeria. Our banking history to date, serves as a vivid reminder that the country has experienced a series of banking failures and volatility in its financial markets. These challenges have been present not too long ago, underscoring the importance of understanding the past to navigate the present and shape a more stable and resilient financial future.

As a response to these challenges, Nigeria implemented policy reforms that have significantly impacted the banking industry. Measures such as the consolidation of the banking sector, the establishment of an expanded discount window, and the creation of the Asset Management Company (AMCON) were key components of the central bank's approach.

These policy reforms were instrumental in ensuring a sustained period of positive performance thus far, aiming to mitigate the risk of economic disruptions in the aftermath of the global financial crisis. The implementation of these measures demonstrates a proactive stance towards safeguarding the stability of the Nigerian economy and its financial sector.

However, I am firmly of the opinion that there is still much work to be done in this aspect. This leads us to question how we can further diminish the likelihood of systemic crises, enhance the smooth functioning of vital financial institutions, and achieve the dual objectives of price stability and

sustainable economic growth.

Furthermore, it serves as a compelling reminder that despite the apparent resolution of issues in the financial sector, as indicated by robust recoveries, we must not make the mistake of assuming that systematic macroeconomic crises in banking and finance will not resurface automatically. Therefore, it is imperative that we take proactive measures to explore supplementary strategies and measures that can reinforce the resilience of the financial system and effectively address potential vulnerabilities.

In light of this perspective, it is crucial to acknowledge that although monetary policy is a valuable tool, its effects can be somewhat imprecise, often involving interest rate adjustments. These measures may inadvertently lead to undesirable consequences such as increased unemployment and the potential risk of deflation. In contrast to micro-prudential regulation, which focuses on ensuring the safety of individual banks, what is truly essential are macroprudential policies that incorporate targeted rules to mitigate potential instabilities within the financial system.

In simpler terms, macroprudential policies aim to address risks arising from the interactions between individual institutions, the financial system and the real economy.

So, what does it look like in practice?

From the outset, it has been evident that there is an intrinsic relationship between monetary and macroprudential policy actions, and both policies are of equal relevance and necessity. Yet, there is no doubt that macroprudential policy is committed to adopting a comprehensive approach to

identifying and managing potential risks and regulations that can significantly affect the financial system.

This recognition underscores the unquestionable economic importance of macroprudential policies and their pivotal role in safeguarding the sector. Moreover, it appears likely to me that macroprudential stimulus may be required at some point to proactively prevent risks within the sector from escalating into more pernicious outcomes.

To provide a concise illustration, consider the interactions between borrowers and individual institutions. Often, these interactions demonstrate a tendency to prioritise personal incentives and benefits, overlooking the broader social implications of their choices.

An apt example can be observed when borrowers pursue sizable mortgages based on expectations of rising property prices, while lenders, motivated by the prospect of higher profits, readily grant such loans. However, this dynamic can result in repayment challenges and, in the event of a potential economic downturn, create ripple effects that negatively affect the entire economy.

To address such situations, macroprudential tools assume a pivotal role in aligning the interests of individuals and institutions with broader societal costs and benefits.

As I will discuss later, these rules aim to prevent customers from overextending themselves financially and ensure that financial institutions engage in responsible lending practices. By doing so, macroprudential rules contribute to the promotion of a resilient financial system capable of withstanding shocks and safeguarding against detrimental outcomes.

IMF loan and fuel subsidy removal?

By MAGNUS OMYIBE

AS I was in the process of releasing this piece into the mass media, the news broke that President Bola Tinubu had on Wednesday July 12, 2023 put forward a request to the House of Representatives for N500 billion as extra funds for the provision of succor for the masses undergoing what Mr. President referred to as pains similar to child birth pang experienced by women who are mothers.

The sum which is to be specifically deployed in the provision of succour to the masses distressed due to the immediate consequences of the withdrawal of subsidies on both petrol and the naira policies being implemented by the incumbent administration.

The fund is expected to be deducted from the 2022 Supplementary Appropriation Act, which has a provision of N819.5 billion for palliatives envisaged by the predecessor administration.

It was quite a pleasant co-incident to me because a critical question that I had posed in the later part of this piece before the request for the approval for the allocation is: where would President Tinubu find the funds to provide the much needed cushion for his temporarily painful but ultimately economically revolutionarily positive policies?

Having searched and not being able to identify other more viable alternatives in the horizon, my answer to the question is that taking the option of the International Monetary Funds loan may hold a better promise for our beleaguered country.

That is because although Nigeria is currently distressed financially, it is endowed with the resources and potentials to thrive as a prosperous and successful country which are yet to be tapped or harnessed.

But with the self-imposed reforms-removal of petrol subsidy and end of multiple exchange rates of the naira with foreign currencies which President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's government has voluntarily embarked upon in less than 45 days of being in the saddle of leadership, Nigeria is eminently qualified to seek and obtain the IMF loan.

Having basically fulfilled all the loan conditionalities made by the IMF as far back as 1986 under the watch of then military president Gen. Ibrahim Babangida, IBB, through the sweeping reforms introduced by president Tinubu via his Tinubunomics initiative since 29 May this year, the question that comes to mind would be: is

Nigeria taking the IMF loan?

Everyone knows that our country is in dire need of revenue, and its external debt burden that is hovering around fifty trillion (N50Tn) naira added to its local debt that brings its indebtedness to an estimated eighty (N80Tn) trillion has been acknowledged as unsustainable.

Given the paucity of revenue inflow that has been compounded by an epidemic and pernicious crude oil theft (Nigeria's main source of revenue) that has assumed an alarming dimension, the country may not have any other option than to go the way of its neighbor, Ghana which recently sought and received a loan of three (\$3b) billion dollars from the International Monetary Fund, IMF.

The option of IMF loan recommends itself because it is becoming increasingly difficult for Nigeria to service her external debt due to the fact that the cost of servicing it practically consumes most of the revenue accruing into the coffers of the federal government, to the extent that our country's debt to equity ratio is in the negative territory and the world bank reckons that our debt servicing obligations matched against our national income, is at about 96 per cent.

In fact, by some estimates in some quarters ability a year ago is that our debt payment obligations, (all things remaining the same) would outstrip our revenue inflow in less than one year time.

Consequently, in recent times there has been very little or nothing left to apply in providing infrastructure or even somethings as little as basic remedies or palliatives for the hardship triggered by the removal of subsidy on the pump price of petrol and multiple naira exchange rates unification in the last one month of president Bola Ahmed Tinubu's sweeping economic reforms.

For instance, the economy is in such a dire strait that it is the N400 million that used to be pushed into the black hole otherwise known as petrol subsidy on a daily and four hundred billion (N400bn) on a monthly basis that are being targeted as the funds for the new administration to kick start the much anticipated palliatives to ameliorate the hardships currently being faced by Nigerian masses.

It may be recalled that the outgone

administration of President Mohamadu Buhari had programmed for petrol subsidy regime to be over at the end of last June beyond which there was no financial provision in the 2023.

And the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation Ltd, NNPC had claimed that the federal government was owing it a princely sum of N2.8 trillion naira after netting off the income from crude oil sales from the cost of petrol imports.

That is despite the fact that N3.5 trillion provision was made in 2023 budget for petrol subsidy up till June which is just half of the year after N6 trillion was appropriated as subsidy for petrol in 2022.

That brings subsidy in 30 months to a mind boggling N9.5 trillion which the House of Reps is determined to investigate its disbursement.

That is on top of Nigeria producing crude oil below the 1.8 million barrels a day quota from OPEC and its income from the sale of the commodity which constitutes about 79 per cent of our country's foreign exchange earnings (gas is 11 per cent) and as a result earning only a paltry income in the neighborhood of \$5b which when converted to the naira is approximately less than N30 trillion annually.

Meanwhile, the world bank has estimated that about \$5.6b would be saved owing to subsidy removal from petrol and naira which is about half of the over \$10 billion that the country used to earn annually in not too distant past.

In light of the above, despite the best efforts of tax experts, finding funds to sustain government would be like trying to squeeze water out of stone. And even the dollar proceeds hitherto applied in defending the naira by the Central Bank of Nigeria, via weekly interventions in the foreign exchange market through the sale of dollars to a vast array of bureau de change outfits that were mainly owned by government officials and fronted for by surrogates located in popular hotels, airports and strategic street corners, the bonanza is not available anymore as NNPC Ltd had been mandated to use the dollar income from crude oil sales to import petrol into Nigeria and sell at subsidised rate, which has been returning a net deficit for the federation.

At some point, the weekly dollar bazaar which was carried out ostensibly to shore up the naira/

FX rate was no more available for the twin reasons of crude oil proceeds being exclusively managed by NNPC that collects and uses the funds to import refined petroleum products into our country and which it subsidises before it is retailed to motorists.

And it is a largesse diverted to the NNPC that has also ended with President Tinubu's bombshell decision/ pronouncement in his inauguration speech on 29 May: "Petrol subsidy is gone".

As observed earlier, NNPC in the wake of the petrol subsidy removal had claimed that our country is owing it N2.8 trillion in payment areas for subsidising the pump price of petrol which an activity that it had been carrying out on behalf of the Federal Government of Nigeria, FGN.

What the narrative above indicates is that our crude oil revenue was not even enough to support the cost of subsidizing petrol pump price because the FGN was still owing NNPC N2.8 trillion.

That explains why the FGN has been borrowing to pay civil servants emoluments and meeting other governmental responsibilities.

In the light of the grim fiscal and socioeconomic situations described above, even as President Tinubu's team that I have, for the lack of a better nomenclature branded Tinubunomics evangelists are able to come up with strategies to ease the burden of galloping inflation that has been taking a heavy toll on the masses, the initiatives would need to be cash backed.

Whence cometh the funds, Nigerians would wonder?

Definitely not the paltry \$800m that the world bank offered Nigeria to help cushion the harsh effect of subsidy removal just before former President Buhari's tenure ended, neither is it the new \$500m that has been offered to President Tinubu's new regime by the world bank, perhaps as a demonstration of its support for the far reaching reforms so far introduced.

Clearly both world bank funds to be availed or already disbursed to Nigeria, even when combined are inadequate as they would not even scratch the surface of our country's need.

Magnus Onyibe is an entrepreneur, public policy analyst, author and democracy advocate.

CHANGE OF NAMES

JESSY	GODIYA	MAFWALAL	SIHITSHAI	BULUS	VILBEN
I, formerly known as SAMBO TIMCIT JOY , now wish to be known and addressed as JESSY TIMCIT JOY . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as MISS GODIYA MUTEK , now wish to be known and addressed as MRS GODIYA MARAM . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as MAFALA HANATU JAMES , now wish to be known and addressed as MAFWALAL HANATU JAMES . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as SAMUEL NANDI SHIKHITSHAN , now wish to be known and addressed as DAKAS SIHITSHAI NANDI . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as DANIEL BULUS PASLEK , now wish to be known and addressed as BULUS PASLEK . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as VILBEN FAITH TSINKAN , now wish to be known and addressed as VILBEN TSINKANG ANDREW . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

MICHAEL	KICHIME	MAICHIBI	HAUWA	AYOGU	KINGSLEY
I, formerly known as MICHAEL OCHEGBA AJONYE , now wish to be known and addressed as MICHAEL AJONYE . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as GORITJI OLIVER GOGWIM , now wish to be known and addressed as KICHIME OLIVER GOGWIM . My correct date of birth is 14/05/2000 not 05/01/1991 as wrongly captured on my BVN/PVC. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as ADAMSON PATIENCE RINA , now wish to be known and addressed as MAICHIBI PATIENCE RINA . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as MRS GAMBO MUHAMMED , now wish to be known and addressed as MRS HAUWA GAMBO MOHAMMED . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as EZEA MARY NGOZI , now wish to be known and addressed as AYOGU MARY NGOZI . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as TANKO DANJUMA MAIKANO, JONATHAN KINGSLEY , now wish to be known and addressed as KINGSLEY MAIKANO MANI . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

LAWAL	CHUNG	ELISHA	EMMANUEL	BLESSING	COMFORT
I, formerly known as BELLO PATU LAWAL , now wish to be known and addressed as LAWAL FATIMA . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as CHUN ASABE SILAS , now wish to be known and addressed as CHUNG ASABE SILAS . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as ELISHA TSOK SUNDAY , now wish to be known and addressed as ELISHA TSOK TSOK . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as MARTINS EMMANUEL NANSONH , now wish to be known and addressed as EMMANUEL MARTINS NANSONH . Correct date of birth is 07/08/2001. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as BLESSING DENNIS , now wish to be known and addressed as BLESSING GOLIT GAMBO . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as RAMATUR AUDU SAMBO , now wish to be known and addressed as COMFORT RAMATUR JWAMKUR . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

LAWAL	ANAGOR	EMMANUEL	SALISU	TAWAL	HARUNA
I, formerly known as LAWAL MUHAMMED, LAWAL MAHAMMED , now wish to be known and addressed as LAWAL MOHAMMED . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as ANAGO UCHE , now wish to be known and addressed as ANAGOR UCHE EMMANUEL . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as DAGWAI BUBA EMMANUEL , now wish to be known and addressed as EMMANUEL BUBA DAGWAI . Correct date of birth is 25/12/1996. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as YUNUS SALISU YAHAYA , now wish to be known and addressed as SALISU YAHAYA . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as ISHIAKU TAWAL , now wish to be known and addressed as TAWAL ISHAKU . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as YAU AISHA HARUNA, YAU AISHATU HARUNA , now wish to be known and addressed as HARUNA AISHATU YAU . Correct date of birth is 28/07/1999 not 07/4/1999. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

DAVID	JACOB	MUHAMMAD	ISHAQ	RHEMA	RHEMA-EKENENE
I, formerly known as DAVID PATRICIA WARET , now wish to be known and addressed as DAVID PATRICIA . Correct date of birth 8/6/1985. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as JACOB, MARTHA BUNMI , now wish to be known and addressed as JACOB, MARTHA OLUWABUNMI . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as UMAR ABDULRAHMAN , now wish to be known and addressed as UMAR MUHAMMAD ABDULRAHMAN . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as ISHAK KHALID , now wish to be known and addressed as ISHAQ KHALID . My correct date of birth is 14/05/2000. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as RHEMA JOYCE UDEME , now wish to be known and addressed as RHEMA JOYCE EKENENE . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as RHEMA BLESSING OLUCHI , now wish to be known and addressed as RHEMA-EKENENE BLESSING OLUCHI . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

QUEEN	NANYHI	EMMANUEL	BARRY	DANLAMI	ANDABAL
I, formerly known as IKWU JANET OYINE , now wish to be known and addressed as QUEEN EJEMBI JANET . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as JAMES INANMWAMICIT NIMMYEL , now wish to be known and addressed as NANYHI INANMWAMICIT JAMES . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as OLORUNDARE ELIZABETH OMOLOLA , now wish to be known and addressed as EMMANUEL ELIZABETH OOLORUNDARE . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as MARTINS BARRY , now wish to be known and addressed as BARRY TISLONG MARTIN . Date of birth from 16/10/1991 to 16/10/1992. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as DANLAMI VICTORIA MAICHIBI , now wish to be known and addressed as DANLAMI VICTORIA . Correct date of birth 29/06/1988. Not 29/6/1986. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as SAMUEL MARY ANUKWAI , now wish to be known and addressed as ANDABAL MARY AKUMU . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

HUSSAINI	AFALAL	ABDUL-RAFIU	VICENT	YUSUF	GYANG
I, formerly known as HUSSAINI ABDULLAHI MAPUR , now wish to be known and addressed as HUSSAINI ABDULLAHI MALLO . My correct date of birth 1/10/1971 not 18/7/1969. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as AFALAL MAHAN ANGUT , now wish to be known and addressed as MAHAN JONAH MANGUT . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as ABDUL-RAFIU MUBARAK SHITU , now wish to be known and addressed as ABDUL-RAFIU MUBARAK AYINDE . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as VINCENT DAVOU , now wish to be known and addressed as DUNG VINCENT DAVOU . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as YUSUF MALLAM YARO , now wish to be known and addressed as YUSUF GWANA DEMAS . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as GYANG MESHAK PAM , now wish to be known and addressed as GYANG MESHACK PAM . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

NWACHUKWU	DASET	AGBABIKA	AJIJI	BITRUS	MAREN
I, formerly known as NWACHUKWU EBELE MARY , now wish to be known and addressed as NWACHUKWU MERCY EBELE . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as DASET LONGDI YILLONG , now wish to be known and addressed as PETER DASET . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as AGBABIKA AMANDA TEMITAYO , now wish to be known and addressed as OKETEH AMANDA TEMTAYO (MRS) . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as AJIJI JOSEPH , now wish to be known and addressed as JOSEPH AJIJI IZANG . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as BITRUS SUNDAY , now wish to be known and addressed as BITRUS VAHYALA SALE . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as MAREN UWADAH MACHEN, MAREN DORCAS MACHEN , now wish to be known and addressed as GABRIEL DORCAS FRANCIS . My correct date of birth is 28/12/1985. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

OBE	AUDUH	TANG	AUCTION! AUCTION!! AUCTION!!!		
I, formerly known as OBE SHEDRACK , now wish to be known and addressed as OBE OLUWASANJO SHEDRACK . My correct date of birth is 22/10/1964 not 26/10/1964. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as AUDUH MAMMAN DAH, AUDUH M. DAH , now wish to be known and addressed as AUDUH DAH . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as PATRICK EZEKIEL GWONG , now wish to be known and addressed as TANG EZEKIEL PATRICK . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>This Space Is For Sale</i></p> <p>The Nigeria Police Plateau State Command Jos, Riyom Divisional Headquarters wish to notified the public that the under-listed items/exhibits are due for Auction.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Volkswagen Golf Solon Car with Chassis No. 4U00024591475, and Reg; No: AZ 967 MKD. Red Colour. 2. Sharon Mini Bus with chassis No: WUWZZZ7MZWY031989 and Reg. No: JJN 180 ZU. Blue Colour. <p>Therefore the public are advise to come with prove of ownership and claim there properties within the stipulated time, before the expiration of this notice.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Signed: ADAMU YAHAYA NO: 08166116199</p>		

<i>This Space Is For Sale</i>	<i>This Space Is For Sale</i>	<i>This Space Is For Sale</i>	<i>This Space Is For Sale</i>		
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News

2 pilots ejected as NAF Trainer Aircraft crashes

By DORCAS PANKYES

The Nigerian Air Force has said its FT-7NI trainer aircraft crashed recently, at about 1615 hours in Makurdi, Benue State.

Director of Public Relations and Information at the NAF Headquarters, Air Commodore Edward Gankwer said in a statement that the incident happened while on a routine training exercise.

"Luckily, the 2 pilots on board survived the crash after successfully ejecting from the aircraft.

"Additionally, there was no loss of lives or damage to any property around the area of impact.

"Both pilots are currently under observation at NAF Base Hospital, Makurdi", he said.

Consequently, the Chief of Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal Hasan Abubakar, has constituted a Board of Inquiry to determine the immediate and remote causes of the crash.

The center, he added, would ensure that digital objects created and preserved at the Nigerian National Information Centres are available, accessible for re-use in the short and long-term

Prof. Gbaje also called for the modification and re-design of the Open Archival



Abubakar

Information System (OAIS) reference model for the preservation of digital objects using appropriate computer hardware and Dspace Open Source Software.

He hinted that the Federal Government of Nigeria over the past two decades had formulated and promoted many initiatives and policies that encourage the use of digital technology in almost every facet of human endeavour.

The aim, according to him, is to ensure that Information Technology resources are readily available to promote efficient national development and provide enabling environment for

data protection and data utility.

"I wish to state that to date, no digital preservation policy has been put in place to ensure that the growing digital objects created as a result of a shift to digital information systems are preserved for long-term accessibility and re-use, he asserted.

He added that fake news was now rampant because of improper information preservation procedures saying that when put in proper perspective, systems would begin to reject fake news on their own.

With artificial intelligence, fake news rejection is possible, he emphasised.

BY PETER TITLE

Governor Caleb Mutfwang of Plateau State has solicited for more support from the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), who suffered from the incessant attacks in Mangu Local Government Area of the state.

He made the call recently when he visited the headquarters of the agency to seek for its swift intervention whenever the state was engulfed in a humanitarian crisis.

The governor said, "Before I even came into office, I know that NEMA had always extended its goodwill to us when there was a storm in Mangu. Also, with the recent development that bothers on security, we also received the goodwill of NEMA and it has gone a long way in addressing some of the fallout of the security challenges".

According to him, at the last count, they had Internally Displaced People (IDPs), in about 13 different locations. He described it as unfortunate stressing that part of the visit was to brief heads of security agencies on the true situation on the Plateau and to harvest their

Mutfwang solicits for more support from NEMA

goodwill to ensuring that the challenge was brought to an end.

"Plateau is a multi-lingual state, it is multi-religious state and we have always lived in peace with one another. But in the last two to three months, there was a dimension in which it was taken. There are places which hitherto were quite peaceful and one of the places is my own local government area, Mangu. Before now, it was one of the most peaceful and safest places but now, it has come under serious siege", Mutfwang stressed.

The governor lamented that some vested interests find a way of bringing

mercenaries from outside who have attacked those communities and their houses have been destroyed and properties vandalized.

"Few of the communities which have managed to still farm, these insurgents come in the night and cut the maize which has already grown and if you can farm in Mangu for example, it makes a significant contribution to food security in Nigeria", he added.

The Director -General, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Mustapha Habib Ahmed thanked the governor for the visit and assured that NEMA would do everything possible to assist the victims.



Mutfwang

COAS commends troops for intercepting truckload of ammunition

By DORCAS PANKYES

THE Chief of Army Staff, Major General Taoreed Lagbaja has commended the troops of 192 Battalion Nigerian Army (NA) operating in 81 Division Area of Responsibility for intercepting an international ammunition smuggling syndicate, while transporting a truck load of smuggled ammunition to Anambra State on Saturday 15 July 2023.

In a statement by the Army spokesperson, Brigadier General Onyema Nwachuckwu recently noted that timely intervention by the vigilant troops thwarted the chaos that such volume of ammunition would have unleashed on innocent members of the public, if the criminals had succeeded.

Brig. General Nwachuckwu said the army chief lauded the troops for their commitment and urged them not to relent as they strive in synergy with other services and security agencies to provide safe and secure atmosphere for all Nigerians and socio economic development across the country.

He added that the Nigerian Army appeal to all law abiding citizens to continue to support the troops and other security agencies with credible and actionable information, as they combat security challenges across the country.

The troops of 192 Battalion Nigerian Army acted on actionable Intelligence,

conducted a meticulous and rigorous Stop and Search operation along Ajilete- Owode Road in Yewa North LGA of Ogun State and uncovered the illegal ammunition in a truck with Registration number ENU 697 XY, loaded with 720 packets of Red Star Cartridges of 12 Calibre, containing 25 cartridges per packet, totalling 18, 000 cartridges and an additional 250 packets of live (black) cartridges containing 10 packets each, totalling 2500 cartridges of same calibre.

The information gathered during preliminary investigation revealed that the ammunition, which were surreptitiously concealed in a supposed empty truck were imported from Mali, via Idiroko International Border, where the criminals had successfully beaten several other checkpoints en-route their final destination in Onitsha, Anambra State, where they intended to deliver the illegal ammunition.

The suspects, identified as Mr. Eric Seworvor, a Ghanaian

NGO donates relief items to Dekina victims attack

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

A non-governmental organization (NGO), AbaraCare, has donated relief materials to communities attacked by herdsmen in Aloko and Ede communities in Oganenigu, Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State.

It would be recalled that some fulani herdsmen had on April 2, 2023, allegedly attacked Aloko and Ede communities in Oganenigu, killing APC Ward Chairman, Jacob Wodi and eight others, while over 50 houses, cars, motorcycles and other properties were burnt down.

Speaking at the community recently, the country Director of AbaraCare, Pastor James Odiba said the gesture was part of the organisation's humanitarian services to provide succor to victims of herdsmen attack in the affected communities.

According to Odiba, AbaraCare is a United States non profit organisation, aimed at



Bello

providing access to affordable healthcare, disaster relief and poverty alleviation.

"We are here to share our little token of relief to members of Aloko community as part of our mandate, show our concerns, and sympathize with them. The same gesture will also be extended to Ede community who was also affected.

He encouraged public spirited individuals, organisations and government agencies

especially National Emergency Manager Agency (NEMA) and SEMA to come to the aid of the people, saying they were really suffering.

"We have brought them little relief items worth over a million naira such as indomie noodles, seasonings, salt, buckets, mattresses, among others," Odiba said.

In their separate remarks the leaders of Aloko and Ede communities, MrAtaboOkpachi and Mr Stephen Epah respectively, commended the NGO for the gesture.



Lagbaja

PROBATE NOTICE

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE OF PLATEAU STATE OF NIGERIA
PROBATE DIVISION**

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first Column hereunder died into on the date and place state in the said column. AND WHEREAS the person whose name(s) and addressed and relations to the deceased are set out in second column hereto has/have applied to High Court of Plateau State if grant of letter administration of the Real and personal properties/ estate of the said deceased NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that letters of Administration will be granted to such person/persons unless a "NOTICE TO PROHIBIT the grant is filed in the Registry within twenty one (21) days of from the date hereof.

<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON NAANDEM RITA NJIN also known as RITA NAANDEM DANLELE late of F.C.T Abuja died on the 27th Nov, 2022 at Fed. Med. Centre Abuja.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT NAANSEL NJIN PAUL & NOKNAAN NANCY DRENKAT of Directorate of Internal Audit University of Jos Plateau State. Lawful Brother/Sister of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON MWANTI NYAM late of Plateau State. Died on the 2nd Feb, 2023 at Riyom, LGA, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT MWANTI BITRUS LONG of Hoss, Riyom LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON BAKO BITRUS late of Plateau State. Died on the 14th September, 2022 at Langtang, North LGA, Plateau State.,.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT NANNYAM BITRUS of Pilgani Langtang North LGA, Plateau State Lawful daughter of the said deceased.</p>
<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON D AS HE WALLAS ABDULLAHI late of Plateau State. Died on the 4th February, 2023, at PSSH, Jos.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT RABIU WALLAS of Gishare Kanam LGA. Plateau State, Lawful son of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON GARBA MUAZU late of Plateau State. Died on the 8th March, 2023, at Ali-Kazure, Jos North LGA Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT SUNUSI MU'AZU GARBA of 84/17 Mango street Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON DAFI KIRNANA DAGIN late of Plateau State. Died on the 20th June, 2022, at JUTH, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT ASABE EDWARD BASH (GUARDIAN TO) DESTINY KIRNAN DAGIN & PRINCESS KIRNAN DAGIN of Dahwol Giring behind VITAFORM Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful Son/Daughter of the said deceased.</p>
<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON CPL ARDEL NANDOM late of Plateau State. Died on the 5th February, 2015, at General Hospital Mangu, LGA, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT NANLOP ARDEL of sabon Gari Mangu LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON ADEWALE ADEYINA DANIEL late of Plateau State. Died on the 17th Nov, 2022 at Agbaji.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT MOYINOLORUN SILEOLA ATINUKE of Building Materials Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON GALADIMA LAURA MATKWAP late of Plateau State. Died on the Feb 21st, 2023 at Foundation Med. Cen. Rantya Jos South LGA, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT DANJUMA GALADIMA & JASON DANJUMA GALADIMA of Daku Village Abbatior Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful Husband/son of the said deceased.</p>
<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON AL-KHAMIS ALA A. BALA (also known as) KHAMIS ALA. A BALA late of Plateau State. Died on the 2nd January 2016 at Jos , Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT MUHAMMAD KHAMIS SAEED of No. 38 Adebayo Street Jos North LGA, Plateau State. brother of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON OPARA BEN JERRY late of Imo State. Died on the 13th October, 2022 at Jos, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT O P A R A M A U R E E N OTUOMASIRICHI of Phase 1 New Abuja Kangan Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON MICHAEL TOTYEN late of Plateau State. Died on the 4th Jan, 2023 at Shendam, LGA Jos, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT FELICIA RAYMOND DABO of No. 10 Thomas Didel Drive Liberty Dam Boulevard Jos Plateau State. Lawful Daughter of the said deceased.</p>
<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON SOLOMON OLADIMEJI OLAYIWOLA late of Osun State, died on the 27th March 2023, at Jos, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT ADENIKE LILIAN OLAYIWOLA of No.2 Nabor Village of Old Lamingo Road Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON MAKATA ISAAC NNADI late of Plateau State. Died on the 17th July, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT ISAAC MIRACLE CHUKWUEBEKA of Government College Okposi Ebonyi State. Lawful son of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON HADIZA IBARHIM late of Plateau State. Died on the 25th April, 2022 at Jos Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT K A B I R U U N U W A MOHAMMED of Dankarfala New Market Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful husband of the said deceased.</p>
<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON ALFRED NANJIN DALA late of Plateau State, died on the 25th September 2019, at JUTH, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT RAHAB SELBYEN DALA & YACHIT SUZAN DALA of No 22. Old Legislator's Quarter Lamingo Road Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter/widow of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON MARY NYAM late of Plateau State. Died on the 13th May, 2021 at Jos Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT RIFKATU NYAM of No 31 Tina Junction Jos, Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON DUDNG DAVID late of Plateau State. Died on the 8th May, 2023 at Apwela Edo State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT DADUNG LYOP SAMUEL & DAVID TSETSENG YOHANNA of behind COCIN Church Dakunpyan Vom Jos South LGA, Plateau State. of Phase 1 New Abuja Kangan Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widwo/ son of the said deceased.</p>
<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Yerima Danlami Zini late of Plateau State, died on the 23th Feb 2023, at Kwal, Dawaki Kanke LGA, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT MESHAK DANLAMI & KINGAK DANLAMI of COCIN Church Dawaki, Kanke LGA, Plateau State Lawful sons of the said deceased</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON GYANG THERESA HUYOM late of Plateau State. Died on the 19th Feb, 2023 at BHUTH Jos Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT CHUNDUNG GYANG of No. 10 Kumba Street Zone 2 Wuse Abuja FCT. Lawful Daughter of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON JACOB LUCKY late of Plateau State. Died on the 15th April, 2023 at Gonin-Gora, Kaduna State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT JACOB JOHNBULL OSAZELE of No.3. Ramun street New Abuja, Jos Plateau State. Lawful brother of the said deceased</p>
<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON SUNDAY BALA CHIROMA late of Plateau State. Died on the 3rd March, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT LADI SUNDAY BALA CHROMA of jerusalem Baptist Church Zakalio Babale Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON KASSSIM INUWA late of Plateau State. Died on the 6th June, 2023, at Jenta Makeri, Jos Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT JOHN HAJARATU TURAKI of Bauchi Ring Road Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful sister of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON MUSA ISA UMAR (also known as) ISA MUSA late of Plateau State. Died on the 24th February, 2022 at Angwan Kuyanba, Wase LGA, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT MUSA HAUWA'U ISA of Angwan Kuyanga, Wase LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.</p>
<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON GYANG IBRAHIM DAVOU late of Plateau State. Died on the 15th, November 2022 at Rock Haven Jos North LGA, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT CHUNDUNG GYANG of No 10. Kunba Street Zone 2 Wuse Abuja, Pot. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON MIANGO MUSA late of Plateau State. Died on the 29th June, 2022, at Kabong, Angwan Mata Jos North LGA, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT TABITHA MUSA of Kabong Angwan Mata Gada Bui Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON KASSAM EUNICE DIRIMWA late of Plateau State. Died on the 14th February, 2018 at Jos Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT ALPHONSUS SYLVIA GOLPONA of Mado, Sabon Gari, Tudun Wada Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful sister of the said deceased.</p>
<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON E VE ON ISIMUS NZOMABATO late of Adamawa State. Died on the 21st January, 2023, at Yola, Adamawa State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT ETUKUDO EZEKIEL DICK of New Abuja Dadin Kowa Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful husband of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON MANN SAMUEL GWONG late of Plateau State. Died on the 24th November, 2018 at Jos, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT ABIGAIL SAMUEL GWONG of Gyel D.B. Zang Junction, Bukuru Jos, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON ABDULAKEEM RAFIU late of Plateau State. Died on the 14th June, 2023 at BHUT, Jos Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT ABDULAKEEM ABDULMAJID & ZUBIARU ZAINAB ABDULAKEEM of No. 42/7 williams Street Jos Plateau State. Lawful widow/son of the said deceased.</p>

SPACE FOR SALE

SPACE FOR SALE

SPACE FOR SALE

Signed
(ANDRAWUS MAIKAI)
PROBATE REGISTRAR
PLATEAU STATE OF NIGERIA, JOS



By VICTOR ALI

WAY back in the year 2019, a strange disease (or is it ailment?) reared its ugly head from far away Wahum in China with devastating consequences for humanity and the entire universe. As a matter of fact, no continent of the world was spared by the monumental damage(s) brought in by the scourge. Corona Virus, diabolically yet beautifully christened Covid-19, put the entire world on the precipice. Many, either out of fear or genuine concern, believed then that, the much talked-about Armageddon had arrived.

So fearsome was the covid-19 pandemic that many analysts postulated that the Human

Immuno Deficiency virus otherwise known as the HIV/AIDS pandemic was a child's play. With no scientific knowledge of its hitherto existence nor any clinical solution to treat the "monster" HIV/AIDS pandemic, nothing could be farther from the truth for those who believed that comparatively, the HIV/AIDS pandemic was a child's play.

themselves, there is always a leeway aimed at ameliorating the already bad situation if total cure is not found.

With the advent of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, massive enlightenment campaigns were carried out both in the print and electronic media for people to learn to abstain from indiscriminate sex behavior or in

Covid-19 still with us

Without any empirically established evidence, some people believed it was the handiwork of some Chinese Scientists in the laboratory to scale down the world's population, while others believe, till this moment that it is simply a mysterious diseases. Whatever be the case, the undeniable fact is that, the origin of the disease is not in doubt-China: Nonetheless the disease knows no borders, hence, it has killed people in their thousands if not millions all over the world.

The African continent nay Nigeria as a nation with their mystique believe also recorded its own share of deaths and is still ongoing. And with all the advances in science and technology, a cure for the disease has proved a mirage. However, in whatever difficult or horrific situation homo sapiens found

the worst case scenario, use condom as a protective weapon. Equally too the multiple usage of share objects were frowned at. With the rampaging Covid-19 around the corner, the advocated panacea for now seems to be the Covid-19 protocol -social distancing, use of face mask, personal hygiene via washing of hands amongst others.

The big questions at the moment are What is obtainable now? Are Nigerians observing these protocols? Or is there a tentative pronouncement that Covid-19 has bid us farewell? Is Covid-19 dead and gone? These questions become very pertinent looking at the turn-around attitudes of Nigerians at the moment. A visit to any gathering, whether social, religious or otherwise will give one the impression that the pandemic has faded into oblivion.



ordinary Nigerians on protocols of Covid-19?

Perhaps, with the exception of hospitals, everyone else is behaving or believing that Covid-19 is dead and gone! Yet, every other day, Nigerians are being inundated by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) of new cases of discovery, fatality in deaths and recovery of patients. Who is fooling who? Nigeria and Nigerians should be careful because, caution is the watchword. Needless to say, What lessons are they teaching

"The big questions at the moment are What is obtainable now? Are Nigerians observing these protocols? Or is there a tentative pronouncement that Covid-19 has bid us farewell? Is Covid-19 dead and gone? These questions become very pertinent looking at the turn-around attitudes of Nigerians at the moment. A visit to any gathering, whether social, religious or otherwise will give one the impression that the pandemic has faded into oblivion."



By HOSEA NYAMLONG

EVERY country's well-being and prosperity are determined by its development which is mostly related to the utilization and harnessing the human and material resources.

Most governments of the world, today, consider the National Population and Housing Census as very important and key indices to modern society by providing comprehensive demographic information on which development planning hinges

2023 census: Citizens need to own the process

on.

The recent approval by the National council of state for the conduct of the 2023 census has given the National Population Commission (NPC), the responsibility for the conduct of the exercise that has left no stone unturned in ensuring that the exercise is credible, reliable, and acceptable by all citizens. The commission is prepared to conduct the best census ever with the aid of modern digital technology called the Personal Digital Assistant (PDA), to collect data from respondents defacto basis.

This time around the method is different from the former way of gathering data by using papers.

In this new method, the questionnaires are going to be in electronic form, and responses to the questions would be imputed electronically and transmitted directly to a

central server in real-time. Storage would be automatically digital and be easily retrieved and used

Notwithstanding, the census is an important issue within the public space and the public deserves to have adequate knowledge and understanding of it.

The commission has succeeded through the Enumeration Area Demarcation (EAD), which is the bedrock of effectively demarcating the country into smaller units, while the second step was the pre-test, a census trial which all has been successfully concluded across the 36 states including Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

Another major component of the commission deployed is sensitization, and advocacy to ensure that the

public is involved through holding town hall meetings with traditional rulers, Religious leaders, stakeholders, community leaders, youth leaders, etc.

Thus, organizing, workshops, summit, and training for stakeholders to get the citizens involved in the process to conduct a credible census next year 2023.

This is to effectively communicate the intense purpose of the commission to achieve the right objective of the census and they have not rested on their oars as they continue to plan on how best to deliver on this enormous national mandate.

Again, census data is imperative for planning and implementation of development programmes, therefore, it requires citizens cooperation, security for the progress of Nigeria.

Despite the security challenges in the country, the commission was able to conduct the trial census without any hitches.

The commission is striving to ensure that census exercise meets International standard by employing more hands (ad hoc staff), during the exercise in April 2023.

The 2023 census ad hoc

Portal for the recruitment exercise is opened to interested and suitable citizens to apply, and vacancies exist in Field Coordinators, Training Center Administrators, Monitoring and Evaluation Officers, Data Policy Managers, Policy Assurance Officers, Supervisor and Enumerators.

The importance of census cannot be over emphasized, because the data is not only important to government alone but also to other private sectors and the general public. This will help the government to know the population size of its citizens in order to plan side by side with its resources.

It is disheartening that some citizens today don't know the importance of the census, census is key to development and the size of population is what defines us as a nation.

To this end, the federal, state, local governments, traditional rulers, religious institutions, stakeholders, community leaders, civil society organizations women and youth groups, academia, private sector and development partners are to ensure NPC achieve its mandate and the result at the end of the day, will provide a pathway for a sustainable development in the country.

"The importance of census cannot be over emphasized, because the data is not only important to government alone but also to other private sectors and the general public. This will help the government to know the population size of its citizens in order to plan side by side with its resources."

By **BULUS GAMBO**

THE prestigious University of Jos had its 33rd and 34th combine convocation between the 11-13th May 2023. Though the ceremony has come and gone, the sweet memories of the epoch making event will linger in the hearts of many for years and if perhaps not several decades to come. Indeed, after sleepless nights of study, any such graduation ceremony is not taken for granted by the grandaunts and their loved ones. Therefore, many personalities came out in their astonishing number to celebrate this rare significant feat.

This aside, it was also another opportunity for Karl Kumm University Vom community to celebrate its Chairman Board of Trustees (BoT), Prof. Suleiman Elias Bogoro OON who was conferred with Doctor of Science, Honoris Causa for his outstanding performance towards reviving Nigeria's educational sector and excellent service to humanity. For the Vice Chancellor of this faith based tertiary institution, Prof. Nanven Audu Gambo whose joy knows no bound, Prof. Bogoro OON, former Executive Secretary of Tertiary Education Trust Fund, (TETFund) has continued to exhibit exemplary leadership which is an embodiment of the philosophical ideology of the establishment of the institution.

Prof. Gambo believes that Karl Kumm University is indeed very lucky to have a personality in the like of Prof. Bogoro OON as its Chairman of Board of Trustees at this contemporary times knowing too well that his worth of experience has continued to translate on the remarkable achievements recorded by the institution towards facilitating one of the best critical educational curriculum for the benefit of its soon to be students.

The Council and the Senate of the University of Jos had resolved to confer the Honorary Degrees on the former Executive Secretary of TETFund, Prof. Suleiman Bogoro OON alongside former Nigeria's Ambassador to Switzerland, Alhaji Yahaya Kwande during the convocation ceremony held at the Faculty of Social Sciences Auditorium, Naraguta Campus, University of Jos following their excellent tracks of overwhelming and resounding achievements. The Chancellor of the University of Jos, His Highness, Malam Ahmed Nuhu Bamalli, Emir of Zazzau by the powers vested on him conferred the Degrees of Doctors of Science, *Honoris Causa* with the rights and privileges attached on these great Nigerian personalities.

Though this kind of award is not the first and would not be the last to be conferred on Prof. Bogoro OON, the *Honoris Causa* award conferred on him basically confirms the concept that the history of the University of Jos would certainly not be complete without the mention of the great contribution of this erudite scholar of global reckoning. It is

basically today factually on record that projects worth billions of naira were approved by him when he held sway in TETFund not forgetting many research opportunities he granted the university academicians.

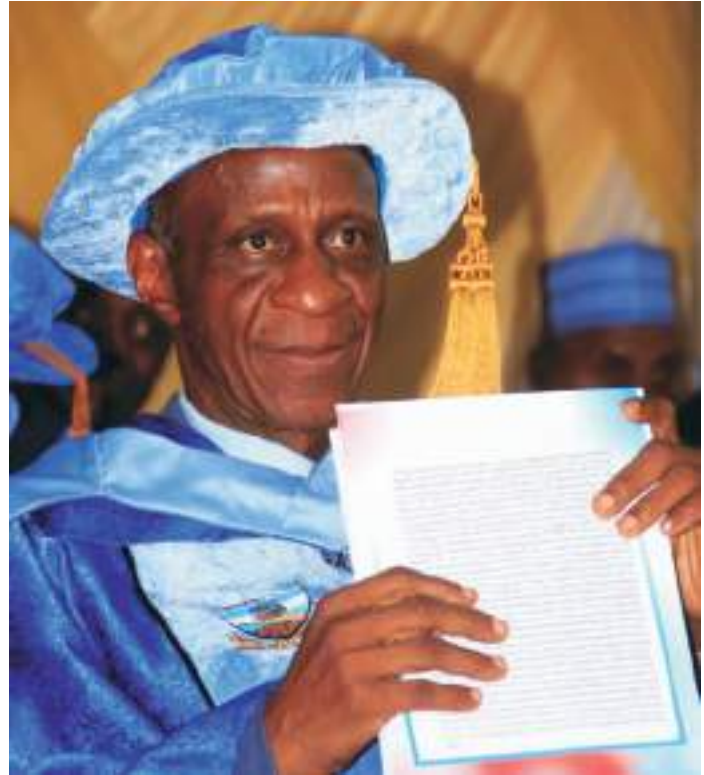
Today, Prof Bogoro OON is not only a household name as one who provided world best financial support in the area of critical infrastructural development but pushed lecturers including other researchers beyond limit for the benefit of educational excellence

Universities Commission (NUC) have done so much to keep us afloat. Other government and non-government bodies whom we have entered into partnership with have also been impactful towards our growth and development."

According to him, "the provision of inspirational direction of the research and innovation strategy by the university has recently led to improved quality research that is relevant to the development of our immediate community. This administration has supported



Karl Kumm varsity celebrates Prof. Bogoro's Honorary Doctoral award



Prof. Bogoro

(NRF) grants won by well inspired and motivated team of researchers in the university. Just within two years, various research teams in the university attracted over eight TETFund research grants. The Office of Research and Development (ORD) of the university won an (NIH) research administration grant from the National Institute Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), National Institute of Health (NIH), USA (NUMPERA) to develop the grants management system in the University of Jos and other institutions in Nigeria."

He then appreciated the significant role played by the former TETFund Executive Secretary, Prof. Suleiman Bogoro OON toward uplifting the educational standard of the university.

Speaking during the occasion, the Chancellor of the University of Jos, His Highness, Malam Ahmed Nuhu Bamalli, Emir of

commend the current management of the University for the Giant Strides recorded within the short time it has been on board. I am sure you would have seen the new structures springing up especially on the Naraguta Campus and the Permanent Site. This is clear evidence of commitment and diligence as well as testimony of judicious application of both statutory subventions from the Federal Government and the internally generated revenue. In addition, the university is relentlessly working hard to move all its undergraduates and other programmes to its Naraguta Campus Permanent Site at the shortest possible time. With valuable support from the Federal Government, State Governments, corporate organizations and well spirited individuals, this is achievable."

Also contributing, the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the 14th Governing Council, University of Jos, Prof. Attahiru Jega noted that "In particular, we are grateful to Mr. President for your kind approval to TETFund for the construction of four TETFund Special Innovation Projects namely, perimeter fencing of the university, further works at the faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, external works provision of furniture and equipment in the faculties of Agriculture, Natural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, construction of Vaccine Development and Production Center and the upgrading of Renal Dialysis facility at the teaching hospital."

In his appreciation on behalf of the two award recipients, Prof. Bogoro noted that the gesture would motivate them to do more for the institution in the coming years. Bogoro re-emphasized his determination to continue to contribute his quota to reviving the educational sector. He indicated his passion to improving further; the fundamental research framework for for desirable intellectual impact on the polity. He noted that the place of research in the anticipated developmental progression of the nation cannot be over-emphasized.

He called for more research based approach to intriguing challenges facing the nation for greater productivity in the country.



Prof. Nanven Gambo, Vice Chancellor Karl Kumm University presenting a gift to Professor Tanko Ishaya, Vice Chancellor University of Jos

in the country. Fortunate enough, all the six geopolitical zones of the nation benefitted from this critical educational intervention devoid of bias intentions and his scholarly works have proven beyond doubt that he is a genius of his generation.

In his remarks, the Vice Chancellor, University of Jos, Prof. Tanko Ishaya explained that "we have also received enormous support from our parent ministry and some of its agencies. The Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) and the National

and encouraged staff to key into its vision on research and innovation and this has led to a number of successes including but not limited to the award of one Billion naira TETFund Center of Excellence in Food Security is currently focusing on research on areas such as Handling Problematic Soils and Hydroponic Farming and Seed Potato Value Chain Innovation Platform and offer short courses that will benefit the community.

"A significant number of TETFund National Research Fund

Zazzau explained that "as the current administration both at the Federal and state levels complete their tenures in office, and hand over to incoming administrations, we must appreciate and commend Your Excellency and visitor to the university for the giant strides you have recorded during many years of meritorious service to this nation and wish you greater success in your future endeavors."

According to him, "I want at this point to sincerely appreciate and

IMAGES

PLATEAU NUJ PRESENTS RELIEF ITEMS TO MANGU ATTACK VICTIMS

The Plateau State Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) last week presented relief materials to Mangu LGA attack victims who were displaced by herdsmen (Fulanis) in different villages. Chairman of the Council, NUJ, Mr. Paul Jatau made the presentations, flanked by his EXCO and members of the Pen Profession in Jos



Chairman Nigeria Union of Journalists, Mr. Paul Jatau (standing) delivering his message to the Miskhaham Mwaghavul, Da John Putmang Hirse, mni (left)



NUJ Vice Chairman, Ayuku Pwaspo (right) with other members at the presentation



HRH Miskhaham Mwaghavul, Da John Putmang Hirse, mni, responding to the message from the NUJ Chair



NUJ Secretary, Peter Amine, Vice Chairman, Ayuku Pwaspo showing some of the items to the National President MDA, Chief Joseph Gwankat (KSM)



National President, Mwaghavul Development Association, Chief Joseph Gwankat (KSM) flanked by some members of national body of MDA



Nigerian Union of Journalists Chairman, Paul Jatau (right) presenting the relief materials for onward delivery to the victims through the Mangu Victims Support Committee Chairman, Chief Musa Pwul, flanked by MDA President and some of his national EXCO



From left are, NUJ National Auditor, Ladi Dinci Emmanuel, former NUJ Council Chairman and National Trustee, Mr. Katdapba Gobum with other members of the NUJ

Photos: DANLADI DUK



HRH, Miskhaham Mwaghavul, Da John Putmang Hirse, mni, Chairman, NUJ, Paul Jatau, President MDA, EXCO in a group photograph with members of the pen profession

Odd World

Mum defies doctors, refuses abortion

A mum was called selfish for defying medics who told her to abort her baby boy, as she insists she would rather have her baby born without any arms as he is "perfect".

When Mariaan Strauss, 25, and her husband Hendrik Strauss, 26, from South Africa, found out they were pregnant, they were elated.

However, a sonar scan at 13 weeks revealed something that changed their lives forever, after the doctor told them that their baby wasn't developing arms.

He informed the pair that aborting the baby would be the best decision.

With full-time jobs, Mariann working in the food safety department of a national bakery and Hendrik being a manager at the parts department of a trucking company, the thought of managing and rearing a baby with a disability sounded tough to both.

But at the same time, Hendrik said that he did not want to go down the route of abortion. And Mariaan said that she had love for her unborn child, who is now eleven months old.

Hendré weighed six pounds and one ounce at birth as Mariaan said that they cried "because it was such a beautiful moment."

She continued to say: "Then the big, dark depression hit me.

"Society is cruel and I thought will our child ever be accepted? Is he going to be mocked and bullied?

"The words of my specialist kept running through my head, 'You're selfish if you don't abort. You must think of the child. He will never be able to have a normal quality of life'.

"I was angry at God for allowing this.

"There was self-blame and pain. And the fear of the unknown and an uncertain future. I thought, 'Why us? Why our child?' You pray and you ask for a healthy child, but then this happens.

"But if I had to choose today, I would take him just like that, again. Without arms."

The couple remained optimistic that they could care for Hendré, and it was ultimately the best decision of their lives, with Mariaan saying: "When Hendré was three months old, he taught himself to roll from place to place and it was like a cloud lifted.

"I realised my child was okay, then I was okay and the depression went away."

Proud father Hendrik added: "You should see how he rolls these days.

"If he wants to get to a toy on the other side of the room, he moves or he pulls his little legs under him and pushes himself forward."

However, the parents revealed that Hendré had other physical problems, including being unable to digest more than 30ml of milk at a time.

The parents said: "A day after his birth his right leg was put in plaster because his foot was turned inwards.

"He also didn't have a fibula – the lower leg bone that supports muscles and nerve endings.

"His stomach hasn't grown and he can drink only 30ml of milk at a time before he's full."

But Mariaan and Hendrik's family has been unconditionally supportive of them, and they help them care for their young son in any way they need.

But Mariaan has admitted that she has never forgotten the words her specialist said to her, saying that she feels for women who terminate their pregnancies because of abnormalities.

Mariaan said: "I wish they could hear me when I tell them it's okay to have a child who's different from society's idea of 'normal'.

"Hendré is the greatest gift we could have received.

"We remember how the doctor looked at our first sonar for a long time. When he said that he was having trouble seeing the second arm, he referred us to a specialist in Bloemfontein who did a second sonar, three weeks later.

"He told us our baby didn't have arms. But we'll find out in future if Hendré can get prosthetic arms.

"Just the other day Hendrik jokingly remarked it's strange for him to see babies with arms."

Hendrik, too, is enjoying fatherhood like he never thought with his adorable son, adding: "Hendré sleeps in his cot next to our bed. When he wakes up, he lies there and smiles at us.

"And to think I wanted to throw it away because I was scared and insecure."

Source: MIRROR



Good-bye Lalong, welcome Mutfwang

JUST like the twinkle of an eye, the disposition of rural communities. But again, former Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong's eight years tenure has expired and he has gone back home. Lalong once the Speaker of the Plateau State House of Assembly during Governor Dariye's era was subsequently voted into office as Governor in 2015 after he defeated the then PDP gubernatorial contender, the late Senator GNS Pwajok, he was re-elected into office again in 2019 after he won the gubernatorial polls against Senator Jeremiah Useni. Today, the story is nonetheless different and such is life if the popular adage, "solider come, solider go, barrack remains" is anything to go by.

I however can still recall with great nostalgia when Plateau people gathered together at the Rwang Pam Township Stadium where they inaugurated Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong as the Executive Governor of the state for the first time in 2015, the ceremony was quite overwhelmingly exciting. On the second occasion in 2019, Lalong still stood before the citizens of the state pledging on oath to be a servant leader and do his best for the people. Necessarily, his tenure would be remembered for many things though as humans, we all have our strongholds and shortcomings even as our electorates usually expects much more from our leaders. One thing for sure however is that our leaders will always stand accountable for all that they have done and hugely be rewarded by God if they excel well enough.

This time around in 2023, Barrister Caleb Mutfwang has indulged himself in this oath taking ritual. As is the usual tradition, Mutfwang also stood before his people to swear on oath to guide and protect them, hold the virtues of the founding fathers of the state and propel it to unimaginable greatness and progress in the coming four years. In the midst of unabated contemporary difficulties in leadership, he is anticipated to redeem his campaign promises prior to the gubernatorial polls to the later.

Before the 2015 general elections which brought Lalong into office, a lot of issues emanated within the state's political circle. Aside the vehement rejection by the citizens of the state over perceived political anomalies then, many who felt out of place in the art of governance subsequently vented their anger which necessitated the emergence of the out-gone Governor. Back then, the civil servants felt aggrieved over epileptic salary payments which took a great toll out of them. Many civil servants equally became hapless and disillusioned following their inability to fend for their families due to some of these obvious precarious situations.

But again, truth be told, the past decades have also been so traumatic for the vulnerable people of the state owing to the episodes of unending security breaches here and there. Since the ethno-religious crisis which enveloped Jos in 2001, the city has not been the same again. While hundreds of innocent lives were lost, the city center is still polarized along religious lines even as some selfish politicians have continued to capitalize on the gullible and fragile communities to achieve their selfish interests.

On assumption of office, the out-gone Governor also confronted these overwhelming issues. Aside the reality of the fact that the state nearly became a shadow of itself for many obvious reasons, many citizens were left suffering and smiling due to the impoverished

disposition of rural communities. But again, despite the fact that Lalong's predecessor Senator Jonah Jang tired his best to protect the state from its obvious enemies, it never halted their unabated antics and crafty methods of intentionally making the state become subservient. Lalong was given the opportunity to serve Plateau on the premise of consolidating on the fundamental principles of the founding fathers and whether he was able to do so or not is left for posterity to tell. Whether Lalong was able to achieve his campaign promises or not is also another agenda for futuristic discussion.

Of course on assumption of office, Governor Lalong after identifying the holistic problems bedeviling the state thought it wise to practicably approach it from his logical perspective. For me, God gave him the opportunity to serve the people and now that he is out of office, he is left for him to re-examine himself as to whether he upheld the oath of his office diligently and to the best of intentions. Today, it's however another scenario all together as a new Governor in the person of Barrister Caleb Mutfwang finds himself taking over the mantle of leadership of the state from his predecessor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong. Few days to his official takeover ceremony, the incumbent Governor's home town, Mangu Local Government Area came under heavy attack by herders leading to the death of hundreds. This particular attack which nearly overwhelmed its citizens but for the grace of God.

However, despite these hiccups, we must welcome the new Governor on board as he gets set to lead the people of the state in the next four years. Certainly, leadership in any category demands that the person on the throne hits the ground running right from the start. For a state like Plateau, nothing less than this would make things work for the betterment of the citizens.

Prior to his victory at the polls, Governor Caleb Mutfwang had pledged to ensure that more pragmatic strategies are employed to chart a lucrative way forward. A perusal of his campaign manifesto also reveals his good intentions to pragmatically transform the state amidst contemporary challenges we have found ourselves in. This dream of his may not be that easy owing to the intractable problems bedeviling the state at the moment. Worthy of note is the heavy debt burden running into over three hundred billion and the polarized disposition of the ethnic nationalities.

For Plateauans, all they are cavernous for is the pragmatic applicability of strategies which will enhance good governance and better their lot. They are desirous of a leader who can led them into spontaneous prosperity and bring sustainable peace back to the land. A leader who stands fearless and is ever ready to put Plateau first ahead of all other desires of his life.

We must accept the reality of the fact that Plateau has and is still going through a lot. Many things have gone wrong while many innocent lives have been cut short by marauding enemies of the state. As we move into the next four years of governance under a new leader, it is portended more than ever before that the right things must be done to protect the entire citizens from becoming victims of administrative ingenuity. This is not to however say that our leaders should not be prayed for and or supported as the state journey through another years of anticipated development and holistic healing. Against all odds, some of us are still hopeful that the next coming years will be great for Plateau if the leaders that be and the citizens guard their loins and prayerfully do the needful.

View Point

Governor Mutfwang: The time has certainly come

By BULUS GAMBO

ON the 29th May 2023, Barrister Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang was inaugurated as the sixth Executive Governor of Plateau State under a euphoria of great excitement and joy witnessed by the citizenry throughout the entire state. Mutfwang who defeated the candidate of the All Progressive Congress, (APC), Dr. Nentawe Yilwada during the last gubernatorial elections received the mantle of leadership from the former Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong who held sway in the corridors of power for eight years with convincingly nothing much to show for it in terms of realistic capital projects execution. But again, Lalong's romance with the caliphate after acclimatising with the core northern oligarchy's political ideology was also perceived by stakeholders as ridiculing the integrity and struggling spirit of the founding fathers of the state. The former Governor's gesture was no doubt also perceived as sending wrong signals about the citizen's dire need for the total emancipation of the state and the entire middle belt region from political subjugation to enhance political self-proficiency.

The inauguration ceremony of Governor Mutfwang also witnessed the swearing in of his Deputy, Ngo Josephine Piyo who ran on the same ticket with her boss under the platform of the People's Democratic Party, (PDP). This historical event held at the Rwang Pam Township Stadium, Jos was witnessed by unprecedented crowd cutting across all façade of our political class, technocrats, erudite scholars, leaders of thoughts, stakeholders including community representatives amongst others. The colourful event according to pundits was witnessed by massive turnout of audience ever seen in most recent historical antecedence of the state.

Before Governor Mutfwang came on board, Plateau State had in the past eight years been groaning under a huge burden of administrative ingenuity, political misadventure and allegation of mismanagement of available resources ending up in collective visible decision-making ignominy. Realistically, the state also suffered from infrastructural deficit, absence of good governance attributes necessitating a huge schism of the ethnic groups. The crippling in of the machinations of *caliphization* schema through deceptive treaties and ties did not only made the state to be a shadow of itself but logically unnecessarily subservient. Most if not all of these consensus alliances arrived at by the immediate past government had led to the state losing its integrity amongst the comity of



Governor Mutfwang

federating states in the country. Consequently, while this ideological deceptive synergy and or pact proliferated between the state's selfish political elites and the core northern oligarchy, vulnerable native communities on the Plateau were consistently attacked and chased from their ancestral homes with impunity. As it is today, several native peopling of rural Plateau particularly those in the northern and of recent central senatorial districts have become internally displaced persons in their abode. As if this was not enough, some communities within the fringes of the incumbent Governor Mutfwang's hometown, Mangu Local Government Area were sporadically attacked by marauding herders in a genocide mission style which has so far continued to receive substantial condemnations. This most recent unprovoked attacks in

Mangu Local Government Area has led to the death of close to two hundred people while thousands have been rendered devastated and homeless. Even in the aftermath of Governor Mutfwang's inauguration ceremony, these attacks have not dwindled thereby raising serious significant concerns and worry. Unfortunately, the fragile security framework put in place by the outgone government has woefully failed in ensuring the return of most of these vulnerable internally displaced persons back to their ancestral lands. This humanly created dilemma through cosmetic security arrangements have continued to traumatise vulnerable communities beyond comprehension.

But again, since the emergence of the present political dispensation in 1999, Plateau State tagged 'Home of Peace and

Tourism' has continued to face outrageous challenges in the likes of overwhelming poverty, epileptic healthcare facilities, and pragmatic anomalies in the art of governance which has necessitated episodes of unending security breaches including other devastating consequences on the citizenry.

Plateau State which from all indications is amongst states that is suffering from heavy debt burden of over 300 billion naira with loan repayments exceeding total revenue by 0.76 percent is leaving little room for capital expenditure. Statistically, the state debt grew by 40.4 percent and as 2021 was the 13th indebted state in the country.

It is certainly in the midst of these surmounting problems that Governor Mutfwang is taking over governance of the state. Fundamentally, the incumbent Governor is taking over at a time when glaring indicators reveal

unpleasant developmental hurdles enveloping the state. Already, Mutfwang has assured that by the grace of God, he would work with stakeholders towards the systematic enthronement of massive development in the state.

Governor Mutfwang's desire is also encapsulated in his inauguration speech where he noted that 'Today, I prophesy that the new Plateau by this inauguration is born. The glory of Plateau shall manifest in the coming years to God's glory and to our collective pride. We shall work round the clock to provide the leadership and governance that our dear citizens deserve and yearn for.'

According to him, 'I understand clearly, the enormity of the task before me and I have no illusions that it is presently under a huge debt burden of 200 billion naira, the healthcare sector is in need of urgent attention, our school system requires a comprehensive overhaul, our infrastructure is decayed and inadequate and practically, every sector requires urgent redress. I must mention that there are no quick fix solutions to these challenges, but one thing is certain, we are prepared to take the challenges head-on and we will hit the ground running immediately.'

Truth be told, there are several unimaginable challenges facing Plateau State and only the grace of God will see its citizens through. However, we must also acknowledge the obvious fact that the state is lucky to have as Governor, a man of integrity who possesses visionary tendencies in the like of Barrister Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang. Today everybody on the Plateau is happy that the long awaited personality competent to take the state to the promise land has taken his rightful place in the governance of the state. Though the present predicament the state is facing may not be entirely fix within the twinkle of an eye, there is great hope that this incumbent Governor and his Deputy have what it takes to change our narratives for the better.

Barrister Caleb Mutfwang for those who don't know does not only come from a humble family background but consensually, is a true capacity of what he represents as a brilliant lawyer, a man of integrity with a calmness that disarms anyone. Aside the fact that Mutfwang comes from a solid family, it's been quite a long time that Plateau has gotten a personality that gives assurance, with capacity to govern with calmness and this tells us that things are going to be exceptionally different for us all. Even as we declare that the time has come for a pragmatic change, Mutfwang surely needs our prayers to fulfil his campaign promises and make us happy.

News

JWSC commences 5 day survey on water supply

By
EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Jos Water Services Corporation (JWSC) commenced Baseline Survey on Water Supply exercise in Gyel and Kwata communities of Jos-South Local Government Area, Plateau State yesterday, July 18, 2023. It is meant to establish the current water supply situation in the two communities.

This came in a press statement signed by the corporation's Public Relations Officer (PRO), Nangor Ndam, and made available to THE NIGERIA STANDARD in

Jos, the Plateau State capital Monday, shortly after a training organised for staff who would conduct the Baseline Survey Exercise. The Acting Managing Director of the corporation, Mrs Stella Buge disclosed this. She called on residents of the two communities to co-operate and give useful information to staff of the Corporation who would be in their Communities to conduct Baseline Survey on Water supply tomorrow which would last for five days.

She said, "the exercise is in



Mutfwang

preparatory of intervention on Water supply under the Sustainable Urban, Rural Water and Sanitation Programme (SUR-WASH)- a World Bank intervention Programme and Plateau State is one among the seven states in Nigeria that is benefiting from the Programme.

"The Baseline Survey will also be extended to Yelwa - Bukuru Water Treatment Plant which is the source of water to Gyel and Kwata communities. This will determine the operational

status of the Treatment Plant leading to its rehabilitation for effective service delivery", Buge explained.

Bauchi targets 2.2 million children for malaria prevention

From
ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

BAUCHI State Government has targeted 2.2 million children from the age of three to 59 months in the state for the 2023 rounds of Seasonal Malaria Chemo-prevention (SMC) for the prevention of malaria in children.

This was disclosed by the Bauchi State Programme Coordinator of Malaria

Consortium, Kabiru Mohammed Algamaw, during a pre-implementation media briefing of the rollout of the exercise held at the office of the Bauchi State Agency for the Control of Malaria, Tuberculosis, Leprosy and HIV/AIDS (BACTMA).

The state Coordinator, however, said the objective of the SMC campaign is to maintain adequate therapeutic anti-malarial drugs concentration in the blood of the recipient throughout the period of malaria risk.

He explained that the burden of malaria has been reduced by 12.5% from 2020 to 2022, adding that Out-of-Pocket Expenditure to treat malaria has also been reduced.



Mohammed

He narrated that the SMC intervention is an intermittent administration of a monthly course of anti-malaria to children during high transmission of the scourge as

the rainy season sets in. He also said that about 25,000 adhoc personnel will be engaged in 2023 to support SMC in the state and will be paid a monthly allowance which he said is another way of generating employment in the state.

Kabiru Mohammed expressed confidence that with the SMC coming while the Treated Mosquito Nets are being distributed, the prevalence of malaria in mother and child will reduce drastically to a barest minimum.

The Executive Chairman of BACATMA, Dr. Sani Mohammed Dambam, in his speech said this year's SMC campaign came at a time when the State Government is also distributing Insecticide Treated Nets for household use against Malaria.

Dambam unveiled that Bauchi State was ranked the best performing State in SMC implementation in 2022, assuring the Malaria Consortium that the 2023 SMC campaign will record more success than last year.

He said the successes achieved was not unconnected to the commitment and support of Governor Bala Mohammed in his quest to bequeath a healthy and productive citizens that does not have to engage in out of pocket expenses for healthcare delivery.

The Nigeria Standard reports that the exercise is expected to commence on Saturday 15th -- Tuesday 18 of August 2023 and will cover the 20 local government areas of the state.

NGO donates foodstuffs to 300 widows

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

NO fewer than 300 widows have received food items in some rural communities of Isanlu, Yagba East Local Government Area of Kogi, distributed by an NGO, Doyin and Suzan Foundation.

Speaking at the event recently in Isanlu, the Executive Director of the N G O , Chief Mrs Adedoyin Ibikunle-Eshanumi, said the initiative was prompted by the present economic hardships the people were facing due to the removal of fuel subsidy.

According to her, women, especially vulnerable widows without means of livelihood, are the most affected group of people by the subsidy removal.

"We have also empowered over 400 widows during the Easter celebration as well as other festive periods, and we will continue to do that as part of our humanitarian services.

"In addition, we have also offered scholarships to children of some of the widows and we will never relent in improving their

wellbeing.

"The humanitarian gesture is part of our foundation's vision to reach out to the indigents and the vulnerable in society so as to cushion the current hardships due to fuel subsidy removal, and alleviate their suffering," Ibikunle-Eshanumi said.

The former APC Senatorial Aspirant, stressed that the gesture was beyond politics but was borne out of her passion to improve the wellbeing of the vulnerable in the society and better their livelihoods.

The philanthropist encouraged well-spirited individuals, NGOs and corporate organisations to emulate the gesture by reaching out to the less privileged citizens, saying that the government alone cannot do it.

She enjoined the state and federal governments to fastrack the process of providing palliatives measures to cushion the negative effects of the fuel subsidy on the masses especially the

less privileged citizens.

Items distributed were: rice, spaghetti, semovita, maggi, provisions, noodles, salt, among others.

COAS emphasises importance of information to military operations

From DORCAS PANKYES
Abuja

THE Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Major General Taoreed Lagbaja has described information as a very critical element to the success of military operations. Gen Lagbaja made the assertion recently when the Executive Governor of Kaduna State, Senator Uba Sani paid a visit to the Army Headquarters, Abuja.

The COAS stated that the visit affords the Nigerian Army (NA) the opportunity to receive feedback on the security situation in Kaduna State and the yearnings of the people for the NA to sustain operations to entrench lasting peace and stability in the state.

The Army Chief expressed appreciation to the Kaduna State Government for its support and partnership with the NA towards the restoration of peace and tranquility in the state. He emphasized that timely information is critical to military operations, as it



Lagbaja

facilitates troops' proactiveness in the conduct of operations.

Describing the state as a strong and dependable ally of the NA, the COAS noted that Kaduna State holds a special place in the hearts of the military personnel, as it is a home for several military institutions and formations.

Gen Lagbaja lauded the governor for being the first governor to visit the Army Headquarters since

assumption of duty as the 23rd COAS. He assured the Governor and the good people of Kaduna State that the NA will remain resolute in its efforts towards attaining sustainable peace and stability in the state.

Earlier in his remarks, the Executive Governor of Kaduna State, Senator Uba Sani stated that he was at the Army Headquarters to congratulate the COAS on his appointment and to express his appreciation to the Army Chief for his unprecedented performance as the then General Officer Commanding 1 Division.

He urged the COAS for more intervention in tackling banditry and other criminalities in Southern Kaduna.

The governor pledged the support of his government to the NA and other security agencies combating security challenges in the state.

NGO begins 3 year tree planting

A Non Governmental Organisation, Elim, a Christian Vocational Training Centre has flagged off a three-year tree planting programme at the weekend in Naka, Gwer West Local Government Area. The act is aimed at mitigating against negative impact of climate change on some communities in the area.

Tagged "Enabling resilience to climate change related risks through local civil society organisations' strengthening in Benue State", the state Programme Coordinator, Mrs. Mimi Dzever told beneficiaries that the programme was the organisation's little way of bringing succour to the communities that have been ravaged by natural disasters.

She explained that her organisation had carried out needs assessment from the affected communities during which they were told which trees were needed by each community.

The trees which comprise assorted economic trees such

as mango, cashew, pears, banana, oil palm and guava according to her, were to be planted in phases with the first phase beginning in 2023 from Konshisha and Gwer West Local Government Areas.

She said the choice of the two local government areas as pilot local governments was arrived at due to high rate of annual flooding in the case of Konshisha and massive deforestation in the case of Gwer West Local Government thus, exposing the environment to high degradation.

Speaking during the occasion, the acting TerNagi, MueTer Chief Lawrence Ijir charged his subjects to embrace the programme with all seriousness which according to him will go a long way in salvaging environmental degradation.

Accompanied to the occasion by his chiefs, the royal father who revealed that the programme was the first of its kind in the area, advised benefiting communities to always ensure availability of water to the trees even during dry season to ensure their survival as well as guard against thieves.

In a remark, the chairman Gwer West Local Government Council, Mrs. Veronica Kwaghbc who was represented by the Head, Personnel and Administration, Mr. Vincent Adegh said it was a rare privilege to be among the benefiting local government areas in the state and promised that the programme will be given priority attention.

There was symbolic tree planting by the acting TerNagi, Chief Lawrence Ijir and representative of the council chairman to mark the official flag off.

Sports

How Maguire lost his way at Man United

When Manchester United paid a record £80m to make Harry Maguire the world's most expensive defender in 2019, one of the big attractions was his ability to lead. SIMON STONE writes.

WITHIN three months of his arrival from Leicester, Maguire had captained the Old Trafford club for the first time. Less than three months after that, the England man was given the armband on a permanent basis following Ashley Young's move to Inter Milan.

At United, arguably, he is now Erik ten Hag's fifth choice central defender behind Raphael Varane, Lisandro Martinez, Victor Lindelof and even Luke Shaw.

With Euro 2024 to come at the end of this coming season, England boss Gareth Southgate has told Maguire he needs to play more often to secure his place in the squad.

Sources close to Maguire have insisted for months he wants to stay at United. But to what end? Other clubs, including West Ham, want Maguire. The question has to be asked, is this the moment to leave?

Manchester United were prepared to make Maguire, at that time, the second most expensive signing by an English club, after Paul Pogba. Then manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer spoke about his ability to read the game, his strong presence and calmness under pressure.

It was widely accepted these were all qualities United needed after the chaos of Jose Mourinho's final few months in charge and Solskjaer's inability to lift the club back into the Champions League places.

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Twelve months previously, Mourinho had wanted to sign him. Pep Guardiola was keen to take Maguire to Manchester City. As he set about the latest United rebuild, having Maguire as a foundation seemed a no-brainer for Solskjaer.

It worked too. They finished that first Covid-affected season in third place. Maguire started every Premier League game and United tightened up considerably at the back. Champions Liverpool, who lost only three games, conceded just three goals fewer.

The certainty around Maguire was stripped away on Thursday, 20 August when he was arrested on the Greek island of Mykonos and subsequently given a 21-month suspended sentence for hitting a police officer and attempted bribery following an altercation in a bar.

At the time, Maguire told BBC Sport he feared for his life. He insisted he had done nothing wrong and his appeal - which automatically means he is regarded as innocent under Greek law - will be heard on 7 February 2024.

'My conscience is clear' - Maguire tells BBC sports editor Dan Roan. He continued to insist the incident had no additional effect on his football but when the new season started the following



Harry Maguire has been relieved of his duties as captain of Manchester United before the 2023-24 season

month, he did not seem to be the same player.

Maguire was exposed and individually culpable in an "abysmal" display in a 6-1 home defeat by Tottenham in October 2020 - with Solskjaer describing it as his "worst day ever" as manager.

But it wasn't until 13 months later, in November 2021, that Solskjaer was sacked - following a torrid run including Maguire and the United defence being dismantled 5-0 by Liverpool at Old Trafford when the eventual margin of victory could have been much worse.

Now, the defender's failings - lack of pace and mobility - were being highlighted. His confidence appeared affected and criticism began to mount.

A major fall-out with Cristiano Ronaldo over the captaincy disturbed squad unity and offered no support when Maguire could have done with some.

Reports of the rift were initially denied by interim boss Ralf Rangnick, but BBC Sport understands there was an issue, before Ronaldo's acrimonious exit in July 2022.

In April 2022, his Cheshire home was the subject of a bomb

threat. Maguire accepted the negativity around his performances but, citing the affect on his family, said he felt a line had been crossed.

Ten Hag took the manager's job last summer with a clear plan. He wanted Martinez as his left-sided central defender.

Martinez wasn't on United's pre-season tour of Thailand and Australia but Ten Hag switched Maguire with Victor Lindelof anyway. When Maguire played, it was on the right. Given World Cup winner Raphael Varane plays there, at a stroke, Ten Hag had taken away Maguire's position in the team.

After starting almost every game in 2019-20 and 2020-21, last season Maguire made just 16 starts and 31 appearances, totalling 1,600 minutes on the pitch, compared to almost 5,000 in his first United campaign.

At Brighton in May, when Varane and Martinez were missing through injury, Lindelof was moved to the right and Luke Shaw took the left-sided slot, with Diogo Dalot at full-back. Maguire was an unused substitute. That did not give the impression Ten Hag feels there is much of a future.

It is fair to say Maguire has had to show a lot of character over the last few months amid the negative fan backlash.

He was booed by United fans in Melbourne last summer when he played in a pre-season match against Crystal Palace. England supporters have also turned on him on occasion, when his name was read out before a friendly with the Ivory Coast last March and against Germany in September at Wembley.

Yet, to his credit, Maguire has remained stoic and kept his dignity.

After the EFL Cup final in February, when Maguire lifted the trophy with Bruno Fernandes despite coming on for the final two minutes, he said "I'm a footballer who wants to play games and I want to lead the boys out in the tunnel at the start of the game," but that his main job was to "move the club forward and bring success back". Maguire said nothing after the FA Cup final defeat by Manchester City, when he remained on the bench throughout.

Between the two games, Maguire started just six times. Tellingly though, only one of

them - the final day win against Fulham - was after the 3-0 hammering at Sevilla in the Europa League on 20 April.

It was after the England games that followed the FA Cup final defeat that Southgate spoke about Maguire's lack of game time, putting him in the same category as Calvin Phillips, who had limited time on the pitch at Manchester City last season.

Nevertheless, the word remained that Maguire saw his future at Old Trafford.

Now he's had the club captaincy taken off him, Maguire said he was "personally extremely disappointed" as he revealed it first on social media.

It was always likely Ten Hag would switch his captains this summer, now he has his feet under the Old Trafford table and his rebuild is taking shape. Maguire, it seems, will have a limited role at best.

His contract is a big one - and he still has at least two years left. Finding a club to take that on in its entirety will not be easy. United may have to offer an incentive.

But surely, that is the best way forward for all parties now.

Sports



Rhasidat Adeleke broke 50 seconds for 400m for the first time in May and then improved her personal best and Irish record to 49.54 seconds

Adeleke to become professional athlete

IRISH record-holder Rhasidat Adeleke has announced she is becoming a professional athlete.

BBC SPORT said that, the Dublin runner said she is forgoing the rest of her collegiate career at the University of Texas, who she has represented for three years.

Adeleke, 20, won the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) 400m title last month.

That win, the first for an Irish athlete since 2006, moved her to 20th on the all-time women's 400m list.

Adeleke is set to run her first race as a professional at the Diamond League in Monaco next Friday.

"I'm extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to represent the University of Texas these past three years," she said on Instagram.

"I couldn't have made a better decision! I'd like to thank absolutely everyone who supported me along the way and those that helped me

become who I am today. "However, I'd like to announce that I am forgoing the remainder of my eligibility and becoming a professional athlete."

Adeleke was a semi-finalist in the 400m at last year's World Championships in Oregon and a month later went on to finish fifth over the distance at the European Championships in

Munich. Meanwhile, Sophie O'Sullivan, daughter of former Irish athletics star Sonia, has won the women's 1500m at the European Athletics Under-23 Championships Finland.

Her victory is the first-ever gold secured by an Irish athlete at these championships and it was an Irish one-two with Sarah Healy coming second.

PAW Championship: GB team in good position

UK Athletics' head of Paralympic performance says the British team is in a good place after the Para Athletics World Championships in Paris.

BBC SPORT said that, Great Britain finished fourth in the final standings with 29 medals, including 10 golds.

Tom Paulson, overseeing his first major championship a little more than a year out from the Paris Paralympics, said he was pleased with the performances.

"It has been a really positive week for the team," he told

BBC Sport.

"It has been great to see those experienced hands coming back into the World Championship environment and delivering on the big stage.

"But we've had some new faces coming through who have really stepped up and that has been great to see as well - people like Zac Shaw, Ben Sandilands and Zak Skinner who have all won global medals for the first time.

"We have also had a number

MIKAEL Ymer says "my conscience is clear" after being banned for 18 months for an anti-doping rule violation.

In June 2022 an independent tribunal cleared him of failing to declare his whereabouts three times in 12 months.

The International Tennis Federation then lodged an appeal with the Court of Arbitration for Sport, which imposed a ban on the 24-year-old Swede on Monday.

"I find their decision to try me again and subsequently find me guilty unfair," said the world number 51.

"On top of that, I find it difficult to comprehend that they found an 18-month suspension to be a just punishment.

"I understand that these rules have been put in place to protect the integrity of our sport, and that they are there for a reason.

"However, I do not believe I broke those rules, and my conscience is clear with God as my witness."

Ymer accepted his first two whereabouts failures in April and August 2021 but contested his third failure, which came before an event in France in November 2021.

A statement by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (Cas) said that Ymer "was accommodated in a different hotel than the one he had requested when making his reservation, but the player's

Ymer says 'conscience is clear' after ban

agent (who updated the player's whereabouts on his behalf) did not receive news of that change and therefore did not make the necessary update on that occasion."

The first tribunal found that "no negligence could be attributed to the player or his agent".

However, the Cas panel concluded Ymer "failed in ensuring his compliance" with anti-doping regulations "by assuming that any discrepancy between his

actual and declared whereabouts would be corrected by his agent or by the tennis authorities".

The ITF had requested a two-year period of ineligibility for Ymer but Cas determined he should serve an 18-month ban.

"The degree of fault of the player, a professional and experienced athlete, was high, although the third whereabouts failure could be described as the result of culpable negligence," said Cas.



Mikael Ymer knocked ninth seed Taylor Fritz out of Wimbledon before losing in the third round

I need perfect preparation for Scottish open

WINNING last week's Scottish Open in "proper links golf conditions" was the "perfect preparation" for this week's tilt at The Open, says Rory McIlroy.

The Northern Irishman, who won his sole Claret Jug at Royal Liverpool in 2014, returns to the Hoylake venue looking to end a nine-year drought in the majors.

"I couldn't ask for better preparation," he told BBC Sport NI.

"The way I played the last two holes was an amazing finish and a perfect way to come into this week."

The threat of thunderstorms and high winds saw last Sunday's final round of the Scottish Open brought forward to a morning start but players still had to battle tough conditions on the East Lothian coast, east of Edinburgh.

McIlroy birdied the final two holes at the Renaissance Club - hitting a superb low 200-yard shot under the wind to set up a winning birdie to edge

out home favourite Bob MacIntyre by one.

"The way I played the last two holes, going into the next few months and seasons I can always draw on that memory of being able to get it done under the toughest of conditions," the 34-year-old added.

"It was an amazing finish and a perfect way to come into this week."

McIlroy said this is the first time he has been back to the Wirral course where he won the third of his four major titles to date.

That victory in July 2014 saw him become the third player after Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods to win three majors by the age of 25 and the first European to win three different major titles.

A month later he won a second US PGA Championship, prompting record 18-time major winner Nicklaus to say: "I think Rory has an opportunity to win 15 or 20 majors."

However, despite multiple

- McIlroy victories on the PGA Tour and DP World Tour, McIlroy has been unable to add his major tally.

Only 10 players have won majors with more time elapsed between them than the eight years and 347 days from McIlroy's 2014 US PGA win to this Sunday at Hoylake.

Julius Boros holds the record with 11 years and nine days between his US Open wins in 1952 and 1963.

McIlroy has finished in the top 10 of at least two majors in every year since his last win. He recorded four top-10 finishes in 2022 and after missing the cut at the Masters in April, finished joint seventh at the US PGA in May and runner-up at last month's US Open.

"I've had so many close calls since," added the world number two, who said he is more driven to succeed this year than he was in 2014.

"I've had a great nine years and won a lot of tournaments but the big four have eluded me. Hopefully this week that's something I can change.

of fourth places which earns us Paralympic qualification slots, so we are in a good position ahead of next year and know where we need to focus and put the support teams in place to hopefully bridge that gap at the Games.

"With no major since the Tokyo Paralympics and no crowds in Japan, you forget that some of the athletes haven't competed in front of a big crowd before, so for them to come and experience the environment and take it away for next year, whether they medal or not, is positive for us.

"However, there are athletes leaving here knowing they have work to do ahead of next year, but I am excited for what lies ahead over the next 12 months."

Paris pushed hard to pull in the crowds after two of the

last three Worlds - Doha in 2015 and Dubai in 2019 - attracted little or no spectators and the Tokyo Paralympics was held behind closed doors.

Before the event, organisers said that 100,000 tickets had been sold for the 10 days of competition and there was plenty of billboard advertising on show around the city.

While the 20,000-capacity Charley Stadium was never full, there were still healthy crowds with school groups a regular sight during morning and evening sessions, which were preceded by live music featuring artists including former French Open champion Yannick Noah, generating a positive atmosphere, especially when French athletes were in action.

Both competition director

Adrien Balduzzi and International Paralympic Committee president Andrew Parsons, who himself attended a number of days of the competition, were pleased with the way the event was received and hailed it as a stepping stone towards 2024.

"We have had a lot of world record and championship records broken so if the athletes are happy and performing, we are happy," Balduzzi told BBC Sport.

"The stadium is big and it may seem empty, but to have 5,000 people per session is a first step for us.

"We have also used the event to promote all Para sports, not just athletics, and get people to try them out, which will hopefully lead to an increase in interest."



Hannah Cockroft led home a British clean sweep in the T34 100m final

Sports

Giggs cleared over former girlfriend charges

FORMER Manchester United footballer and ex-Wales manager Ryan Giggs has been cleared of allegations he assaulted his ex-girlfriend and her sister.

It comes after charges were withdrawn by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) at a hearing at Manchester Crown Court.

Mr Giggs, 48, has always denied assault and controlling or coercive behaviour towards Kate Greville, 38, and assaulting her sister Emma.

Judge Hilary Manley directed that he was not guilty on all three counts.

The retrial had been due to start at Manchester Crown Court on 31 July.

Jurors failed to reach verdicts following more than 20 hours of deliberations after his four-week trial in August last year.

Mr Giggs was not in court on Tuesday as the judge had agreed he did not need to attend.

Prosecutor Peter Wright KC told Manchester Crown Court that the CPS were not now proceeding with the case.

He said Kate Greville had "indicated an unwillingness" to give evidence in a retrial as giving evidence in the first one had "taken its toll" on her and her sister.

Ryan Giggs did not attend the hearing at Manchester Crown Court.

Mr Wright said: "This is not a decision taken lightly.

"In this case, Ms Greville and her sister Emma gave evidence over a number of days in a case when there was considerable media and public interest, and it is that particularly that's taken its toll on them, in particular Kate Greville."

Mr Wright said there had been "protracted" efforts to find out why she was unwilling to co-operate with a second trial but prosecuting lawyers did not think it appropriate to issue a witness summons to compel her to give evidence for a second time.

He said there was no realistic prospect of conviction on count one of coercive and controlling behaviour, and it was no longer in the public interest to proceed to prosecute on the other charges of assault on Ms Greville and her sister.

He added: "That being the case, we formally offer no evidence on counts one, two and three."

His defence barrister, Chris Daw KC, said: "Mr Giggs is deeply relieved that the case has finally come to an end after almost three years of fighting to clear his name.

"He now intends to rebuild his life and career as an innocent man."

The former footballer denied "losing control" and headbutting his ex-girlfriend and assaulting Ms Greville's sister, Emma, 26, by elbowing her in the jaw during a row at his home in Worsley, Greater Manchester on 1 November 2020.

Mr Giggs was due to go on



Giggs

trial for a second time facing the same charges, after the jury in the first trial was discharged.

Ryan Giggs made 963 appearances for Manchester United, scoring 168 goals.

The jury was made up of 11 people - seven women and four men - after one of the original 12 jurors had fallen ill.

During the trial, Mr Giggs admitted to being unfaithful in relationships but, when asked if he had ever physically assaulted a woman, he said "no", adding that he had never set out to control or coerce a woman.

The trial was told of the alleged assault on 1 November 2020 at his home in Worsley, Greater Manchester, where the couple returned following a row at dinner in which she accused Mr Giggs of messaging a string of women.

Jurors heard the pair tussled over their mobile phones, leading to Emma Greville, who was looking after the couple's dog, calling the police.

He denied the accusations

Davies wins fifth world shot put crown

BRITAIN'S Aled Sion Davies claimed his fifth consecutive shot put title on the final night of the Para Athletics World Championship in Paris.

BBC SPORT said that, the 32-year-old Welshman led the F63 event from start to finish with his best throw of 16.16m coming in the penultimate round.

"As soon as I threw over 16m, I knew it would take something special to beat that," he told BBC Sport.

Davies, whose first world title came in Lyon in 2013, had come into the competition on the back of an injury-hit winter as he dealt with painful inflammation in the joint in his pubic bones (osteitis pubis).

Before the event he said that it was only in the last month that he was pain-free, but he was still the class act in the field with silver going to Iran's Sajad Mohammadian (14.38) and Brazil's Edilson Roberto third (14.06).

"I've had such a disrupted winter with injuries that it was always going to be hit or miss and I am just happy to be there

and alleged Kate Greville kicked him in the head.

A CPS spokesperson said: "At all stages we keep cases under careful review, to ensure our legal test is met. This means there must be a realistic prospect of conviction based upon the available evidence and a prosecution is in the public interest.

"Following a recent change in circumstances in this case we have determined our legal test is no longer met.

"We have determined there is no longer sufficient evidence available to proceed in respect of the controlling or coercive behaviour charge and that it is no longer in the public interest to prosecute the remaining assault charges.

Ryan Giggs made 64 appearances for Wales, and went on to manage his national team for Wales.

"This decision was made following detailed discussions with Greater Manchester Police and consultation with the complainants.

or thereabouts," he added.

"But what motivates me is that I know there is so much more in the tank and next year fully fit and with an uninterrupted winter I will be back to break my world record (17.52).

"It has been a long few weeks so I am just glad I could step up and do my job when it mattered.

"I never thought when I won double gold and set two world records in Lyon that it would be the start of a decade of dominance.

"I think all of the five titles have been special in their own way - 2017 back home in London was special because it is hard coming away to someone else's backyard and playing there.

Sidbury earned his second bronze of the championships after the same result in the 5,000m last Monday.

The 29-year-old from London clocked the same time (one minute 29.72 seconds) as China's Hu Yang but got the nod.

"The 800m is my least favourite event so I am

BRAZILIAN winger Willian has rejoined Fulham and signed a new one-year contract with the London club.

The 34-year-old's previous deal with the Cottagers had expired earlier this summer and he appeared to be close to a move to Nottingham Forest.

Instead, he has gone back to Fulham on a deal that has the option to be extended by 12 months.

"I'm completely happy," said Willian, who helped Fulham finish 10th in the Premier League last season.

"Happy to continue the work I did last season with all my team-mates and the whole club.

"I think it's a club that can do even better this season, so I'm happy to continue this amazing adventure."

Former Chelsea and Arsenal forward Willian initially joined Fulham on a free transfer after

Willian rejoins Fulham on one-year deal



Willian

leaving Corinthians in August 2022.

He made 27 appearances in

the Premier League last season, scoring five goals and registering six assists.

Miami unveil Argentina forward to sold-out crowd

NEW signing Lionel Messi has been officially presented to cheering crowds at Inter Miami's DRV PNK Stadium.

A sold-out crowd of about 20,000 waited through downpours and lightning to see the seven-time Ballon d'Or winner given a number 10 shirt.

In a brief address in Spanish, Messi, 36, thanked supporters and said he had the "same desire" he always has.

The World Cup-winning Argentina forward joins the Major League Soccer (MLS) club on a deal until the end of 2025.

He will be reunited with defensive midfielder Sergio Busquets - with whom he played at Barcelona - who has also signed for Miami until 2025.

Busquets, too, was formally unveiled during Sunday night's event.

Messi entered the pitch via a huge catwalk and was introduced as "America's number 10, the world's best number 10".

Seven-time Super Bowl

delighted to pull it out of the bag," he said. "It doesn't get closer than that but that is how it goes sometimes.

"This feels like redemption after the 1500m, which is my best distance but I only finished sixth.

"I had an ambition to come here and maybe win one medal, if we were lucky, so to win two means a lot to me and my coach."

Lyle added 100m bronze to her 200m third while Santos, who previously practised jiu-jitsu, earned his first global medal with a battling run behind Brazilian pair Petrucio Ferreira and Jose Martins.

"Although I didn't execute the race I wanted to, I know I have got things to work on for the future. My body just gave out at 70m and I didn't think I was going to medal.

"I just kept the pace going and trusted myself that I could win a dip if it came to that. I knew it was close between me and fourth, because I didn't think I even made it."

Scotland's Lyle, 23, had to rely on all of her experience after a foot operation last year.

winner Tom Brady and four-time NBA champion Stephen Curry also welcomed him to the United States in video messages.

"I really want to start training, to compete," Messi said. "I have the same desire that I always had to compete, to want to win, to help the club continue to grow.

"I am very happy to have chosen to come to play in this city with my family, to choose this project and I have no doubt that we are going to enjoy it a lot.

Don Garber, commissioner of Major League Soccer, said someone of Messi's status choosing to play in the league was a "transformational moment", and he hoped the signing would "shout to the world that this is a soccer nation".

Garber added: "It's been so many years of developing this league into becoming a player on the global stage, so it's a very momentous night for us."

The DRV PNK Stadium in Fort Lauderdale is Inter Miami's temporary stadium and has a capacity of 18,000, making it the joint-smallest in MLS along with San Jose Earthquakes' PayPal Park in California.

A temporary grandstand has been erected to allow more fans into the ground.

Messi left French champions Paris St-Germain at the end of the 2022-23 season after scoring 32 goals in 75 games across a two-year spell.

He turned down lucrative offers from other countries to play in the US - and this is the first time he will play for a non-

European club.

Inter Miami co-owner David Beckham hailed Messi's signing as a "dream come true".

"Leo, we are so proud that you have chosen our club for the next stage in your career," he said.

Inter Miami's primary owner, American billionaire Jorge Mas, called Messi "the best player ever to don boots".

Messi is expected to be available to play for Miami against LIGA MX side Cruz Azul on 21 July in their opening match of the Leagues Cup.

He reunites with his former Barca and Argentina boss Gerardo Martino after the 60-year-old was appointed manager in June following the sacking of Phil Neville.

The arrival of Messi in the US has been met with feverish anticipation by the fans of Inter Miami, who only started playing in the Eastern Conference of the MLS in 2020.

Another fan said that while she did know and care about the club, it was Argentina legend Messi who was the main attraction.

The ownership were also praised by fans for their commitment to bringing a huge signing to the south Florida side.

"They have been making promises and keeping promises," said a fan. "They promised world-class soccer and they have been able to provide it. They have been able to deliver.

He said: "Much like when Pele joined the New York Cosmos [in 1975], same thing. Bring him up."



Lionel Messi is Barcelona's record scorer with 672 goals and won 10 La Liga titles, four Champions Leagues and seven Spanish Cups



Quest



writer

JOSIAH MUTIHIR

FRAGMENT

"This practice must be stopped or abolished forthwith in view of the cost to the economy. The penalties so stipulated by the existing law be carried out to the letter to put some people behind bars and more Naira into the economy from funds accruing from fines. Envelopes be provided to well wishers at these events to put their monetary contributions inside for onward transmission to the celebrants."

Prof. Josiah Mutihir

Spraying Naira at social events: Need for a rethink

THE origin of this disease (spraying the Naira notes at social events) is actually unclear. Before 1957, bank notes were not available for trading except cowries which could not have been thrown at people's faces in the name of spraying. The first bank notes issued in 1958 were mainly the pounds, shillings, and pence. By 1973, these had been replaced by Nigerian Naira and Kobo.

Spraying was non-existent pre-colonially and pre-independence. 'Spraying has been described as just one of those purely Nigerian traits resulting from our unwarranted arrogance and over-bloated ego. It is a Nigerian substitute for sophistication'. I agree no less with the assertion as it is totally baseless, serving no purpose except ego massage of the perpetrators.

Spraying is simply a mans of showing off, be-deviled and spurred by the oil-boom of the 1970s. It appears to have spread from the west, where parties are the norm, to the east and then to the north. It is a situation where the Naira and sometimes other currencies are used to lavish accolade on mainly celebrants during wedding ceremonies, naming ceremonies, birthday celebrations and so on. In fact, the list is expanding by the day.

Secretaries of these events are humiliated as they are converted into 'beggars, stooping low to pick up 'crumps' from the floor, and some of them are mistakenly trampled upon.

Having travelled a bit, it appears a rare event in other parts of the world, particularly in Europe and the Americas. On the other hand, where it is done in those countries, it is orchestrated by people of Nigerian stock or extraction. I have come across stories of princes in Dubai spraying large amounts of dollars on praise singers. My immediate response is why not the dirham?

My faint memory tells me that during Buhari's regime as a military ruler, spraying money was a crime! So, what has changed? The apostle of the 'rule of law' appears to have gone to sleep. Interestingly, there is a law assented to by President Obasanjo, tagged "Central Bank of Nigeria Law, 2006. This law forbids all manner of abuse of the Naira.

The Law states that 'spraying or dancing on the Naira' during social occasions or otherwise shall constitute an abuse of the Naira and is punishable under the law. The Law adds that hawking, selling or otherwise trading in the naira is an offense. Sections 20 and 21 of the CBN Act of 2006 states that the penalty for flouting the law is imprisonment for a term of not less than 6 months, or a fine of not less than 50,000 Naira, or both fine and imprisonment. Despite this law, the law enforcement agencies are yet to apprehend and prosecute a single



Nigerian for spraying or dancing on the Naira notes despite the numerous social events or functions in which the law is flouted, (. The Sanusi led Central Bank Governor considered it an abnormality in view of the physical assault metered out to the Naira note by the proponents and perpetuators. With the coming of the Emefile led Central bank, the ban or restriction in this regard appears to have been lifted. The Covid pandemic temporarily halted if for a moment but with the easing of the pandemic, this malady has sprung back in full force and even threatens to surpass the previous level.

How can we stop this done when the law makers are the breakers or culprits? There is the possibility that the legislators and politicians will not support implementation because the laws made by them are for people other than them. The culprits include serving politicians, monarchs, business moguls, media magnets, etc. In addition, the powers that be who are not legislators would break the law at will with no consequences as they are above the law, a purely Nigerian anomaly. Therefore, the implementation of the law by the appropriate authorities appears to be a mirage as laws already on ground are broken at will with absolutely no consequences.

The degradation of the naira can actually be considered an economic crime and therefore handled by the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC). The consequences of money spraying constitute economic sabotage as a national identity is treated with disdain. It is even worst than doing same to the national flag. Imagine burning a national flag during protests.

What is the money spraying all about? Brand new naira notes are obtained from whatever source, sometimes from the Central bank

(called the mint), from the commercial banks, vendors of Naira notes, traders, or other sources. These notes are taken to the social events, used to spray celebrants, trampled upon by celebrants and those spraying and others attending the event. At the event, the already battered currencies are re-cycled by attendees as 'change from the secretaries of the event' for re-spraying over and over again. At the end of the event, a used note may have been re-cycled and trampled upon several times, ensuring overt defacement, and sometimes torn to pieces. That is the malady of the Nigerian currency, the Naira.

The commonly assaulted notes are the 100 Naira note, the 50 Naira note, the 20 Naira note, and often the N200 Naira note. The 500 Naira note is seldom used. The least abused Naira denomination is the 1,000 Naira note. The reason being the high value and therefore not easily used for this purpose. In these days of harsh economic reality, one is now witnessing the spraying using the 5- and 10-Naira notes.

Who is the benefactor of this nefarious activity? No doubt, it is the person performing the spraying, not even the celebrants. It is an ego boosting affair for the sprayer. The sprayer is 'seen' by the celebrant and other on-lookers as generous; and hailed even if what was sprayed is insignificant. The newer the naira notes the more pleasant the person feels. The longer the time the person takes spraying, the more his ego, self-esteem and hailing by on-lookers. That is why 'sprayers' get new notes of the lowest available denomination to achieve a longer time-frame of spraying. Those with no muscle power to give out much, get the lowest available denomination at the site for 'spraying to achieve longer

spraying time. At a wedding event for example, a 'sprayer' with for example 500 Naira would exchange the single 500 Naira note for 5, 10, 20, or 50 Naira notes. With an exchange for 50 Naira notes, the sprayer gets 10 notes for which to spray the bride, bridegroom, fathers in law of both parties, mothers in law of both parties and some more to spare. If the 500 Naira note were to be sacrificed, it would only go to one person, and just a couple of seconds to accomplish. With 10 notes, the sprayer can use 5-10 minutes to proudly and arrogantly do this.

What is the benefit to the celebrant? Perhaps very minimal. It is assumed that the sprayers dish out a lot of money in the process. May be, may be not. But the ones I have witnessed are to the contrary. The many denominations sprayed on collation amounts to virtually nothing. It should be noted that some non-sprayers give even more and do not want it announced perhaps not to evoke mental guilt on the money sprayers!

Third question: Who replenishes these defaced Naira notes? The Government I guess in our minds. The next question is who the government is? Of course, you and I constitute the government. Therefore, it is you and I that replace the cost of replacements instead of using same for other pressing national demands. These notes require replacement from time to time. Undue replacement on a continuous basis, has huge cost implications, putting unbearable stress on the already ailing economy. What we now do is to completely mutilate a new note as soon as it is brought out to the open in the guise of spraying. We then complain on a daily basis about the dearth of good-looking Naira notes, but fail to acknowledge our being the cause.

The Naira currency notes generally undergo a lot of recycling or circulation and likely to pick up infectious agents (bacteria, viruses - (including Covid-19), parasites. This is unhygienic, particularly during these events, posing actual and real health challenges best avoided.

In conclusion, the Nigerian currencies of all denominations must be valued and respected as our national identity. It costs fortunes to produce and distribute them. They are precious commodities desiring better deal from all and sundry. The Naira will continue to be sprayed because it is a symptom of the average Nigerian's love of exhibitionism. It has apparently become part of our culture because Nigerians worship

money and those who have it, no matter how they acquire the money. Corruption also thrives because people need excess cash to spray in public; a development not to be envied!

Additionally, market women and traders who unnecessarily squeeze, wet, grease, tear and mutilate the currency must also be sanctioned by the law. No one treats a precious commodity of his or hers as the Naira notes are treated. But why? Is it because as an individual, I do not pay for minting of the notes? Or is that the way of spending the tax-payers' contribution to the common pool of national development? We need a re-think at the way we treat our national currency. A second look will make us change the way we handle our national identity, the Naira. Nigerians Love Money while at the same time, hate the Naira notes. What a paradox!!!

This practice must be stopped or abolished forthwith in view of the cost to the economy. The penalties so stipulated by the existing law be carried out to the letter to put some people behind bars and more Naira into the economy from funds accruing from fines.

Envelopes be provided to well wishers at these events to put their monetary contributions inside for onward transmission to the celebrants.

The religious bodies to adhere to government laws as any breach is sin and unexpected particularly inside churches, mosques, and shrines where applicable.

Promissory notes be substituted for real Naira notes and used by proponents and the said amounts redeemed later through the banks. Honest and sincere monetary contributors to support the event, would redeem this. Fake 'sprayers for self-aggrandizement would be discouraged for fear of knowing how much they really contributed.

The cash-less economy should be pursued to a logical conclusion and as soon as is feasible.

Innovative event managers must come out with other ways of maintaining the funfair of events instead of mutilating and defacing our national currency in this difficult time faced by our economy and fight of the Naira against other National currencies.

If the desire for continuous abuse to the Naira by spraying, trampling upon, and other ways of defacement cannot be achieved honorably, it will be achieved otherwise as bandits, armed robbers, kidnappers, petty thieves and other desperate on-lookers are watching, and will help us do it the other way.

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