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Still on rising cost of living

THE rising cost of living in Nigeria over the years become a major source of worry and concern for citizens. So far, this development has also persuaded economic experts to begin to re-strategize towards resuscitating this predicament for the betterment of the country.

ACCORDING to National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria's Consumer Price Index (CPI) surged to 22.79 percent in the month of June in 2023. In fact the World Bank, in its latest Nigeria development update report explained the loss of purchasing power from high inflation has increased poverty in short term, pushing an estimated four million Nigerians into poverty between January and May 2023.

AS it is, many households in the country are facing severe poverty beyond imagination. Houses and businesses across Nigeria are weight down by stalled income growth and raising prices and amplifying cost living. In the midst of these economic realities, there have been unpleasant spike in unemployment to a record 33.3 percent in 2021 according to the same statistics.

THE World Bank in its latest Nigeria Development Update report also said the loss of purchasing power from high inflation has increased poverty in the short term, pushing an estimated four million Nigerians into poverty between January to May 2023. By far, this development has confirms global banks data which shows how many other citizens are dramatically sliding into abject poverty due to deliberately humanly created problems.

JUST recently, President Bola Tinubu announced sweeping measures to soften the impact of his move to end gasoline subsidy which has sent prices of commodities surging. The 500 billion naira package is aimed at improving food supply, ease transportation costs and boost manifesting in the country.

UNFORTUNATELY, while the ordinary citizens are languishing in abject poverty, the experiences seems to be different for the political class which has indeed indicated that the incumbent government led by President Ahmed Bola Tinubu is yet to come to terms with the realities on ground. Just recently, a strike action by the Nigeria Labour Congress, NLC was averted after dying minute agreement that so the body shelved the pending action.

AS the implementation of these agreement is being awaited however, the cost of gas and other consumables in the likes of building materials is still far beyond the reach of the common man. Food stuff in our markets are on daily basis skyrocketing even as other commodities unbelievably remains on the high side to the detriment of many vulnerable households.

WE are strongly displeased with the way and manner the common man has continued to suffer in the country without concrete measures taken to end this menace. With the abundant human and natural resources Nigeria is blessed with, there is no excuse for the leadership of this country to fail in doing the needful.

THEREFORE, the Federal Government must involve all stakeholders and experts to immediately resuscitate the socio-economic fabric of the nation for the vulnerable to have a sense of belonging. While this is being done however, Nigerians must also support government in any way they can towards ensuring that sour economic recovery does not take undue time for the benefit of our future generations.

Many feared dead as transformer explodes in Plateau

MANY people were feared dead on Saturday when an electric transformer exploded in Gada Biu community, Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State.

It was learnt that the incident which occurred around 3: a.m. on Saturday also destroyed some residential buildings and shops in the area.

Residents said the transformer had exploded and set fire to the surrounding buildings and shops leading to the death of the victims.

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A resident of the community, John Silas confirmed the incident to our reporter on Saturday.

Silas said, "The people of Kabong village in the Gada Biu community woke up this morning around 3 a.m. to mourn the death of four persons. They

were electrocuted due to an electric transformer explosion in the area. I understand that more others were trapped in the fire and we don't know their fate now."

The Spokesman for the Plateau State Police Command, Alabo Alfred, when contacted, said they were aware of the fire incident and that an investigation had commenced to unravel what happened.

He said, "Yes, we are aware. Some people also sustained injuries and had been taken to the hospital. So, we have deployed our officers and men to the area to investigate the incident."

Mutfwang promises massive transformation in agriculture

By DUMAH RANDONG

CALEB Mutfwang of Plateau State says the agricultural sector under his administration will witness a massive transformation in the state.

The governor stated this when the All Farmers Association of Nigeria, AFAN, Plateau State led by its Chairman, Mr Paul Belles Kwa paid him a visit at the Old Government, House, Rayfield, Jos, recently.

He pointed out that no nation could achieve food sufficiency by paying lip service to the Agricultural sector. As such, his administration would continue to accord top priority to farmers in order to maximize the agricultural potentials of the state.

Represented by his deputy, Mrs Josephine Piyo, Mutfwang stressed the role farmers play in food production and disclosed that the government will procure more tractors and other inputs in addition to collaboration with researchers to fight crop pests and diseases affecting agricultural yields.

The governor promised a robust partnership with AFAN to achieve the best for the sector.

Chairman, All Farmers Association of Nigeria, Plateau State chapter, Mr Paul Belles Kwap had appreciated Governor Mutfwang for the fair distribution of fertilizer to members at their farm gates according to their units during the wet season farming. He also thanked him for the procurement of additional 240 trucks of fertilizer which was timely with the ongoing registration of dry season farmers as directed by the Federal Government.

He disclosed that a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between AFAN and Agricultural Equipment Manufacturing Companies, Organic Fertilizer blending and Chemical Companies whose products were of world standard to supply farmers at affordable



Mutfwang

prices. He expressed regret for the drought that affected groundnut farmers and the recent flood that washed away harvested rice in some parts of the state. And called on the government to find a lasting solution to the problem.

According to the chairman, the association has suffered great setbacks due to leadership tussles but all have been put to rest and this has resulted in tremendous achievements in the area of security, through meetings with security organizations and stakeholders on the way forward.

FG to increase oil output by December

THE Federal Government says it is targeting to increase crude oil production to two million Barrels Per Day (bpd) and beyond by the end of the year.

Mr Heineken Lokpobiri, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil), made this known in a meeting with the Abuja Energy Correspondent Association on Friday in Abuja.

Lokpobiri said the government was working assiduously to ramp up crude oil production to two million bpd by December and beyond by the end of 2023.

"The reason why we are underperforming is because of insecurity and we are gradually tackling those problems.

"My sole agenda is to increase production, once we increase production we will get more revenue for the country. You know Nigeria is still more dependent on oil.

"Though the non-oil sector is also supporting the economy, a substantial part of our forex comes from oil.

"So, my ambition is to see how I can lead the sector to increase production so that we can get more revenue to deal with the fund and strategic rationale projects in the country," he said.

The minister said already steadily there was increase in production, adding that as at last month it was 1.1 million barrels while currently it has increased to

1.3 – 1.4 million barrels.

"I get the reports from relevant authorities. Today, we are doing about 1.4 million barrels of crude. So, we are steadily increasing but our target is to see how we can get to two million barrels," he said.

Lokpobiri, while urging relevant stakeholders to put hands on deck to tackle challenges in the sector said he had been interacting with some of them, including the International Oil Companies and local producers.

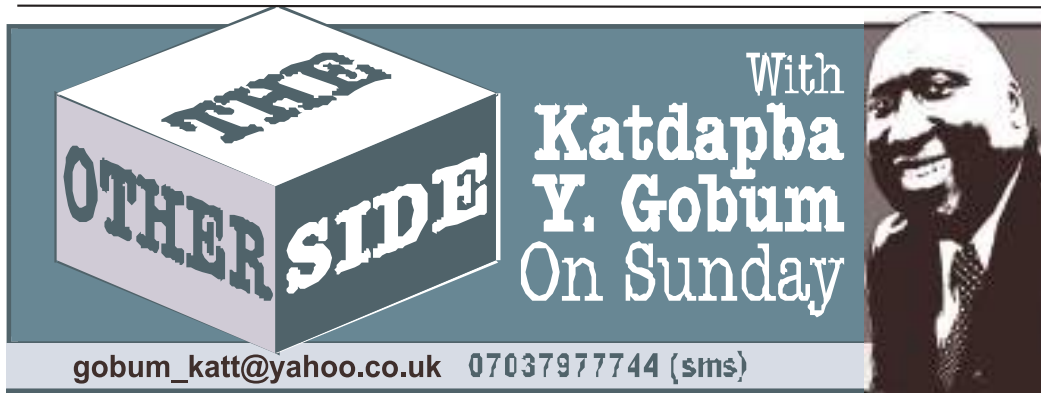
He noted that the engagement with them was already yielding results.

We have identified where the problem is, and where we are getting the shortfall and we are already engaging them within the next few weeks, we will be able to give you how far we have gone in that direction.

He said some of the solutions might not be immediate but once identified there would be provision of a good framework to address those problems.

He said the government was bent on rebuilding the confidence of investors and rekindle the industry to become more competitive.

Earlier, the President of the socation, Mr Victor Nnodim, had reiterated the association's readiness for collaboration and sought the minister's support in driving his developmental agenda and moving the industry forward.



With
Katdapba
Y. Gobum
On Sunday

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"Those who snuffed the life out of Fwinbe don't value life. If they do, the rightful thing to have done was to apprehend him and taken to the nearest police station for interrogation. They went for the extreme, but the law must serve its course by answering for their roles when investigations have been completed".

Fwinbe Gofwan: What manner of death is this?

A post had appeared on the community platform where I am domiciled on Wednesday, September 27, 2023. It was short and terse: Bad news! We lost a member of the community day before yesterday named Fwinbe Thomas Gofwan.

As it is usual with such posts, the replies from members of the community on the platform were largely to sympathize with the family. Nothing in that post suggested what took place that led to the loss of life and property.

The new media on Wednesday night was inundated with pictures of the gory scenes of the death of Fwinbe Thomas Gofwan. The visit of Dunka Jallo Pikopba to my house Thursday morning gave a clear picture of the victim.

It was then that the face of his mother, Afiya was broadly displayed in his picture. His father, Toma Gofwan; an old horse in the development world was at some point a Special Adviser to Governor Jonah David Jang on Non-Governmental Organizations. Both have served the state meritoriously in the health sector and retired with honour.

All the posts mourned the death of Fwinbe without knowing the details of what had happened. They may have known but it was hard and painful to relate; thus leaving the readers to mere conjectures, while seeking justice for him in the circumstance.

The cry for justice became rife anywhere the story was read; to the point that sympathizers had urged the security to go after the perpetrators, perhaps the incident may serve to stop the barbaric act anywhere human beings were haunted and killed as in this case.

What was the nature of his death? Who were responsible for snuffing life out of him? Did his accusers have patience to find out if he was guilty of the offence he was accused of? They just 'pursued him with unwavering determination and within moments, they changed the narrative, accusing him of stealing' the car that was actually his.

They never did, otherwise, common reason would have prevailed to take him to the police. It is the prayer of all who have demanded for justice that the killers would be identified from the maze of his accusers and made to pay the price.

Fwinbe may have been given a befitting burial; yet, the conscience of his killers can never go to rest, knowing that an innocent 35 year young man; easily everyone's friend was silence on account of the words of their mouths.

Did it not appear to them as he struggled with fright and pains to explain to them that he was not what they thought of him that fateful evening as they descended on him that something was wrong



Goma

about the accusation?

Could a man ever steal the car he has used in real time to run a business? He has always owned a car since he was in the university; the one he was killed in was not the first he had used.

Fwinbe, indeed, anyone in that situation must have been overwhelmed with fear.

Surrounded by a menacing mob that was shouting 'thief', 'barawo', 'thief', on an almost deserted road, anyone would have cringed in fear. If he found himself powerless to run, the result of a car accident on October 5, 2007 which affected his hip joint certainly had impeded him. He surrendered himself to fate, thus he sadly paid for his life.

Several questions raced through my mind without any answers. The mob did not want anything except to beat him to death, with all manners of cudgels, stones, tires, dry firewood and dangerous weapons they could lay their hands on and subjected him to merciless beating.

After all, the unruly group that chased him as an animal had labeled him a thief, no one dared to change the course of justice that awaited him.

The unruly mob's narrative prevailed-he was a thief according to them. He was only 35, Fwinbe thus left behind grieving parents and several loved ones he was fond of.

Since, there were no security men around as they hotly chased

him to Domkat Bali, one thing was apparent: Death smelt and was lurking around him; before long, he was history, as he lay in his pool of blood.

Even at that point none of his traducers cared to find out if he was indeed guilty of stealing the car (KWK 536 XA) registered in his name and had used over time to fend for himself with a beautiful life that lay before him. They snuffed that life on the altar of stupidity by desecrating his body and regrettably celebrating a Pyrrhic victory.

Fwinbe's brother, Wakbul Gofwan had written him thus: My brother was not killed by bandits. He was not killed by herdsmen militia. He was not killed by cultist or armed robbers. He was not killed by boko haram or terrorists. He was violently killed by supposed community members in the heart of the city we love and the land we call home.'

Such an eulogy on his younger brother, the man everyone who knows him calls 'Bushman' demonstrates the bond they had shared between them. His siblings had plans for him as one who was ready to settle with his heartthrob, Kwanmen Tracy Na'ankang. That plan too has also evaporated, no thanks to the hoodlums walking around in the garb of being transporters, denied her the joy of a life partner.

The mobs' senseless narrative prevailed even for some who read the initials posts, until the right

angle came up. The earlier story of having brushed someone's vehicle soon evaporated.

He has never been a thief; his elder brother had written a panegyric even before his burial. It was touching as the motorcycle riders who initiated the death process were reduced to nothingness, but largely as band of killers who must be apprehended to face justice.

When he finally gave up in the most despicable manner on pieces of stones and logs of wood, it is possible they celebrated thinking, after all, they 'got one of them', without any inkling of who their victim was.

Consider all manner of invectives they must have used to place on the lifeless body of the young man, who has been variously described as a 'hustler' despite the station of his parents. As his other siblings, he wanted not to depend on them, but be a man of himself and being dedicated to his industry.

He didn't want to be considered as one who depended on his parents. Having a father who uses every given opportunity to pass a message of self-improvement, his children must certainly be the first set of his students. That explains why he was out every day on the streets to make life meaningful to a family he was reported to be planning. Sadly, that dream was cut short.

Without sounding emotional on account of the death, would we continue to allow mob actions rule our streets? Do we not have the Police who would have settled the allegations labeled against Fwinbe, had they been invited on the scene?

Many innocent souls have been victims of mob actions in the past. It is only when the dust has settled that those caught in the web begun to wonder what has hit them. Most onlookers as well as passers-by most times watch as the mob dissipate their worthless energy on the incapacitated victim; who always is not able to save himself until the police arrive to pack his remains.

This was the case of Fwinbe Thomas Gofwan. Anyone who may have arrived the scene after the act was committed came late. The worst had been done; yet if they accused him, why is it that in most instances those who are found at such scenes come with ulterior motives? Do they not know they are guilty of the accusation also?

As I have asked like many, what crime did he commit to warrant being killed as a common criminal? Did he take what belong to someone they know? Did he hit someone and needed to go and report himself? Why did the horde of Achaba riding mob go after him until they got hold of 'their victim'? When they caught up with him, did they make efforts to ascertain the veracity of the accusations leveled against him?

They may not have; they were only interested in taking their pound of flesh in the wrong way. They killed an innocent man, who, like them, was only out to eke a living. Accidents happen, yes, they do, but why would

he be the one to face the consequences of a wrong decision? Why not they who chased him to his death as a common criminal?

Let must stop going in circle asking questions. What crime did he commit that should warrant him being killed? Who are those responsible for his death and how can they be apprehended and brought to justice?

While the police are working on the above questions for answers, we must keep insisting for Fwinbe Thomas Gofwan to get justice. Only those who do not respect the law can descend to such barbaric level to perpetrate the act.

It was alleged initially that on the fateful Monday, September 25, 2023, at the Tudun Wada Motor Park, he brushed a motor cycle prompting some of the riders to give him a hot chase and eventually caught up with him that evening, where they beat him without mercy until they sent him to the world beyond.

The act has many questions than answers: There is a law in place for Okada riders not to go beyond 6pm in Jos and Bukuru Metropolis. Where did they come from at that hour which is prohibited for doing business? How come they were in large number as if they arranged to be at the park at that hour?

Given the propensity of Keke and Okada riders at the Tudun Wada Park to be disorganized and unruly, security agents must establish their presence there. Those who use the road may have one form of experience or another to relate.

It is on record that the ban on the use of Motorcycle in the Metropolis is still in force in the metropolis. They should not be allowed to ply their trade, even as most of them have become a public nuisance.

Despite being a source of transportation many who live in the suburbs patronize, they riders have nonetheless become a law to themselves. It is an area that should not be left unattended to; otherwise lives will be treated with outright disregard by those who do not value it.

Those who snuffed the life out of Fwinbe don't value life. If they do, the rightful thing to have done was to apprehend him and taken to the nearest police station for interrogation. They went for the extreme, but the law must serve its course by answering for their roles when investigations have been completed.

For how long will the blood-thirsty mob continue to rule the streets of the state? They may have succeeded in this, and in many instances; the law and sane persons amongst us must not let any repeat take place. Those who have a hand in silencing Fwinbe must answer for it; as it is the only way he can perfectly rest.



The enemy at home

LARABA was one of those girls whose bodies transformed early. When girls her age were still dry chested, her breast budded as early as 10 years. By 11 years, she was wearing bras. Within the same period, her period became regular. It took the grace of God to get Laraba to stop playing with empty tins, cartons, and acting out as their parents with younger children or her age mates.

Shortly after Laraba clocked 13, her parents had a misunderstanding which led to divorce. The mother left with Laraba's younger brother, leaving Laraba with her father. It was a very difficult time for the family. The one worse hit seemed to be Laraba. She recoiled into her shell and would not talk to anybody in the neighbourhood. Many mothers in their vicinity tried but discovered it was impossible to break through to her.

Instead of getting better, things got worse. Laraba lost interest in school, friends. As a consequence, she became a loner. She stopped going to school completely at some point. And nobody could persuade her to go back to school. After all, her performance had been deteriorating since her mother left.

One fateful day, the once vibrant Laraba, purposefully walked into her Pastor's house and told him the last thing anyone expected to hear. The revelation stripped her father of any respect people used to have for him.

No wonder the girl was dying slowly.
No wonder she withdrew from everyone.
No wonder she lost interest in everything.

She hated everyone and everything and blamed herself for her predicament. Her father made her believe it was because of her that her mother left him. Guilt stricken, he had deflowered her and had constantly defiled her since the first week that her mother left them.

She had felt like filth and had been living in fear because her father had threatened that he would kill her if she uttered a word to any soul.

Laraba took the bull by the horn that fateful day because she asked herself : what was worse than what she was going through? That was the best decision she had made.

The long hand of the law caught up with her father. She is now being trained by missionaries very far away from home. Laraba had to go through therapy to become normal again.

In this next story, a lady brought in a live-in nanny to take care of her children and house. She was very hard working and she made life easier for this woman. However, she began to notice some odd things between the nanny and her 2 daughters. They were barely 12 and 10 but they behaved shyly around the nanny and there was an unhealthy rivalry between them. Everything became a competition

The mother became curious. She became very observant. One night, she decided to sneak into the room her daughters shared with the nanny. What she witnessed almost drove her crazy. The nanny, who was in her twenties, was making love to her daughters. They were all involved. Her daughters were not touching each other but doing ungodly things with the nanny and moaning in ecstasy like adults.

This mother almost committed murder that day. Thank God for her husband who saved the nanny from being strangled. They chased the nanny out of their house. Unfortunately, not the spirit of lesbianism. Her daughters began doing it with each

other. As at the time I heard the story, the mother was running from pillar to post, trying to get her daughters delivered from the spirit of lesbianism.

There is no excuse for what this nanny did. However, a woman of God advised women who engage the services of nannies to make sure they give them a day off. She explained that it has been observed that most of these ladies may have been sexually active before they started working for you. If that is the case, if you keep them locked up, one day, they will look for ways to expend their sexual energy. It could be with your husband or children, no matter their sex.

Another story that corroborates the observation of the woman of God, happened here in Jos, Plateau State. A young family engaged the services of a young girl of about 16 years to take care of their children and home. One fateful day, the man of the house sister took a stroll with 2 of the kids, leaving the eldest who was about 8, at home with the maid.

When they came back, they discovered that all the doors were locked up. Knowing that the maid and the boy must be somewhere in the house, the man of the house sister ran around to a window at the back of the house that gave her a good view of the sitting room. The girl could not believe what she saw. Kneeling down naked before the frightened 8 year old boy, also naked, was the housemaid. She was in another world, eyes looking crazy, begging the boy who was shaking and crying to touch her breast and private part.

Not even the shrieking shouts of the man of the house sister could bring her back to her senses. The lady had to break in to save the boy. It took slaps to get the maid back to reality. They sent the girl packing. What they didn't do, was hand her over to the authorities. That would have saved other families from her evil mission.

Recently, a lady gave her testimony on Streams of Joy International, on how her aunt who was her guardian, used to make them (she and her cousins) touch each other sexually. It began at the age of 5. And influenced her to be an ardent masturbator until age 50, when she was delivered through prayers.

The question is, who are you entrusting your children to? If not a pervert, rapist, the person could be a cultist or witch/wizard. Sometimes, it is better you manage life with your children by your side than send them out to stay with your relatives who may promise them a better life.

The stories abound. There are boys who have been recruited into homosexuality, cultism, yahoo plus, armed robbery because their parents wanted a better life for them. Some of them have become hardened criminals. A few are in prison for different offenses. A negligible number have been given a second chance by the mercies of God.

Sadly, some of these children become sacrificial lambs in the hands of their guardians. They pay the supreme price with their lives for their guardians to amass worldly goods, become powerful and people to reckon with.

The government is doing its best through its agencies. But that is not enough. Religious bodies, churches, mosques have to speak to our consciences. The ball is in our courts as parents, guardians, community leaders, spiritual fathers. What are you doing to safeguard the future of the leaders of tomorrow?

Watch out for the continuation. Please, the name used is fictitious.

NEWS

18 year old nabbed for killing stepdaughter

From
Abbas Gungura,
Bauchi

BAUCHI State Police Command has confirmed the arrest of one Khadija Adamu, a housewife aged 18, for allegedly killing Hafsat Garba, her five-year-old stepdaughter.

This was made public recently by the Bauchi State Commissioner of Police, Auwal Musa Mohammad, during a press briefing with journalists at the Command Headquarters in Bauchi. He disclosed that the suspect beat up 5-year old Hafsat Garba for defecating on her clothes.

The Police Commissioner said, "One Abdulaziz Adamu, aged 38 years of Kandahar area Bauchi, reported at A' Divisional Police Headquarters that on the same date at about 1600hrs, one Khadija Adamu, aged 18 years of the same address, beat up her stepdaughter named "Hafsat Garba" aged 5 years. As a result, she sustained serious injuries on her body.

"Upon receipt of the report, a team of detectives led by the DPO, swung into action, rushed to the scene and moved the victim to Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Teaching Hospital (ATBUTH) Bauchi for medical attention, where she was certified dead by the medical doctor.

"Preliminary Investigations revealed that the suspect beat up the victim as a result of alleged passing of stool that soiled her clothes, leading to her sustaining various degrees of injuries on her body.

FFS cautions Kaduna residents against fire disasters

From John FWAH
Kaduna

THE Commanding Officer, Federal Fire Service in Kaduna State, Mr. Sadiq Usman has urged residents of Kaduna State to be cautious of fire disasters to protect themselves against any calamities.

Mr. Usman who made the assertion, said that the Command is adopting proactive measures to prevent harmattan-related fire disasters.

He said the call is imperative considering the fast approaching harmattan season.

The Commanding Officer maintained that the mandate of the Service is to safeguard lives and property of the public.

He further called on residents of the state to be on alert, stressing that climate-related incidents continue to rise in the country.

He stressed the need for an earlier warning to residents as a means to address and avert climate and humanitarian challenges that may arise.

Mr. Usman urged residents of Kaduna State to share timely information to the Command for prompt response against any



Muhammad

"During interrogation, the suspect confessed to the alleged offense against her without much argument. Investigation is still ongoing, after which the suspect will be charged to court for the established offense accordingly."

In answering questions from our correspondent, Khadija who is 4 months pregnant, admitted the offense, saying she did not intend to kill the victim, but was trying to correct her.

"Yes, I beat her with charger cable not with the intention of killing her, but to correct her bad action for stooling all over her body when she is old enough to know the right thing to do.

"I did not know that she

was injured until the next morning when she woke up feeling sick and she was taken to the hospital where she was confirmed dead. It was not a deliberate thing. How will I kill her when I have my own child and iam pregnant with another one," she said.

In a disturbed manner, Khadija corrected an insinuation going round that she killed the little girl out of jealousy and hatred. "Why would I have hated her, or be jealous of what? It was just a mistake coupled with religious belief that it was her destiny to die at that time and that I would be the cause of her death, nothing more", she emphasized.

temperatures, strong winds and increased use of heating sources during this season significantly increase the risk of fire and related emergencies".

He assured that his men are working assiduously round the clock to ensure speedy response to fire outbreak and any calamities.



Usman

SUNDAY POLITICS

Tinubu and the inventions of propaganda,

Bias, desperation, delusion, and deception govern the outputting of the distortionist mob. Mob distortions are purposive fabrications. They are oddly designed inventions pulled from a smorgasbord of fake news, injurious falsehood, slander, and prejudice. They come in the cloak of truth and certainty. They come in the swaddle of history and records. But in actuality, they are just a carefully curated jumble of lies, propaganda, disinformation, and misrepresentation.

What the crocheters of the yarns of distortionist hypotheses seek to achieve may be to cause a breakdown of trust, to blackmail, poison perception, stoke crisis, cause disaffection, and ultimately, spur an uprising.

In the case of President Bola Tinubu, his vilifiers have always sought, but fruitlessly so, to poison public perception against him. They invent ahistorical accounts, contort records, fabricate stories, and think up utter ridiculousness.

During the campaigns, detachments of distortionists worked the mill of propaganda over time. They invented tales and doctored videos. Time has revealed the falsity of those videos as well as the dark entrails of the promoters. Today, the President is seen speaking extempore, clearly, intelligently with poise, panache, and a sprightly gait.

The traducing did not let up after the elections – even when it was expected that those in the adversarial phylum would form an opposition established on unrelenting issues of governance as they affect all Nigerians – and not on inanities and delusions. The fixation has been, laboriously, on the pursuit of



a will-o'-the-wisp – not substance.

Despite indisputable evidence, punitive expeditions to the US were undertaken in furtherance of the smear campaign. There was nothing to be had from such endeavours ab initio, but to stir disruptive controversies and excite supporters whose morale was waning. The outcome of the Chicago State University expedition is an indictment on the species of opposition and their disposition of resistance.

This dimension of opposition is ruinous, perfidious, and

insidious. It tears down without building; it talks down without uplifting; it attacks without reason; it claims without evidence; it lies without let; it defames and defiles without conscience; and it opposes without a cause. All it seeks is to pull down and destroy – for as long as its longing for the chief seat remains a pipedream.

At the heart of Nigeria's troubled and enchanted existence is wild and minacious politics. Politics defiant of patriotism and

national interest; politics vacant of soul and righteous purpose; politics of predation and degradation. Politics of gladiatorial contests and duels. Destructive, dangerous politics.

We cannot make progress if our politics persists to be cancerous and a contest of absurdities. We seldom debate policies, and even when we do, it is usually from insular, dopey, and blighted lenses.

Groundless tropes are the definers of our conversations when there are critical matters seeking attention. We keep going through the same foundry every cycle and expect a change. We have to be more purposive about governance and less obsessed with thrilling distractions.

Political parties, especially those in the opposition, have seminal roles to play in educating citizens, mobilising consciences, and activating

the right discourses. The opposition holds a decisive place in any democracy. Should this value be expended on asinities and on guerrilla warfare? If the essence of seeking power is corrective and righteous, where is the sense in efforts to bring down the roof with every artifice and conjuring available?

No one is saying the opposition should be the consort of anyone, but patriotism dictates citizens must commit to the peace, unity, and progress of the country regardless of who is president.

The Tinubu administration has been expansive and sensitive to Nigeria's complexional complexities, blurring the lines between "supporter and opposition" in appointments and in the provisioning of public goods. This clearly says it is all about governance and building a cohesive country for this administration. This is patriotism – what has been essentially lacking in governance in Nigeria.

However, it has become evident that debate in the next four years will be on the absurd. Perhaps, there is a cavity in the intellectual domain of the objurgators. I recall during the past administration; vicious conspiracy theories of ethnic domination and ethnic cleansing were noised as imminent truths. Ethnic epithets, slurs, and tropes defined oppositional aspects to that administration. All for what reason – politics. It was all politics.

Conspiracy theories are the animating force of Nigeria's political discourses. They give taste to falsehood, tension, fear, and prejudice. And often, they are eaten, digested, and regurgitated by the unwary. It is only four months in the life of this administration, but the crocheters of conspiracy theories are returning to their accustomed vocation. I would not give oxygen to the plot of lies and tall tales by reproducing them here.

But it is important that Nigerians understand that those desperate for power will do anything to keep them hooked on the opium of lies, fear, and prejudice.

Be discerning.

Fredrick Nwabuo is the CEO of Line and Link Limited; publisher of *TheLink News*.

"At the heart of Nigeria's troubled and enchanted existence is wild and minacious politics. Politics defiant of patriotism and national interest; politics vacant of soul and righteous purpose; politics of predation and degradation. Politics of gladiatorial contests and duels. Destructive, dangerous politics. We cannot make progress if our politics persists to be cancerous and a contest of absurdities. We seldom debate policies, and even when we do, it is usually from insular, dopey, and blighted lenses".

SUNDAY POLITICS

Mutfwang appoints pilgrims board's chairmen, executive secretaries

By PETER TITLE

PLATEAU State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, has announced the appointments of key officials for the Plateau State Christian and Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Boards.

This was disclosed in a statement signed by the Director of Press and Public Affairs to the Governor, Gyang Bere, and made available to SUNDAY STANDARD.

Rt. Rev. Dr. Juan Zumbes has been appointed as the Chairman of the Plateau State Christian Pilgrims Welfare Board, while Rev. Yusuf Wanson Bagu will serve as the Executive Secretary.

Similarly, Alhaji Danladi Kwari has been appointed as the Chairman of the Muslim Welfare Board, and Hon. Daiyabu Dauda will



Mutfwang

assume the role of Executive Secretary.

All the appointments are with immediate effect, the

From JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja

CHAIRMAN of the Kogi State Council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Adeiza Momojimoh is strongly in defense of practicing journalists in the state, affirming that they have no preferred candidate in reporting the upcoming governorship election.

The NUJ boss urged politicians in the state to stop casting aspersions on members of the union on reportage of political activities in the state.

He gave the advice recently in Lokoja when he received the executive members of Ododo Support Group, OSG, who were in his office on a courtesy visit.

MomohJimoh said that politicians accusing journalists in the state of reports they believed were not favorable to them, had no moral justification for their damaging remarks on members of the fourth estate of the realm.

According to the chairman, journalists in the state have no preferred candidates in their reportage of political activities in the state as being erroneously expressed in

No preferred candidates in upcoming elections reportage - NUJ Chairman



Umoh

some quarters in the state.

He said that all the candidates in the November 11, governorship election, irrespective of their political parties, are welcome at the Press Centre, to tell members of the press about their manifesto for adequate and objective reporting.

MomohJimoh however, advised politicians yet to visit the centre, to come forward, assuring them that they would receive equal and adequate publicity.

According to the state NUJ chairman, there is nothing journalists can do unless such politicians make themselves available to them, telling them of their promises to the electorate for onward dissemination to the public.

MomohJimoh also advised politicians to dwell on issue-based campaigns and not ethnicity inclined to ensure a peaceful election, come November 11.

He commended the group for aligning itself with the concept of a peaceful and issue-based campaign and urged its members to continue to enhance such tempo of political activity.

The NUJ chairman who promised that journalists

would synergise with the group to achieve its aims and objectives, reminded politicians that ethnic colouration, especially on political activities, was alien to Kogites.

Earlier, the Director General of the group, Engr. Suleiman Adehira, said the executive members of the group were in the chairman's office to tell him of their activities and to create synergy with journalists in the state for the electoral victory of the

governorship candidate of APC.

Represented by the Director, Door to Door campaign of the group, Engr. Mufutau, Adehira disclosed that the group comprised 18 directorates with 48 directors among others, saddled with different responsibilities towards ensuring the electoral victory of Ododo.

He, therefore, solicited the cooperation of members of the union for effective coverage of its activities and for the realization of the aims and objectives of the group.

Our correspondent reports that highlight at the occasion was the group photo of the executive members of the group and the journalists.

Tribal, religious sentiments threaten peaceful coexistence in Nasarawa – PDP coalition

THE coalition of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Youth in Nasarawa state has said that tribal and religion sentiment is threatening the unity and peaceful coexistence amongst the citizens of Nasarawa state.

Chairman of the coalition in the state comrade Daniel Agbo and his secretary Esther Osama, disclosed this in a press briefing on Friday, in Lafia.

"We wish to alert the world on the dangerous lane upon which Nasarawa state politics has taken. That the dark forces of religion, tribal and clannish divisive tendencies are about to destroy the hitherto peaceful coexistence of the good people of the state, since the aftermath of the tribunal ruling.

"Consequently, we are cautioning the general public, especially members of our dear party, the main opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the state to be wary of their recklessness, sentimental and threatening remarks

such as "They are non indigenes, they are from Borno state, they have religion agenda, sincerely these are statements that has already pitched the Nasarawa state people against themselves.

"Most regrettably, some of these unfortunate statements are coming from our supposed political and religious leaders. For example, the statement being credited to a supposed religion leader, Primate Elijah Ayodele in an already trending video, openly telling the members of the Nasarawa state PDP and its candidate to seize power from governor Abdullahi Sule at all costs. This is a clear incitement against the state."

They cautioned that "As a

party, we must adhere to the strict principles of decent democracy as being practiced across the globe.

It added that "As result of the foregoing governor Abdullahi Sule has also raised an alarm, telling the world how he is being threatened to be removed from office using religion sentiments. He cited the judgment of the tribunal as one of the examples among several others.

"This trend of religion and tribal dichotomy shows that we still have moral weakness, which makes it very difficult to achieve a common goal as a state. Glory be to God, if not that governor Abdullahi Sule is such a kind and benevolent leader, this state would have since been plunged into an uncontrollable chaos.

Everyone knows that no governor in Nigeria would have allowed this to happen in his state the statement said.

The PDP coalition therefore, called on the religious, political and tribal leaders to be cautious in their statements, henceforth. We are also calling on the stakeholders at the Appeal Court, especially the Judges for a proper review of the tribunal.

"The security agencies, traditional rulers and other critical stakeholders must live up to expectations to curtail or rather stop this ugly menace as peace and unity of the state is at stake. Remember, an injury to one is an injury to all."

REPS to investigate death of LUTH medical doctor

THE House of Representatives has resolved to investigate the death of Dr Micheal Umoh, a personnel at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) who died on duty.

This decision is coming on the heels of unanimous adoption of a motion sponsored by Hon. Adebayo Adesola at the plenary, recently. Hon. Adesola, while moving the motion, said the

importance of medical personnel as the fulcrum of the healthcare delivery system could not be over emphasized.

The lawmaker recalled that on September 17, Umoh, a

medical officer on residency programme in the LUTH reportedly died after spending 72 hours in the Neurosurgery Unit of the institution. He said there is a related incident of a young female medical doctor who lost her life due to

elevator failure in a general hospital, which could have been avoided with improved working conditions.

He further noted that there are several other reports of medical personnel dying as a result of harsh working conditions and other forms of negligence, thus robbing the country of its best brains.

According to him, such cases have reinforced the agitation of National Association of Resident Doctors, Nigeria Medical Association and other associated bodies for improved conditions of service.

After debating on the motion, the house mandated its committee on health institutions, employment and labour institutions to carry out the investigation and report

"Stop distracting Tinubu; he has capacity to deliver" – APC support group tells opposition

A support group of the All Progressives Congress (APC), the Grassroots Governance Oyema; Chairman, Advisory Group (G3) has urged opposition parties to stop distracting President Bola Tinubu so he could deliver on his "Renewed Hope" agenda.

"The president has showed capacity to deliver within his short time in office.

"We commend the various policies of the Tinubu-led administration," the group declared in a statement issued in Abuja on Saturday.

The statement was jointly signed by the APC G3 National Coordinator, Mr Amechi Oyema; Chairman, Advisory Board, Prof. Ojo Ademola and Board of Trustees, Dr Jerry Ugokwe.

It urged opposition political parties still in court over the outcome of the Feb. 25 presidential election to rather join the Tinubu administration to bring Nigeria out of its present economic woes.

"This is not the time for any distraction.

"We commend President Tinubu for headhunting and putting the right people in the

right offices because the appointments made so far have been square pegs in square holes.

"With pride, we commend the Minister of Works, Chief Dave Umahi, for bringing his professional qualifications as an engineer to bear in the task assigned to him.

"We endorse the way the minister had been technically tackling road contractors who before this time had been holding the country to ransom.

"We are proud of what Mr Nyesom Wike, Minister of the FCT is doing in the FCT.

"He has showed uncommon

zeal to do the right thing. The Minister of Interior, Mr Tunji Ojo, has shown that passports can be easily procured in Nigeria.

"Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Dr Betty Edu, has been on the road putting smiles on the faces of the downtrodden.

"Minister of State for Environment, Dr Iziq Salako, has been doing everything to better our environment.

"We cannot mention all the ministers, but APC G3 can boldly say that the "Renewed



Adeiza

SUNDAY INTERVIEW

Let my people coexist in peace - Gyendeng

HON. Gyendeng Peter Ibrahim is the member representing Riyom / Barkin Ladi Federal Constituency of Plateau State in the House of Representatives. He speaks to our National Assembly correspondent, JIDAUNA YANUNG on his plans for the constituency, state of the nation as well as removal of subsidy on petrol by the Federal Government. Excerpt. You spent eight (8) years in the state House of Assembly and now one and half (1 ½) months in the House of Representatives. How would you describe the journey so far?

WELL, I will say so far, so good. One hundred days now, the journey has been good, though there are some hitches here and there. What I mean is that we started the journey well, although there have been some challenges here and there. But so far, it is good. We have just settled down for business now, a series of legislative business now.

As you can see, it took time before offices were allocated to us. We just got our offices and no committees have been set up by the leadership of the House. Thank God in Plateau State, we have got about four committee chairmen, two deputy chairmen. Though I was not one of them. But we sat and agreed that some of us should go to other committees as members of these committees. So for me, by the grace of God, I will be a member of the Committee on Appropriation and other sub-committees.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE AREAS YOU INTEND TO UPLIFT YOUR CONSTITUENCY?

The most important one is first and foremost, let my people coexist in peace. Let them love one another. When there is peace, everything will follow accordingly. As you know, for the past few months, there have been pockets of killings in Barkin-Ladi, Riyom and other parts of Plateau. As I am talking to you now, the killing is still going on. People are still ambushed and killed. The situation is very worrisome. Our prayer is that enough of these killings. Let us embrace one another and live in peace. My major concern now is how to restore peace and bring back those that were displaced from their homes. If that is done, in fact, even if it is that one alone I have achieved, I think I will be satisfied and be the happiest person on earth. I will do everything humanly possible to ensure that peace returns to these troubled areas as soon as possible.

I am happy to tell you that I was together with the governor of the state some time ago, and together we went round some top service chiefs. And they assured us that they would help us in restoring peace in these troubled areas. We thanked them for that assurance and determination.

My second priority will be on youth employment. In this case, I will use what it takes to get employment for the teeming youth of my constituency and I intend to empower those that



Gyendeng

are farming and doing business, among others. If that is done, I think it will go a long way to make the youths useful to the society rather than going into illicit drugs and other vices like stealing among others. Many other things are in the pipeline. I will try as much as possible to achieve them.

THE SUBSIDY REMOVAL HAS BROUGHT UNTOLD HARDSHIP TO Nigerians. TO THIS END, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED WELFARE PACKAGES FOR WORKERS AS WELL AS THE DISBURSEMENT OF MILLIONS OF NAIRA AS PALLIATIVES TO poor households. WHAT IS YOUR TAKE ON THIS?

It is not an overstatement to say that Nigerians are suffering seriously. As you can see, there is poverty in the land. Everywhere is very dry and so many things are happening. The truth is that it is biting harder on every Nigerian. Most families cannot afford even two square meals in a day. Everything has gone higher in the market. I want to appeal to the Federal Government to further explore other ways to cushion the

the effects.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO DIFFERENTLY TO REWRITE HISTORY AND POSITIVELY CHANGE THE NARRATIVE AS REGARDS DEVELOPMENT?

Well, there is no challenge that is big or small but the centre point is how well will I bring back the dividends of democracy to my people? The cost of living in Abuja is very high but that notwithstanding, we will do our very best despite the challenges of our time. Really as new legislators, we have challenges of accommodation.

WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS IN TERMS OF PERFORMING YOUR OVERSIGHT FUNCTIONS?

Well, in terms of the oversight functions, I am not new in the system. At least, I have spent eight years as a lawmaker in the state House of Assembly, so I am not new in that aspect. I did not expect anything unusual. It is just that somebody might be doing something right and somebody doing it wrong. Oversight function must be performed, even within the precincts of the executive. If you look at it very carefully, there are inherent oversight functions. If a governor gives a ministry an assignment, they have a duty to do it to the satisfaction of the governor. The House of Assembly also has its own duty to complement that oversight function.

SIR, STILL ON THE FUEL Subsidy. THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT THE REMOVAL AND ALSO THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO DO NOT SUPPORT IT. IN YOUR VIEW, HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE TWO GROUPS OR WHAT IS YOUR TAKE ON THIS?

Yes, I know that there are two types of people who have different views on the fuel subsidy removal. Some criticize it while others look at it as a good step in the right direction. But for me, I don't want to dwell much on this. There is no way a policy will be implemented

without people having different opinions about it. You will agree with me that President Bola Tinubu himself opposed former President Goodluck Jonathan when he made an adjustment on the amount of subsidy on fuel. And all of them went on the streets against it. And now the same President Bola Tinubu is in power now and has removed the subsidy. So just look at the position they took before and look at the position they are taking now. There is nothing new in what is happening now. It is just the natural consequence of the action.

IT HAS BEEN OVER 100 DAYS OF THE TINUBU ADMINISTRATION. HOW DO YOU RATE HIS APPOINTMENTS?

I think he started well. The few people he needed to work with in terms of administration activities, he made those choices early enough. So, I think he started well. The only policy that seems to be so bad is the petroleum subsidy removal. Apart from that, I can say so far, so good.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE REMEMBERED FOR IN THE 10TH ASSEMBLY?

Well, I want to be remembered as a member representing Barkin Ladi and Riyom Federal constituency who did what others have not done in the constituency by bringing democracy dividends to the doorsteps of the people. Just like in the state House of Assembly, I got employment for quite a number of my constituents as well empowered quite a number of them.

I also want to reiterate my determination and commitment to the protection of lives and property of citizens of the constituency.

Meaningful development can only take place in the constituency when there is peace and security.

"The situation is very worrisome. Our prayer is that enough of these killings. Let us embrace one another and live in peace. My major concern now is how to restore peace and bring back those that were displaced from their homes. If that is done, in fact, even if it is that one alone I have achieved, I think I will be satisfied and be the happiest person on earth. I will do everything humanly possible to ensure that peace returns to these troubled areas as soon as possible".

SUNDAY PEOPLE

GOVERNOR MUTFWANG ADDRESS STREET SWEEPERS

Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang addressed women sweepers and informed them about the increase in their salaries.



Governor Mutfwang addressing the sweepers



Another cross section of sweepers



Street sweepers listening keenly



Cross section of sweepers singing songs of praises to the Governor



Cross section of the sweepers in a joyful mood on hearing the news



Listening with rapt attention are street sweepers



Cross section of the women in jubilating after cheering news from the Governor



Governor Mutfwang announcing the increase on their salaries

PRESIDED by the Speaker Rt. Hon. Moses Thomas Sule, last week's plenary proceedings of the Plateau State House of Assembly highlight was the call on the Senator representing Plateau North Senatorial District in the National Assembly, Dr. Simon Mwadkon to reintroduce the bill for the establishment of the North-Central Development Commission in the 10th Senate. The call was contained in a motion moved by the member representing Langtang North-Central constituency, who is also the Deputy Chief Whip, Hon. Nanbol Rimvyet.

Interestingly, the North-Central geopolitical zone referred to here, comprises of Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, Plateau, Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Niger and Nasarawa States. In his submission to the motion, Hon. Rimvyet noted that the geopolitical zone has significant potentials for development but is faced with factors that impedes the development like inadequate infrastructure, banditry, kidnapping, unemployment and poverty among others.

The lawmaker recalled that the bill was presented at the floor of the House of Representatives during the 9th assembly but was denied its passage. He therefore, suggested its reintroduction while adding that if eventually passed into law, the bill will be of great advantage to the state. After due deliberations on its importance, the House unanimously adopted the motion. It however, called and requested that the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) Senator George Akume who is also from the zone and the Plateau State Governor liaise with Governors from the zone to lobby the National Assembly and the President for the passage of the bill.

Also during plenary, another motion was moved by the member representing Langtang North-North constituency, Hon. Nannim Langyi calling on the Plateau State Government to urgently revive technical and vocational education in the state. Members in their various contributions frowned at the current situation of the Bukuru Technical College where they said is in a state of total decay and has turned to retirement ground for Teachers.

On his part, the Deputy Speaker Rt. Hon. Gwottson Fom Dalyop who is also the member representing Jos South constituency, regretted the unfortunate situation of the school. According to him, the disdainful condition of the college has pushed many youths into illegal mining while others have resorted to constituting as nuisance to society through their involvement in different societal ills.

For Speaker of the House Rt. Hon. Moses Thomas Sule, reviving the center will go along way in addressing the issues of unemployment and youth restiveness in the state whereby making them self employed. He therefore, directed the House Committee on Science and Technology to intervene through an oversight visit and report back to the House. The visit was not only to Bukuru Technical College

but to all vocational centers in the state.

Yet in another motion, the member representing Jos North-North constituency, Hon. Adamu Aliyu has placed a call on the Plateau State Government to authorize the state Ministry of Health and other relevant agencies to check what he described as the alarming activities of quack health practitioners and unregistered medical facilities within the state.

Moving the motion, the member cited an example with the recent case of one Dr. Noah Kekere, the



On Plateau assembly's plenary proceedings



Aliyu

proprietor of Murna Clinic and Maternity, situated at Nasarawa Gwom in Jos, who allegedly removed the kidney of a woman, referred to as Mrs. Kehinde while reportedly conducting surgery on her sometimes ago.



Gwottson

Noah Kekere. Investigations further showed that the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) Plateau State branch had in a statement confirmed that he is indeed a quack doctor.

Meanwhile, the Plateau State

tenth assembly had during last Wednesday's plenary announced their first recess, which is to commence from September 14th to October 23rd, 2023. Wishing our lawmakers a fruitful recess period.

SUNDAY MAGAZINE



Tinubu



Atiku



Obi

Presidential, Gubernatorial election litigations: Politicians' bellyache, surprises

By **BULUS GAMBO**

SINCE the conclusion of both the presidential and gubernatorial elections in Nigeria, the country has continued to witness legal battles in several courts intended to confirm the victories of these elections held by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in the country some months back. Immediately after the presidential polls, the People's Democratic Party, PDP and the Labour Party headed to the Presidential Election Petition Court in Abuja challenging the victory of the All Progressives Congress winner of the elections, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu alleging he did not win the polls and or committed offences which were contrary to the Electoral Acts and needs to be disqualified from contesting. Likewise, governors of several states were also taken to the Election Petition Tribunals that entertained applicant's prayers to remove the winners from office.

In the case of President Bola Tinubu, the People's Democratic Party's Presidential Candidate, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar had anticipated the tribunal to declare him Nigeria's president-elect and or order a fresh election elections due to alleged irregularities that marred the 25th February polls

in thousands of polling units. These were and still are part of the seven prayers anchored on five grounds in the petition he filed against the victory of the incumbent president as his team of lawyers led by Joe-KyariGadzama, a senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) BEATING THE 21-day statutory deadline set for filing such case. In the same mannerism, the Labour Party Presidential Candidate, Peter Obi had approached the court noting that Tinubu should not have been eligible to run for the top office through his lead lawyer, Livy Uzoukwu noting amongst others that the president was not duly elected by majority of the lawful votes cast at the time of the elections.

In like manner, about 25 state Governors were equally dragged to the tribunals in the aftermath of the 2023 gubernatorial elections in Nigeria. Out of the 28 states where the governorship elections were held, the results of polls announced by Independent National Electoral Commission are being contested in at least 25 states. Though all the cases have passed through the first stage of the legal tussle, more anxiety is beclouding the political class particular those whom their lawyers are only milking their resources with telling them the true situation at hand.

Consequently, however, the

Presidential Tribunal could not overturn the elections which saw the applicants on the matter heading for the Supreme Court of Justice, the final deciding point on the entire matter. In its ruling on the matter brought before it, the presidential tribunal stated that both the PDP and LP candidates failed to prove the allegations of fraud, Tinubu's ineligibility and others in their petitions challenging the outcome of the tightly contested elections. This outcome eventually generated various reactions amongst the citizens of the nation.

Never in the history of Nigeria has such court proceedings generated various reactions than this time around. The passion also exhibited by many citizens of the nation before the elections also indicated the degree of enthusiasm of the people towards ensuring the emergence and sustainability of good governance in all facades of the nation.

Therefore, the outcome of the tribunal rulings really caught many citizens napping. For instance, a Labour Party's supporter, Bob Ngene vehemently displayed his displeasure noting that 'what they showed us during the tribunal was that this was a classic open and shut case. Which it wasn't at all. They made it out to be a classic open and shut case, like there

was really no case there. And it was at that point in time manipulated to kick Peter Obi out of the conversation.' NyimbiOdero, an IT Expert who designed some of the most significant tech innovations for Nigeria's elections noted that INEC failed to manage the chain of custody of results from the polling units adding that 'I have looked at some of the results they published. A large percentage of them are completely illegible.

According to him, 'No matter what the judiciary decided based on facts, Nigerians know the truth of what happened on the 25th February 2023 in the presidential elections in Nigeria. Truth and facts and evidence in proof are poles apart. While courts rely on evidence of facts, truth does not.

He noted that 'Nigeria will do itself well if at all times it upholds truth in the ruling of its affairs. Nigerians know the excruciating pains petitioners go through in the hands of INEC and how pink copies of elections results are not always given to agents of parties in most cases.' Thus the affirmation of electoral heists especially in presidential elections by Nigerian judges is a threat to the legitimacy of future elections in the country.

Amongst all the tribunal judgements concerning some of the gubernatorial elections,

those of Kano, Plateau, Kaduna, Nasarawa, Benue, Gombe and Lagos States are obviously the most followed and anticipated ones. The tribunal in Kano State created an upset after it ordered the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), to withdraw the certificate of return issued Governor Abba Yusuf who contested under the platform of the New Nigeria Peoples Party, NNPP. The judgement which was delivered through zoom affirmed the candidate of the All Progressives Congress, APC Nasir Gawuna. Yusuf who was declared the winner of March 18 Governorship elections got 1,019,602 votes to defeat his closet rival Gawuna who pulled 890,705 votes. During the judgement, the Tribunal deducted 165,663 vote from Yusuf's votes on the ground that the ballot papers were not stamped, signed and dated by INEC as the law required. According to the Tribunal, it was NNPP and Yusuf who provided materials that were used against them as evidence.

Reacting to the judgement, the NNPP's National Working Committee NWC described it as laughable and nothing short of pure mischarge of justice. The acting National Chairman Abba Kawu Ali, vowed that the party would appeal the judgement at the

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NEWS

NAF receives additional aircrafts

By
DORCAS PANKYES

IN its bid to add impetus to ongoing air operations, the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) received 2 additional Diamond-62 (DA-62) aircraft at a brief but colourful ceremony held in Ilorin, Kwara State recently.

A statement by Air Commodore Edward Gabkwet explained that during the ceremony, the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Marshal Hasan Abubakar, noted that the process that culminated into the reception of the 2 additional aircraft, began about 2 years ago when the Federal Government (FG) appropriated funds for the acquisition of 4 Diamond-62 aircraft for the NAF.

According to him, out of the 4 aircrafts, the first 2 aircrafts were delivered between February and July 2023, while the remaining 2 were being received today.

Speaking further, Air Marshal Abubakar noted that the 2 DA-62 aircrafts received earlier in the year, have since been deployed to the operating theatres in support of the ongoing efforts to restore peace and stability in troubled areas within the country.

While urging the air and ground crew that would handle the aircrafts to eschew discipline and professionalism, Air Marshal



Abubakar

Abubakar admonished them to also ensure the proper maintenance and operation of the aircraft in line with recommended best practices by the Original Equipment Manufacturer.

He also implored them to leverage the capabilities available on the aircraft to enhance NAF's operational efficiency.

In paying glowing tribute to

the FG for its commitment to revamping the fortunes of the NAF and other Services, Air Marshal Abubakar also noted that the receipt of the 2 additional DA-62 aircrafts, confirms the sincerity and commitment of the government towards ensuring peace returns to hitherto troubled spots.

He went on to add that the NAF will in no distant time take delivery of additional

platforms that include the M346FA aircraft, AW109 Trekker light attack helicopter, AH-1Z Super Cobra, T-129 ATAK helicopters and the King Air 360i Beechcraft aircraft.

In his remarks at the occasion, the Executive Governor of Kwara State, Abdulrazak Abdulrahman, commended the NAF for its efforts, alongside other security agencies towards ridding the nation of its numerous security challenges.

He also expressed his appreciation for the CAS for making Ilorin the homebase of the DA-62, which is indicative of the peaceful and conducive nature of the state. He then assured the CAS of his administration's unwavering support to the NAF and other security agencies in their onerous tasks of safeguarding lives and properties.

Earlier in his welcome address, the Air Officer Commanding Mobility Command, Air Vice Marshal Tajudeen Yusuf, noted that the acquisition of the DA-62 aircraft, stems from its ability to carry out robust missions in furtherance of combat operations.

He added that domiciling the DA-62 under 303 Medium Airlift Group in Ilorin will no doubt go a long way in breathing life into the unit while enhancing its operational activities.

Tinubu seeks Reps confirmation for NDDC Board

From
JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja

PRESIDENT Bola Tinubu has requested the House of Representatives' confirmation of appointments for the position of chairman and members of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC.

This was contained in a letter addressed to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon Tajudeen Abbas and read at the plenary recently.

According to the president in the letter, the request was in compliance with section 2:(2) of the NDDC establishment ACT.

It would be recalled that the section stated that the board and management of NDDC would be appointed by the president and Commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces. This is subject to the confirmation of the Senate in consultation with the House of Representatives.

"In compliance with the

provision of section 2(2) of the NDDC establishment etc ACT, I am pleased to present the underlisted 17 nominees for the consideration of the House of Representatives. " This is for the position of chairman and members of the governing board of NDDC", the letter stated.

Diphtheria: Agency confirms 156 cases, 20 deaths

From
JOHN FWAH, Kaduna

THE Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the National Primary Health Care Department Agency

(NPHCDA), Dr Faisal Shuaibu has confirmed that out of the 156 cases of Diphtheria in Kaduna, 20 have died from the disease.

"There is also a need for the media to step up in creating

awareness and providing useful information to the public about the existence of the disease," he said.

Dr Faisal Shuaibu, who is also Co-Chair of the Federal Task Team on Diphtheria, said this during an assessment visit to Kaduna recently.

Dr Shuaibu told journalists after the inspection tour of the Kaduna Diphtheria Centre, that they were at the Barau Dikko Teaching Hospital to assess the situation of the diphtheria outbreak that affected part of Kaduna State.

"Kaduna is ranked among the 7 states with the highest number of Diphtheria. We are at the Barau Dikko Teaching Hospital, where mild to moderate cases are being attended to before being admitted to the infectious disease hospitals."

Shuaibu also stressed the need for patients to be presented early and their contacts for vaccination.

He said Diphtheria is a preventable disease, noting that about 80 per cent of those afflicted by the disease did not present themselves

for vaccination.

He therefore, said the outbreak is seen due to low population immunity created by low vaccination coverage. "The discrepancy of the outbreak, even within Kaduna, shows that the LGAs that have high rates of vaccination record lower cases of the disease."

The Executive Director, therefore, noted the fact that vaccines are the most powerful tools against the vaccine-preventable disease.

While acknowledging the state government's efforts in combating the disease, he also encouraged the people to wear nose masks especially when visiting health facilities.

He commended the Chief Medical Director of the Barau Dikko Teaching Hospital and the state's Primary Health Care Board for their leadership towards ensuring that the disease is contained. And expressed optimism that within a short period of time, the outbreak would be controlled.



Shuaibu



EFCC recovers monies

ECONOMIC and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), has recovered N27.2 billion and \$19.1million in the course of the ongoing investigations embarked upon by the agency this year so far. The anti-graft agency, which claimed it was cheaper to prevent crimes, has also launched vigorous investigation into the financial dealings of former governors, ministers and officials of the Ministries, department and agencies

UEFA Chief Expresses Profound Sorrow

UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin has expressed "profound sorrow" about "the tragic acts of violence" in Israel.

Palestinian militant group Hamas launched a series of attacks on the country, killing hundreds and taking up to 150 people hostage.

CBN lifts FX ban on 40 others

The apex bank in a major monetary policy shift, restored the 43 items which were banned from accessing forex since June 2015 to, according to it, "sustain the stability of the foreign exchange market and the derivation of optimum benefits from goods and services imported into the country." Items on the list include rice; cement; toothpicks; margarine; palm Kernel/Palm oil products/vegetable oils; meat and processed meat products; vegetables and processed vegetable products; poultry – chicken, eggs, Turkey; Soap and cosmetics; tomatoes/tomato pastes; milk; maize and tinned fish in sauce

FG approves emergency road repairs

President Bola Tinubu has approved emergency repairs on 260 roads across the 36 states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The Minister of Works, David Umahi, disclosed this in a chat with correspondents after a meeting with the president recently at the presidential villa in Abuja.

Kogi govt to prosecute who buried 11-year-old Kogi State Government has said it would prosecute those involved in burying one

Friday (surname withheld) an 11-year-old boy alive at Apamisede, in Adavi Local Government Area of the state.

Man conspires with others to rob friend

Kano State Police Command has arrested three persons for allegedly robbing a businessman of the sum of N2.9 million.

The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Abdullahi Haruna, in a statement on behalf of the Commissioner of Police, Mohammed Usaini Gumel, said the suspects confessed to the crime.

Cricket: Nigeria Top West Africa Trophy

Nigeria's senior male cricket team, the Yellow-Greens, are sitting comfortably atop the leaderboard of the ongoing West Africa Cup at the Tafawa Balewa Cricket Oval in Lagos, with eight wins and two matches to spare. Rwanda, Ghana, and Sierra Leone are following respectively, in the four-nation tournament

Audit Report: Senate Probes Ex-Accountant General Members of the Senate Public Account Committee recently commenced the probe of a former Accountant General of the Federation, Ahmed Idris, for unilaterally signing the country's 2019 financial statement, totaling N26 trillion without the awareness of the former Finance Minister, Hajia Zainab Ahmed

FG vows to deal with perpetrators

The Federal Government has expressed disgust over the sexual harassment scandal rocking the University of Calabar (UNICAL) and some other tertiary institutions in the past.

Minister of Education, Professor Tahir Mamman, warned members of the academia and the university community over matters of sexual harassment on campus.

Compiled by HOSEA NYAMLONG

SUNDAY FEATURE

What the Nigerian military can't tackle alone

Four years ago, Lt. Gen. Tukur Yusuf Buratai (rtd), then Chief of Army Staff (COAS), incurred the 'wrath' of many Nigerians when he dragged spiritualism into the fight against religious extremism. At a seminar organised by the Nigerian Army Headquarters, in Abuja, Buratai asserted that terrorism and terrorist groups could not be eliminated by the military alone. ABDULSALAM MAHMUD write.

HE noted that religious bodies and organisations in the country must come to the "forefront of this spiritual battle." Buratai observed that the focus must be religious groups interfacing on addressing the ideologies which fuelled the Boko Haram and ISWAP terrorists.

During the seminar themed, "Countering insurgency and violent extremism in Nigeria through spiritual warfare," and which held at the Army Resource Centre, Asokoro, the then army chief urged Islamic and Christian clerics across army formations to join the fight against terrorism, and reorient the people against negative ideologies.

Buratai said, "It is easier to defeat Boko Haram and ISWAP terrorists than their ideology because, while we degrade the terrorists and their havens, the narrative of the ideology grows the group."

"Therefore, communities, families, and groups should join in the fight and narratives to reject and prevent the ideologies of the terrorists and extremist groups. Religious bodies and organisations in particular who interface regularly with the grassroots should be at the forefront of this spiritual battle and fashion out ways of stepping up their roles."

"The fight against terrorism, Boko Haram and ISWAP, as well as other security threats, cannot be left to the troops in the battlefield alone. Yes, we will do our duties, but the need to tackle groups through spiritual warfare and re-orientating the followers against the ideology is also a necessity."

"It is a well-known fact that terrorism and terrorist groups cannot be totally eliminated by mainly military actions. The need to defeat the ideologies of Boko Haram and ISWAP is based on the awareness that it is the ideologies that enhance their resources and help to recruit new fighters to their fold and as such; kill their ideology and the terrorist movement withers and dies."

As expected, a large section of the general public did not cut Buratai some slack. They bayed for his blood and demanded for his head. Journalists, columnists and commentators also locked horns as the battle over Buratai's statement (then) raged. If my memory serves me correctly, Casmir Igbokwe, one of the erudite columnists I follow at Daily Sun newspaper, 'somewhat' doubted the potency of the spiritual warfare 'gambit' of Gen. Buratai.

Mr. Igbokwe, in a piece: 'Beyond Nigerian Army's Spiritual Warfare', quipped: "I am not sure how far Buratai's spiritual warfare will go in eliminating Boko Haram. What I know is that soldiers are trained to ward off external and internal aggression. It is not for nothing



that they are called armed forces and not armed spirits".

But a 'firebrand activist' and ace commentator, Emmanuel Onwubiko, the Head of Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria, in a 'counter article' titled: "Spiritual 'Warfare' And Counter Terrorism", however rose firmly in defense of the ex-COAS.

According to Onwubiko, Buratai's statement was misinterpreted and misunderstood. He wrote: "But let me remind these critics, who I must admit mean well for Nigeria, that the Chief of Army Staff did not call for the abdication of combats by the professional soldiers, neither did he advocate that the soldiers, who are fighting in the war or flashpoints of war on terror should abandon their professional callings to embrace spiritual exercises in churches and mosques".

Regardless of the divergence in the opinions expressed for and against Buratai's 'words on the marble', I could recall arguing with a fellow journalist that the former Army Chief did not deserve to be 'lynched' in the media. Left to me, the 'spiritual warfare soundbite' of Buratai implies that only through collective efforts, can the fight against lingering insecurity be won.

Fast forward to September 2023, the incumbent Chief of Defence Staff, CDS, General Christopher Gwabin Musa, has equally re-echoed the sentiment shared by Buratai. Although, Gen. Musa this time around did not patently solicit the intervention of God and our religious preachers, he did not prevaricate in stating the obvious: the fight against insecurity is not what the military, alone, can powerfully wage.

At its media briefing on military operations ongoing in the country, the Defence Headquarters, DHQ, last Thursday, called for the support of all Nigerians in its fight against terrorism and insurgency, saying the military cannot do it alone.

The Director, Defence Media Operations, DMO, Major General Edward Buba, who spoke at the conference, said: "Experience reveals that, military means alone cannot end terrorism and insurgency. Our mission against terrorists, insurgents and perpetrators of insecurity in the country is not one that should be seen as the exclusive preserve of just the military alone."

"...This underscores the need for our counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency war to remain a reflection of a whole of society's commitment". Even without the DHQ coming out to restate the views of Lt. Gen. Buratai on counter-insurgency, rational citizens know that fostering national security is everyone's job. It is not something exclusively reserved for the Nigerian military or army troops. Citizens also have a crucial role to play in the war against insecurity.

Though, it is expected that our military will always take the lead, as it has always done, in terms of dealing with criminals whose nefarious activities are further deteriorating our security. It should however, evolve a more robust and practical strategy of fighting terrorists, bandits, kidnappers, pirates and secessionist elements, among others. Enhancing and prioritizing the welfare of troops in the frontline is very, very vital.

It will help in boosting the combat morale of fighting troops. I also have

some words for the military authorities, led by the Defence Chief, Gen. Musa. There is the need to review ongoing military operations, laws and ethical codes, with a view to identifying areas and gaps that need to be strengthened or amended.

It is pertinent for them to come up with sound policies that will comprehensively rejig Standard Operating Procedures, SOPs, and rules of engagement by troops, especially against enemies of the Nigerian state. As for citizens, they should do well to help bolster the intelligence of security and military agencies.

If they must rid their communities of terrorists and other bad elements, persons of dubious characters and merciless criminals should not be accommodated. Their presence in any Nigerian community, instead, should be reported to relevant security bodies.

It is also expected that Nigerians, particularly those in the North-east, North-central and North-west, should not spare informants and collaborators discreetly working with terrorists and bandits. If the rotten eggs can be identified, they should be exposed, arrested and diligently prosecuted. Our local vigilantes, across the 36 states, have always complimented the conventional security outfits.

Like the police, army, and other sister security agencies, they also deserve the moral and logistics' support of government and the spirited Nigerians. To the government, the need for adequate funding of our security institutions cannot be overemphasised.

But annual security budgets which are becoming humongous, should duly be accounted for. We cannot be pumping in money to boost national security, with nothing tangible to show. Above all, Nigerians can do more for our military troops and security personnel.

The road to making our dear nation insecurity-free is still long. Attaining that goal, however is not impossible. What is unrealistic however, is for the masses to think that the Nigerian Armed Forces, warts and all, have the exclusive wherewithal or permanent solution for the nation's insecurity malaise. It is time we do away with that fallacious and misleading school of thought.

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SUNDAY FEATURE

Nigeria: Transcending the economic impasse,

Despite the gloom, we are seeing flashes of brilliance already. An example is the recently announced intention to initiate code-sharing in the creative sector. Revamping the intellectual property format will lead to co-production, the creation of jobs, and bringing in an inflow of hard currency earnings. More of this kind of thinking is needed. The Tinubu era must be the era of value addition, true exports promotion and transition to a balanced economy. Writers BĂMIDÉLÉ ADÉMÓLÁ-OLÁTÉJÚ

A flurry of activities has commenced since Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu won the presidential election and was sworn in, as president. Due to the poisoned chalice he inherited and the economic booby trap he walked into, he enjoyed no honeymoon whatsoever. From the pronouncement he made that "Subsidy is gone!", it was clear from the onset that President Tinubu ascended the presidency without any illusion about the magnitude of the task at hand. So far, he has responded to the fiscal crisis and taken the punch manfully on the chin. There was no room for manoeuvre, nevertheless he could have ducked it. This would have been in line with the past sequence, wherein the refusal to accept the crisis. Warts and all, his response is commendable.

A key fault line pertained to the path-breaking commitment in the manifesto of the All Progressives Congress (APC) to construct a "Social Market" economy. The first set of interventions resembled the sort of response associated with the Bretton Woods formula, rather than the social market associated with Germany (after the Second World War) and the countries of Scandinavia since the 1920s. The Federal Government is now sensibly rebooting. The commitment to pay N35, 000 to federal workers across the board for six months is a good response. It is a stimulus package, like what America did. Subnationals should be assisted to do same.

The Minister of finance needs to allay the understandable



Tinubu

reservation about the possible inflationary consequences of this response. The inflationary pressure we are seeing is cost-push inflation, given the dysfunction in our economic structure. Prices went up because the naira underwent a 42 per cent devaluation due to the attempted merger of the corruption-propelled multiple exchange rates and the withdrawal of subsidy on petroleum.

The N35, 000 stimulus will give a boost to purchasing power and help restore the balance through what is called the ripple-effect. In simple terms, ripple effect is a multiplier effect. For example, because there is an increase in the minimum wage, we expect spending to increase. Every salary earner has at least four dependants. Therefore, an increase in spending of one person will help in generating more income for another,

hence the spending power of others will also increase. As a result, manufacturers will begin to clear the unsold products, it will stave off disengagement of staff and increase the overall well being of many people.

This response makes one to recall the admonition of Bill Gates that, "if you cannot pay the minimum wage, there is something wrong with your business model". He is correct! There is everything wrong with the current situation in Nigeria, which is absurdly based on a low wage, low skills economic model. This has translated into a sixties style "growth without development" and the "development of underdevelopment." Increasing the minimum wage is the beginning of a correction and it must be deepened.

Now to the policy anchors, if President Bola Tinubu must fulfil his historic mission by placing an anti-poverty, jobs creating programme as the

propellant for sustainable development and higher living standards, he must embrace the long-neglected need to create Social Capital. A social market begins with the realisation that fiscal, macroeconomic stability is the gateway to achieving social justice. Germany learnt valuable lessons from the fall of the Weimar Republic, leading to the rise of Hitler. Nigeria must also learn from the misguided fiscal recklessness of the recent past. The emphasis must now be on a currency based on production, on skills as well as value-added exports.

Social capital must be brought back to the fore. I suggest that the Ministry of Labour is outdated. It should be discarded, revamped, and reinvigorated in a Ministry for the Social Economy, which fits better into the present thrust. The Social Market thrust must see a new form of industrial relations. A new tripartite system based on goals driven relationships between the government, labour and the private sector must emerge.

The concept of social capital must be revisited and placed on the front burner. The Titans of the past, such as Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Sir Ahmadu Bello and Micheal Okpara understood the intrinsic link between the investments in the social sectors, such as education, health, social services, and real growth. The empirical evidence is unambiguous. The United Kingdom, for example, has an admirable health sector, which is also the fifth largest employer of labour in Europe! We must learn from this. The housing sector is another example. In Brazil under Lula da Silva, the housing and school feeding programmes were instrumental in taking forty million people out of poverty. At home we can recall the outstanding achievements in an earlier era of the Lagos Economic Development Board (LEDB), the housing programme of Lateef Jakande and so forth.

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The Federal Government, the Nigeria Labour Congress, NLC, and Trade Union Congress, TUC, arrived at an agreement for the federal government to pay N35,000 wage award to federal workers to cushion the effect of petrol subsidy removal. So says the government. This is meant to alleviate the suffering of the poor. However, there is a big problem that may not allow for that to happen unless this problem is solved. This problem is called inflation.

The inflation in Nigeria does not seem to be ebbing. Consequently, our purchasing power has dropped. What actually is inflation, what causes inflation, what are the types of inflation and how can we solve it? Let us look at what the experts say in the following excerpt from the business insider so that we can gain a deeper understanding of the subject and proffer practical solutions:

Inflation is an increase in the prices of goods and services in an economy over a period of time. That means you lose buying power — the same dollar (or whatever currency you use) buys less and is thus worth less. In other words: With inflation, your money doesn't go as far as it used to.

Remember that modern money really has no intrinsic value — it's just paper and ink, or, increasingly, digits on a computer screen. Digital currencies (such as cryptocurrencies, stablecoins, and CBDCs) continue to become increasingly popular and accepted as legitimate forms of payment. Still, crypto and stablecoins are decentralized currencies (aka not issued by the government or federal bank) and are limited. The US has yet to issue centralized bank digital currencies (CBDCs) into the market. Regardless, the value of a currency is measured by two things: What you can buy with it, and how much it can buy.

While it is easier to understand inflation by calculating goods and services, it is typically a broad measure that can be applied across sectors or industries, impacting the entire economy. In fact, one of the primary jobs of the Federal Reserve is to control inflation to an optimum level to encourage spending and investing instead of saving, thereby encouraging economic growth.

One of the best ways to protect yourself against inflation is through investing, as your assets can grow in value as inflation rates rise. You can start investing with the best investment apps or with the best online brokerages. If you are interested in investing in digital assets like crypto or stablecoins, you can check out our picks for the best cryptocurrency exchanges.

What causes inflation? There is a massive economic literature on the causes of inflation, and it is fairly complex. But in short, inflation happens because of supply and demand. Keynesian economists emphasize that demand pressures are most responsible for inflation in the short term. Here are the different causes of inflation:

Demand-pull inflation: When prices rise from an increase in demand throughout an economy, supply remains the same. A moderate amount of demand-pull inflation can spark market competition and may actually be an indicator of a healthy economy.

Cost-push inflation: When supplies are limited (such as from a natural disaster, a struggling economy, or increased production costs), prices rise but supply remains the same.

Built-in inflation: When the prices of goods and services start rising and businesses prepare for continuous inflation at the same rate by upping prices. Workers demand higher wages, which in turn raises the costs of consumer goods and other services.

Example: If apples cost \$0.25 each, one dollar buys four. But say apples become

scarcer or more expensive to grow, and the next year, the grocer prices them at \$0.50 each. Now one dollar buys only two of them. In purchasing-power terms, the dollar has effectively lost half its value (at least as far as apples are concerned).

Other analysts cite another cause of inflation: an increase in the money supply — how much cash, or readily available money, there is in circulation. Whenever there is a plentiful amount of something, that thing tends to be less valuable — cheaper. Indeed, many economists of the monetary school believe this is one of the most important factors in long-term inflation: Too much money sloshing around the supply devalues the currency,



An inflationary N35,000



and it costs more to buy things.

Types of extreme inflation

Hyperinflation: Hyperinflation refers to a period of extremely high, uncontrolled inflation rates, sometimes raising prices by over 50% per month for several months. A "normal" or low inflation rate is typically around 2%.

Hyperinflation can be caused by a triggering event, such as war, civil unrest, or natural disasters. Government deficits and the over-printing of money are some of the most common situations that lead to hyperinflation. As folks recognize the possible threat of future inflation, they spend more in fear that their money will soon be worth less. Demand then increases and prices get ramped up.

A recent example of hyperinflation comes from Venezuela, starting in 2016, as a result of deficit spending and excessive money printing. In February 2019, Venezuela's inflation rate reached an all-time high of over 344,509%. It dropped as low as 114.1% in August 2022 but started rising again in 2023. As of April 2023, it was 436.30%.

Stagflation: Stagflation is a rare event in which rising costs and prices are happening at the same time as a stagnant economy — one suffering from high unemployment and weak production. It can occur when there is a supply shock, or poor fiscal and monetary policies are enacted.

A supply shock is defined as a period of time when the economy's capacity to produce goods and services is reduced. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were supply shocks in labor, goods, and services that greatly

affected the economy.

An example of fiscal and monetary policies sparking stagflation was in the 1970s "Great Inflation" period, which not only proved that stagnation was possible (as many economists at the time deemed it impossible) but also how devastating it was. In 1973 and 1974, the result of a rapid increase in oil prices in the midst of low GDP caused uncontrollable inflation rates. Fed Chairman Arthur Burns then issued an ineffective monetary policy that let inflation rates continue skyrocketing.

The good and bad of inflation: Inflation is certainly a problem when it comes to ready cash that isn't invested. Over time, it'll erode the value of your cash and the funds in your bank account. It's also the enemy of anything that pays a fixed rate of interest or return. But individuals invested in stocks or other assets may actually benefit from inflation. Also, a moderate amount of inflation is normal and can be a sign of a healthy economy.

Advantages of inflation: In general, economists like inflation to occur at a low, steady rate. It indicates a healthy economy: that goods and services are being produced at a growing rate, and that consumers are buying them in increasing amounts, too. In the US, the Federal Reserve targets an average 2% inflation rate over time. If you have invested money in the stock market (or other investing markets), you'll have a better chance of buying low and selling high. On a similar note, businesses may try to "outrun" inflation costs by investing more in research, development, and new technologies.

Low inflation rates can encourage

increased consumer spending, which in turn boosts the economy. Instead of putting away money for a rainy day, people are more motivated to spend and put the money back into the economy. When consumer spending increases, businesses gain more profit and are more likely to invest in development, production, and new technologies. Businesses are also more likely to invest more in their own workers and increase wages to balance out the effects of inflation.

However, it's important to recognize that the economy only benefits from moderate inflation rates. High inflation rates often have extremely negative effects on consumers, businesses, and the economy as a whole.

Disadvantages of inflation: When inflation starts mounting higher and higher, it can become a real problem. It's a problem because it interferes with how the economy works as currency loses its value quickly and the cost of goods skyrockets. Uninvested money loses a lot of its value, especially cash or bonds. Wages can't keep up, so people stop buying. Production then stops or slows, and an economy can tumble into recession.

The problem of where, how, and when new money enters the economy can also significantly hurt the economy. Usually, new money is distributed to certain individuals and businesses in the hope that the money eventually circulates back through the economy and is fairly distributed. But this can take time.

To be continued

SUNDAY FEATURE

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"...This underscores the need for our counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency war to remain a reflection of a whole of society's commitment". Even without the DHQ coming out to restate the views of Lt. Gen. Buratai on counter-insurgency, rational citizens know that fostering national security is everyone's job. It is not something exclusively reserved for the Nigerian military or army troops. Citizens also have a crucial role to play in the war against insecurity.

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INTERNATIONAL

Can Netanyahu survive Hamas's attack on Israel?

Israelis are increasingly aware of government failures that enabled Hamas's attack, but that may not be enough to bring the Israeli prime minister down. NEVE GORDON writes

Hamas's October 7 attack on southern Israel is without doubt of historic proportions and will be remembered for generations to come. The Israeli death toll has reached 1,200 people and the number of people kidnapped and being held in Gaza is estimated at more than 100.

Israelis are realising that Hamas's success is intricately tied to the government's colossal failures. And that of course has brought up the key question of whether Netanyahu and his messianic government can survive the fallout of the brutal attack.

The accusations are beginning to mount, even as it might take months if not years before we fully understand what happened.

Netanyahu's strategy has always been to allow Hamas room for manoeuvre in order to weaken the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah and Palestinian society more generally.

"Those who want to thwart the establishment of a Palestinian state should support the strengthening of Hamas and the transfer of money to Hamas," he stated at a Likud party meeting in March 2019. "This is part of our strategy, to differentiate between the Palestinians in Gaza and the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria."

Following Hamas's attack, this strategic framework has come increasingly under intense fire.

There is also a lot of talk of an "intelligence failure", where Hamas outsmarted Israel's famed Unit 8200, the general secret services – also known as the Shabak – and several other agencies responsible for surveillance.

These intelligence units appear to have been operating under a mistaken colonial paradigm, one that casts Hamas as weak and lacking strategic acumen, leading them to ignore fairly obvious warning signs, such as the military manoeuvres Hamas had been carrying out on Gaza's beach over the past few months. Perhaps the best phrase for this failure is colonial hubris.

Then there is the "preparedness failure". This, too, is the result of colonial hubris. More concretely, it has now come out that the military has been moving battalions away from the border with Gaza to secure Jewish settlers in the West Bank.

As of September, some 22 battalions were spread



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during a meeting in Tel Aviv on October 8, 2023

throughout the region while only two remained near Gaza. In Hebron, for example, 600 to 800 soldiers regularly protect about 800 settlers, while three battalions accompany Jewish "prayer" at Joseph's Tomb in Nablus and Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem.

This past weekend an entire battalion that was supposed to secure the Gaza border was sent to protect Jewish settlers who went to pray in Huwara, the Palestinian town where settlers carried out a pogrom. As one commentator put it, the same battalion cannot simultaneously secure the southern region and a pogrom in the West Bank.

The lack of preparedness also bled into the hours and days that followed Hamas's attack, with military units taking hours before they could reach besieged civilians. The families of those kidnapped feel completely abandoned by the government, while one person living not far from Gaza's border expressed a sentiment increasingly shared by Israelis: "In this war, something cracked. The contract between us and the state had been clear: we guard the border, and the state guards us. We did our part bravely[...] the State of Israel did not fulfil its part."

The right-wing government

and its supporters have already established a defence. "Now," they say, "is not the time to point fingers; now we must unite to defeat the common enemies." Most liberal Zionists have readily adopted this position as well, vehemently criticising anyone who dares to break rank.

A broad unity government appears on the horizon, with former chief of staff and the leader of the opposition political alliance Blue and White, Benny Ganz, publicly indicating that he is willing to enter Netanyahu's government until the fighting abates.

Yair Lapid, the leader of another opposition party, Yesh Atid (There Is Future), has set out strict conditions under which he would be willing to enter such a government. Some say Lapid is now wavering. Netanyahu knows full well that broadening the government will help stabilise his reign.

At the same time, there is little doubt that a defence playbook for the "day after" is being crafted. Netanyahu and his ministers will blame the different intelligence agencies, the pilots and elite military units who have been protesting against his government's judicial overhaul.

They will blame Hamas, Hezbollah, Iran and the Palestinians. They will blame the Supreme Court judges, the media, the army chief of staff and their own defence minister. They will blame the Palestinian citizens of Israel, the anti-Zionist leftists, and the academic staff in Israeli universities. They will also blame the liberal Zionists leading the protest movement.

Netanyahu and his entourage of poodles will spurt their poison and spin the narrative, doing anything and everything possible to secure their seats in power. It is, however, too early to know if they will succeed.

As evidence of the widespread death and destruction comes to light, Israeli public anger will only increase. Thirty-six hours after Hamas's attacks began, Minister of National Security Itamar Ben-Gvir finally appeared on the political scene calling for the complete destruction of Hamas while trying to deflect attention away from the quite apparent governmental failures.

"The State of Israel is experiencing one of the most difficult events in its history. This is not the time for questions, tests and investigations," he said.

A report on his statement in the Walla news outlet garnered

over 1,400 angry comments, many of which expressed outrage and a desire to send Ben-Gvir to jail or to exchange him for the hostages Hamas had taken.

But let there be no mistake: despite the wide chasm between the far-right pro-government and the liberal Zionist camps, there are also areas of broad consensus. Both liberal Zionists and their messianic counterparts believe that Netanyahu has been too timid when dealing with Hamas.

Despite the growing criticism, outcry and fury, there also appears to be an agreement that following a massive aerial attack, Israeli infantry will need to enter Gaza to "reestablish deterrence" and get rid of Hamas once and for all.

Many also agree with Israel's Defense Minister Yoav Gallant who recently revealed that he has ordered "a complete siege on the Gaza Strip. There will be no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed. We are fighting human animals and we will act accordingly."

A desire for violent retribution is the glue that holds Israeli society together at the moment, however tentatively. But this might also be the one key ingredient that Netanyahu needs to stay in power for years to come.

Source: Al Jazeera's

INTERNATIONAL

Libel: Italian journalist guilty

A prominent Italian journalist has been found guilty of libel after insulting Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni in a television interview.

Roberto Saviano used a swear word to describe Ms Meloni while attacking her stance on migration in December 2020.

He has been handed a suspended fine of 1,000 euros (£864).

Though he will only have to pay it if he repeats the offence, campaigners said the verdict sent a "chilling message" about press freedom.

Speaking to reporters outside the court, Mr Saviano said Ms Meloni's government had sought to "intimidate" him for calling out "lies" about migrants, news agency AFP reported. Ms Meloni's lawyer said his words were an "insult", not criticism, accusing him of "excessive, vulgar and aggressive language", the agency added.

The incident happened in a December 2020 television interview, before Ms Meloni became prime minister.

In the interview, Mr Saviano criticised Ms Meloni and fellow right-wing leader Matteo Salvini for their comments on migrant rescue charity vessels.

As opposition leader, Ms Meloni had said that boats



Meloni

carrying rescued migrants ought to be sunk.

The Pen International writers' association had urged the prime minister to drop the case, but Ms Meloni said she saw no reason to, adding that it was up to the judges to decide.

The association said the judgement was an "alarming setback for free speech" and sent a "dangerous warning to writers and journalists across the country".

Mr Saviano's lawyer said he would appeal the verdict.

Under Italian law, some defamation cases can be criminal and carry a custodial sentence up to three years in jail.

Ms Meloni has filed similar lawsuits in the past, including against the editors of Domani newspaper, for alleging she had tried to help an MP from her own party win a government contract to procure face masks during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Earlier this year, it was revealed that she is also suing Placebo singer Brian Molko for defamation, after he called her a fascist and racist during a gig in Turin. Once adopted by the UN General Assembly, the Political Declaration will be regularly monitored for implementation to identify gaps and solutions to accelerate progress, and discussed at the next dedicated UN High-Level Meeting in 2027.

Sylvia Bongo, wife of ousted Gabonese President Ali Bongo, is being held in pre-trial detention on allegations of the embezzlement of public funds, her lawyer says.

She had been under house arrest since the 30 August coup.

But after a long hearing in front of a judge it was decided that she should be detained in jail.

Her lawyer, Francois Zimeray, criticised the decision and is quoted as calling it arbitrary and illegal.

Mrs Bongo is facing charges of money laundering, forgery and the falsification of documents. She has not made any public comment on the charges.

The BBC understands she will appear in court in 10 days' time for a further hearing, where her lawyer can make a case for her release.

The former head of Gabon's cabinet, Brice Laccruche Alihanga, who was jailed four years ago on charges of embezzlement, misappropriation of public funds and money laundering, gave evidence at Mrs Bongo's hearing.

The allegations against her are closely linked to the

Wife of deposed President Bongo detained



Ngeuma

former cabinet chief.

In 2019, the former first lady is alleged to have been behind a major anti-corruption campaign, dubbed Operation Scorpion, which saw several government officials arrested and jailed, including Alihanga, and which some Gabonese described as a witch hunt.

Noureddin Bongo, the son of the deposed president, is also in detention awaiting trial on corruption allegations following his arrest after the coup.

The ousted president, aged 64, had led the oil-rich country since 2009 when he succeeded his father who had been in power for more than 40 years. The family had strong links to France, the former colonial power in Gabon.

The August coup, led by Gen Brice Oligui Ngeuma, was greeted by celebrations at home but has been condemned by regional and continental bodies, as well as France. It came soon after the announcement that Mr Bongo had won disputed elections.

A week after the military takeover, the deposed president was released from house arrest and is free to leave the country, but he has remained in the capital, Libreville.

Gen Nguema has promised that there will be free and fair elections leading to the establishment of a new civilian government, but no timetable has yet been announced.

Israel targets tunnels under Gaza

The leader of Hamas in Gaza has previously claimed that it has 500km of tunnels

Israel says it is striking parts of a secret labyrinth



Netanyahu

of tunnels built underneath the Gaza Strip by Hamas, as it continues to retaliate for the Palestinian Islamist militant group's unprecedented cross-border attack on Saturday.

It is very difficult to assess the size of the network, which Israel has dubbed the "Gaza Metro" because it is believed to stretch beneath a territory that is only 41km (25 miles) long and 10km wide.

Following a conflict in 2021, the IDF said it had destroyed more than 100km of tunnels in air strikes. Hamas meanwhile

claimed that its tunnels stretched 500km and that only 5% were hit. To put those figures into perspective, the London Underground is 400km long and is mostly above ground.

Tunnel construction began in Gaza before Israel withdrew its troops and settlers in 2005.

But it was ramped up after Hamas took control of the Strip two years later, which prompted Israel and Egypt to begin restricting the movement of goods and people in and out for security reasons.

At its peak, almost 2,500 tunnels running underneath the Egyptian border were used to smuggle in commercial goods, fuel and weapons by Hamas and other militant groups.

The smuggling became less important to Gaza after 2010, when Israel began allowing more goods to be imported through its crossings. Egypt later shut the smuggling down by flooding or destroying the tunnels.

Arrest warrant: Putin makes first trip

Kyrgyz people walk past to an electronic panel with photo of Russian President Vladimir Putin shaking hands with Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov, October 11, 2023, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in Kyrgyzstan on Thursday, marking the first foreign visit for the Russian leader this year, Russian news agencies said — and the first trip abroad since he was issued with an arrest warrant by the International Criminal

Court in March.

Russia's foreign ministry was not immediately available for comment.

In other news, Ukraine said it thwarted an overnight attempt by a Russian saboteur group to cross its north-eastern border in the Sumy region, the commander of the Joint Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine said on Thursday.

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18 HOURS AGO International Olympic

Committee suspends Russian Olympic Committee until further notice

President of the Russian Olympic Committee Pozdnyakov attends The Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) meeting at the Russian Olympic Committee Headquarters in Moscow, Russia on October 05, 2023. The Executive Board convened to address matters concerning compensation for athletes unable to participate in international sports competitions during the 2022/2023 period.

The International Olympic Committee, or IOC, suspended the Russian Olympic Committee for breaching the Olympic Charter by violating Ukraine's territorial integrity.

"The Russian Olympic Committee is suspended with immediate effect until further notice," the group wrote in a statement.

A group of Ukrainians demonstrate in front of the European headquarters of

the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on March 29, 2023 in Brussels, Belgium.

Additionally, the IOC wrote that it "reserves the right to decide about the participation of individual neutral athletes with a Russian passport" who are looking to compete in the Olympic Summer Games in Paris next year and the Olympic Winter Games in Milan in 2026.

U.S. sanctions two tankers for carrying overpriced Russian oil

Two tanker owners have been hit with U.S. sanctions for carrying Russian crude oil above the agreed price cap, the U.S. Treasury said in a statement.

One owner is based in Turkey and the other in the United Arab Emirates.

A view from the oil company Tatneft in Tatarstan, Russia on June 04, 2023. Tatneft is one of the largest Russian public companies with a market capitalization of more than 1.1



Putin



Separating fact, fiction from creation of Dolly's dream



"I used to think if I make it big, if I get rich like I was dreaming I might, that I'd love to do something special, to come back home and build a park of my own."

Just about everything in Dolly Parton's Dollywood amusement park circles back to her.

While Nashville is full of honky-tonks and bars emblazoned with the names of country stars, from Jason Aldean and Dierks Bentley to Miranda Lambert and Kid Rock, no other hit-making celebrity has been audacious enough to create



a theme park where they are the theme.

But ask most visitors to her namesake Dollywood amusement park and they will repeat the myth that Parton built Dollywood from the ground up to put her hometown of Pigeon Forge, Tenn., on the map.

The truth, however, is a lot more nuanced.

A theme park has occupied the land where Dollywood now stands since 1961. Before Dollywood came to be, three different parks stood on the site. They got bigger and better with each iteration and were already successful by the time Parton arrived on the scene.

A decade before Parton became involved, the park was purchased by Jack and Pete Herschend. The brothers were experienced amusement-park operators who already owned the Ozark-themed Silver Dollar City in Branson, Mo. Their new park, Silver Dollar City, Tenn. was a success. But, Jack and Pete found an opportunity to transform the park once again — while avoiding competition — when Parton came knocking.

In a 1982 interview with Barbara Walters, Parton shared her "big dream" of opening a "mountain Disneyland... a Smoky Mountain fairyland" theme park in Pigeon Forge. Four years later, that dream became a reality, when Dollywood opened its doors to visitors.

Musician Dolly Parton attends the Opening Weekend Celebration of Dollywood on April 24, 1993 at Dollywood in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. (Photo by Ron Galella, Ltd./Ron Galella Collection via Getty Images)

Dolly Parton at Dollywood on April 24, 1993 at in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. (Ron Galella, Ltd./Ron Galella Collection via Getty Images) (Ron Galella,

Continued on page 26

Eddie Murphy's 'Candy Cane Lane' heads to Prime Video

COMEDIAN Eddie Murphy stars in his first holiday comedy film as he brings to our screens the lead character in Candy Cane Lane.

Murphy goes on an adventure in this holiday drama about a man on a mission to win his neighbourhood's annual Christmas home decoration contest.

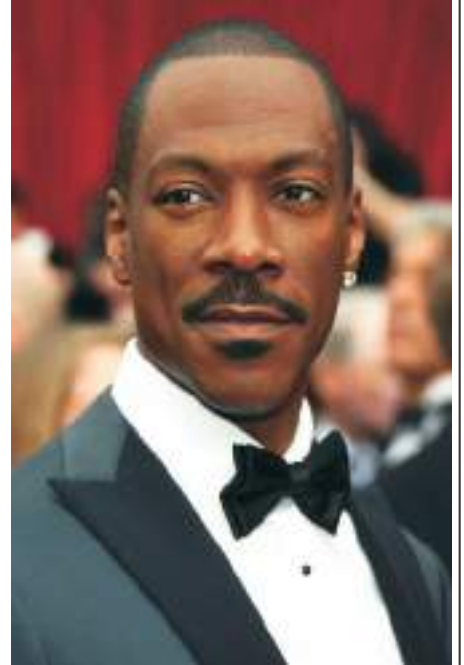
After a while he makes a deal with a mischievous elf named Pepper (Jillian Bell) to better his chances of winning. She casts a magic spell that brings the 12 Days of Christmas to life, which wreaks havoc on the whole town. On the verge of ruining the festive season for his family, his wife Carol (Tracee Ellis Ross), and their three children race against the clock to break Pepper's spell, battle deviously magical characters, and save Christmas for everyone.

The story is said to be inspired by Younger's own holiday experiences in an actual location called Candy Cane Lane in El Segundo, California.

Directed by Reginald Hudlin, other cast includes Thaddeus J. Mixson, Ken Marino, Nick Offerman, Robin Thede, Chris Redd, Geneya Walton, Madison Thomas, Anjelah Johnson-Reyes, Lombardo Boyar, D.C. Young Fly, Danielle Pinnoch, Timothy Simons, Riki Lindhome and Stephen Tobolowsky.

Produced by Brian Grazer, Murphy, Karen Lunde, and Charisse Hewitt-Webster, the movie will debut on December 1, 2023, via the Prime Video platform.

Fans and viewers can also expect an official teaser debut on Thursday, October 12, 2023, which will reveal more about what's to come.



Tupac was my soulmate - Pinkett reveals

AMERICAN actress, Jada Pinkett Smith has confirmed that late rapper, Tupac Shakur was her soulmate.

The mother of two referred to the rapper as someone with whom she had a "soulmate friendship," stressing that there was no romantic "chemistry" between them.

Pinkett said, "Tupac was my soulmate... If there's such a thing as past life, I definitely think Pac and I have travelled a few together.

It just was impossible for us to take it beyond the friendship level. There was no chemistry between us. What we had was friendship love chemistry, trust me.



I wish I can get people to understand the repelling nature. It was almost like God made us that way like, 'Y'all gonna be a dynamic duo. Y'all not going to be able to get together.' Because that wasn't the purpose."

Recall that Pinkett recently disclosed in a clip from her forthcoming NBC News primetime special with Hoda Kotb that she and her husband, Will Smith have been separated since 2016.

Continued on page 26

THE WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Relationship

How to tell if a job offer is a scam

By **GAYLE SATO**

GETTING a job offer is exciting, but how do you know the job is legitimate? Employment scams linked to sketchy job offers ensnare an estimated 14 million people each year, according to the Better Business Bureau, resulting in more than \$2 billion in losses.

Your new job offer may be a scam if it requires money or personal identifying information up front, seems too good to be true, has you doing suspicious work or pays you with a fake check.

How could this happen to you? Read on. How do employment scams work? Job scams play on your eagerness to work. They may try to get you to hand over money upfront for training or equipment, share personally identifiable information like your Social Security or driver's license number, work in exchange for a fake check (or a check that never arrives) or do illicit work like "reshipping" products purchased with stolen credit card numbers.

Some employment scams are carefully conducted in a way that makes them look real. For instance, fake jobs may be posted side by side with a company's real jobs on job search sites. Scammers may even go as far as faking the identities of real company employees in communications. But even if something feels off, the temptation of a well-paying job can be hard to resist. Roughly 76% of employment scam victims in the BBB's study said they suspected something was wrong but pursued the job anyway. If your gut tells you a job offer is shady, follow your intuition. When you're evaluating a job offer, consider these steps:

Check your sources
If you find a job posting that interests you or if a job offer arrives from out of the blue, search the company online and contact them directly to confirm that both the recruiter and the job listing are legitimate. Search the company's name and "scam," then see what



comes up.
Don't skip the Interview
Employment scams often make you feel like you're a shoo-in for a job posting, and may even offer you a position with little or no time spent interviewing you to learn your qualifications. Even in a tight job market, however, employers want to know your background and suitability for a job. Use the interview (and how it's conducted) to size up the employer. Beware of recruiters who want to communicate only via messaging apps and those who sound like they're trying to sell you on the job. Emails that come

from Gmail or other generic providers and not the company's web domain are another red flag.
Take your time
It's customary for a job applicant to take 24 hours to think about a job offer. Being pressured to accept a job on the spot isn't a good sign. If the recruiter's tactics are aggressive or make you uncomfortable, that's even worse.

Pay Nothing
An employer should not require you to pay for training, equipment, directories or inventory to secure a job. Do not wire funds, provide credit card numbers or share bank account information. If you accept a job but feel uneasy sharing bank information for direct deposits, consider opening a separate bank account just to receive payments from your new job as a precaution.

Don't deposit a suspicious check
Your new employer sends you a big check and tells you to deposit it into your personal account, keep part of it for your wages and send the remainder along to another person. The check will bounce, your bank will reverse your deposit and you'll be out the money you sent. Real companies don't pay their employees this way.

Remain skeptical
Is the job description so vague that it seems like anyone would qualify? Are they offering you twice what you'd expect to be paid for this position? If a job seems too good to be true, it might be.

Beware of scammy job titles
In the BBB study, 65% of scam job



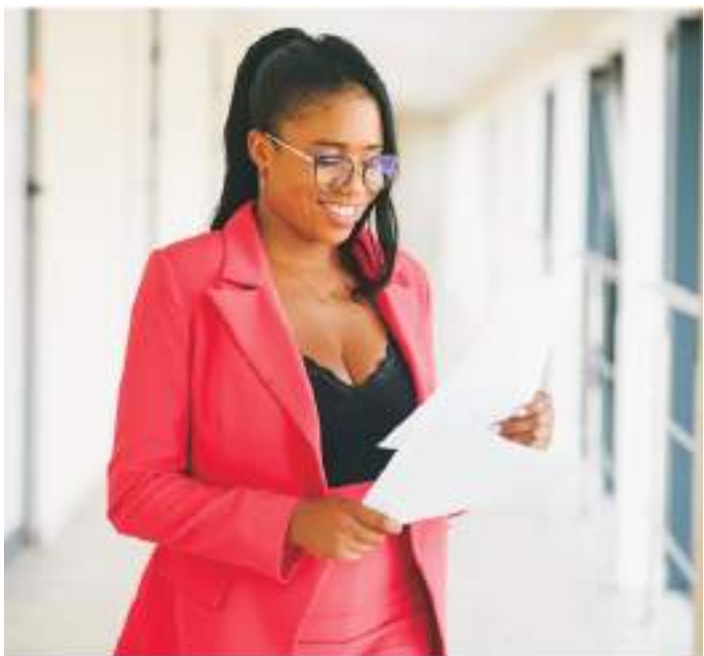
offers were for "warehouse redistribution coordinators" or similar jobs that amounted to reshipping stolen goods. Mystery shopper and other work-from-home positions are also frequent bait in these types of scams.

What do you do if you've been scammed? Have you already encountered a job scam? Here are steps you may want to take, depending on how much information or money you've shared. Close your bank account. If your "employer" has your bank account or payment card information, contact your bank immediately. Ask if they can reverse any payments you've made. You may need to close your account to prevent further access. Notify the authorities. File a report with the Federal Trade Commission, the BBB Scam Tracker and/or your local FBI field office or the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center.

Contact job search sites or social media network support. Report fake job postings or scam employers to

any job sites or social media platforms the scammers used to find you. If the scammer was pretending to represent a legitimate company, contact them as well. Going forward, make sure your profile information and resume don't reveal personal information such as your date of birth or full home address. Protect your identity. Study up on what to do if you've been a target of identity theft. Identity thieves may try to open new credit accounts or file fake tax returns in your name. Filing a fraud alert with and considering a security freeze or identity theft protection may help protect you from identity fraud.

Move on to your next real job. In the US, the FBI reports that the average reported loss from an employment scam is \$3,000, and that doesn't include the potential damage to credit scores, lost time or stress. Don't overlook warning signs when a new job offer smells like trouble. Though it can be difficult to pass up any opportunity, doing so in this case brings you one step closer to the real thing.



EVE'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Relationship

Obvious signs he doesn't like you

By **ANITA OGEAUGUST**

WE'VE all been there. That tingling feeling when we meet someone new, the flutter in the stomach, and the countless hours spent wondering, "Does he like me?"

It's a universal question that has crossed almost everyone's mind at some point. It's simple, really. Sometimes we meet people and just can't tell what's going on in their heads. Are they into us? Are we just friends? Or are we reading too much into things?

The truth is, while everyone is different, there are some signs that are pretty clear indicators. These aren't based on grand gestures like in the movies, but on everyday behaviors. And when it comes to matters of the heart, sometimes the subtle signals are the most telling. So, if you've been racking your brain trying to figure out his feelings, you're in the right place. This article will walk you through some of the most obvious signs that he might just not be that into you.

He's distant and unresponsive

Picture this: you send him a message and the waiting game begins. Hours or even days go by, and his response is a simple, nonchalant "okay" or "cool." It feels as though he's not eager to keep the conversation going, and that's because he probably isn't. We all have busy moments, but when someone genuinely likes you, they'll find a way to make time. Communication is a two-way street, and if he's frequently distant, it's a glaring sign. Now, don't mistake this for him having a busy day at work or being caught up with personal matters. We're talking about a consistent pattern. You know that excitement you feel when someone you're interested in messages you? If he felt the same, he'd display more enthusiasm in his responses. And this doesn't just apply to texting or calling. If he's often distant or aloof when you're together, his body language pushing you away rather than pulling you closer, it's a clear indicator. Physical and emotional distance often go hand in hand, and both speak volumes about his feelings.

He's avoiding plans with you

You're ready for a movie night or maybe a dinner out. Every time you suggest something, though, there's an excuse. Another commitment, a sudden plan, or just feeling "tired." When someone's into you, they'll leap at the opportunity to spend time together. But when they're not? Making plans feels like pulling teeth. Now, don't get me wrong. Everyone has moments where they genuinely can't hang out. But there's a difference between the occasional "I can't today" and the ever-familiar "maybe next time." Pay attention to these patterns. The frequency of your meet-ups matters as well. When he always seems to be available for group activities but never for one-on-one time, it's a tell-tale sign. He might be trying to dilute the intimacy of personal moments by staying within the comfort of group dynamics.

He doesn't initiate conversations

Obvious signs he's not interested in you

You're the one always reaching out. Be it a hello, a plan, or even a simple meme share, it's always you making the first move. A guy who's interested in you will ensure that he's on your radar, popping into your chats or calling just to hear your voice. It's a



beautiful feeling when two people are equally excited about each other, right? That equilibrium ensures that the relationship or friendship remains lively and engaging.

But if you're the one constantly putting in all the effort, it can feel exhausting and unreciprocated.

Imagine if you didn't message him for a week. Would he notice? Would he reach out, or would there just be silence? If it's the latter, it's worth reconsidering where you stand in his life.

Friends haven't heard about you

You've met his friends, perhaps once or twice, but they seem to have no idea about your connection with him. When someone is smitten, their friends often know. They've heard the stories, seen the photos, or at the very least, know your name. Being in the dark means he hasn't felt the need or desire to talk about you. Moreover, if he avoids introducing you to his close friends or family, it's another hint.

Introductions often signify a certain degree of seriousness or commitment. If he's hesitant about that, it reveals a lot about his intentions and feelings.

Conversations lack depth

You talk, sure, but it's all surface-level. The weather, that new movie, a random meme—never about dreams, fears, or what makes you both tick.

Deep conversations forge connections, and if he's avoiding them, he might be maintaining a boundary. Without depth, a relationship or friendship can't flourish. These deeper moments reveal vulnerabilities, hopes, and perspectives. They build trust and intimacy, solidifying the bond between two people. If he always steers the conversation to shallow waters, never diving into anything profound, it may be because he doesn't envision a long-term or meaningful connection.

He's flirtatious with others

You notice that he's equally, if not more, flirtatious with others as he is with you. It feels as though you're not special in any way, just another name on a list. When someone truly likes you, there's an exclusivity to their affection, making you feel unique. Sure, some people have flirtatious personalities. They might be naturally charming or affectionate with many. But there's a difference between being friendly and being romantically interested. When you're special to someone, there's a certain possessiveness, even subtly. They might hold your gaze longer or have a different tone when talking to you.

He mentions other romantic interests

He talks about his latest crush, his date last weekend, or reminisces

it's time to prioritize self-care. Spend time with friends and family, dive into activities that make you happy, and focus on personal growth. Every experience, including unrequited feelings, offers a lesson. Take this time to reflect, learn, and grow stronger, ensuring that when the right person comes along, you're in the best place emotionally and mentally.

How can you be sure he's not interested?

While everyone expresses their feelings differently, certain signs are universal indicators of disinterest. Often, it's a mix of verbal cues, body language, and behavior patterns. For instance, if he rarely initiates conversations, avoids spending quality time with you, or frequently discusses other romantic interests, it's a strong hint. Consistent indifference is another telltale sign. However, the most straightforward approach is direct communication. If you're in doubt, it might be helpful to have an open conversation about your feelings and concerns.

This can clear up any misunderstandings and provide clarity. While it might be nerve-racking to face the situation head-on, it's often the best way to get a definitive answer. Is it worth confronting him about his feelings?

Confrontation might sound intense, but think of it more as open communication. If you're feeling uncertain or confused about where you stand with someone, discussing it can be beneficial. It can provide clarity, closure, and help both parties understand each other's perspectives. By talking, you ensure that you're not building narratives in your head based on assumptions.

That being said, approach the conversation with an open mind and heart. Instead of making it about seeking validation, frame it as seeking understanding. Can feelings change over time? Feelings are ever-evolving. Someone who might not have been interested in a romantic relationship at one point might develop feelings later on. Life events, personal growth, and shared experiences can change one's perspective and feelings toward another person.

Sometimes, as two people get to know each other better, bonds strengthen, and perceptions shift. However, banking on someone's feelings to change can lead to disappointment. It's always best to focus on personal growth and happiness rather than waiting in hope. If feelings do evolve, they'll do so naturally, and if not, you'll be in a better place, having focused on your well-being.

Remember, not every someone who is into you doesn't want you to think about them with others; they want to be the center of your romantic world. There's a nuance here. Friends share dating tales or seek advice. But there's a boundary, a line that isn't crossed when there's romantic interest involved.

His readiness to frequently bring up other romantic interests can be his way of indirectly communicating where you stand.

Even more, it sets a certain dynamic. You become the confidante, the friend he shares his romantic escapades with. This firmly places you in a non-romantic category, showing that he doesn't view the relationship progressing past friendship.

What do you do when you realize a guy doesn't like you?

Realizing someone doesn't share the same feelings can be tough. First, remember that everyone has their preferences and reasons. It's not a reflection of your worth or your qualities. It's simply a matter of personal feelings and compatibility. Instead of seeing it as a rejection of who you are, view it as a redirection to something or someone better suited for you.

Once you come to this realization,





Reality Bites

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How not to be fooled by a fake Paternity Test

THROUGHOUT the past decade, numerous stories have been published in the news about false paternity test results which have led to serious consequences for both parents and their children.

In some cases, these fake paternity test results are due to one party actively trying to falsify the results while others are due to mistakes performed by untrained collectors at unaccredited laboratories.

This situation could happen to anyone. If you want to avoid falling for misleading claims, just

follow these tips and consider getting a paternity test from Test Smartly Labs – a leading Testing Center for the people of Kansas.

How can DNA Paternity Test Results be faked? DNA Paternity test results can be faked in a variety of ways if specific protocols are not followed in the collection and transportation of samples. Some examples of how DNA test results can be faked include via the substitution of the DNA of the individual being tested with someone else's DNA and the purposeful contamination of the DNA specimen or testing kit.

In addition, fake paternity test

reports can also be purchased in order to trick individuals into thinking that a valid paternity test has been conducted. So how do you spot a fake DNA Paternity Test Results? When examining a fake paternity test report, there are specific indicators that differentiate a valid paternity test report from a fake report.

Key indicators of a fake paternity test report include:

Expressions of certainty
 Valid paternity test reports do not ever confirm paternity at 100% and always leave room for the possibility of error or coincidence. Even if paternity is almost certain, valid paternity test results will report a probability of paternity at 99.99999...%.

No Accreditation or Contact Information:

Valid paternity test reports will contain accreditation information verifying that the laboratory conducting the test has been approved to do so. The American Association of Blood Banks (AABB) is the organization in the United States that sets the standards for DNA testing. Contact information for the laboratory should also be provided to allow you to discuss and interpret the results with a trained professional.

Grammar and spelling mistakes
 Fake paternity test reports may include grammar and spelling



mistakes. Looking for these mistakes can be a simple way to ensure that your paternity test report is real, and testing was conducted at an accredited lab that you can trust!

What you can do to ensure accurate Paternity Testing:

As soon as you get the news that you might be the father of a child, make sure to get a DNA test and be sure that you are a part of the process. Agree on the testing facility, and go together to get the test done, this way you can be sure it actually goes through correctly. Provide your contact information so that you can get the results directly.

When worse comes to worst, if the child's mother has claimed

you are the father, but you don't believe it and the mother is fighting against a paternity test, you may have to go through the courts. Getting a court order is not an ideal choice but in the long run, it can save you time, money, and heartache in the future. Are DNA test results reliable? If you entrust your paternity testing needs to a professional testing, where DNA testing results are reliable. The Lab Technicians are to follow strict identification, collection, and transport protocols which ensure that your DNA sample remains uncontaminated and your results are accurate and confidential. Source: Testsmartlylabs.com



EYE'S WORLD

With *Henrietta Gonzuk*

Health

The dangers of virtual sex

JUST like everything else, virtual sex in moderation is healthy and blissful. But, when you overindulge in it, major repercussions can follow. Is virtual sex as good as the real thing? Nikita Bhardwaj writes.

Till date, sex is a term that comes with its own set of taboos. The truth is that sex comes with a lot of health benefits and should be talked about to raise awareness. From boosting your mood to relieving pain, sex can fix a lot of troubles because it results in the secretion of a 'happy hormone' called dopamine.

Technology has revolutionized this domain as well and virtual sex has become quite common. Porn, chat room sex, etc. are the multiple ways to explore the territory of virtual sex. Do you know that indulging in cybersex too often can take away from the real deal? You might face intimacy issues and can also fall prey to major physical and mental health disorders.

"Virtual sex is actually fairly safe, especially during the ongoing pandemic when couples and singles are living in isolation. In addition, virtual sex is absolutely fine for those who are experienced in real sex because they know how the entire process falls into place. But, when it comes to a first-timer, it can be really problematic because it can malign the idea of sex in their heads," explained Dr Rahul Khemani, a psychiatrist from Wockhardt Hospital, Mumbai. Here are 5 ways in which virtual sex can be harmful to your mental and physical health:

1. It can lead to sexual dysfunction

According to a study published in the Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy, indulging in virtual sex too often is a major cause behind genital disorders. In men, it has increased the risk of premature



ejaculation and erectile dysfunction. In women, it can lead to delayed orgasm or the inability to experience an orgasm.

2. It leads to unrealistic expectations: Porn and real sex are very different. But, when you expose yourself to porn too often and are unable to match that level, it creates a discrepancy in

performance as well. "The problem arises when you encounter sex in the real world. When you're preoccupied with what you've seen in the virtual world, you end up not focusing on the act. It becomes difficult to feel the sense of satisfaction that leads to problems like performance anxiety," said Dr Khemani.

3. It causes intimacy issues: When virtual sex is on your mind, you want to indulge in it at every opportunity you get. This cuts short the time that you spend with your family or partner. The bigger problem is that virtual sex seems to be replacing real sex. Physical touch, which is important for bonding, is missing.

"In my experience, I've seen people divorcing their partners as their idea of sex has been distorted due to virtual sex. Basically, they feel unsatisfied," said Dr Khemani.

4. It can also lead to mood disorders:

"Virtual sex sets the wrong expectations in a person's head. The problem starts when people aren't able to perform the way they have seen others do online. This leads to disappointment. The person can become irritable, anxious, and even aggressive," explained Dr Khemani.

5. It can affect your sleep: When this indulgence turns into an

addiction, it can affect your sleep, revealed Dr Khemani. It becomes a vicious circle. When a person spends more time watching porn or in chat rooms, they compromise on their sleep. Sleep deprivation causes reduced concentration and irritability.

"Virtual sex is fine when it doesn't

affect your day-to-day work. When it becomes an obsession, it can lead to many problems and can wreck your entire life. So, be vigilant," he concluded, is great for a release of all that sexual energy but overindulgence can have some grave harms.



BUSINESS WORLD

Agenda to ending hunger and climate crisis in Africa

Therefore, meet! The goal of all men is to have the warm reception of well-prepared food on their table and perhaps have drinkable water to push it. All men desire to have their fork and knife engaging in brawls in competition for the inviting delicacies. SAMUEL OLOMU writes.



SADLY, the world's food system is in shambles. One in ten people is undernourished. One in four is overweight; at least one in five Africans goes to bed hungry. And according to statistics, more than one-third of the world's population cannot afford a healthy diet.

This begs the question, what then is the effect of climate change on food security? And how can taking food actions mitigate the climate crisis?

This essay shall however paint a vivid picture of food production and its impact on climate change and shall comprehensively enunciate my six actionable agenda on how I will contribute to ameliorating the menace of food non-availability and climate sustainability in my immediate community, in Africa, and in the global space.

Read also: Democracy's survival: Africa's path forward

Climate change affects everything from the smallest of bugs to the biggest of whales including us, humans. It is one of the greatest challenges of our era and its impact will affect how and where we produce our food. This, in turn, will reduce the level of food access and availability thereby creating more hunger on the planet.

As humans, we live on food to survive and the ways we produce these foods contribute to climate change. Yet, we won't stop eating. Today, 60% of the Earth's land surface is used for agricultural purposes. Also, food production is

responsible for about 30% of the greenhouse gasses contributing to climate change. In perspective, there is a need to connect the dots between climate change and the world food system.

The UN Food Systems Summit recognized the importance of food systems for global climate discussions and solutions, marking an important shift to put food systems at the center of global discussions on climate change impacts and solutions. But agriculture and food systems still receive insufficient attention and funding to address the crisis.

In a similar vein, emission reductions from food production have so far received less attention in GHG mitigation policies than those from energy, transport, and other industrial sectors. Consequently, emissions from agriculture could become the dominant source of global emissions.

ng the Paris Agreement's targets to limit global temperature increases to 1.5°C or well below 2°C, will be impossible without an intensified involvement of the agricultural sector. Essentially, the actualization of the Paris Agreement – which of course is a climate-driven policy – is not solely dependent on the energy sector as it appears; the contribution of the agricultural sector is as much imperative.

As such, the global food system needs a revamp – in policies and institutions as well as on social, business, and, technology fronts. Invariably, what we eat and the way

we grow, produce, and process our food have a huge impact not only on our health but also on our ecosystem; as such there is a need to take necessary precautions against the effect of some of our actions and connect the dots where and when necessary.

Ending hunger is the greatest challenge of our time. It is not about supply, the problem is access and availability, both of which are disrupted by things like extreme weather, food waste, drought, and – worst of all – conflict. However, questions that knock for answers include; how can we regulate the climate crisis in a way to stabilize food production? And how can we mitigate the environmental negatives that create the problem of access and availability to food production?

As recommendations, I have outlined some of my actionable agendas on how I will take contributory actions to mitigate the climate crisis and at the same time motivate and mobilize people, creatively and innovatively, to care for the environment. My actionable agenda is what I call the "CRIDIR Agenda".

Create comprehensive information-based systems particular to human and ecological dimensions. Agreeably, ICT is a very formidable tool to combat climate change and mitigate its effects. ICT makes available vital information on the changing environment to the mass population who need information and education to help sustain basic needs such as food and water. Ideally, this

agenda could be achieved through green technologies such as mobile devices and base stations powered by solar energy. Hereunder are my actionable agenda:

A. Since information is cardinal to knowledge, I would create a climate education platform where through leveraging several social media platforms, I would mobilize a wider audience of more than 15,000 on the importance of taking necessary actions to save our planet while also tilting towards ending hunger in Africa.

B. I will build an incentive-based system where innovative and creative ideas aimed at climate actions will be appreciated. This can be in the form of various writing and arts competitions or contests.

Integrate food security and sustainable agriculture into global and national policies.

A. As part of my actionable plans, I will develop platforms at global, regional, and national levels for coherent dialogue and policy action related to climate change, agriculture, crisis response, and food security. These include fostering local and regional-level coalitions and partnerships for food security and building resilience, particularly in areas most vulnerable to climate shocks.

Develop programs and policies to assist populations and sectors that are most vulnerable to climate change and food insecurity.

To assist populations and sectors that are most vulnerable to climate change and food insecurity below is

my actionable agenda:

In a bid to eliminate food loss and waste, I will:

A. As part of my actionable agenda, preach the transformation of by-products into useful agricultural products. Currently, less than 2% of valuable nutrients in food by-products and waste are recycled, and most of them end up in landfills where they are left to rot and produce greenhouse gasses, or else be incinerated. I will on the other hand motivate people to tap into the endless opportunities for turning this "waste" into useful products, which can drive innovation and create sustainable jobs.

Sustainably intensify agricultural production while also reducing Greenhouse gas emissions and other negative environmental impacts of agriculture.

Agriculture is central to the climate crisis. While essential to human survival, it contributes to greenhouse emissions that pose a dire threat to humanity's future. Climate change has reduced global agriculture productivity by 21% since 1961, according to a recent study by Nature and climate change.

To the bottom line, the cut-and-dried dictum of Lord Denning is hereby invoked, when the erudite jurist remarks; "If we never do that which has not been done before, we shall never get anywhere". On this center-pin, this essay concludes by reiterating that a cry for food security and availability is a cry for climate sustainability.

Source: *Businessday*

BUSINESS WORLD

FG awards first oil exploration license under PIA

THE Federal Government has granted a Petroleum Exploration Licence to TGS-PetroData Offshore Services Limited, which is the first of such licence to be issued under the Petroleum Industry Act 2021.

It said the licence, which was granted by the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Commission, was in compliance with the provisions of Section 71 (1) – (10) of the PIA.

It also announced, recently, that Nigeria's oil drilling rigs had increased from 10 in 2022, to 31 in August this year, a development that gave rise to increased crude oil output in September, as exclusively reported by The PUNCH on Thursday.

The Chief Executive, NUPRC, Gbenga Komolafe, said the Petroleum Exploration Licence was under the licence agreement which the commission and TGS-PD executed for a geophysical survey project.

"Without data, reserves cannot be auctioned for



Ekpo

development and revenue attraction. Data acquired under the PEL is not proprietary but speculative/multi-client survey data acquired in partnership with the NUPRC.

"The licence therefore authorises TGS-PetroData Offshore to carry out non-exclusive petroleum exploration operations on a multi-client basis within the licensed area and permits the use of the acquired 3D

seismic and gravity data by exploration companies," Komolafe stated.

On the rise in Nigeria's rigs count, the NUPRC boss noted that in the years preceding the enactment of the PIA, investments in the Nigerian oil and gas industry declined mostly due to regulatory uncertainty, de-funding of fossil fuel development occasioned by energy transition and the global call for decarbonisation.

CBN restates commitment to single FX market

THE Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has restated its commitment to boost liquidity in forex Market.

This was contained in a report signed by the CBN Director, Corporate Communications, Isa AbdulMumin recently, that the apex bank will continue to promote orderliness and professional conduct by all participants in the Nigerian Foreign Exchange Market to ensure market forces determine exchange rates on a Willing Buyer – Willing Seller principle.

CBN reiterates that the prevailing Foreign Exchange (FX) rates should be referenced from platforms such as the CBN website, FMDQ, and other recognised or appointed trading systems to promote price discovery, transparency, and credibility in the FX rates.

"As part of its responsibility to ensure price stability, the CBN will boost liquidity in the Nigerian Foreign Exchange Market by interventions from time to time. As market liquidity improves, these CBN interventions will gradually decrease.

The report in part read, "Importers of all the 43 items previously restricted by the 2015 Circular referenced TED/FEM/FPC/GEN/01/010

and its addendums are now allowed to purchase foreign exchange in the Nigerian Foreign Exchange Market".

It further assured it's commitment to

accelerating efforts to clear the FX backlog with existing participants and will continue dialogue with stakeholders to address the issue.

While urging participants and the general public to

The Central Bank of Nigeria has said it is raising dollar supply in the foreign exchange market, just as it also lifted the ban on 43 items that were previously not qualified for forex at the official market.

The decision came after the naira tumbled to 1,050/\$ at the parallel market recently, following pressure from international organisations and experts.

It has been noted earlier that despite unifying exchange rates, the CBN had in June said that the status quo remained on the 43 non-eligible items banned from the forex market introduced under the former governor, Godwin Emefiele.

Nigerians imported not less than nine items worth N18.12tn from the forex ban list of the CBN between 2016 and 2022.

According to an analysis of Nigerian Foreign Trade reports of the National Bureau of Statistics from 2016 to 2022, items such as crude palm oil, vegetable products, animal products, meat, vegetable fats and oil, steel products, rubber, plastic, clothes, and textiles were imported from various countries.

ensure compliance of the above, the apex bank assured that one of its goals is the attainment of a single FX market. "Consultation is ongoing with market participants to achieve this goal", it added.

CBN raises dollar supply, lifts ban on 42 items



Cardoso

In a different report, it is stated that despite the unavailability of forex for banned items by CBN, Nigerians imported five items worth N543bn in the first quarter of 2023.

However, different economic experts and organisations have repeatedly advised the CBN to remove the forex restrictions.

Earlier in the week, Citigroup said that the restrictions placed on foreign exchange provisions for 43 items by the CBN must go if the country was to fix the challenges plaguing the forex market.

This was revealed in the

CEEMEA Frontier Credit Market Commentary written by credit analyst, Ayso van Eysinga, following a trip to Nigeria.

In his notes, Van Eysinga said that apart from clearing the backlog of forex demand, there was a need to remove restrictions from the 43 items.

Also, in its Nigeria Development Update (June 2023), the World Bank advised the CBN to end its forex restriction policy. It said this would complement moves to reduce inflation through a sequenced and coordinated mix of monetary, fiscal and trade plans.

NCC restores regulatory services to Globacom

THE Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) has restored regulatory services to one of its licensees, Globacom Limited after it successfully cleared its outstanding debt obligations to the

Commission for unpaid Spectrum Fees, Numbering Fees and Annual Operating Levy (AOL).

This was contained in a statement by Director, Public Affairs of NCC Reuben Muoka

According to the statement, the Commission has also stepped down planned enforcement action against Globacom over its breach of extant regulations by failing to pay its debts

despite several demand notices.

"The Commission had temporarily withdrawn the suspension of regulatory services to Globacom in a letter dated May 22, 2023, titled "Re: Continuous Breach of Commission's

Laws and Regulations.

"The suspension of regulatory services to Globacom was automatically reinstated after it failed to meet the conditions for the earlier withdrawal," it said.

Africa should maximise benefits of gas resources

Africa should maximise the benefits of its gas resources to the continent with minimal risks. A blend of domestic, regional, and international supply of the resource is required to build roadmaps for a balanced gas monetisation strategy.

The Chief Executive Officer, Seplat Energy Plc, Mr. Roger Brown said this at the ongoing Africa Oil Week (AOW) in Cape Town whilst speaking on a panel session dubbed "Monetising Africa's Gas in the Next 7 to 10 Years."

"A blend of domestic utilisation, regional use and export of gas from Africa will maximise the benefits of gas to the continent with minimal



Brown

risks. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals also identified access to power as one of the key goals," Brown said.

With significant part of African nations still lacking access to electricity, the Seplat Energy CEO advocated the importance for African nations to develop the Continent's abundant gas resources to promote domestic access to clean power, which will double to further the drive towards decarbonization.

He added: "Understanding of the current and potential

domestic gas demands will underpin the roadmaps. On a regional scale, the nations of Africa must also put in place the necessary infrastructures to transport and distribute gas within the region, ensuring the availability of affordable and reliable gas supplies to African nations.

"This will also help to promote intra-African trade, developments, and improved regional cooperation. Gas exports to the international gas markets will help the nations to earn foreign

– **Seplat CEO**

exchange inflows to support their developmental needs."

Also speaking on panel session themed "The Energy Industry Value Proposition – Amplification of the 'S' in ESG", the Director External Affairs & Sustainability at Seplat Energy, Chioma Afe, said in driving a sustainable African continent, social issues around internal and external stakeholder management must be holistically addressed by operators or businesses in the energy space.

ENTREPRENEUR WATCH

WITH CELESTINE D. ATTSAR

Providing MSMEs with digital financial solutions to grow

Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) are the lifeblood of Nigeria's economy, contributing significantly to employment, innovation, and economic growth. Nigeria is home to over 36.9 million MSMEs, comprising 96.7% of all businesses in Nigeria. However, these businesses need relevant, affordable, and accessible digital financial solutions for them to reach their full potential and drive the country's development. The time has come for Nigeria to recognize the transformative power of these solutions and the enormous impact they can have on the growth of MSMEs and the overall economy Ebehijie Momoh writes.



A recent Mastercard study, 'The Digital SME: How Are Small and Medium Enterprises in the Middle East and Africa Embracing a Digital Future?' provides valuable insights into the evolving landscape of MSMEs in the Middle East and Africa (MEA), including Nigeria. The fact that MSMEs are aware of the many advantages of digitization is one of the study's most compelling findings. For Nigerian MSMEs, digitalization is a useful tool that can improve daily operations, spur development, and promote financial inclusion.

MSMEs need affordable, easily accessible digital solutions

MSMEs must have access to and be able to afford digital financial solutions to benefit from them. Previously, MSMEs had restricted access to financial services however the introduction of digital financial solutions has removed these restrictions, with even the most remote MSMEs now having access to financial services.

We take great pride in our active support for initiatives in Nigeria aimed at fostering financial inclusion. Through strategic partnerships with local banks, we have made digital payments more affordable and accessible for MSMEs, even in remote areas.

Our recent collaboration with First City Monument Bank (FCMB) and Netplus introduces a game-changing contactless payment solution. Now, merchants can accept payments with their Android smartphones or tablets, eliminating the need for separate hardware Point-of-Sale (POS) devices. This innovation simplifies business transactions, reduces costs, and empowers businesses across Nigeria. Tap on Phone works by enabling the device's Near Field Communication (NFC) capabilities, allowing it to communicate with a customer's contactless payment card. The customer simply taps their card on the merchant's smartphone or tablet, and the payment is processed through the Mastercard network.

We need to work together to create a bigger impact

To make these digital financial solutions a reality for MSMEs, collaboration and innovation are key. Financial institutions, fintech companies, and regulators must work together to create an enabling environment that fosters innovation and competition in the digital financial space.

Collaboration and innovation are at the heart of Mastercard's approach to empowering MSMEs in Nigeria. We have partnered with local fintech startups and

telcos to harness innovative technologies and provide cutting-edge digital financial solutions. These collaborations have led to the development of innovative payment systems and financial management tools that cater specifically to the needs of Nigerian MSMEs.

We have opened access to digital financial services on a large scale partnering with telcos. We are leading the way in a rapidly evolving mobile money market, working closely with telcos and Mobile Network Operators (MNOs), retailers and e-tailers, and traditional and non-traditional financial institutions to enable financial access for millions of consumers and merchants. We have partnered with Airtel to enable over 100M Airtel consumers across 14 markets in Africa and the Middle

East with Virtual card and QR Payment capability and onboarding over 100k SMEs as merchants on QR. We teamed up with MTN, a mobile network operator in Africa, to bring more digital services to MTN's platform.

Mastercard is dedicated to Empowering Every Business Everywhere by leveraging its innovation and solutions beyond payments to help small and medium enterprises get paid, get capital, and get digital – safely and securely – wherever they are.

Financial and digital inclusion is critical to the socio-economic success of the African continent, and we know that achieving this, at the scale Africa needs, is not a solo project. This is why we are partnering with a number of private companies, government institutions and development

agencies to develop and scale locally relevant solutions, build stronger payment platforms, improve financial literacy, and empower even the smallest businesses.

Growth is achievable

MSMEs in Nigeria contribute over 45% to the country's GDP and they account for over 80% of employment in Nigeria. MSMEs are therefore critical for economic development so it is important for us to encourage their growth. We need to work together to help more MSMEs survive past their fourth year by ensuring they have access to finance for capital and operational demands, have the technological support they need to overcome market challenges, and make it easier for them to do business. If we get that right, I do believe that 7.5% growth is achievable for Nigeria's economy.

Source: Business day

Mastercard is dedicated to Empowering Every Business Everywhere by leveraging its innovation and solutions beyond payments to help small and medium enterprises get paid, get capital, and get digital – safely and securely – wherever they are. Financial and digital inclusion is critical to the socio-economic success of the African continent, and we know that achieving this, at the scale Africa needs, is not a solo project. This is why we are partnering with a number of private companies, government institutions and development agencies to develop and scale locally relevant solutions, build stronger payment platforms, improve financial literacy, and empower even the smallest businesses."

NEWS

Government to prosecute suspects for burying boy alive

From AMEDU JOSEPH,
Lokoja

THE Kogi State Government is to prosecute all the suspects involved in burying one Friday Oshodi, an 11 year old boy alive.

The Kogi State Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Hajia Fatima Kabir Buba disclosed this while speaking with journalists on the sad development in Lokoja, recently.

Buba said the ministry is also making necessary arrangements to put the victim in an orphanage home.

According to her, information reaching the ministry indicates that the boy is being mistreated by his stepmother and brother. She further added that the government will ensure that justice is served on all the perpetrators of the evil act.

She reiterated that the government, under Alhaji Yahaya Bello, remains committed to protecting the boy and girl-child. And warns that any guardian carrying out ill human treatment on their wards will face the full wrath of the law.

"The victim, Friday Oshodi is currently in our custody while the prime suspect, Goodness Oshodi is in Police net. This is wickedness in the highest order. How will somebody bury his fellow human



Bello

alive?

"The woman who ordered the punishment of this young boy is currently at large. I am assuring the general public that she will be arrested and made to face the full wrath of the law," she stated.

It could be recalled that

one Goodness Oshodi, allegedly buried his younger brother Friday Oshodi alive for stealing money.

The incident, it was gathered, occurred at Silo community, Apamisede in Zango Daji, Adavi Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Organisation celebrates World Mental Health Day with inmates

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Mulapnen Capacity Building Initiative (MUCABI), a non profit organization, celebrated

this year's World Mental Health Day with inmates in Jos, the Plateau State capital by engaging them in mental talks and counseling to give them hope.

This celebration which was in collaboration with Rescue Outreach Centre Nigeria, YIAVHA, and Global Law Thinkers Society, took place

at the Department of the Nigeria Correctional Centre, Jos Hall, where hundreds of the inmates participated and were counseled and given some food items.

Speaking to the inmates at the Jos Department of the Nigeria Correctional Centre, the Guest Speaker, Dr. Garba Yohanna, PhD, who is a Clinical Psychologist counseled the inmates on mental health. He pointed out some of the causes, symptoms and ways to overcome it.

BAUCHI State Governor, Bala Mohammed, recently flagged-off the commencement of daily flight by Value Jet Airline from Abuja to Bauchi.

The Governor at the launching of the Value Jet Airline held at the Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa International Airport, said that the resumption of the flight by Value Jet Airline will boost tourism industry in the state.

He assured that the resumption of the flight marks a significant milestone in his administration's ongoing efforts to enhance transportation, facilitate the movement of goods, services, and people.

According to him, the effort will also promote the growth of Bauchi State, as transportation is key to any thriving economy.

The governor explained that flights from Abuja to Bauchi will play a pivotal role in connecting the state with the rest of the nation.

Value Jet Airline kicks off daily operation



Bala

From ABBAS
GUNGURA, Bauchi

"It's a crucial artery for the exchange of commerce, ideas, and culture. I want to emphasize our commitment to ensuring

ease of business, security, and the safe movement of people and goods within Bauchi State", he said.

He stressed that his government has invested heavily in road networks and therefore noted that air travel is equally essential.

He pointed out that Abubakar Tafawa Balewa International Airport, serves not only Bauchi State but also neighboring states of Yobe, Jigawa, Gombe, and Adamawa.

The State Governor used the occasion to commend the management of the airline for choosing Bauchi State as one of its destinations, stating that the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa International Airport boasts state-of-the-art facilities to ensure the effective operation of airlines.

"Your decision is a testament to the immense potential and opportunities that our state offers. Be assured that the Bauchi State government stands firmly behind you", the Governor assured.

He expressed the commitment of the state towards ensuring the profitability and smooth operation of the airline in the state.

The governor, while thanking the regulatory agencies under the Ministry of Aviation for their support in maintaining the airport to global standards and best practice, reiterated his administration's unwavering commitment to promoting ease of doing business and ensuring the safety of passengers.

He called on all the airlines operating on Abuja to Bauchi route to maintain the highest standards of professionalism, punctuality, and consistency as the good people of Bauchi State are very much with them.

FG begins reconstruction of Ganaja Road

From AMEDU JOSEPH,

THE Federal Government of Nigeria has approved the reconstruction of the bad portion of the Ganaja road in Lokoja, the Kogi State capital to salvage the road from yearly flooding.

In a joint assessment between the Kogi State Ministry of Works and Housing, the Federal Road Maintenance Agency and Gitto Construction Company recently in Lokoja, Engr Onafuye Olayinka,

the Federal Controller of Works (Deputy Director) also revealed the state of readiness of the new design for the entire road.

In his word, "The contract is special repair of the 700M flooded/bad portion of Ganaja road.

The job is awarded to Messrs Gitto Nig. Ltd.

The scope of work includes:

Removal of unsuitable material to 500mm depth. Provision of hard core and granular materials. Provision of concrete

(rigid) pavement, and embankment protection work.

Provision of Solar-Powered Street Light.

The contractor has mobilized to site and has commenced work execution.

However, the design for the 7km dual carriageway from the Ganaja Junction Flyover to Ganaja roundabout in Ganaja village with spur through Nyamanyama/500 Unit Housing Road is almost completed and awaiting approval for award by the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing," he said.

Responding, the Kogi State Commissioner for Works and Housing, Hon. Samson Bako, thanked President Ahmed Bola Tinubu led administration for the swift response to the call of Gov Yahaya Adoza Bello on the Federal Government over the flooded part of the Ganaja road.

Umahi has promised to redesign the Lokoja-Ganaja-Ajaokuta Express

road in view of its strategic importance as the gateway between the Northern and the Eastern parts of the country.

Umahi made the promise during his maiden working visit to Kogi State.

He was responding to Governor Bello who had highlighted the road as the major link road between the North and South.



Umahi

On his part, Pastor Alhassan Mohammed, the National Coordinator of the Rescue Outreach Center, said that the celebration was a great opportunity for some of the inmates to be part of this World Mental Health Awareness to have counseled some of our brothers who are incarcerated here in Jos Correctional Centre".

Earlier, the Team-Lead of Mulapnen Capacity Building Initiative (MUCABI), Dabong Job Nanma, said the World

Mental Health Awareness Day was celebrated on October 10 every year and that they were at the Jos Correctional Centre to create awareness to inmates on the importance of mental health.

He said, "Although, government has always been doing well, we want to make an awakening call that there are people here who need mental health awareness, because they have been kept out of their comfort homes to be here. They are really suffering from mental challenges.

"So, we really want to call on the government to see the need to come in and provide the necessary and conducive environment for them with programmes like vocational skills, sporting activities to help them stay away from negative thinking that will bring problems to them", he appealed.

Meanwhile, the Bassa Local Government Youth Leader and an Islamic scholar, Yahyanu Alhassan Abdullahi, observed that in the course of counseling some of the inmates, he discovered that most of the inmates were actually criminals, but some were really innocent because they were just set up by those who hated them.

During the counseling session coordinated by the personnel of the Correctional Service, Mr. EA Gokir had 15 counselors, among which were Clinical Psychologists, trained counselors, Emotional CPR, Imams, and Pastors listening to about 40 inmates who were attended to individually.

SUNDAY FEATURE

Investing in Nigeria's energy future

Nigeria is at a crucial intersection as the world rushes towards a future powered by clean energy. This West African country is endowed with abundant natural resources and can change the way it uses energy, but it also faces significant obstacles. We must set out on a voyage through time to examine the evolution of Nigeria's energy landscape to comprehend its present difficulties and potential. The story starts with the late 1950s oil discoveries in Nigeria. Oloibiri-1, the country's first commercial oil well, started producing in 1956. In Nigeria's economic history, this finding represented a turning point. Nigeria swiftly entered the group of countries that produce oil as oil became the backbone of the country's economy. TOYIN BANJO writes

Nigeria became one of the major oil exporters in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of a surge in oil production. Roads, hospitals, and educational facilities were all supported by oil export revenue that was used to finance large-scale infrastructure projects. A promising future for the country was implied by the oil boom. The decades that followed, however, were marked by both promise and danger. The public became dissatisfied as a result of problems in Nigeria's energy industry that prevented the development of infrastructure and a fair distribution of income.

"Investments in renewable energy and off-grid technologies might lessen sensitivity to market volatility and improve sustainability even as oil and gas remain important"

Nigeria, known as the "Giant of Africa," is not only endowed with an abundance of natural resources but is also gifted with a rich cultural legacy. For investors looking for profitable prospects, the country's oil sector continues to be an alluring option.

It takes careful consideration to invest in Nigeria's energy business because it is a complex equation. Here, we examine the potential rewards of investing in this crucial sector.

1. Rich resources, enormous reserves, and production: Nigeria is endowed with enormous energy resources, such as sizable oil and natural gas deposits, an abundance of sunlight, and possibilities for wind. The nation constantly ranks among the top oil producers in Africa, and its crude oil reserves present enormous opportunities for investors. Nigeria is a major player in the international oil market with a daily production capability of about 2 million barrels. These resources offer a huge chance to diversify the energy mix and lessen reliance on fossil fuels. West Africa, has a strategic location that is good for the trade in oil and gas. It serves as a strategic hub for international commerce in energy due to its proximity to important consumer markets in Europe, the Americas, and Asia. With a population of over 200 million, it is a rapidly growing energy market. As a result, there is a sizable home market for energy goods. Investors in the sector - from petrochemicals to refining and distribution - have a steady source of demand. For investors hoping to profit from a big and growing consumer base,

meeting the expanding energy demand offers a strong incentive.



3. Potential for Renewable Energy in the Global Energy Transition: Nigeria's oil and gas industry is prepared to adapt as the globe moves towards greener energy sources. The sector may be positioned to remain relevant in a changing world of energy by investing in sustainability and technology. The massive solar and wind potential of the country is also virtually unexplored. Investment in renewable energy projects along with developments in technology can bring dependable and sustainable electricity to neglected areas.

4. Policy Reforms: The Nigerian government has demonstrated a commitment to reforming the energy industry. Initiatives like the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB), which aims to provide investors with a more open, competitive, and appealing regulatory framework, are just a few of the actions done. The National Renewable Energy Action Plan and the Power Sector Recovery Programme are two further sector initiatives targeted at enhancing the environment for investment and resolving infrastructure bottlenecks.

However, while the opportunities are clear, potential investors must also be aware of the associated risks:

1. Infrastructure Deficits with Political Instability: Political unrest has occasionally occurred in Nigeria, which may scare away potential investors and have an impact on the legal

and business environment. Building investor confidence requires consistent policies and laws. Significant infrastructure problems, such as an unstable electricity grid and inadequate transit systems, also exist throughout the nation. The success of energy initiatives depends on addressing these deficiencies.

2. Security and Corruption Concerns: Corruption is still a major problem in Nigeria, affecting both the public and private sectors. Investors must manage this difficult environment while upholding moral business principles. Oil theft and vandalism are still a problem in some areas of Nigeria, which might interfere with energy operations. The protection of people and resources is of utmost importance.

3. Market and Price Volatility: Price swings in the world energy market affect business profitability and investment returns. Investors in a volatile market should carefully evaluate the long-term viability of their ventures.

4. Impact on the environment: The sector is frequently criticized for its effects on the environment, including oil spills and gas flare-ups. The majority of these environmental effects frequently fell on local populations, causing social discontent and conflicts with oil firms. Investors need to be ready to address issues related to sustainability and the environment.

In light of these opportunities and risks, investors should

adopt a strategic approach:

1. Opportunities for Diversification: It is critical to diversify our energy sources. Nigeria has enormous but untapped gas reserves in addition to its crude oil. Investments in renewable energy and off-grid technologies might lessen sensitivity to market volatility and improve sustainability even as oil and gas remain important. Additional expansion opportunities are provided by the development of the liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry and the investment in gas infrastructure.

2. Local Partnerships: Nigeria has implemented local content policies that encourage investors to collaborate with local suppliers, supporting technology transfer and generating employment possibilities for the Nigerian workforce.

3. Risk Mitigation: Using effective risk assessment and management techniques is crucial. Along with security precautions and backup plans, this also involves insurance against political risk.

4. Long-Term Vision: Investors ought to take a long-term approach. For energy initiatives to provide meaningful returns, it is frequently necessary to invest patiently and persistently.

In addition to the various perspectives mentioned above, Nigeria's energy sector is still in an uneven position. But there are numerous opportunities for growth and development, despite the challenges it

presently faces. Sustainable practices, transparency, and effective governance are essential to maximizing the sector's potential.

The history of Nigeria's energy industry is a nuanced tale of hope, dismay, and transformation. It is a tempting possibility that has its share of difficulties from an investment point of view.

Investors must carefully weigh the opportunities and hazards, and they must also commit to ethical and sustainable behaviour.

In conclusion, as the country looks to the future, it must draw on its rich history, learning from previous failures and accomplishments, to establish a sustainable and inclusive energy sector that propels both the nation's industries and its citizens' aspirations. For individuals up for the task, however, success in this industry necessitates a long-term commitment, an in-depth knowledge of regional dynamics, and a readiness to adjust to changing global energy patterns. Nigeria's energy sector has traditionally been seen as a method to earn sizable returns and as playing a crucial part in determining the continent of Africa's energy future.

Banjo is the vice chairman of BonnyLight Energy and Offshore Limited as well as the chief executive officer of Oriental Capital and Asset Management Group.

2. Strategic Location and Market Potential: Nigeria, which is located in

NEWS

Government to prosecute suspects for burying boy alive

From AMEDU JOSEPH,
Lokoja

THE Kogi State Government is to prosecute all the suspects involved in burying one Friday Oshodi, an 11 year old boy alive.

The Kogi State Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Hajia Fatima Kabir Buba disclosed this while speaking with journalists on the sad development in Lokoja, recently.

Buba said the ministry is also making necessary arrangements to put the victim in an orphanage home.

According to her, information reaching the ministry indicates that the boy is being mistreated by his stepmother and brother. She further added that the government will ensure that justice is served on all the perpetrators of the evil act.

She reiterated that the government, under Alhaji Yahaya Bello, remains committed to protecting the boy and girl-child. And warns that any guardian carrying out ill human treatment on their wards will face the full wrath of the law.

"The victim, Friday Oshodi is currently in our custody while the prime suspect, Goodness Oshodi is in Police net. This is wickedness in the highest order. How will somebody bury his fellow human



Bello

one Goodness Oshodi, allegedly buried his younger brother Friday Oshodi alive for stealing money. The incident, it was gathered, occurred at Silo community, Apamisede in Zango Daji, Adavi Local Government Area of Kogi State.

It could be recalled that

Organisation celebrates World Mental Health Day with inmates

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Mulapnen Capacity Building Initiative (MUCABI), a non profit organization in Umahi

this year's World Mental Health Day with inmates in Jos, the Plateau State capital by engaging them in mental talks and counseling to give them hope.

This celebration which was in collaboration with Rescue Outreach Centre Nigeria, YIAVHA, and Global Law Thinkers Society, took place

at the Department of the Nigeria Correctional Centre, Jos Hall, where hundreds of the inmates participated and were counseled and given some food items.

Speaking to the inmates at the Jos Department of the Nigeria Correctional Centre, the Guest Speaker, Dr. Garba Yohanna, PhD, who is a Clinical Psychologist counseled the inmates on mental health. He pointed out some of the causes, symptoms and ways to overcome it.

BAUCHI State Governor, Bala Mohammed, recently flagged-off the commencement of daily flight by Value Jet Airline from Abuja to Bauchi.

The Governor at the launching of the Value Jet Airline held at the Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa International Airport, said that the resumption of the flight by Value Jet Airline will boost tourism industry in the state.

He assured that the resumption of the flight marks a significant milestone in his administration's ongoing efforts to enhance transportation, facilitate the movement of goods, services, and people.

According to him, the effort will also promote the growth of Bauchi State, as transportation is key to any thriving economy.

The governor explained that flights from Abuja to Bauchi will play a pivotal role in connecting the state with the rest of the nation.

Value Jet Airline kicks off daily operation



Bala

From ABBAS
GUNGURA, Bauchi

"It's a crucial artery for the exchange of commerce, ideas, and culture. I want to emphasize our commitment to ensuring

ease of business, security, and the safe movement of people and goods within Bauchi State", he said.

He stressed that his government has invested heavily in road networks and therefore noted that air travel is equally essential.

He pointed out that Abubakar Tafawa Balewa International Airport, serves not only Bauchi State but also neighboring states of Yobe, Jigawa, Gombe, and Adamawa.

The State Governor used the occasion to commend the management of the airline for choosing Bauchi State as one of its destinations, stating that the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa International Airport boasts state-of-the-art facilities to ensure the effective operation of airlines.

"Your decision is a testament to the immense potential and opportunities that our state offers. Be assured that the Bauchi State government stands firmly behind you", the Governor assured.

He expressed the commitment of the state towards ensuring the profitability and smooth operation of the airline in the state.

The governor, while thanking the regulatory agencies under the Ministry of Aviation for their support in maintaining the airport to global standards and best practice, reiterated his administration's unwavering commitment to promoting ease of doing business and ensuring the safety of passengers.

He called on all the airlines operating on Abuja to Bauchi route to maintain the highest standards of professionalism, punctuality, and consistency as the good people of Bauchi State are very much with them.

FG begins reconstruction of Ganaja Road

From AMEDU JOSEPH,

THE Federal Government of Nigeria has approved the reconstruction of the bad portion of the Ganaja road in Lokoja, the Kogi State capital to salvage the road from yearly flooding.

In a joint assessment between the Kogi State Ministry of Works and Housing, the Federal Road Maintenance Agency and Gitto Construction Company recently in Lokoja, Engr Onafuye Olayinka,

the Federal Controller of Works (Deputy Director) also revealed the state of readiness of the new design for the entire road.

In his word, "The contract is special repair of the 700M flooded/bad portion of Ganaja road.

The job is awarded to Messrs Gitto Nig. Ltd.

The scope of work includes:

Removal of unsuitable material to 500mm depth. Provision of hard core and granular materials. Provision of concrete

(rigid) pavement, and embankment protection work.

Provision of Solar-Powered Street Light.

The contractor has mobilized to site and has commenced work execution.

However, the design for the 7km dual carriageway from the Ganaja Junction Flyover to Ganaja roundabout in Ganaja village with spur through Nyamanyama/500 Unit Housing Road is almost completed and awaiting approval for award by the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing," he said.

Responding, the Kogi State Commissioner for Works and Housing, Hon. Samson Bako, thanked President Ahmed Bola Tinubu led administration for the swift response to the call of Gov Yahaya Adoza Bello on the Federal Government over the flooded part of the Ganaja road.

Umahi has promised to redesign the Lokoja-Ganaja-Ajaokuta Express

road in view of its strategic importance as the gateway between the Northern and the Eastern parts of the country.

Umahi made the promise during his maiden working visit to Kogi State.

He was responding to Governor Bello who had highlighted the road as the major link road between the North and South.

The minister expressed gratitude for the governor's warm reception upon his appointment and for his dedication to the betterment of Kogi State.

Bako finally urged Kogites to reciprocate the kind gesture of Gov Bello by voting massively for the candidate of All Progressive Congress, Alh Ahmed Usman Ododo come 11/11/2023 for



Umahi

NEWS

Film festival to hold November in Jos

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

Arrangements are already in place by Jos Human Rights Film Initiative (JOHRI) to hold the 2023 Rock International Film Festival (RIFF), in Jos, the Plateau State capital starting from November 1 to 4, 2023.

This aims to celebrate the power of storytelling to bring about change through human rights issues.

The Festival Director, Henry Samson Mafulul, disclosed this recently at the first 2 press conferences for the Rock International Film Festival (RIFF) 2023, held at the conference hall of the Plateau State Disabilities Rights Commission in Jos, the state capital.

He said, "RIFF is a prestigious human rights film festival that celebrates the power of storytelling to bring about change. It will hold from November 1st to 4th, at the Jos National Museum Auditorium.

"This year, RIFF is excited to unveil a carefully curated lineup of films that delve deep into the heart of human rights issues.

"We are also honored to announce the presence of some remarkable special guests at this year's festival. Renowned filmmakers, activists, and other inspiring individuals will be gracing RIFF with their insights and experiences. We invite you to join us for four days of thought-provoking cinema and discussions.

"The Rock Awards ceremony is another highlight of RIFF, where we recognize outstanding contributions to human rights storytelling through film. This year, we are excited to announce



MAFULUL

that the award will be presented to a group of filmmakers who have used their craft to amplify the voices of marginalized communities and give a platform to important human rights issues", Mafulul highlighted

The Director, however, enthused that from stories of resilience in the face of adversity, to powerful calls for justice, this film festival would ignite conversations and inspire action.

He further pointed out that RIFF was proud to partner with a variety of organizations and initiatives that were dedicated to promoting human rights and social justice.

According to him, "these partnerships will allow us to reach a wider audience and have a greater impact. We are excited to share more details about RIFF 2023 in the coming weeks. Stay tuned for updates on our website and social media channels. Let's make RIFF 2023 a celebration of storytelling, human rights, and positive change".

Mafulul added that the human rights festival is aimed to enlighten people about their rights violation and that their major challenges were publicity and they were hoping for not only local or national, but internationally where our local films would be promoted.

Kaduna NUJ buries member

From JOHN FWAH Kaduna

THE remains of the late Hassana Muhammed Yakubu, Kaduna correspondent of the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), was committed to mother earth at Bachama Cemetery Tudu

Wada amid tears.

The last prayer was held for her at her Kano Road, Kaduna residence, graced by members of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Kaduna State Council, clerics, friends, and

colleagues.

Late Miss Hassana Muhammed Yakubu died on the 9th of October 2023 after a protracted illness. She was aged 39.

Family members, friends, and colleagues of the deceased were heartbroken as they paid their last respects.

A cleric, Mallam Mohammed Abbas said the corpse of the late Hassana was a message on its own to everyone, as it shows that everyone has an appointment with death any day.

"We are not praying that we die young like her, but when death shall come, where is the last place you shall go?"

Clerics took turns praying for the family and her twin sister at the graveside, after which the corpse was carried by friends and family



Hassan

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE Kogi State Commissioner of Police has paraded 9 suspects for offenses ranging from armed robbery, kidnapping, car-snatching and manhood theft.

Parading the suspects at the command headquarters in Lokoja, Commissioner of Police, Bethrand Onuoha, said the Command has adopted comprehensive crime prevention and detection strategies, including the commencement of intensive raids on identified criminal hideouts, black spots, and flashpoints across the state.

Onuoha noted that the Command arrested Thankgod Joseph and Monday Matthew for armed robbery and recovered arms and ammunition, including dangerous weapons.

He mentioned the recovery of three Dane guns, one shotgun, a single-barrel gun, three cutlasses, knives, five palm oil jerrycans, and several charms from the suspects.

Narrating how the two suspects were arrested, the police boss said, "Following a tip-off by the United Onicha-Igo Development Association in Ofu Local Government Area, Kogi State, it is alleged, among other things, that a group of hoodlums led by one Sumaila Musa, aka Osama (now at large), ThankGod Joseph, and others, all 'M' of Onicha-Igo town in Ofu, had serially turned criminality into business activities as they frequently terrorised the residents of Onicha-Igo and its environs.

"The hoodlums are responsible for a series of armed robbery, thuggery, mischief, assault, causing hurt, kidnapping, and culpable homicide committed at different dates against different individuals in Onicha-Igo community.

"The hoodlums invaded the house and premises of Mrs.

Police parade 9 suspects for armed robbery, kidnapping



Bethrand

Rachael Agada, firing guns sporadically, robbing the occupants of their valuable properties, kidnapping Mrs. Agada's housegirl named Nawaitu, and stealing her Hilux Van.

"Also, the hoodlums fired guns sporadically and killed Miss Queen Onoja of Onicha-Igo without any just cause.

The Police boss added that Haruna Adamu, Yakubu M o h a m m e d , Abdulmumun Zakari, Akoji Oyibo, Ali Abdulraman were all arrested for criminal conspiracy, culpable homicide, armed robbery, and false alarm, while Daniel David was arrested for car theft.

Items recovered from the suspects include an AK-47 Magazine, live AK-47 ammunition, 8 communication lines, memory cards, phones, a military camouflage shirt, a pair of camouflage trousers, and Peugeot cars.

Onuoha averred that all the suspects arrested had since confessed to their various

criminal roles and admitted to carrying out several kidnapping and armed robbery attacks on innocent people, as well as travelers on the major highway in the state.

He explained that the Command has continued to adopt common problem-solving strategies for effective results in Community Policing, improving public confidence in police service delivery.

While soliciting more cooperation from the good people of Kogi State and urging them to continue providing credible and timely information to the police, the Commissioner of Police stated that the Command would not relent in its efforts in crime prevention and public safety in the state.

"Those who engage in criminal activities are warned to desist from such and hand over their arms and ammunition to the police and engage in something meaningful for their lives or be prepared to face the full consequences of their actions," warned.

State Council, Asmau Yawo Haliru, trying hard to control tears, described the demise of Hassana as unfortunate. She said that it will take the union a long time to recover from the shock.

"It is unfortunate that we lost Hassana at this tender age."

According to her, she was diligent in her duties until she breathed her last.

"We pray to Allah to forgive her shortcomings and grant her Jannatul Firdausi."

Similarly the Kaduna Zonal Manager of News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) Abubakar Ahmed said late Hassana worked under supervision despite her health challenges. She was concerned about other people's welfare and she inspired others to be dutiful, he said.

"It is a sad moment for the entire staff of NAN and the NUJ, family at large of Hassan. We pray to God to comfort her family members.

"May the Almighty Allah forgive her shortcomings and grant her gentle soul Aljannat Firdausi as her final abode," he prayed.

Chairman, NUJ, Kaduna

NEWS

PLSG commits to creating conducive business environment

From DUMAH RANDONG

PLATEAU State Government says it will continue to create a conducive atmosphere for citizens to pursue their legitimate businesses in the state.

Governor Caleb Mutfwang stated this while playing host to a community of Igbo Youth Wing also known as Izinwne Social Club led by Obinna Okwakwu who paid him a visit at the Old Government House, Rayfield, Jos, Friday.

Represented by the Deputy Governor, Mrs Josephine Piyo, the governor said the doors of the state will remain open to people willing to do genuine business. He commended the Igbo people and other tribes who have contributed to the economic development of the state.

The governor acknowledged the support and contribution enjoyed from the igbos who stood firm to ensure that the People's Democratic, PDP was not only voted massively but also made sure that the votes were protected, culminating in



Mutfwang

their victory.

He also appreciated them for supporting those affected by the security challenges in the state.

He reiterated his resolve to revive and reposition Operation Rainbow and other security outfits for the protection and welfare of all citizens in the state.

Earlier, leader of the Youth Wing, Igbo Community and Izinwne Social Club, Obinna Okwakwu who spoke through his secretary, Uzo Herbert, said they were on

a solidarity visit to congratulate the government on their victory at the polls and also intimate the government on the activities of the group.

He highlighted that members of the association were business people and that igbos voted massively for government of the day.

He advised them to resuscitate the moribund security outfit, Operation Rainbow to secure the rural areas. He expressed readiness to partner with the government in

By HOSEA NYAMLONG

PLATEAU State Muslim Pilgrims' Welfare Board has stated that the National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON), directs intending pilgrims from the State to pay the sum of 4.5 million Naira only pending when the final fares would be announced by the NAHCON.

This was contained in a press release, signed by Namu Sanusi, Public Relations Officer to the Acting Executive Secretary, Plateau State Muslim

NAHCON directs intending pilgrims on Hajj fare

Pilgrim's Welfare Board and made available to SUNDAY STANDARD recently.

The statement added that the acting Executive Secretary of the Board, Hajiya Aisha Ibrahim Saleh said NAHCON has recently allocated 1345 Hajj slots to the state and assured that, priority would be given to those who could not perform last year's Hajj.

Howevel, newly intending pilgrims would be on a first come, first served basis.

She urged intending pilgrims to make their deposit on time to enable the Board make remittance to NAHCON in good time.

And emphasised that this announcement supersedes the earlier one placed two (2) weeks ago.

Airline, Africa Magic TV, win at AFRO award

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE Nigeria based private flight servicing agency, Air Peace Airline has won the prestigious AFRO Awards 2023 "Airline of The Year Award" along 25 others for being the best in the airline industry with excellent service.

A statement issued in Nigeria recently, by Chief Taiwo Oduala, founder and Executive Producer of The AFRO Awards, said the airline was among 25 other awardees honoured at the 2nd edition of the annual event held at Los Angeles, California, USA, recently.

Oduala, who is a famous Film Director with many

movies to his credit, disclosed other awards won to include: "The Outstanding Network Programme of The Year Award" awarded to Multi-Choice Nigeria limited network, AFRICA MAGIC for their outstanding network platform and delivering programme services across the globe.

Business Tycoon of The Year Award: Awarded to business owner, filmmaker, and musician, Monica Omorodion Swaida for her outstanding accomplishments and dedication to bringing about positive change in the business, film, and music sector.

Red Carpet Royalty of The Year Award: Awarded to TV host, journalist, actress, writer, and former Miss Kenya, Rachel Mbuki for her very best hosting nature and fashion innovations across Hollywood's red carpets.

Excellence in Global Healthcare of The Year Award: Recognizing the renowned Plastic Surgeon and President of Global Health Solution, Dr. Michael K. Obeng, for his extraordinary work.

AFRO Awards Merit Award: Honoring Amber Washington, Co-Founder and Vice President of the HAPA Awards, for her exceptional contributions.

Fashion Icon of The Year Award: Awarded to Fashion Model and Founder of BalangNyal Foundation, Nyakim Gatwech for her unforgettable fashion assemblments, making a significant impact on popular culture across international platforms and her invaluable contributions that have changed the entire fashion landscape.

Social Mover of The Year Award: Awarded to nurse, entrepreneur, philanthropist, founder of Health4Peace Foundation, and CEO of Maisondene Inc., Nathalie Beasnael for her sight beyond frivolity to use her social numbers

and heightened platform to change the world for the better.

Business Tycoon of The Year Award: Conferred upon the dynamic founder of Spectrum Solution, Phill Westbrooks, for his remarkable achievements.

Finance Innovator of The Year Award: Awarded to founder of Agic Energy North America and Agic Group Holdings, Chief Duran Alabi for his outstanding contributions and innovations within the banking industry

AFRO Awards Governors Award: Recognizing the immense impact of Global Media Entertainment Executive and Head of Content & Brand: The Africa Channel, Aval L. Hall,

Collaborative Practice of The Year Award: Presented to Paul Mwaura Mwangi, Founder and President of Staff Today Inc., for his outstanding contributions to collaborative practices.

Global Cultural Thought Leader of The Year Award: Celebrating a true community activist and Founder of Crownz Society 19 Keys.

According to him, with a star-studded guest list and a remarkable lineup of honorees, this event exceeded all expectations, leaving a lasting impression on attendees and the global community.

"The highlight of the evening was the recognition of accomplished individuals who have made indelible contributions to society and culture.



TAIWO

Girl-child be bold, assertive to break barriers

WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe

YOUNG school girls desiring to make it in their chosen careers have been advised to be bold and assertive to be able to break many barriers that could prevent them from achieving their life dreams.

These and many other inspirational talks were the key points during a programme organized by the Gombe State branch of Medical Women's Association of Nigeria

(MWAN) and the National Young Doctors Forum (NYDF) held at Government Day Secondary School, Gandu, Gombe State, to mark the 2023 International Day for the Girl-Child.

Many young girls in Nigeria, especially in the North, have to contend with many socio-cultural, traditional and religious barriers before they can achieve their chosen careers in life.

This is because the

education and welfare of the girl - child has been relegated to the background by major stakeholders in the society which includes the government, religious, traditional and community leaders.

National Coordinator of the Young Doctors Forum of the Medical Women's Association of Nigeria, Dr Safiya Tanko, in an interview with our correspondent shortly after the programme, said the event was specifically organized by the association to inspire the young girls in spite of the challenges they are facing in the society.

The professional young doctors presented themselves to the excited girls as perfect models and Dr Safiya said, "We came to inspire the girls, encourage, counsel and guide them to be on the right path.

"We encouraged and counseled them on their life and career choices as well as the need for them to take their studies seriously despite the challenges they face as girls in the society.

"It is possible for them to be doctors, lawyers or whatever career they choose for themselves but they must take their

- MWAN, NYDF

education as paramount", adding that the rights and needs of the girl- child must be protected and met by her parents and government.

Reflecting on this year's theme, 'Invest in girls rights: our leadership, our well-being', Dr. Tanko called on the government at all levels to invest in girls' education and their wellbeing.

She said, "things are getting more and more expensive to be able to educate girls. A girl should be educated to at least the secondary school level. Government should invest in the education of the girl- child".

On her part, Dr Mercy Raymond, the Gombe State coordinator of MWAN-NYDF, took the audience on an emotional story of her resilience and struggles by her widowed mother to ensure she succeeded to her current level of being a consultant Pediatric Doctor.

The association distributed detergents to the female students to encourage personal hygiene in their homes.



Dr Safiya

SUNDAY MAGAZINE



Mutfwang



Sule



Yusuf

Presidential, Gubernatorial election litigations: Politicians' bellyache, surprises

Continued from Page 10 higher court. He said, 'NNPP received with utter incredulity and disbelief the judgement of the Kano State Election Petition Tribunal on the March 18, 2023 Governorship elections. Regrettably, in the aftermath of the judgement, violence erupted in Kano as many noted that the ruling went against the aspirations of the people of the state. Likewise, the elections of Nasarawa State where the incumbent Governor Abdulahi Sule's election was nullified through split judgement. The tribunal chaired by Ezekiel Ajayi had declared the candidate of the People's Democratic Party, David Ombugadu the winner of the March 18th Governorship elections held in the state. Observers said though PDP's victory was unprecedented as the citizens of the state had spoken through the ballot, there is great apprehension as to whether the outcome of the Appeal Court would be taken in good fate.

This is because, the unfolding development in the state is causing great concern and worry even as some individuals are beginning to see the fight from a more dangerous and unpleasant perspective. For the Director of Media and Publicity, David Ombugadu Campaign Organization, Mike Omeri however, the ruling marked an unprecedented milestone in the pursuit of electoral justice

and fairness adding that the tribunal's action highlighted the tenacity of the resolve of the people of Nasarawa State to seek and secure justice.

In Plateau State, the battle at the Tribunal was between the incumbent Governor Caleb Mutfwang of the PDP and Nentawe Yilwada of the APC. During the gubernatorial polls, despite incumbency strength, the opposition party was able to dwarf the antics and caprices of the APC by winning the elections. During the tribunals ruling on the petition filed by the APC Gubernatorial candidate, Nentawe Yilwada, against the expectations of many, it affirmed the election of Caleb Mutfwang and dismissed the petition filed by Nentawe of the APC.

Yilwada had challenged the election of Mutfwang claiming that the governor was not validly nominated and sponsored by his party, and that PDP has no structure to sponsor any candidate for the governorship elections and that the election of Mutfwang was not conducted in compliance with the electoral act.

In recent years, many Nigerians have expressed concern over monies spent by politicians in the aftermath of such elections whether they win and or lose. First and foremost, it has been estimated that about 305 billion naira was spend by

INEC on elections in the country in 2023. Knowing too well that elections are always very expensive, the 2023 general elections came with lots of expectations. Basically, the 2023 elections budget was informed by the number of registered voters and the creation of 56,873 new polling units in the country. However, many individuals also questioned the humongous amount of money consumed in an election which did not live up to the expectations of many. For instance, reports indicated that though there were initially 93 million Nigerian on voters list but when voting eventually took place only a liite over 25 million actually casted their votes. On this premise, Wilson Uwujaren, the Spokesman of the EFCC said the organisation was investigating and preventing monetary malpractices in the system.

This may include allegations of corruptions in our judiciary which over the years have continued to spoil the reputation of the courts particularly during elections. Evidentially, some of the questionable rulings of petitions have been attached to acts of personnel aggrandizement exhibited by the courts. In 2023, the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission(ICPC)had its Nigeria Corruption Index Pilot Survey which was conducted by the Anti-Corruption

Academy of Nigeria, its research and training arm found that 'bribe for judgement is one of the most egregious forms of grand corruption as it operates to undermine the very essence of judicial dispute resolution'

This is similar to other surveys conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and crime(UNODC) in 2017 which revealed that an estimated N400 billion or equivalent of 4.6 billion dollars is paid out in bribes to public officials in Nigeria annually. However, many also know that perverting electoral adjudication process has grave consequences and failure to ascertain and vindicate democratic choices made by the electorates can destabilize political society.

In an Easter message, Bishop Mathew Kukah, Bishop of Sokoto Roman Catholic Diocese said the future of the country hangs in the hands of the judges. According to him, 'Nigerians are saddened that your sacred temples have been invaded by the political class leaving the toxic fumes that now threatens your reputation as the last hope for all citizens.'

The convener, of Access to Justice (A2J) Joseph Ottech wrote to a Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice OlukayodeAriwoola about the perceptions and allegations of

corruption issues in the judiciary saying that ' investigations showed that N9 billion was offered to judges(most of whom handled elections petitions) within the space of three years and associated with different cycles and electoral adjudications in Nigeria, the judiciary has not taken steps to strengthen the ethnical framework for the electoral dispute adjudication.'

Now that most if not all the cases have moved to the higher courts, the politicians in this country are beginning to have bellyaches as more surprise looks eminent. So far, the gubernatorial petitions in Kaduna, Kano, Nasarawa and Plateau State were really surprising depending on the angle of assessment. While many are still optimistic that the case in Kano would be reversed, others believe that the Nasarawa judgement has come to stay likewise those of Kaduna, Plateau and Lagos states.

Therefore, pundits do believe that the forthcoming judgements at the appeal and or supreme courts would not change a thing but a confirmation of the most rulings adopted by the lower courts. But for the politicians, it is a different game all together. It would be a different game all together for them who are convinced that it should not be over until it is over.

METRO-FOCUS

Ember months and the rise in criminality

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

EVERY year as the ember months approach, they are looked forward to with so much trepidation. It is usually at this time that criminality increases, ritual killing, kidnaping become the order of the day. In the same way, accidents leading to untimely death increase. Due to all these negative occurrences, most people enter these end months fasting and praying.

The ember months signal the last quarter of the year beginning with September and ending in December. They are referred to as ember months because they all end with ember- September, October, November, December.

Apart from heightened vices, one of the things that signal ember months is skyrocketing prices of goods and services. As people try to stay safe, they have to plan how to survive the ember months.

The recent display of desperation by citizens these ember months is a thing of great concern. Although, this is not new because it is a yearly practice. People double up their struggle to meet their needs ahead of every end of year celebrations.

Here in Plateau State especially in Jos, the state capital, as the day breaks, you see people running helter-skelter looking for money to either travel home or so that they can celebrate Christmas and New Year in style with their loved ones. The desperation has seriously driven most people above board, to the point that some lose the ability to coordinate themselves logically.

Young girls engage in prostitution to get money to spend for Christmas. Just as young boys engage in dubious businesses or deals to get enough money to spend the Christmas and New Year in style.

As brief as these holidays are, it is to them more or less like a whole year because certainly, these are periods where they meet with families, friends, relations, old school mates, neighbours and so many who have been away for months or years working outside the state.



They believe that it is the only opportunity they have to meet again and share those old good days and of course, this has its way of reuniting families and redefining the bond of unity among people especially when it is celebrated peacefully.

The joy of visiting one another during that period, taking families to recreational centres like zoos, resorts, attraction sites, swimming pools or rather, attending weddings, birthday celebrations of loved ones and most importantly, family meetings, is majorly one of the things one cannot afford to miss.

However, this, to some extent, has its good, bad and the ugly to reckon with. This desperation definitely has its negative sides because of how demanding this period is to parents and guardians. People go the extra mile to look for money and or save to buy clothing, change new cars, renovate houses, change phones, shoes, hairstyles etc ahead of the celebrations. If unlucky, they get trapped in the hands of criminals.

This, mostly, is the case in

our neighborhoods these days. Some of our criminal minded youths have taken advantage of these desperate and careless people to break into their homes and get away with their valuables.

It is sad that neighborhood theft for the time being, has become a common story. No day passes by without reports of house bugling and it is becoming quite alarming. Sadly, both the young and the elderly are neck deep in the webs of this desperation.

There is no denying the fact that the resultant effect of these negative happenings is a depraved society, where everyone seems to be at the mercy of criminals.

In the city of Jos, criminals have resorted to physical harassment and broad day robbery, snatching women's bags who innocently board what they thought was a commercial car or tricycle. They are now a cartel and can snatch one's phone at gunpoint and within the shortest time imaginable, it can be tracked to Bauchi or Abuja.

It may interest you to

know that at the time of writing this piece, my son fell victim. His phone was snatched from him in broad daylight at around Terminus, Ahmadu Bello Way. He said narrated that, "I just came from Access Bank and was trekking down when a tricycle rider overtook me and blocked my way."

"When I stopped to ask why he blocked my way, three other persons from the back seat came out and pointed a gun at me and ordered me to submit all I have and I complied. What baffled me the most is that I was shouting: thief!!!! But nobody responded. I painfully watched these criminals go away with my phone in the heart of town like Terminus", he narrated.

Similarly, one Mrs. Hannatu Bilma, narrated her experience with these criminals who ply our streets in the name of looking for passengers. She said, "I boarded a taxi from Terminus to Angul-Di in Jos-South LGA and dropped around Grand Cereal. While I was waiting to cross to the other lane, somebody from the taxi I boarded snatched my bag and the car zoomed

off". The situation has been quite alarming especially when using tricycles as means of transportation. It has been revealed that when you enter a tricycle and you hear one of the passengers saying, 'Sugar and garri', or 'I am around Sharp Corner' then be wary.

Or when you are with a so-called passenger that receives calls upon calls telling the caller that he or she was close by, ensure your pocket is protected because those calls are tactically made to distract your attention or make you restless so that they can carry out their plans without you noticing.

However, we want to use this medium to appeal to the Plateau State Commissioner of Police and other security agencies in the state to deploy their officers and men at strategic locations in the event of any emergency so that these criminals would not have a field day at the detriment of innocent citizens.

God bless Plateau State! God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria!!

SUNDAY PEOPLE

MUTFWANG RECEIVES HEAD OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS/ ALL FARMERS

Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang through his Deputy, Hon Josephine Piyo received on courtesy call the Heads of Tertiary Institution led by the Provost, College of Science and Technology, Kurgwi at Government House Rayfield, Jos



Team leader (standing) delivering the courtesy message



Chairman, All Farmers Association of Nigeria, Plateau State delivering his speech



Deputy Governor, Hon. Josephine Piyo responding



Plateau Deputy Governor, Hon. Josephine Piyo responding to the message by AFAN



Cross section of members of the team leader entourage



Cross section of members of AFAN in a group photograph with the Deputy Governor



Hon. Piyo in a photograph of the delegation



Cross section of AFAN members

Photos: Office of the Deputy Governor, Plateau State, Jos



Road Runner
 Michael Agada
 SAFER TOGETHER
 magada122@gmail.com
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NEWS

From
JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja

Minister goes tough on FCT criminals

MINISTER of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike has reiterated his determination to destroy all areas suspected to be safe haven for criminals in the territory.



Wike

Disclosing this at the inspection of the site for the proposed MabushiKatampe road corridor that has been taken over by Scavengers, Wike called on the Department of Development Control to clear the place without delay.

He assured that he will do everything possible to clear the place so as to ensure the people there are not disturbed anymore. The minister stressed that there is no

compensation for anybody living in that area while directing development control to clear the place immediately so that all the criminals would be forced to leave.

On his own part, the Coordinator, Federal Capital Territory City Management Task Force Team, GaladimaMouktar, described the exercise as the mother of all cleanups. He added that the illegal activities would be cleared as directed by the minister.

The minister was accompanied by a combined team of security personnel and senior officials of the territory administration.

CROSSING the road at Traffic Signal Point

Basically, the watchword for pedestrians here is when the Red Man shows, do not cross. When the Green Man begins to flash, do not start to cross.

III. When the Green Man is steady, check to be sure that traffic has stopped, then cross quickly. If you have started crossing when the Green Man begins to flash, you have time to finish crossing. Do so safely to finish up.

Watch the traffic as well as the lights. VI. Don not cross when the lights are on Green or Amber. Junction without Traffic Light

When crossing at a junction without traffic light, pay attention to traffic turning into the road especially from behind you. Manned Traffic Control Point

This is a point where a traffic officer controls traffic. Do not cross the road when the officer has permitted vehicular traffic to move or has signaled you to stop. Cross ONLY when the officer signals you to do so.

Look out for oncoming vehicles as you cross briskly. At Bus Stop Board or alight from a bus or cab at an authorized Bus Stop. Do not cross the road in front of a vehicle. Do not board a vehicle

while it is moving. On Approach of Emergency Vehicle An emergency vehicle is a vehicle designed and authorized to respond to emergencies. Emergency vehicles include, Ambulances, Fire Trucks, Law enforcement vehicles, etc. Give way to all categories of emergency vehicles. On the road. They life they are trying to save may be yours or that of a relation or friend. When walking with children Children are easily distracted on the road by fancy sights like ice cream vans, siren blasting and flasher displaying vehicles, carnivals, processions etc. An adult walking with children must guide and keep them on track at all times. Children must never be let loose as they may run off to dangers. As such: Walk on the walkway/extreme left facing oncoming vehicles. Hold the child on the left and position yourself between the child and traffic. Note that pedestrians include children have right of way immediately they step on zebra crossing. However, do not claim such right at the expense of your safety. Only the living can claim right of way. Guide for children of School Age Using The Road

When crossing the road, use pedestrian bridge or Zebra crossing where they are provided. Walk facing oncoming

traffic. Use the walkway where provided. Avoid playing on the road. Scream and run away as fast as you can from total strangers who stop to give you lift. They are most likely to kidnapers and robbers. Do not accept any gift from total strangers. Wear bright- coloured clothing when walking at night. Work Zone Warning Signals The lives of highway construction workers depend on vehicles who are expected to obey speed limits and other signs at work zones. Do not forget, the colour orange marks a work zone and means slow down. The sign "SLOW DOWN, MEN AT WORK" may also be seen at such places. Flaggers (Traffic Control Signalers) are responsible for guiding drivers and other road users through work zone areas. They wear orange or yellow reflective vests, yellow-green reflective shirts or jackets. They use "STOP" or "SLOW" paddles or red flag to direct road users and to let workers or construction vehicles to cross the road. This is a high visibility barrier tape used to enclose an area in order to restrict unauthorized persons. it is used at crash scene to ensure that existing pieces of evidence are not tampered with. Do not enter the area or cross the tape when in place.

Teenager buries brother alive in Kogi

From
AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

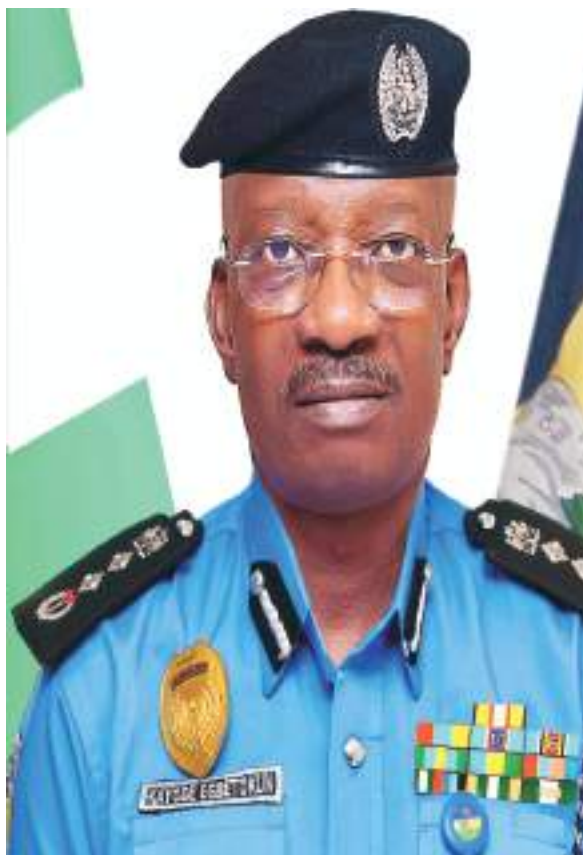
POLICE have confirmed the incident of a 17-year-old boy, Goodness Oshodi, who allegedly buried alive his younger brother, Friday Oshodi at Apamsede, a suburb for accusing him of stealing N1,000.

Police Public Relations Officer, (PPRO) for Kogi Police Command, SP William Aya, who confirmed the incident in a telephone chat with our correspondent in Lokoja recently, said that police have arrested Goodness for the alleged offense. Aya also told our correspondent that Kogi Police Command has commenced investigation into the case.

Sources at Apamsede community had earlier informed our correspondent that

Friday is noted for stealing , adding that nearby bush and buried him alive.

Our correspondent further gathered that luck however, ran out of Goodness as he was caught in the heinous crime by some vigilant members of the public in the area who exhumed the body of Friday alive and reported the case to the police.



SUNDAY FEATURE

Mining sector and Nigeria's industrialization

Mankind has strived in different ways to evolve, survive, develop, create wealth, organize safe societies and sustain human survival. Of the three different responses by mankind to survive – urbanization, industrialization and mining, mining is the oldest. Accessing specific mineral materials for the good of humanity has been an essential part of human existence since the prehistoric era

**EMMANUEL NNAMDI
OSADEBAY**

In Nigeria, a country endowed with over 44 different mineral types, occurring in commercial quantities in over 500 locations across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, is naturally situated for regional and global industrial productivity. Cutting across various mineral spectrums, we have industrial minerals such as barite, kaolin, gypsum, feldspar, limestone, bitumen, lignite, uranium, gold, cassiterite, columbite, iron ore, lead-zinc, copper, among others. With these mineral endowments, Nigeria is naturally positioned for limitless opportunities for industrialization and economic growth. How then can Nigeria embrace the mining sector for productivity? To build our economy better, boost the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), achieve high rates of employment opportunities and create a thriving enterprise ecosystem, we need a functional mineral sector governance.

As Nigeria's mining sectors continue to attract investor interests, extractive sector governance is required to ensure that our regulatory framework and laws are implemented

As the world moves towards



digitization and automation revolution, there are immense opportunities linking mining and

technological development. Minerals constitute a core component of the production of technological

gadgets like batteries, solar panels, laptops, mobiles and other ICT gadgets. To fully explore the opportunities of the sector for productivity, the federal government, which has the constitutional exclusivity of ownership, management and revenue collection, distribution and management, must strengthen Nigeria's geosciences base – which is to drive investment growth into exploration and mining industries through improvements in data accessibility for investors and other participants in the sector.

The mining sector has remained evident as a viable alternative to Nigeria's oil-based mono-economy. With the potential for inter-sector growth, increase Nigeria's export ratio, and with a global commodity price rise, there has been both local and foreign investor interests in Nigeria's extractive sector. To unlock the full potential of Nigeria's mining sector in galvanizing Nigeria's industrialization, government regulatory institutions must maintain the required reforms that would underpin the 2017 roadmap for the growth and development of the sector. The government must ensure that we have a competitive minerals and mining climate that is capable of contributing to processing quality products, creative wealth creation, providing jobs for the people and enhancing social wellbeing. As Nigeria's mining sectors continue to attract investor interests, extractive sector governance is required to ensure that our regulatory framework and laws are implemented and that the mineral rights and responsibilities of investors and firms as provided particularly by the principal law governing the sector – the Nigerian Minerals and Mining Act, 2007, are secured.

project and illegal mining across many states in Nigeria, greater transparency is required in the Nigerian mineral and mining ecosystem.

With increasing demand for energy and low-carbon technologies, an unprepared extractive industry is likely to struggle to meet rapid increases in demand of mineral and metals for production. In examining future energy demand and composition through the year 2040, renewable energies are the fastest growing sources of energy and renewable energy technologies such as electric vehicles, solar photovoltaics and wind turbines, all have huge and significant material needs. Government, therefore, must remember that the key factors limiting mineral extraction are not physical limitations, but also environmental, social and economic challenges. This requires state intervention to ensure that these connected challenges are met.

As global warming becomes more pronounced, the mining sector has a huge role to play in the world's transition to a low-carbon economy and in the mitigation of the climate crisis. Though mining firms are natural targets for emission-reduction efforts, legislation and lack of lending from investors looking to minimize their own climate risks, regulators must ensure that mining firms' projects are not inhibited by carbon taxes. To achieve Nigeria's industrialization through the mining sector, both regulators and mining firms must work to ensure sustained aversion to high-carbon projects. It is to this drive that Blu Quarry and Mines 'extractive activities are confined to environmentally friendly technologies in almost all of our processes.

To advance and drive Nigeria's development goals, embracing the mining revolution is critical in achieving industrialization. Perhaps, embracing the revolution will start with a secured sector security. Without security, it is difficult to attract credible, sustained and profitable investments in the sector, given that most mining locations are within rural areas. Social infrastructures like good road networks are directly linked and connected to physical security in the sector, hence, public-private partnership is required to ensure that mining firms contribute to providing basic infrastructure that also benefit host communities. With good infrastructures, regulation, credible firms and cordial host communities' engagement, the mining sector holds the key to Nigeria's industrial and sustainable development.



Mangu Local Government Council, Plateau State

INVITATION TO TENDER

Tenders are invited from reputable and registered contractors with the Council for the execution of the following projects:-

1. Renovation of Mangu Old Market Motor Park
2. Renovation of Pankshin Road Motor Park
3. Renovation of Sum Pyem's residence
4. Surface dressing of Ambassador S. Dakat Street Mangu Town
5. Surface dressing of Dr. Simon Ishaya Guteng Street Mangu Town
6. Surface dressing of Angwan Wupol Street Gindiri Town
7. Surface dressing of Sun Pyem Palace Street, Gindiri Town.
8. Surface dressing of Angwan Durundin Court Road Gindiri
9. Ampang West, Perka, Jirep, Konbiring rural electrification
10. Langai District Headquarter rural electrification.
11. Consultancy, Engineering services and Architectural design for a proposed Mangu new International Market.
12. Bridge linking Bungha Dawo and Kwasghas Bungha Community.

PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- i. Evidence of registration as contractor with the council;
- ii. Certificate of incorporation with CAC/Registration of Business name;
- iii. Evidence of Tax Clearance for the last three years
- iv. Evidence of financial standing (copy of recent financial statement from the Bank your company operates with).
- v. List of equipments and technical staff;
- vi. Evidence of similar projects executed by the company;

Eligible contractors should forward their Bid documents to the Secretary, Mangu LGC Technical Evaluation Committee to reach him not later than two (2) weeks from the date of this publication.

Note: The Council is not bound to award the contract to the highest or lowest bidder.

Signed:

Yamba Appolos Yoila

(Director Budget, Planning and Statistics/Secretary TEC)

For: Transition Implementation Committee Chairman, Mangu LGC

Change of Name

DABOER

I, formerly known as **DAWAM GABRIEL TOOT**, now wish to be known and addressed as **DABOER GABRIEL TOOT**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

MAMVEN

I, formerly known as **LABAR KARGWAK**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MAMVEN KARGWAK BOLGANG**. All former documents remain valid. My date of birth is 2/2/2000 not 2/2/1999. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

SUNDAY SPORTS

The turbulent 2022-23 season for Everton

By
**SHAMOON HAFEZ
& GIULIA BOULD**

That famous quote from former Everton player and England World Cup winner Alan Ball was summed up by a rollercoaster 2022-23 season.

A dramatic campaign saw a managerial sacking, absent board members, fans' protests, a Premier League referral to an independent commission and was topped off by escaping relegation on the final day.

"Let's put it this way," says ex-Burnley manager Sean Dyche, who took charge of the Toffees in January. "In nine and a half years in my previous club I have probably got one book in me, in four months here I have probably got three. There is a lot going on and a lot more to come."

In autumn last year, BBC Radio Merseyside's Giulia Bould was given exclusive behind-the-scenes access to document the inside story of a turbulent season.

"I thought this would be a club on the up," Bould says when reflecting on what she expected.

"I thought it was very much going to be a building process of how Frank Lampard, Everton, the board and the fanbase turned it around."

The previous season had seen Everton stay up with a game to spare, helped by a memorable victory over Crystal Palace at a raucous Goodison Park in which they came from 2-0 down at half-time to win 3-2.

There was optimism under manager Frank Lampard that the team could aspire for a better season next time around, but the reality was much more different.

By the time the mid-season break for the World Cup came around in November 2022, Lampard's position was under real threat following demoralising back-to-back defeats by Bournemouth to leave them languishing in 17th place in the league and out of the Carabao Cup.

The former England midfielder would not be able to turn the dire situation around, but many at the club say they enjoyed working with him, praising his approach to the job and how he took to the area and supporters.

"Living and being around Liverpool by managing Everton, you understand more issues people face in this part of the country that don't in London," Lampard says in the opening episode of the podcast



Abdoulaye Doucoure's winning goal on the final day against Bournemouth kept Everton up last season

series. "You understand a bit more why football feels like everything to them in certain ways.

"The change-around [against Palace] was completely player-led. It was special to me because in the short time here I have understood what it means to people.

"It is a club that has a distinct thing about the fanbase, local area and club. I wasn't aware of that. When I walked in, someone told me I really have to tap into the fans, they want to feel you are listening to them."

Director of football Kevin Thelwell adds in the same episode: "I regard myself as very lucky to work with Frank. Despite all he has achieved in the game, he is such a normal guy.

"He is a collaborator and has such a good way about him. You can see that in the way he brought the football club and fanbase together."

Captain Seamus Coleman says: "To this day I've not seen many managers galvanise the fans and have a connection with the fans as quickly, and as passionately, as they have done with Frank Lampard so that's credit to him."

Winger Alex Iwobi, who joined from Arsenal for an initial £28m in 2019,

adds Lampard "is the guy that saved my career".

"He gave me the confidence to express myself and the opportunity to fall in love with football again," says the Nigeria international. "I am grateful for what he has done for my career."

The inside story of Everton in 2022-23 as the club face their most difficult season

After the World Cup break, the situation at Everton begins to turn really toxic.

On Boxing Day, the first game after the resumption of the Premier League, Everton lose 2-1 at Wolves and, a week later, heavily beaten 4-1 at home by Brighton.

There are chants of "sack the board" during the game and the relationship between the club and supporters starts to turn sour.

Before kick-off in the next game against Southampton, Everton release a statement saying the board of directors have been told to stay away from the game because of a "real and credible threat" to their safety and security.

"There was a moment in training ahead of the Southampton game,

which became a story in itself because of the board statement that came out," she explains.

"It was awful weather in January and Lampard was sat on a football in the rain.

"I asked if he was all right and he just said, 'yeah'. You could see people feeling sorry for him."

Shortly after, a story in the local media appears saying chief executive Denise Barrett-Baxendale was held in a headlock by a fan at the previous game, while social media footage emerges of players Anthony Gordon and Yerry Mina being confronted by supporters.

Some fans asked why there was no CCTV footage of the incident with Barrett-Baxendale and Merseyside Police confirmed they received no complaint from the club about an alleged headlock.

By the summer of 2023, Barrett-Baxendale, the club's chief finance and strategy officer Grant Ingles and non-executive director Graeme Sharp had all left their roles.

"Some of the criticism received was unnecessary and probably inaccurate. The board stayed away from some of the matches because of a threat to their safety and spectators saw their absence as something else, when it wasn't.

"We had some threats made on social media, there were some harsh letters that came into the club. It was certainly not the majority of Evertonians but, as soon as somebody sends in a threat, it has to be taken seriously.

"Spectators or Evertonians' perceptions of why the board were prevented from coming to football matches, they will have seen that as a personal affront, but it was never intended to be that way.

"It was purely about security of individuals and any statement that came out of the club was never directed at the majority of spectators, it was just those one or two individuals who probably take things more seriously than others."

One fan tells the podcast: "We need a complete revamp of this club. Everyone needs to go from the top to the bottom and we need to start from scratch because, at the moment, we

are getting beaten by teams below us and deservedly so."

On Saturday 21 January 2023, away at West Ham, chairman Bill Kenwright, Barrett-Baxendale and former striker Sharp are present, as is owner Farhad Moshiri who appears at an Everton match for first time in 15 months.

The result doesn't go well with a 2-0 loss. Only a handful of players acknowledge the travelling support at full-time and Lampard looks a broken man.

He is sacked shortly after but the handling of his departure is chaotic. The club begin to discuss Lampard's future in the hours after the game and thereafter news outlets - including BBC Sport - report that he has been dismissed.

There is silence from Everton and it is not until Monday afternoon when they officially confirm he has left.

Thelwell says: "We all wanted Frank to succeed and he did a very good job in lots of ways. He united the fanbase at a very difficult time. He did help us to do a great job in helping us to survive last season.

"Fundamentally it becomes a results business and if you don't start to get the results, then of course it's very difficult to keep everybody in situ sometimes.

"We were desperate for it to work, everybody worked as hard as they possibly could for it to work."

Everton Under-21s manager Paul Tait and under-18s boss Leighton Baines take training and midfielder Gordon is missing, texting in to say he is sick.

The former Burnley boss is battle-hardened and details are provided on the podcast of how he insists on shin pads in training and no woolly hats, putting the players through their paces with a gruelling bleep test.

But the transfer deadline shuts with Gordon leaving to join Newcastle for £45m while Everton fail to sign a player in the window.

Thelwell explains: "The reality of our situation is January is always a very difficult window. Everybody is overpriced.

"All the best players are very difficult to get unless you've got the money to spend on those sorts of



Frank Lampard was sacked as manager in January before being replaced by Sean Dyche

SUNDAY SPORTS

AFCON 2023: Eagles drawn against two-time Champions

THE Super Eagles of Nigeria have been drawn against two-time Africa Cup of Nations champions and host Ivory Coast, Equatorial Guinea, and Guinea-Bissau in the group stage of the 2023 AFCON, SoccerNet reports.



Super Eagles

Ahead of the competition, CAF held the draws in Abidjan on Thursday. The event had in attendance some African football greats like Mikel Obi, Taribo West, Aristide Bance, and Yaya Toure.

In the draws, Nigeria was in pot two, and that guaranteed that they were going to have a top African team in their group.

Eventually, the three-time African champions were drawn in Group A alongside hosts and two-time champions of the tournament Ivory Coast. Equatorial Guinea are also drawn in Group A, while Guinea-Bissau, who were

in Nigeria's group at the last AFCON, make up the four teams.

Nigeria are the second team in Group A, so the opening game of the tournament should be between them and hosts Ivory Coast.

Minister directs NFF to conclude statute amendment

SPORTS Minister, Senator John Owan Enoh, has directed the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) to conclude the amendment of its statutes to address the country's situation within the next one year.

According to **Guardian**, the minister also directed the federation to submit to his office the timeline leading to the final amendment of the statute.

Speaking during a meeting with the NFF board recently, Enoh said the federation's new statute should accommodate all interest groups to avoid the constant litigations that have recently dogged the body.

The minister, who recognised NFF's unique position as custodian of Nigeria's football, reminded the federation that the world football governing body, FIFA, recognised each country's peculiar situations, hence the liberty it gives these countries to handle their game to suit their purpose.

He said: "If FIFA recognises the unique situations in each country as you mentioned, then NFF does not need to wait for the universal statute as it may not cover those unique situations and we may not have control of the timelines. Rather, NFF should initiate and conclude all expected amendments and

approval within the next one year and send to FIFA.

"NFF should submit action plan leading to the final amendment of the statute with definite timelines to the office of the Minister of Sports Development, as we need to make progress and bring this to a positive conclusion on or before one year.

"There should be an expansion of the NFF's congress to accommodate other stakeholders. NFF's congress should be such that it is proportionally representative enough of all interests for the good of the sport."

He added: "We need to save our football from unnecessary litigations so that the round leather game makes significant progress.

The legislation from FIFA guiding the NFF must be domesticated in Nigeria, so it is capable of handling issues peculiar to Nigeria."

The minister told the NFF that the current situation of the local league should challenge it to work harder for the development of the game, especially at the grassroots level.

The minister said the strategic meeting with the NFF leadership at the

Moshood Abiola National Stadium, Abuja, was part of his series of engagements with all sports federations in the nation.

He added that it is part of his efforts to appraise the state of sports in the country, to drive a common vision of development, resuscitate, rejuvenate and reinvigorate areas that are not in tandem with its mission.

The Minister said that the Ministry will not run football or any other sport on behalf of the federations, insisting, however, that it has a responsibility to play oversight functions and ensure the best interest of the nation is represented in the operations and activities of federations.

He added that the followership, interest, popularity, and excitement that football generates around the country requires careful and intentional actions for the growth of the game.

"We must be open to dissecting some of the burning issues in our football. This is what this meeting is about. Where are we as a footballing nation? What are our prospects?"

NIGERIAN sprinter Divine Oduduru has been given a six-year ban for committing two doping violations.

BBC SPORT said that, the Athletics Integrity Unit announced the decision on Thursday, saying there was "overwhelming evidence" against the former world junior silver medalist.

The violations were possession of prohibited substances and attempted use of a prohibited substance or method.

Oduduru's case was linked to that of team-mate Blessing Okagbare, who was banned for 11 years for doping in 2022.

"We are very pleased with the outcome of this matter, given its particularly grievous nature, exposing the sinister collusion between athletes and other persons in deliberate plans to corrupt athletics at the highest level," said Brett Clothier, head of the AIU.

Nigerian sprinter receives six-year ban

Oduduru had been provisionally suspended on 9 February.

Okagbare's case came to light after US prosecutors charged therapist Eric Lira with supplying performance-enhancing drugs to athletes at the Tokyo Olympics.

The 34-year-old Okagbare was expelled from the Tokyo Olympics just before the women's 100m semi-finals after it emerged she had tested positive for human growth hormone in an out-of-competition test in Slovakia before the delayed 2020 Games.

Okagbare's phone was seized by US Customs and Border Protection when she returned to the United States and a Federal Bureau of Investigation complaint set out "highly incriminating text and voice messages" with Lira.

She was banned by the AIU for the use of multiple prohibited substances and for not co-operating with the investigation.

There was significant evidence against Oduduru, including Whatsapp messages between Okagbare and Lira that revealed Okagbare soliciting prohibited substances on Oduduru's behalf.

The 27-year-old Oduduru maintained his innocence throughout the investigation.

Oduduru, who has a 100m best time of 9.86 seconds was disqualified in the 100m heats in Tokyo but reached the 200m semi-finals. He won 200m silver at the 2014 World Junior Athletics Championships.

"The AIU is fully committed to unearthing cheats and the extent of their networks. In our quest to protect the integrity of athletics, we often work closely with other investigative organisations," said Clothier.

"We are grateful for the assistance from the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) and United States Department of Justice whose legal reach provided vital evidence which helped in this matter as well as in our case against Blessing Okagbare last year."

The AIU added: "There was photographic evidence of multiple prohibited substances discovered in Oduduru's Florida apartment."

Among evidence found were two boxes of Somatropin, "Xerendip" and "Humatrope," which were identified as human growth hormone; a plastic bag labelled "IGF LR3" - an abbreviation for synthetic Insulin Growth Factor - containing three vials, and two boxes of erythropoietin (EPO).



Divine Oduduru was disqualified in the 100m heats at Tokyo 2020

Govt sacks chairman of Wikki FC

BARELY 2 months after he was appointed as the Chairman of the Interim Management Committee of Wikki Tourists FC of Bauchi, the appointment of Aminu Dalhatu Umar has been terminated with immediate effect.

Newsnow said that, the termination was contained in a letter to that effect from the State Ministry of Youths and Sports, signed by the Commissioner, Muhammad Salis Gamawa, titled: "Termination of your Interim Chairmanship at Wikki Tourists Football Club Board" dated 11th, October, 2023 and addressed to him.

The letter reads: "I hope this letter finds you in good health. It is with a heavy heart that I write to inform you of our decision to terminate your role as the Interim Chairman of Wikki Tourists Football Club.

effective immediately (today), 11 October 2023."

It further reads "Your appointment as interim chairman was a testament to our belief in your ability to steer the Club in the right direction. However, we have observed a series of actions that, regrettably contravene the clear instructions and guidelines provided for the proper management of the club."

According to the Commissioner, "These violations include, but are not limited to, borrowing funds without due approvals, making appointments without adhering to due process, a failure to accept and rectify mistakes after receiving warnings, and a lack of consultation with the board prior to making important decisions."

"These actions compromise the

transparency, accountability, and effective governance we expect within the club. As a result, we are left with no choice but to terminate your interim chairmanship.

"We appreciate the efforts you have put into the club and your commitment to its success. However, we must uphold the principles of good governance, responsible financial management, and adherence to established procedures.

"We trust that this decision will serve as an opportunity for both you and the club to reassess and move forward in a manner that upholds the highest standards of integrity and professionalism.

"We wish you all the best in your future endeavors, and we hope that you continue to contribute positively to the



SUNDAY SPORTS



Haaland

Haaland scores twice to keep Norway hopes alive

ERLING Haaland scored twice as Norway cruised past Cyprus to keep their Euro 2024 qualification hopes alive and force Scotland to wait to seal their place at next summer's tournament.

BBC SPORT said that, the Manchester City striker hit two goals in seven second-half minutes to take his tally in qualifying to six.

Alexander Sorloth and Fredrik Aursnes were also on target in Larnaca.

Norway face Spain in Oslo on Sunday and a failure to win would ensure Scotland's qualification.

Stale Solbakken's side are third in Group A, five points behind leaders Scotland and two points behind Spain, who have a game in hand.

Scotland could have secured qualification themselves with a point against Spain on Thursday but they were beaten 2-0 in Seville.

Meanwhile, Eduard Bello scored an overhead kick as Venezuela earned a 1-1 draw in Brazil in their 2026 World Cup qualifier.

Defender Gabriel Magalhaes headed Brazil ahead from Neymar's corner shortly after half-time, before Real Madrid forward Vinicius Jr had a goal disallowed for offside.

Bello made them pay when he netted spectacularly with five minutes to go.

Brazil fall to second in South American qualifying after three games, behind Argentina who have a 100% record.

Argentina earned their third win from three games in Conmebol qualifying with a 1-0 victory over Paraguay thanks to a brilliant goal from former Manchester City defender Nicolas Otamendi.

The 35-year-old scored his fifth goal in 106 international appearances just three minutes into the match in Buenos Aires, via an acrobatic back-post volley from a corner.

Uruguay, who host Brazil in Montevideo in their next fixture on 17 October, earned a 2-2 draw away to Colombia thanks to a late Darwin Nunez penalty.

The Uruguayans, now managed by former Leeds boss Marcelo Bielsa, trailed to James Rodriguez's 35th-minute strike but equalised through Mathias Olivera shortly after the interval.

Mateus Uribe restored the Colombian lead, but in the 87th minute their goalkeeper Camilo Vargas was sent off for fouling Maxi Araujo in the box, with Liverpool striker Nunez netting the penalty to earn a point.

Chile beat Peru 2-0 while Ecuador won 2-1 in Bolivia, helped by a goal from Kendry Paez, who became the youngest player to score in a Conmebol qualifier.

The 16-year-old, who has agreed a deal to join Chelsea in 2025, raced clear of the Bolivia defence before coolly

finishing left-footed shortly before half-time to open the scoring.

Rodrigo Ramallo equalised for the hosts in La Paz; however, Kevin Rodriguez netted a stoppage-time winner to earn Ecuador their second victory in qualifying.

All 10 teams in the Conmebol confederation play each other twice in qualifying, with the top six sides in the table reaching the 2026 World Cup in Canada, USA and Mexico. The seventh-place finisher goes into an inter-confederation play-off.

WAYNE Rooney believes Birmingham City belong in the Premier League and says that his aim is to "make that happen".

According to **BBC SPORT**, the former England captain, 37, was appointed the Championship club's new manager on a three-and-a-half-year contract on Wednesday.

Rooney said he was "intrigued" and "excited" by the opportunity he now has at St Andrew's.

He told BBC Radio WM: "I want to build Birmingham back up - really get it back to where it belongs. It's a huge club."

"It hasn't been where I think I should it have been over the last 10 years and now this is a challenge and an opportunity to get it back there."

Rooney's appointment is the first made by Blues' new American owners Shelby Companies Limited (SCL), who took over in July and ended head coach John Eustace's 15-month spell in charge on Monday.

SCL is a subsidiary of Birmingham owners Knighthead Capital Management LLC, who welcomed seven-time Super Bowl champion Tom Brady as a minority owner of the club in August.

"I want to be the one to lead"

It marks a return to English football for Rooney, who heads into his third job in management after stints with Derby County and, most recently, American side DC United - who he left earlier this

Rooney targets Premier League return



Rooney

month.

Birmingham sit sixth in the Championship going into the international break, with Rooney's first game in charge away at Middlesbrough - managed by his former Manchester United teammate Michael Carrick - on 21 October.

"I'm excited and, after speaking to the owners, was intrigued and wanted to get in and be part of it."

"The club is looking to elevate itself to new levels and I really want to be the one to lead that."

The former Manchester United and Everton striker said he has already had a "great" meeting with the squad and highlighted the quality of the young players he can now develop, saying "that's something I've always tried to do as a coach".

Giving young players their

opportunity was one of the things Rooney became known for during a turbulent time in charge of Derby, whom he saved them from relegation in his first four months at the helm, only to suffer relegation to League One the following season in 2021-22 against the backdrop of administration, a 21-point penalty and a transfer embargo.

Another consistent trait of Rooney's career so far has been an attempt to play attractive football, and he says that will be no different at St Andrew's.

"I want us to be a possession-based team, to get the ball forward and excite the fans. Ultimately we have to win and that's the most important thing," he said.

"You're always learning, even managers at the top level."

"Football changes all the time and it's important you study the game and the changes, and have your own way and identity to get the best out of the players."

Rooney arrives in the West Midlands with expectations high that he can finally end the club's exile from the Premier League, which dates back to 2011.

Ten managers have come and gone since then, along with several close shaves with relegation, and a prolonged period of uncertainty over the club's ownership that was only recently resolved with SCL's takeover in July.

But Rooney, who made his Premier League debut as a 16-year-old with Everton in 2002, says his career on the field and in the dugout will stand him in good stead when it comes to dealing with the pressure he will face with Blues.

"I love it," he said. "I've dealt with a lot of pressure throughout my whole career, since I was 16."

"You're in the game to develop yourself and your team, and not be afraid to take risks and make mistakes - you learn from the mistakes you make, that's how you improve."

"I've no problem with the pressure and I have to make sure the players are ready for that. We have expectations and targets to hit."

"Winning is always the key but the plan is getting back playing at the top level."

"That's the target for us and I'm here to make that

Messi will not go on loan - Balague

LIONEL Messi will not join another team on loan when the Major League Soccer season ends, says Guillem Balague.

BBC SPORT said that, the Inter Miami captain, 36, has been linked with a return to Barcelona and a switch to the Saudi Pro League.

Inter Miami are out of play-off contention after Saturday's 1-0 loss to FC Cincinnati and their season ends on 21 October.

Argentine World Cup winner Messi has only played 72 minutes in the MLS since early September due to injury.

After the MLS regular season ends, Argentina have World Cup qualifiers against Uruguay and Brazil on 17 and 22 November and Messi is then expected to take a month's holiday.

"Messi will have around one month holiday, like other footballers. So forget any move to Saudi or similar," says Spanish football expert Balague.

He will then return for pre-season in Miami with the MLS new season starting in February.

The seven-time Ballon d'Or winner joined Inter Miami from Paris St-Germain in July and guided the club to their first Leagues Cup victory in August, before losing the US Open Cup.

Although he has scored 11 goals in 13 games for the side, only one of those has come in his five MLS appearances.

Messi has been linked with a

return to Barcelona ever since he left for PSG in 2021 after 21 years at the club.

Asked about the rumours after the loss to FC

Cincinnati, Inter Miami manager Tata Martino said: "That's surprising. I know nothing about that. If you're telling me that he's going to go



Messi

Kenwright has cancerous tumour removed from liver

EVERTON chairman Bill Kenwright has had a cancerous tumour removed from his liver.

BBC SPORT said that, the club confirmed on Wednesday the operation, carried out six weeks ago, was "completely successful".

However, complications meant Kenwright required a "prolonged period in an intensive care unit".

"He has returned home to continue his recovery which is expected to be

club said.

In September, Everton owner Farhad Moshiri agreed to sell his 94% stake to American investment fund 777 Partners.

The club said Kenwright, 78, had "worked hard" alongside Moshiri "right up until the day of the procedure" to help facilitate the proposed takeover.

Toffee fans held protests before some home games last season and called for Moshiri and the board to leave the club.

Barrett-Baxendale, chief finance and strategy officer Grant Ingles and non-executive director Graeme Sharp have all since left their boardroom roles, but Kenwright remains in his post as chairman.

"Mr Kenwright has always been fiercely protective of his private life and is grateful that his privacy has been respected during this difficult time," Everton added.

"He hopes this will continue following this

SUNDAY SPORTS



NPFL action

NPFL to sanction clubs over time-wasting antics

THE Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL) board has vowed to sanction clubs that indulge in any negative tactics through their ball boys to run down...

The Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL) board has vowed to sanction clubs that indulge in any negative tactics through their ball boys to run down the clock and win matches.

The league organisers have said it has been discovered that there is often a gradual reduction in the number of balls available for play whenever the home side is leading.

According to the NPFL board, the ball boys are instructed to hide away balls rather than keeping them close to return for play to continue when the one in use goes out.

Consequently, the NPFL said it has now moved to stamp out

this unsporting behaviour, dangling heavy sanctions on clubs that henceforth fail to carry out a reorientation of their ball boys to put a stop to the practice.

Like 'Jay Jay' Okocha, I rather watch Premiership than NPFL Okocha calls for NPFL proper management to attract investors

In a memo to the clubs, Davidson Owumi, the Chief Operating Officer of the NPFL said the attention of the league has been drawn to the corruption of young boys into bad football practice.

'It has come to our attention, the unscrupulous and undisciplined behaviour of ball boys on match days. The continuous attitude of ball boys hiding match balls when the game is still on and mostly in favour of the home team shall no longer be tolerated'.

The memo reminded the

clubs hierarchies that at no time during a match should there be less than ten match balls available to the teams.

'Note that at every point in time during an NPFL match, a minimum of ten match balls should be available for use at all times.'

The NPFL board went further to say that the practice constitutes misconduct under Rule C1.1 of the NPFL Framework and Rules, a breach of which may lead to appropriate sanctions against erring clubs.

'We urge you to take immediate steps to rectify this situation by carrying out orientation sessions for the ball boys to ensure that they understand and adhere to the rules.'

'Failure to do so may result in penalties, including fines and points deductions as outlined in Rule C18 of the NPFL Fram.

International friendly: Osimhen doubtful for Mozambique clash

FOLLOWING the injury he sustained in the game against Saudi Arabia, Super Eagles forward Victor Osimhen remains a big doubt for the second friendly against Mozambique, BSNSports.com.ng reports.

The Napoli striker was subbed off early in the second half of the game against the Green Falcons due to an injury he sustained in the course of the game.

The coach of the Super Eagles Jose Peseiro has said Osimhen will undergo an MRI Scan to ascertain the level of the injury.

"At this moment, it is my opinion, will I go and put in a player with an injury?"

A month's injury, or even two? It is better to put it in his mind now.

"He is going to do the test, check, and if it doesn't improve, you must expect the club to make the final decisions, the club pays the salary for him. "Not only for Osimhen but for our players", he said after the game.

Nigeria's Super Eagles coach Jose Peseiro has attributed the inability to beat Saudi Arabia to poor finishing from the attackers.



Osimhen

The Arab country forced the international friendly played in Mozambique in a 2-2 draw against Portugal on Friday.

Eto'o daughter requests prison sentence for her father

BARCELONA legend Samuel Eto'o's daughter, Erika Do Rosario Nieves wants him to be jailed in prison for a year over failure to pay €90,000 child support, according to Diario Sport.

The former Barca star does not pay his daughter the child support fee of €1,400 per month - the sum that was defined by court last year when it was confirmed that Erika is

daughter. Eto'o allegedly hasn't paid the allowance fee for 5 years already which amounts to 90,000 euros.

"He owes his daughter more than five years of allowance but continues to defy justice.

Erika's economy is very weak, while Eto'o lives in luxury," the daughter's lawyer, Fernando Osuna, has

STUDENTS' participation in sports, especially group competitions help them to learn skills that apply to opportunities both on and off the field of play. Through school competitions, children establish a solid work ethic that values practice and rewards determination as against the 'quick success' syndrome seen in many others who do not engage in sports.

Moreover, sporting activities can help earn a child scholarship as there are always grant opportunities for students with athletic skills and noble characters.

Unfortunately, Nigeria's education curriculum does not in actual sense give room for sports and education to go hand-in hand.

A good example was the experience of James Aina, who as a student of the University of Lagos was denied the opportunity to achieve his goal because of a clash with his school academic calendar.

In 1994, James found himself in the middle of a big tussle between his studies and his sports passion. He was compelled to forfeit his dream of participating in the World University Games in California, USA because of his studies.

Similarly, a young man, by name NdukaubaEmenike, who was the school football team captain and the sports prefect of his school, told a story how he was made to repeat classes while in secondary school because of his involvement in

Okocha calls for NPFL proper management to attract investors

FORMER Super Eagles captain, Austin Jay Jay Okocha has reiterated his call for proper management of the Nigerian league to make it attractive to investors.

While reacting to the game, the Portuguese gaffer made it clear that they lacked the killer instinct but expressed his happiness about the result.

"I think we played very well in the first half and could have scored about three to five goals and in the second half as well.

"We created more chances in the second half but we needed the killer instinct in this squad I'm happy with the result."

"We need to improve on our finishing", he said.

Super Eagles will face Mozambique in the second friendly game on Monday.

Why Nigeria needs sport-education curriculum

sports. "I was involved in many sports while in secondary school, and this resulted in my being away from classes. As a result, I was did not do well in my WASSCE. Of course my parents were not happy with me", he said.

This was close the case of one the ex-super eagles player, who at his secondary school was bundled out of school to represent the country on international competitions without a provision to augment the lost lessons time.

James, now a coach believes education and sports can go together but only with a proper policy in place.

In balancing sports and education without jeopardizing

either, James have this to say, "Discipline is key if we want to use sports to develop our youth."

Sports, he said are governed by rules and regulations which must be obeyed by all and sundry. In sports there is time for everything.

And when it is combined with education, a lot of care must be taken to avoid clash of interests, and one overriding the other.

"A child must be made to engage in education in order to engage in sports", he opined.

Our educational system needs an overhauling. A system where a child will enter classroom by 8:00am and leaves by 4:00pm, is not ideal for talents developing.



Okocha calls for NPFL proper management to attract investors

Okocha said this in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) yesterday in Lagos.

The mercurial midfielder, who started his journey to stardom in football with Rangers International FC in 1990, said he had earlier expressed an honest opinion about the Nigerian league being a less-fancied league.

Recall that Okocha in a recent interview with the local media in Nairobi, Kenya, on Sept.1, said he would rather watch English Premier League than the Nigerian league, an opinion which generated some backlash.

"My position on NPFL stands. One thing that is for sure is that there is no shortage of talents in Nigeria, the only difference is management and putting

structures in place.

"I don't want to own a club, I would have loved to. But the question is, how will I function when I know that I will struggle to win away matches, knowing that those games won't be televised?" he asked.

Explaining further Okocha said: 'It hurts to see that the efforts that we have put in those years have not been built on.

"We need to make our stadia conducive to watch matches and not people being harassed; we should make sure that we are having the right results and not that home teams must win at all cost.

"I made the statement because of anger, because I cannot be at home in Nigeria and won't be able to watch matches. I desire to go and inspire other players," he said.





Sports Minister dusts Up 10-Year Football masterplan

NIGERIA'S Minister of Sports Development, Senator John Owan Enoh has tasked the Nigerian Football Federation to take deliberate actions on the implementation of the 10-year football development masterplan, developed in 2022.

Senator Enoh made the call during a meeting with the executive board of the NFF, as he passionately rallied stakeholders to ensure football, which represents a tool of national unification, develops across all spheres, including but not limited to the domestic league, infrastructure, coaches' education, referees' development, etc.

He said that the Government is dedicated to fostering a national football culture that embraces international standards, and will support the establishment of a robust framework for domestic football. He added that the Ministry is fixated on creating a value chain that enhances the overall sports ecosystem.

Meanwhile, speaking post-match after his side conceded an injury time goal to draw 2-2 with Saudi Arabia in an international friendly on Friday evening, manager Jose Peseiro fired a warning to Super Eagles fans, saying that their constant criticism of national team goalkeepers does more harm than good.

Francis Uzoho is in the spotlight again for the wrong reasons after his horrendous blunder gifted the Saudi Arabians the opening goal and he didn't cover himself in glory for the second goal conceded ten minutes into second half stoppage time.

The signs were there that Uzoho was not at his best heading into the friendly against Saudi Arabia, given that he has been inactive for his Cypriot club since May 20, 2023.

Even before today's clash, the 24-year-old was not a popular figure with Super Eagles fans, many of whom feel he was the chief culprit for Nigeria's failure to qualify for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

Eleven minutes into the contest at the MKO Abiola



Super Eagles celebrate one of their goals in their match against Saudi Arabia

Stadium, a shot from Thomas Partey squirmed under the body of Uzoho and went into the net and that goal proved decisive as the Super Eagles were eliminated via the away-goal rule.

When asked to share his thoughts on the Super Eagles goalkeeping

department, Peseiro said: "I like our players, when they do mistakes it is my responsibility. I don't know if Nigerians can provoke that situation because the goalkeepers never play free, never play calm because the people, I don't know why, attack the goalkeeper every time.

"Why don't they attack the strikers when they lose the ball or miss a goal, why? "Every time, when I arrived here I remember I was told to change the goalkeeper and the goalkeeper does not feel comfortable. "I spoke with all of them.

No one feels comfortable because everybody attacked them. They could do mistakes, it is my responsibility. Next time I need to train him (Uzoho) better." Uzoho has posted 12 clean sheets in 31 appearances for the Super Eagles while conceding 31

goals.

Also, worrying concerns for Italian Serie A club Napoli, following the news of Victor Osimhen limped off injured during Nigeria's friendly match against Roberto Mancini's Saudi Arabia in Portugal, BSNSports.com.ng sourced.

The centre-forward was in the starting XI for Friday evening's game, which ended with a 2-2 result.

Saudi Arabia had taken the lead, but Nigeria turned it around only to be held in stoppages by a deflected effort.

Osimhen suddenly crumpled to the ground after a knock and motioned to the bench that he wanted to be substituted at the 55th minute.

It is not yet clear what kind of injury he has sustained, but it will undoubtedly concern Napoli ahead of crucial games against Verona, Union Berlin in the Champions League and Milan in Serie A.

Osimhen has an unfortunate record of sustaining injuries while playing for Nigeria, including a dislocated shoulder in November 2020 that kept him out for two months.

Ebi missing in Falcons' squad for Olympics qualifiers

FOR the first time in about four decades, Super Falcons defender, Onome Ebi, will be missing in the team's squad as Nigeria face Ethiopia in this month's Paris 2024 Olympics qualifier.

Onome Ebi, 40 years, became the oldest female player in Africa to play at the 2023 Women's World Cup, co-hosted by Australia and New Zealand. She had featured in several other tournaments including playing in six African Women's Nations Cup.

At a point, some Nigerian fans called on her to retire, but Ebi was adamant, insisting that she would continue to play for the national as long as her body allowed her.

But what appears a 'forced retirement' may have come from the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), as she was left out of the 19 players invited to the Super Falcons' camp for this month's Paris 2024 Olympics qualifier against Ethiopia.

The East African country, Ethiopia, will host the first leg of the second-round fixture in Addis Ababa on October 25, with the second leg in Nigeria on October 31.

Ethiopia eliminated Chad in

the first round of the series as Nigeria drew a bye to the third round of the 2024 Women Africa Cup of Nations qualification series, after Sao Tome and Principe's senior girls scratched the tie. The Falcons will be up against their counterparts from Cape Verde in the third round of that series at the end of November.

The refusal of the NFF to include Onome Ebi in the fixtures has been a major debate in many sports

programmes on radio and television stations.

"I am sure some officials of the NFF are equally tired of seeing Onome being invited to the Super Falcons," one fan, Theophanous, said yesterday. "She ought to have retired from the team long ago."

Another fan, Moses, said: "In sports, if you don't retire when the ovation is loudest, you will be forced into retirement. I am sure that is

what has played out in the case of Ebi. Some players don't know when to stop and we know what ends it."

Another fan, Ese, added: "Ebi should know it's time to give way for the younger ones but she doesn't want to quit when the ovation is high, that is if it is even still high. In fact, I expected Onome Ebi to quit long ago before Desire Oparanozie announced her retirement. There are two or three more players in the

Super Falcons that are no longer effective in the squad. The NFF should stop the coach from calling them. They lack match fitness and sharpness."

Meanwhile, former Super Falcons coach, Godwin Izilien, has applauded the decision to exclude Ebi from the Super Falcons squad for the Paris 2024 Olympics qualifier against Ethiopia.

Ebi played under Izilien at the 2004 edition of the African Women's Championship held in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Among those invited for the tie against Ethiopia are goalkeepers: Chiamaka Nnadozie, Tochukwu Oluehi and Monle.

The defenders are OsinachiO hale, Comfort Folorunsho, Oluwatosin Demehin, Michelle Alozie, Nicole Payne, Jumoke Alani and Rofiat Imuran.

The midfielders are Halimatu Ayinde, Peace Efih, Christy Ucheibe, RasheedatAjibade, Toni Payne and Regina Otu.

The invited attackers are OmorinsolaBabajide, Ifeoma Onumonu, Asisat Oshoala, Uchenna Kanu, Gift Monday and Opeyemi Ajakaye.



Nigeria's defender OnomeEbi (L) and teammate OsinachiO hale celebrate teh Super Falcons' victory after the end of the encounter against Australia at the FIFA Women's World Cup.