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Nigeria: A country still in darkness

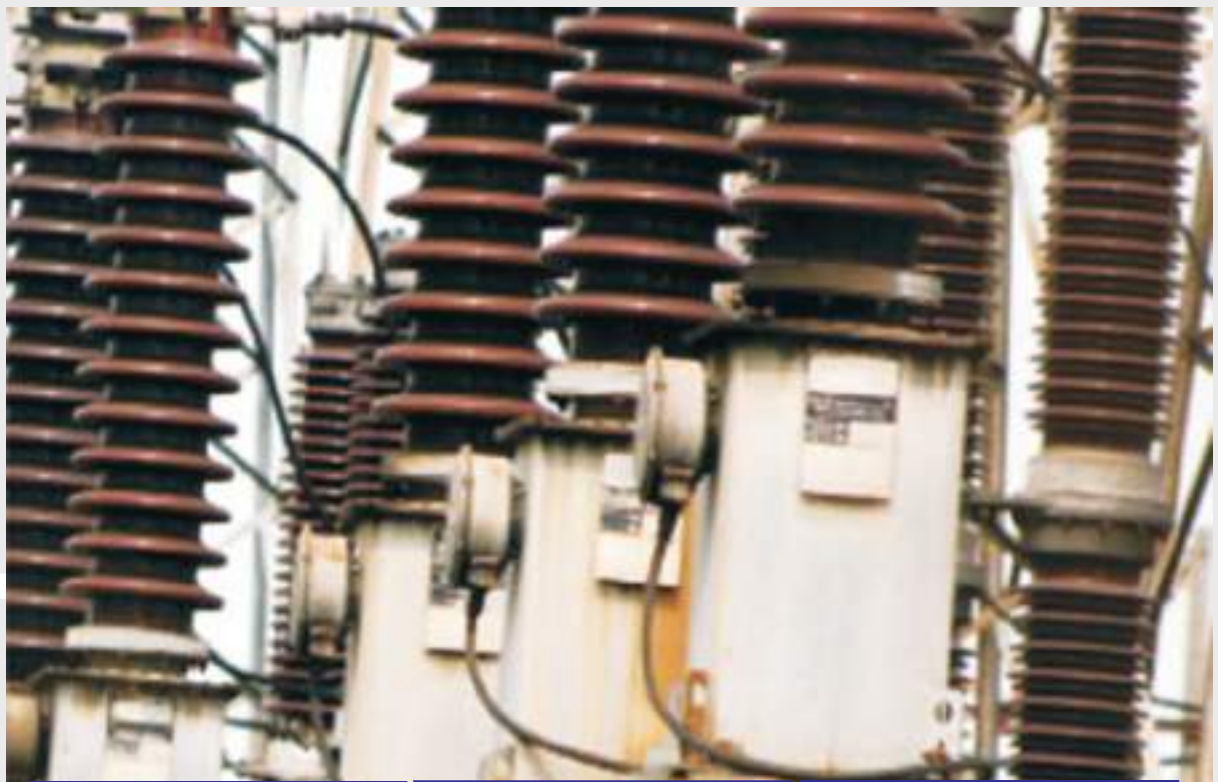
Within this year alone, the country has suffered not less than five collapsed electricity grid that has caused nationwide blackout with incalculable consequences on homes, businesses which has also become a major clog in its wheel of socio-economic progress. KENNETH DARENG writes.

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Xraying President Tinubu's Independence anniversary speech

To commemorate Nigeria's 63rd independence anniversary on the 1 October 2023, President Ahmed Bola Tinubu gave his first Independence Day speech as Nigeria's leader. The President gave an account of his stewardship, defended his administration's sweeping reforms that have caused hardship to the people, and rolled out temporary measures to mitigate the impact of those hardships. At best, it has been judged as a mix grill of the good and the bad.

He reinstated his pledge to reshape and modernise Nigeria's economy and to secure the lives, liberty and property of the people.

However, mixed reactions have trailed the President's speech, especially as regards the N25, 000 provisional pay rise announced for workers, among other measures. Experts are of the notion that considering the high inflation rate, this temporary measure will not solve the economic hardships faced by Nigerians.

President Tinubu had also announced plans to extend the cash transfer to an additional 15 million vulnerable households to cushion the effects of the fuel subsidy removal. Faulting that plan, Nigerians said there is no reliable data to make it work.

One of the economic reforms rolled out by President Tinubu is the setting up of an Infrastructural Support Fund for states to invest in critical areas to ensure better grassroots development. But economists have criticised that move. They described it as throwing money around where it would make no impact. They suggested funding production in order to reduce spending on importation.

President Tinubu also revealed that his administration planned to open a new chapter in the transport sector that would reduce the cost of transportation across the country. The government will deploy cheaper and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses that will operate at a fraction of the current fuel price. This is commendable bearing in mind that cost of transportation has trickle effects on the cost of goods and services. It would translate to cheaper - goods and services.

There is no gainsaying that if the President's economic reforms were implemented, the citizenry would heave a sigh of relief. Nigerians should not throw the baby with the bathing water by picking holes in the President's plan of action. For example, pumping money that would be given as soft loans to its members, will empower small businesses to grow.

Apart from FG's initiative to ease transportation, State Governors should also follow suit and emulate their counterparts like Benue Governor, Rev. Fr. Alia who has purchased 100 buses to hand over to Benue Links to ease transportation for his citizens. Lagos and Plateau State Governors, Sanwo- Olu and Mutfwang who are revamping the rail system to make life easier for their citizens. They should be seen to justify the N2bn Naira palliatives given to them by FG out of the N5bn Naira Tinubu promised to give states. If the second tranche of N3bn Naira is released to the Governors, such practical moves that will touch lives directly should be seen and felt by citizens.

There is light at the end of the tunnel for those in the Labour market. President Tinubu insisted that his government has plans to boost job figures in Africa's biggest economy, with a focus on empowering small and medium-scale businesses.

PDP on the other hand, lead the bandwagon of critics of the Tinubu reforms. They dismissed it that there is nothing concrete in it, and pointed out that for one to achieve a target, it must be followed by some sort of timeline to be able to achieve what you set out to do.

The PDP said that Nigerians did not need to pass through agonising hardship as being excused by Tinubu if the nation is run by a government that has the required vision and skills to harness and manage the economic potentials, national comparative advantage and expanded value chain that abound in the vast but dormant productive sector.

It is therefore advised that the government should do more to turn around the fortunes of the nation.. The policies are good but the implementation was not well-thought out. The government should have introduced them in phases to allow the economy to grow.

FG unveils strategy for food security

The federal government yesterday unveiled a strategy for the country's agricultural sector in a move to address challenges in food production and nutrition.

The strategy seeks to build on lessons learned in the implementation of the National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy (NATIP) 2022 -2027.

Minister of agriculture and food security, Abubakar Kyari who unveiled the plan in Abuja, highlighted the focal areas that hinges on integration, sustainability and resilience to Nigeria's agricultural sector challenges.

The strategy is divided into immediate, short, medium and long term that span across the value chains of agriculture such as investment in women and youth in agriculture, animals feeds as an antidote to the farmers and herders clashes, reforms in agricultural research, take-off and operations of the National Agricultural Development Fund, agricultural mechanisation and others

infrastructures to accelerate food production.

Other areas mainstreamed in the strategy are development of a national agricultural database, establishment of new agro tourism hubs, and establishment of animal diseases free zones among others.

In addressing the most pressing needs in the sector, the minister said the federal government was currently handling preparation for the next dry-season farming beginning with plans to cultivate 70, 000 hectares of wheat in November with a target production of about 875,000 metric tonnes

He also announced the National Agriculture and Food Security Summit coming up in November 2023 which intends to bring relevant stakeholders together for development of national action plan for food security with an implementation and sustainability strategy.

The minister assured stakeholders that the issue of 'political will' as an impediment to policy actions in the ministry was now a forgone issue

Kyari stressed that the underlying challenges in the sector require



Tinubu

innovative and trending solutions which are better understood when recounting the challenges of insecurity, youth's unemployment and increasing population.

FG bans use of laterite in road construction

The Minister of Works, Senator David Umahi, has announced a ban on the use of laterite as a base in road construction.

He directed that henceforth, contractors should use lumps, sharp sand and stone base to form the base before laying of concrete or asphalt pavement.

The Minister gave this directive while inaugurating a committee for the supervision of the Reconstruction of Benin - Warri dual carriageway and the dualization of East - West Road, Port Harcourt - Onne Port junction road in River State.

This was contained in a statement signed by the Director (Information), Press and Public Relations of the Ministry, Lere-Adams Blessing, in Abuja, on Friday.

According to her, Umahi noted that laterite has a limited load bearing capacity, susceptible to erosion and weathering especially in areas with heavy rainfall and this can lead to degradation of the road surface overtime, maintenance challenge and does not last long.

She quoted the Minister as saying, "We are giving very serious attention to the roads between Benin and Warri. The road between Eleme and Onne Port, we are mindful of the site conditions of these roads, the water conditions and the boreholes instead of pot holes on these roads.

"No more laterite, contractors are now to use lumps, sharp sand and stone base in place of laterite"

The Minister also directed the newly inaugurated Road Taskforce Team that there must be a continuous maintenance of all the roads under construction until the end of the

project.

He enjoined them to ensure that the contractors are duly informed of the development, and that they should remember that the ministry is under a matching order given by Mr. President, to fix Nigerian roads for the citizens to have ease of movement from one location to the other.

Umahi said, "The committee must implement the contract agreement with maintenance culture as key. Committee members are to monitor the contractors closely to make sure things are done right.

Our contractors can now understand that we are not insisting that things have to change without a reason, but that the society is demanding for sustainability and integrity of the work they are doing"

Umahi disclosed that road infrastructure is one of the key factors for the revolution of our commerce, education, security and power in this country and that Mr. President is committed to our road infrastructure improvement and thus the Ministry is on a mission to uphold the renewed hope agenda of this administration on road infrastructure provision.

"I want to say that road infrastructure is one of the key factors for the revolution of our commerce, education, security and power in this country and Mr President is committed to our road infrastructure, so we are on a mission and we must take back our country.

He added.

The Minister equally mandated the committee to ensure daily proper supervision and documentation of what the contractors are doing and that they must ensure the new methods of

construction are followed including maintenance because it is part of the elements of the project and anything contrary to this will attract appropriate sanctions.

Umahi said, "We are not at war with the contractor but contractors should not put the public to suffering. Proper daily supervision and documentation of what the contractor is doing is compulsory.

They must ensure the new method of construction is followed and maintenance follows too because it is part of the elements of the contract and any offence is punishable."

Umahi ordered that contracts must be stable; no variation (VOP) on the contract will be accepted.

He charged the contractors using asphalt pavement to ensure that their contracts are stable, sustainable and can stand the test of time and warned that the ministry will not go to Federal Executive Council (FEC) to ask for increment because of the fluctuating price of bitumen, insisting that the ministry will not go beyond the N6trillion set aside for the ongoing projects completion.

He also said, "Those contractors using asphalt concrete and have achieved 80 percent completion can go ahead but no cost variation because I cannot be going to the National Assembly on weekly basis asking them for increment of contract sum"

The Minister added that before mobilization fund can be released to any contractor, the contractor must have mobilized 50% of its equipment and personnel to site.

He noted that the ministry will respect the rights of contractors and contractors have to also respect the right of the citizens.

NBC warns Arise TV over 'incendiary' remarks

The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) has given Lagos-based broadcaster, Arise TV what it described as a final warning over the alleged preponderance of incendiary remarks in the programmes broadcast on the network.

NBC which was saddled with the responsibility of regulating broadcast content in Nigeria gave the warning in a letter to the Chief Executive Officer of Arise Global Limited.

The letter, which was made available to journalists on Saturday in Abuja was signed Director-General of NBC, Balarabe Shehu Ilesah.

NBC listed the alleged incendiary remarks made by guests on the recent programmes of Arise TV and how they violated the Broadcasting Code in the letter titled "Preponderance of derogatory and incendiary remarks: Final warning."

The NBC boss said the letter followed the Commission's notice with concern of preponderance of incendiary remarks allowed on Arise News.

"This letter once again seeks to underscore the tremendous responsibility put on the broadcaster to manage array of guests that may feature on the station from time to time.

For the benefit of doubt, on Oct. 5 during the programme - 'The Morning Show', anchored by Reuben Abati, Rufai Useni and Ayo Mairo Ese, featured Oladotun Hassan and Dele Farotimi as guests.

"The programme contained unguarded incendiary remarks by Dele Farotimi against the legislature, executive, judiciary and Mr President.

"Similarly, On Oct. 6, the programme "Newsday", featured Kenneth Okonkwo (Spokesperson for

the Labour Party) who used derogatory remarks on air.

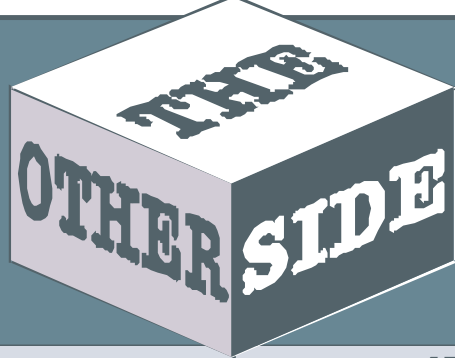
Your attention is therefore drawn to the relevant sections of the Nigeria Broadcasting Code for compliance please," Ilesah said.

The NBC boss explained further that section 1.10.3 says the broadcaster shall ensure that its presenter does not express his or her opinion in the programme, as a matter of professional standard.

He said section 3.3.1 (a) stipulates that the broadcaster shall ensure that any information given in a programme, in whatever form, is accurate


Ilesah said 3.3.3 (c) provided that the broadcaster shall be above inherent biases, prejudices and subjective mindsets

According to section 3.3.1(e), the Broadcaster shall not treat any individual or organisation in an unjust and unfair manner in any



With
**Katdapba
Y. Gobum
On Sunday**

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"We know that the balance of power is tipped heavily greatly against the women. They don't just need appointment; they need to slug it out with the men during elections. The truth is that the women don't have the financial muscle to wrestle power from the men; hence they have to depend on the men for tickets to contest elective positions."

IT is rather difficult to say the teacher's earthly rewards are meager today. They deserve much more, or we think. They have been treated rather shabbily for years, particularly given the Nigerian context. It is difficult to forget the 2023 World Teachers' Day, particularly as Nigerian workers are in the struggle for better pay owing to the removal of fuel subsidy by the federal government on May 29, 2023.

This year's (2023) World Teachers' Day is difficult to be forgotten. There are reasons not to skip this day, given what workers in Nigeria have gone through lately. The Day which was observed last Thursday globally should become our responsibility to fight the war of the Nigerian teacher, who for long has been forgotten and neglected by government and indeed the society.

For the Nigerian teacher, we are aware that so much has happened regarding his predicament and the constant assurance that government is doing enough to change the station of the Teacher. Nothing seems to be happening to the teacher even with consistent rhetoric to the contrary for his development and the future of the sector.

Nothing has changed, rather, the Nigerian teacher's position as we have come to know of it has not improved and nothing appears to be done to change it. It is not as if government has not committed resources to the welfare of the teacher, yet the much that government has said it has done has not been able to address their predicament and settling those contentious issues that have aggravated the minds of the teachers to the point that we have witnessed so many strikes declared by their mother union, Nigeria Union of Teachers.

The World Teachers' Day offers the teacher the opportunity for soul searching and addressing those areas that have been neglected by government and drawing peoples' attention to those critical areas that have been refused attention; but more importantly allow people as well as teachers themselves the opportunity to justify their calling.

Has that been done? Have the teachers critically assessed themselves on the day with a view to changing their attitude to their calling since the activities for the day were started? If they have, could we say with all sincerity that some changes have been noticed in what they do? If nothing has been noticed by the society what have they done to address them, and to be able to change the perception of the society?

The man on the street does not appreciate the worth of the teacher, very few do. They do not see the teacher of today deserving respect and honour that the teacher of yester years would have been given. You and I know that the teacher used to be every thing that was found in society except the bad.

Therefore, if it has changed, and by every inch it has, we have every reason not to see the teacher as an example that he used to be some years back. It is only through the realization of this precarious

The teachers' meager earthly reward



position that we can begin to address those issues that bother him daily.

Right from the beginning, let's agree that education has never gotten the right treatment from government. It therefore means that whatever is done, it can just serve as a palliative measure and cannot translate into concrete solutions. But that is what government has failed to address and put the sector into proper footing.

But then, we can not only address those issues without also assessing if government has played its role as expected of in tackling the problems of the Nigerian teacher over the years. We have said time without number that government has not done much to address the issues of the teachers.

There is so much deception and lack of faith in all the efforts that are continuously being put in place to salvage the education sector from the decay that it has gone through in the last couple of years. I doubt if we can rise from the current decay. It is surmountable, given the fact that on a daily basis the number of students you see wanting to gain admission to read in the country's universities, colleges of education and polytechnics is alarming and it gives credence to the fact that there are some serious ones out there yet. But several others are not prepared to go the right way to pursue their educational careers through the right channels.

It is for this category of students that we need to ask certain pertinent questions regarding the education of our children. We will do so because there is the need to ascertain where we have gone wrong and better still, find avenues through which we can retrace our steps and make the future of our children conducive. Yet, in doing so, we cannot forget easily what we all

have failed to do in regard to sanitizing the sector.

Talking about sanitation of the sector, in the last couple of years, governments have continued to pay lip service to making sure that education is given its rightly place through adequate budgetary allocations, provision of infrastructure and on the whole pay the teachers their rightful dues. And talking about the teachers' dues, we are not talking about paying them pittance and leaving them.

We are saying that government must be able to compensate them with a remuneration that they would die before they get their reward in heaven. Teachers don't want to receive their rewards only in heaven, they want to be paid right here on earth.

Some Nigerian teachers in some states have been shabbily treated and not given what they deserve to be given. The outcome of such a treatment is yearly noticed in the outcome of the products that are churned out of these schools. But the most annoying of all the impediments to quality education is the fact that some states are today battling to settle scores with the Teachers' union.

You will recall that only last year the Nigerian Union of Teachers declared a strike to press home the need to implement the much sought new Teachers Salary Scale.

It took several weeks before it was resolved in favour of the NUT. Since then, it has been one strike after the other from the different state chapters of the union. In some cases, some of the states teachers have spent months at home waiting for a negotiation of the demands by the NUT.

Nothing, for now appears to be happening in most of those states that the teachers are on strike, and our children are still at home waiting for the resolution of the crisis.

In some cases there has been outright condemnation of the union as not being progressive but only out to take away what should be used to develop the state given the current state of the nation's economy. This has further infuriated the teachers who think that the politicians are playing politics with their stomach and are not interested in solving the problem, which has continued to be the bane of our development.

That we are thinking of catching the industrial world with this attitude is ridiculous and laughable as it is an indictment of the efforts that are made for us to be among the twenty most developed economies in the year 2020.

'Teachers we need for the education we want: The global imperative to reverse the teacher shortage' is this year's theme of the event. It is apt and instructive given the continued neglect the teacher has been put through. It is instructive that his theme was chosen ahead of others. We have agreed that government has not given the right support for wanting to go into teaching as a profession.

Elsewhere, once you choose to go into teaching you are given special encouragement through grants above others who are under going other courses in the same institution. This, they believe should spur such students into accepting the fact that teaching has a special place in the development of their people.

They will also reciprocate by rightly doing what they are paid to do: impacting knowledge to the young ones. They do so because they are paid wages that are commensurate with the labour they put their work as teachers.

That is the last thing that we expect here in Nigeria, and they always say, why would the teacher expect his reward here on earth? He

deserves to get it in heaven when he would have suffered so much indignities, neglect and deprivation in his quest for equitable compensation of his services.

Today, however, several people who were employed as teachers are leaving in droves for other jobs that pay, and are not looked at with disdain. This is not the case in some saner climes, where the teacher as the man who works in the bank is paid with dignity and respect; and not because of the two one is a teacher.

I think in the context that we find ourselves education and teachers salary are not treated specially. The attainment of the Millennium Development Goals in his part of the world depends on a virile educational system. What should be done, now that the target year is gone past; can we say with all honesty that government has put in place those things that are needed to attain the goals?

We cannot allow the teachers to continuously go on strikes if we mean to meet the challenges of those goals in the next seven years. Since 1992, the teachers have had a protracted battle with the government on the implementation of the Teachers' Salary Structure; even as we know that teaching became professionalized having set up the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria in 2003.

It is logical therefore that a professional salary structure regime would have been put in place.

For some time now Nigerian teachers have been at home protesting the shabby treatment they have received in the hands of government at all levels. 'The uncompromising posture of the Federal Government on the strike is very unfortunate. The general expectation is that such a hard-line posture has gone with the military era. In a democratic setting, a very diplomatic and sensitive government would have prevented it from getting out of hand. The use of might and naked power in matters of conflict certainly does not produce good results. It cannot do the country any good'.

In saner climes where government treats education with respect, and pays attention to a number of details, they have been developed because right from the beginning education received the right attention.

In Nigeria, even budgetary allocations are not followed. Lack of attention to schools' infrastructure has reduced some schools to abandoned government property. In the last couple of months, some states have had their teachers on strike as a result of lack of the implementation of allowances that were agreed to be paid to them.

With what is happening now is a reflection that once attention is not given to education, what are usually produced from the other levels naturally will affect the quality of what we churn out from our tertiary institution.

This reality is not lost on us in Nigeria, given what we daily see in our schools and even places of work. The foundation has been weak right from start, and until it is addressed by stimulating the teacher, so long will we be in the same station. They deserve their earthly rewards NOW; here on earth.



Conspiracy of silence over men battery

WHO would have believed that the popular American actor, Johnny Depp had allegedly been in an abusive relationship with his wife, Heard. They got married in 2015 but began a legal tussle shortly after, on the issue of physical abuse.

Unfortunately, the rumours making the rounds were that the Pirates of the Caribbean main actor was the one perpetrating the physical abuse against his wife. It was not until the testimony of Dr Shannon Curry portrayed Depp's wife as the perpetrator rather than the victim, which was easier to believe because she is a woman and much younger than Depp.

There is no society in the world that thinks a wife beating her husband is normal. It is something that is frowned at globally because of the general belief that men are stronger than women physically. Or that a woman should be under a man. Our traditions promote that and so do our various religions which give a man the upper arm in all ramifications.

Sometime ago, there was a short video trending on the social media platforms. It was about a man and woman who must have swerved their positions. In the video, the woman who was without doubt in-charge, was instructing her husband who had before him a mortar and held a pestle ready to pound pounded yam, that anywhere he sees yam, he should pound. Everything was okay until she threw yam into her mouth. Her servant husband aimed for her mouth with all his strength with the pestle. Use your imagination to guess what ensued after that.

One has seen men who fear their wives so much that they can't be natural in their company. One in particular can flow in conversations as long as his wife was not present. But the moment his wife was around, he was tongue tied.

A friend said her friend has turned her husband into a stooge. He does the house, cooks, goes to market. She claims that the Bible says he who does not work does not eat. His sin is that he depends on his wife for everything. He was unlucky to be among the few people retrenched from his office for no reason. And since he has no guts to go into business, his business minded wife has switched position with him.

While growing up, we had a neighbour who used to shout at her husband as if he was a fool. In fact, there were a few times she even asked him in our presence if he was a fool. The man was so embarrassed that he walked away silently. The wife became the boss ever since her husband retired. The moment his relations noticed that, they all found their way out of the house. In their place, the wife's relations filled

everywhere. And he became less and less important.

Another man who silently endured torture by his wife said, his undoing was empowering her to do business. The moment the business started moving well, and she was financially buoyant and even independent, her attitude towards her husband changed. His voice in his house became nothing. His wife automatically switched places with him.

His case became so bad because he became a stranger in his home. None of his relatives could come and visit, they got the message and stayed away. He made sure he was relevant as far as their financial needs were concerned. But even with that, they began forgetting to keep his meals for him or feed him anytime he came back home from work.

These and much more pushed him to the arms of another woman who began to do everything his wife was not doing at home. That was the time his wife came down from her high horse and began accusing him of infidelity. He said he didn't deny but told her that she pushed him to the arms of another woman. It took divine intervention to separate him from his girlfriend. It was only possible because his wife changed for the better too.

The cases where men were or are being abused in their relationship or marriage are numerous but not as many as that of women suffering abuse or battery in their marriage. It is not only when the woman is richer than the man. Or when the man depends on his wife for everything. There are isolated cases where the man is the one who pays the piper but the woman dictates the tune. In this case, her husband is a pawn in her hand and does as she says no matter what people say. She controls his wealth and channels it towards her selfish needs. He can do nothing on his own but will often run to her to pat him like a dog.

Cases also abound where women use sex as a weapon to give only when they are happy with their husband. And withhold when unhappy. Many marriages have headed for the rocks because of this attitude. It has also sent faithful men to the arms of strange women whose stock in trade is to destroy homes.

The book of Esther in the Bible is the book every woman should read before getting married. The first chapters tell us how Queen Vashti lost her position as a queen because of insubordination to her king. All that the king asked of her was to come so that he could show off her beauty to his nobles. But she refused him that simple request. As a consequence, she was dethroned.

Nowadays, the attitude of insubordination by wives abounds. The moment a woman thinks she is well rooted, it begins to manifest. The man becomes a rubber stamp except he stamps his feet. The clergy needs to intervene with more spiritual education on this aspect to nip the trend in the bud.

NEWS

By PETER TITLE

Governor Mutfwang increases salaries of street sweepers

PLATEAU State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, has approved a salary increase for widows and women sweeping the streets of Jos and Bukuru metropolis.

This was contained in a press release signed by his Director of Press Affairs, Gyang Bere. He has also expressed his administration's commitment to sustaining these payments and clearing all arrears.

Governor Mutfwang announced this recently when he halted his convoy to greet the widows sweeping the streets of Rayfield in Jos, Plateau State.

He encouraged the women to remain patient with the government and requested their support for policies aimed at improving the living conditions of the people.

Governor Mutfwang reiterated his administration's dedication



Mutfwang

to building a united and individual and group prosperous Plateau and conduct their activities ensuring that every without harassment.

Encroachment: Gov Alia tasks urban dev board

From TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi

FOLLOWING gross encroachment on government lands and building on drainage channels in Makurdi, the state capital, Governor Hyacinth Alia has given marching orders to the Benue State Urban Development Board to within a very short time, identify and summon those that have built on waterways and those who have encroached on government lands to present their title and other relevant documents for assessment

and verification.

Receiving briefings from Governor Alia gave the engineers at the Ministry of Works and Ministry of Makurdi at the premises of Cooperatives, Urban and Benue Links Company Rural Development, Limited where he went to inspect ongoing work on erosion control and laying of interlock.

The governor who expressed satisfaction with the pace and quality of work, especially erosion control measures and interlock at the state owned transport company, fumed at the behaviour of those he described as saboteurs.

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GOSA pays courtesy visit to Mutfwang

BY PETER TITLE

THE Gindiri Old Students Association (GOSA), has paid a solidarity visit to the Executive Governor of Plateau State, Barrister Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang at the New Government House, Little Rayfield Jos, recently.

Welcoming them, the Governor said he was highly elated with the visit, saying it evokes a lot of past memories. He added that being in Gindiri laid the foundation for his spiritual understanding.

According to him, he was proud to be a member of the association, stressing that the position he currently holds comes with a huge responsibility. He assured them that he would not disappoint them while discharging his duties as the Governor of Plateau State.

Governor Mutfwang they were there to celebrate and congratulate him over his victory at the present administration polls and at the tribunal.

The GOSA members who came in their numbers accompanying the executive members said as "Unpleasant".

He posited that his doors their members always were widely opened in any constructive criticism as assignment bestowed on well as counseling to them. They called on enable him move the state Mutfwang to follow that to the next stage of path so that posterity would development.

The Executive Governor Engr. Hyat explained that therefore commended the this year, they would old students for giving back celebrate a mini convention to their alma mater saying on 4th November, 2023 and that the structures were they would recognize some looking as if they were built yesterday and urged them of their members who have been elected and appointed to keep the spirit. into key positions. He used

Earlier, the President of the opportunity to invite the Gindiri Old Students Mutfwang to be part of the Association (GOSA), convention. Engineer Sunday Hyat said

SUNDAY FEATURE

Electoral tribunal verdicts, future of democracy

The palpable fear arising from the declaration of winners in the 2023 general election as announced by the electoral umpire, INEC, the subsequent counsel for losers to go to court, and the outcomes from the courts today are documentary evidence that the Nigerian brand of democracy falls short of the spirit and content that drive democracy in saner climes. Dave Baro-Thomas writes.

THE sheer pretense, connivance and dearth of political will to interrogate the fundamental elements that skew our democratic experimentations since the First Republic and the worsening outcomes since the Fourth Republic – posit nothing but a nation at home with ignominy, and until this shammed democracy is subjected to the acid test and grows organically vis-a-vis respect for its tenants, the business of governance is just a circus in Nigeria.

One of the fall-outs of the recent elections in the country is the coinage – You can go to court and All eyes on the Judiciary – these crept into our political lexicon like wildfire, triggering inconceivable interpretations that stretch from the intellectual to the absurd – and at this juncture, one cannot help but reflect deeply on that aphorism: the law is an ass, or is it that the law is an axe, with the kinds of verdicts emanating from the electoral tribunals across the country.

Before these judgements, expectations were intense, and very few sat on the fence – the ruling party boasted it had no case to answer, while the opposition was resolute that the evidence put on the table before the jurists would change the face of jurisprudence and birth new precedence that would enshrine and grow the much-desired democratic culture and ethos in the country.

It appeared the opposition did a fantastic job with their post-election campaign's theme of eyes on the Judiciary – these are not good times to be a judge adjudicating electoral matters because the judges were also on trial like never in the annals of our immediate history.

All eyes on the Judiciary took a life of its own and dominated our national consciousness such that it deserves to pass as the phrase of the year because never in the history of this nation has this arm of government brought to the cleaners and public ridicule. But why has it suffered this magnitude of disrepute, one wonders, and is the judicial arm an equal arm of government or a mere errand boy for the executive in the context of the doctrine of separation of power?

So far, the tribunals have invalidated some victories at the State Houses, National Assembly, NASS, and out of the 18 gubernatorial electoral cases adjudicated, two sitting governors are red-carded, but matters are proceeding to the Supreme Court. In all of these, there seems to be this air of discontentment and demand for more blood on the dance floor of Nigerian politics, and the angst in the atmosphere is palpable, demanding the head of the judicial arm be dragged to the guillotine.

From the First Republic, the legendary Chief Obafemi Awolowo



challenged the outcomes of the elections till the 1983 presidential election, which was won again for the second time by Alhaji Shehu Shagari of the NPN and that election branded the mother of fraud, yet the Supreme Court held it legit with only Justice Kayode Esho being the dissenting voice on 26 September 1979 – the verdict for the first tenure. Since the Fourth Republic, all presidential election disputations have gone up to the Supreme Court except Goodluck Jonathan, who conceded to General Buhari before the final whistle.

The elections that brought Umaru Yar'Adua, Goodluck Jonathan, Muhammadu Buhari, and now Bola Tinubu are all alleged to be fraught with irregularities on a massive scale, but at all points (while we wait for this present case), the Supreme Court cleared and legitimatised those victories.

Fundamentally, something is wrong somewhere because most of the judgements do not reflect the moods and realities on the ground, and again, legal experts are shouting from the mountaintop that the law is not emotionally-driven, it thrives on hard-core evidence, and where there is none or not sufficiently proven, mere articulations and excellence of speech are merely playing to the gallery and exciting the uninitiated in the temple of justice. Some believe that judges should be discretionary, but medical doctors must follow the rules, or else the patient dies, if you do not get it, forget about it.

So, here we are as a people, confronted with the same post-election tribunal disorder stress and many are hoping that the Supreme Court will contradict the appellate courts, which has not happened in our lifetime and may likely not happen because it is either the legal teams of the oppositions/losers have not

broken the code or organise their evidence beyond all reasonable doubts, otherwise, there is more to Presidential election verdict Nigerians are not aware of.

So, the problems with the outcomes from the courts are endemic and self-inflicted by our collective docility and the once-in-four-years placards carrying and mouthy agitations. As it is today, the judicial arm is a mere tool in the hands of any ruling government to frustrate the development of democracy in Nigeria, and it did not start with Asiwaju Tinubu and will not end with him even when the CJN was in the news shouting that this arm is not a toothless bulldog, but it seems they like bones too much.

Why should the Chief Justice of the Federation, CJN, be at the beck and call of Mr. President, and the State Chief Judges be the errand boys of the Governors? Should their budget be tied to the executive, and is immunity the sole preserve of only the

President, Governors and Deputy Governors in a country like Nigeria, we expect any form of checks and balances where other arms of government are being hounded, harassed, embarrassed and thrown out by the executives because of control of state resources, and even at the last dispensation, members of the National Assembly voted against immunity for the Senate President and the Speaker.

The judicial autonomy is a mirage in our democracy, even when it was enshrined in the constitution but breached in practice, so their financial freedom and welfare remain crucial to the development of democracy in Nigeria, and this should be on first line charge from the national budget, but resisted by the executive for clear-cut reasons – CONTROL!

The French philosopher Baron Montesquieu will turn in his grave when he sees what has become of the doctrine of the separation of power in Nigeria, and we can put

all our eyes on the justices or judges till thy Kingdom come, he who pays the piper dictates the drumbeats, and he who keeps the purse can also transmute into a Judas to keep our brand of democracy, crippled and worthless.

The beauty of any democracy is the rule of law, but the custodians of such ideal that is the judicial arm, are glorified errand boys, broken, insulted, disparaged and incapacitated by the deliberate acts of the other organs, then it is a long walk to freedom as Nelson Mandela mused.

We must rise to the occasion to demand absolute immunity for the Chief Justice of the Federal and States Chief Judges and total financial autonomy for this bastion arm of government – the Judiciary. Otherwise, let us remain with this democracy (the demonstration of craze) and live with whatever verdicts coming from the courts!

"All eyes on the Judiciary took a life of its own and dominated our national consciousness such that it deserves to pass as the phrase of the year because never in the history of this nation has this arm of government brought to the cleaners and public ridicule. But why has it suffered this magnitude of disrepute, one wonders, and is the judicial arm an equal arm of government or a mere errand boy for the executive in the context of the doctrine of separation of power? So far, the tribunals have invalidated some victories at the State Houses, National Assembly, NASS, and out of the 18 gubernatorial electoral cases adjudicated, two sitting governors are red-carded, but matters are proceeding to the Supreme Court. In all of these, there seems to be this air of discontentment and demand for more blood on the dance floor of Nigerian politics, and the angst in the atmosphere is palpable, demanding the head of the judicial arm be dragged to the guillotine."

POLITICS

Kogi Gov: NGO warns candidates against security threat

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

As we prepare for the Kogi governorship election come November 11, 2023, the Executive Director of Lugard Youth Development and Empowerment Initiative, (A non-governmental Organisation), Aminu Okutepa has warned candidates of all political parties against security threat, before, during and after the election.

The Executive Director gave the warning while speaking during the Kogi Youth Town Hall Meeting and Presentation of Kogi Youth Charter of Demand to the gubernatorial candidates in Lokoja on Wednesday

Aminu challenged the governorship candidates to endeavour to play the game by the rules.

He also admonished them to imbibe the spirit of patriotism by ensuring that their campaigns are devoid of triggering violence and security threat to the electorate

"Your campaigns should be issue-based, devoid of insult, inciting and inflammatory statements that could cause crisis or mayhem

"You ought to desist from politically motivated violence, hate speech and fake news in the media industry. Your actions and activities should centre on how to achieve the desired free, fair, credible and peaceful election" Aminu Okutepa further charged the political gladiators

He appreciated the governorship candidates of all political parties in Kogi



Gov. Bello

election and urged them to endeavour to key into Kogi Youth New Charter of Demand geared towards boosting good governance that would usher in accelerated development and capacity building of citizens

In his goodwill message, Ulu, Okoro James, Resident Anti-Corruption Commissioner in-charge of Kogi and Kwara states, admonished the electorate, especially the youths to eschew violence and do away with sentiments while making a choice on who should govern Kogi for the next four years.

According to him, "Your individual and collective choices should be based purely on merit, capacity, competence and the antecedents of the candidates. Those are the qualities you should look out

for while choosing the next governor"

He gave an assurance that "The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission would deploy all available resources to monitor all forms of corrupt practices during the November 11 governorship elections

"Be a good citizen, patriotic and distance yourselves from any electoral malfeasance and have your peace of mind" the commissioner appealed.

Participants were educated on the "Impact of Hate Speech and Fake News in Our Electoral Process"

"Strategies to Address Security Challenges Prior to the Off-Cycle Gubernatorial Election"

Representatives of the three governorship candidates, namely; People's Democratic Party (PDP), Action Alliance (AC), and Young Progressive Party (YPP) attended the

Constitute Independent Investigation panel on rally attack killing - SDP

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

The Governorship Campaign Council of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), in Kogi State, has called on the Inspector General of Police to constitute an independent investigative panel to look into the crisis that resulted in the death of a woman during its campaign in Koton-Karfi last week.

Alhaji Hassan Enapeh, the Director General of the organisation, made the call recently during a press conference held at the party's secretariat in Lokoja.

He debunked the claim by the Kogi State Police Command of the campaign rally in Koton-Karfe.

He noted that the security agents accompanying the SDP candidate were deployed from the office of the Inspector

General of Police and questioned how the woman, killed by APC thugs, could be attributed to the SDP supporters.

He also denied the claim by the Kogi State Police Commissioner that the SDP candidate, Murtala Ajaka, refused invitation for questioning as there was an existing court order from the Federal High Court injunction preventing the SDP candidate from answering any invitation from any quarter, including the police and DSS.

The Director General stated that the SDP and its supporters across the state have lost confidence in the activities of the security agencies in the state regarding the conduct of the governorship election in Kogi State.

He appealed to the National Assembly and the Inspector General of Police to focus their attention on the current situation in Kogi State to ensure free, fair and credible election

NNPP Governorship candidate dumps party for APC.

From Abbas Gungura, Bauchi

The New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) Governorship Candidate in Bauchi State in the 2023 elections, Senator Halliru Dauda Jika, has officially dumped the party and returned to his former party, the All Progressives Congress (APC).

The Nigeria Standard recalled that Senator Haliru Jika decided to dump the APC immediately after the party's primary election at Zaranda Hotel, which gave Ambassador Sadiq Baba Abubakar the ticket, because he was not satisfied with the outcome.

As a result of that development, Jika joined the NNPP and became a candidate of the party. He



Sen. Halliru Jika

contested the 2023 Governorship election in the state, against APC and PDP where he became third loser.

Jika after receiving his APC membership card at Kafin Madaki ward in Ganjuwa Local Government in the state, said, "I don't expect anything short of what I was saying today."

"All APC members in Bauchi State will now come together, harmonise and strategise, fuse together as one solid entity ahead of the 2027 polls, so that we will emerge victorious in Bauchi State". Jika told his supporters who were present to witness his formal return to the APC.

Addressing thousands of his supporters in his ward, Jika said, "This is a homecoming. This is my ward, Kafin Mafarki. it is my support base, it is my base, so I don't expect anything short of what I'm saying today. My return to the APC is marking the beginning of a new dawn in the party in Bauchi State.

"As I said earlier in Hausa, Bauchi has always been a revolutionary state. It is not a politicking time now,

it is time for us to re-strategise, come together and unite so that 2027 will be an easy ride for the APC in Bauchi State, by the grace of Allah," Jika stated.

Earlier, while presenting the party's membership card to Jika, the Kafin Mafarki APC Ward Chairman, Malam Ango Abdullahi, said efforts by some forces in the party to prevent the former NNPP candidate's return to APC failed.

Abdullahi said he was ready to lose his position as APC ward party chairman in order to ensure Jika gets the APC membership card.

He said Jika's return to APC will boost the party's confidence and help make it succeed in the state and the country at large.

Our correspondent in Bauchi, in a related development confirms that Bauchi State Chairman of the NNPP, Alhaji Shehu Sani Mallam also joined the All Progressive Congress (APC) as well as Alhaji Bala Hadis, Bauchi State Vice Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

Governorship candidate condoles with aggrieved family

The governorship candidate of the All Progressives Congress in Kogi State, Usman Ododo

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

allegedly killed by thugs loyal to the SDP Governorship Candidate Murtala Yakubu, in Kotonkarfe.

The first port of call of the candidate was the Palace of the Ohimege of Kotonkarfe, HRM Alh. Abdulrazak Isa Koto, where the candidate expressed sadness over the death of Khadijat. He described the late Khadijat as a "a woman of peace who was desirous of seeing development in Kotonkarfe".

He vowed to ensure justice for the deceased and her family.

Earlier, the spokesman of the Kogi State APC Campaign Council, Kingsley Fanwo, said the party had earlier suspended all campaign activities in honour of the slain Khadijat.



Ododo

African coups, 'failure of democracy' myth

The empirical evidence is clear: When Africans have a voice, they choose democratic governance over every other option, including military rule. By JEFFREY SMITH, writes

THE troubling spate of coups across Africa have not been caused by the failure of democracy, as many pundits and recent coup leaders have claimed. This suggestion is both dishonest and misleading. This is because sham elections rigged by often-aging autocrats do not amount to democracy. Here, we must accept the fact that the meaning of democracy has indeed been warped, and thus called into question, by those who have experienced plenty of Election Day hoopla...

Today on the continent of Africa, there is an unbroken expanse of territory – from Sudan in the east, stretching to Guinea in the west – in which military-led regimes have seized power from civilian heads of state. It is clear that leaders clad in military fatigues are feeling more emboldened than ever.

Over the past decade, since 2013, there have been twenty-two coups and attempted coups across the continent, with fourteen of them taking place in the past three years alone. The success rate is staggering: nine military patches have ultimately succeeded, the latest of which occurred in the central African nation of Gabon on 30 August. Leaders in a number of African capitals are not sleeping easy these days, knowing fully well that another coup before the end of this year is more than likely.

In many of these countries, the first day of a coup is almost always the most euphoric. This is because there is a gaping fissure between the resilient demands of Africans for democracy – alongside its multitude of positive downstream effects – and the woeful lack of its supply. As this gap continues to swell, so too does the volatility of an already young and restive region that is fed up with the empty promises of its leaders, many of whom were imposed, not by military fiat, but rather by rigged elections, the manipulation of democratic institutions, and feckless regional and international community that has failed miserably to hold the line on democratic standards.

In the aftermath of each of the recent military coups in Africa, we have been inundated with images of citizens, mainly young people, celebrating in the streets. Once the new reality sets in, however, people are inevitably forced to ask whether they are getting something better, or simply trading one oppressor for another. The misplaced confidence that coups will somehow lead to genuine democracy, and a better quality of life, has been the hope of many activists from the 1970s onward – but this pipe dream almost never materialises. The simple fact is that military



coups, even if they oust a longtime dictator, rarely usher in a stable democracy.

Of course, there is an understandable appeal and a cathartic rejoice in the toppling of a tyrant. But this optimism is too often reliant on some major misperceptions.

...democrats in Africa and worldwide must consistently and vocally push back against the cynical notion that democracy – and democratic governance, more broadly – is somehow a Trojan Horse for neocolonialism or is somehow part of a nefarious 'Western agenda.' It is both highly misleading and patronising to suggest that democracy has been 'imposed' on Africans, when wars have been fought, and countless lives lost, in the course of the struggle for human freedom.

First, we must not confuse military coups for popular uprisings; the latter has a much better track record at ushering in both stability and genuine democracy. Recent studies unequivocally show that nonviolent civil resistance has been far more effective in producing substantial change in the long term. This is because popular uprisings – especially those grounded in nonviolent resistance – promote and safeguard democratic values at their very core.

Similarly, coups are not a replacement nor a fill-in for free and fair elections in which the will of the people is effectively represented and elected leaders are held accountable. In sum: political power shifting from one autocrat to another is not a 'win' for the people. The worsening security and human rights

situations in a number of post-coup countries across Africa, from Mali to Zimbabwe, highlight this enduring, altogether tragic reality.

Second, we must not accept the charade that today's coup leaders represent 'the people.' That today's military spokesmen are more eloquent – insofar as they cleverly justify their takeovers in extravagant populist ideology – does not deflect from the fact that coups are often elitist, self-serving endeavours. As such, their illegitimate rule merely perpetuates the oppressive and corrupt status quo. The recent coup in Gabon is a prime example: the junta leader now in power is a cousin of the ousted president, who thrived off the regime's largesse for decades, accumulating massive wealth (and million-dollar properties abroad). In Gabon, and in many other contexts, what often takes place is a 'continuity coup' in which very little changes, other than the figurehead benefiting from static resources.

Third, democrats in Africa and worldwide must consistently and vocally push back against the cynical notion that democracy – and democratic governance, more broadly – is somehow a Trojan Horse for neocolonialism or is somehow part of a nefarious 'Western agenda.' It is both highly misleading and patronising to suggest that democracy has been 'imposed' on Africans, when wars have been fought, and countless lives lost, in the course of the struggle for human freedom. Pan-Africanism, in fact, flourished out of the continent's long-enduring democratic demands and

aspirations. African citizens, like all of us, desire to be free and prosperous, and not sit idly by while old oppressors are replaced by new ones in combat fatigue.

Lastly, the troubling spate of coups across Africa have not been caused by the failure of democracy, as many pundits and recent coup leaders have claimed. This suggestion is both dishonest and misleading. This is because sham elections rigged by often-aging autocrats do not amount to democracy. Here, we must accept the fact that the meaning of democracy has indeed been warped, and thus called into question, by those who have experienced plenty of Election Day hoopla but exceedingly little – or perhaps even reversals – in the way of political choice and accountability. Relatedly, we must acknowledge the prevailing bigotry of low expectations that has produced a failure to address rising instances of electoral coups in Africa. Why does this matter? Because electoral coups – or patently rigged elections – pave the way for military coups down the line, as the cases of Zimbabwe, Guinea, and Gabon make clear.

The empirical evidence is also clear: When Africans have a voice, they choose democratic governance over every other option, including military rule. If we can concentrate on fixing the supply side of democracy – and unapologetically support democratic governance and leadership – that is where the solution inevitably lies.

We cannot deny the fact that military coups, in certain contexts, represent a glimmer of

hope, albeit fleeting, for the masses living under crushing dictatorships or dynastic rules. There is much blame to go around, including a generation of African leaders who have failed to live up to the democratic standards that they, themselves, have drafted, signed, and ratified. Washington, too, has been woefully ineffective and inconsistent in its responses to military takeovers. A common theme in each of the recent coups, in fact, has been emboldened militaries knowing fully well that they are likely to face little to no resistance for their actions in the form of targeted sanctions or diplomatic isolation.

What can be done in this prevailing vacuum of leadership and misunderstanding, then, is to empower the masses – the average citizens and civil society, the democratic opposition, even leaders in the diaspora and those living in exile – to seize and act swiftly on any opportunity, including a military coup, to rise up peacefully and to demand dignity and build institutions that safeguard the fundamental tenets of democracy. To be strong and resilient, government effectiveness must necessarily grow in strength, alongside citizen power. Washington, in particular, can play a pivotal role here by investing in and helping to enhance the capacities of African political institutions – legislatures, judiciaries, and the independent media.

Of course, this also requires independent electoral commissions that are properly equipped and supported to enhance citizen trust in and the legitimacy of electoral outcomes, which in the due course of time improves the prospects of long-term stability and safeguards against another emboldened military stepping in to 'save the day.' We are making a grave mistake if we write off the importance of democracy, while remaining flippant and passive about democratic governance, and all that it entails for stability and the quality of life. The longing for democracy is poignant – for Africans, this a quest that spans six decades.

The empirical evidence is also clear: When Africans have a voice, they choose democratic governance over every other option, including military rule. If we can concentrate on fixing the supply side of democracy – and unapologetically support democratic governance and leadership – that is where the solution inevitably lies.

Jeffrey Smith is the founding director of Vanguard Africa and the Vanguard Africa Foundation.

SUNDAY PEOPLE

MUTFWANG COMMISSIONS CLINIC

Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang recently commissioned a clinic in Vwei Community, Jos South LGA



Barr. Caleb Mutfwang with the TIC Chairman of Jos South LGC, Hon. Peter Vwang Dung



Plateau State Governor, Barr. Mutfwang commissioning the project at Vwei, assisted by the Gbong Gwom Jos and President of the State Ttraditional Council of Chiefs, His Majesty, Da Jacob Gyang Buba CFR, TIC Chairman, Jos South LGC, Hon. Peter Vwang Dung and others guests



Cross section of invited dignitaries



Governor Mutfwang unveiling the project



Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang delivering speech



Cross section of the village is during the commissioning ceremony



DOPPA, Mr. Gyang Bere (left) with other Principal Staff of the Governor



Transition Implementation Committee Chairman of Jos South LGC, Hon. Peter Vwang Dung reading his speech

WITH the quest to effectively manage activities of the Tenth Assembly and ensure optimal performance for the good and benefit of the people of Plateau, Speaker of the Plateau State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Moses Thomas Sule has constituted twenty four (24) House standing committees.

You would recall that the speaker had earlier in July, constituted five (5) House Standing Committees which included that of Selection, Rules, Business, Inter-governmental and Inter-parliamentarian, House Services and Welfare, Labour and Security and that of Fund Management.

After the pronouncement during plenary, the Rt. Hon. Speaker instructed the clerk of the House to expeditiously prepare and submit to his office the list of members who will serve as secretaries to the respective committees. He however, instructed that no Director should be appointed secretary of any committee, adding also that no committee should embark on an oversight function without his consent and approval.

The committees and portfolios assigned are as follows:

Education, Science and Technology:

Hon. Philip Jwe - Chairman, he is the member representing Barkin Ladi constituency.

Hon. Nanbol Rimvyat - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Joseph Gokum - Member

Hon. Kalamu Idris -Member, Hon. Ishaku Maren - Member.

Health: Hon. Salome Wanglek representing Pankshin South constituency - Chairman, Hon. Cornelius Doeyok - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Ibrahim Agbalak - Member, Hon. Sani Shilak -Member and Hon. Adamu Aliyu - Member.

Culture and Tourism:

Hon. Samaila Bala member representing Kantana constituency as -Chairman, Hon. Danjuma Azi - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Isa Madaki - Member, Hon. Nimchak Rims - Member and Hon. Adamu Aliyu - Member.

Appropriation:

Hon. Danjuma Azi member representing Jos North West is the Chairman, Hon. Paul Datugun - Deputy Chairman,

Hon. Joseph Bukar - Member, Hon. Bala Fwangje - Member and Hon. Timothy Dantong - Member.

Women Affairs and Social Development:

Hon. Happiness Akawu, member representing Pengana constituency as Chairman. Hon. Salome Wanglek - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Isa Madaki - Member, Hon. Sani Shilak - Member and Hon. Paul Datugum - Member.

Youth and Sports:

Hon. Joseph Gokum, the member representing Kanke constituency is Chairman. Hon. Philip Jwe - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Gabriel Dewan - Member, Hon. Happiness Akawu - Member and Hon. Nannim Joeseeph - Member.

Housing and Urban Development:

Hon. Nanbol Rimvyat,

representing Langtang North Central, Chairman Hon. Adamu Aliyu - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Timothy Dantong - Member, Hon. Danjuma Azi - Member and Hon. Gabriel Dewan - Member.

Environment and Solid Minerals:

Hon. Kalamu Idris representing Dengi constituency is Chairman, Hon. Danjuma Azi - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Sani Shilak - Member, Hon. Rims Nimchak - Member and

Hon. Joeseeph Gokum - Member.



As PLHA constitutes standing committees

Judiciary, Ethics and Privileges:

Hon. Adamu Aliyu representing Jos North North Chairman, Hon. Nannim Joseph - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Happiness Akawu - Member, Hon. Danjuma Azi - Member and Hon. Gabriel Dewan - Member.

Parastatals and World Bank Projects:

Hon. Paul Datugun member representing Qua'an Pan North Chairman, Hon. Nanbol Rimvyat - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Happiness Akawu - Member, Hon. Aliyu Adamu - Member and Hon. Kalamu Idris - Member.

Water Resources and Energy:

Hon. Nannim Joseph

representing Langtang North North Chairman,

Hon. Danjuma Azi - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Saloma Wanglek - Member, Hon. Adamu Bala - Member and

Hon. Cornelius Deoyok - Member.

Commerce and Industry:

Hon. Galadima Adamu member representing Wase constituency Chairman, Hon. Cornelius Doeyok - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Salome Wanglek - Member, Hon. Timothy Dantong - Member and Hon. Joseph Bukar - Member.

Agriculture and Natural Resources:

Hon. Sani Shilak member representing Mangu North East Chairman, Hon. Samaila Bala -

Deputy Chairman, Hon. Nannim Joseph - Member, Hon. Joseph Gokum - Member and

Hon. Ibrahim Agbalak - Member.

Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs:

Hon. Timothy Dantong member representing Riyom constituency is to serve as Chairman, Hon. Rims Nimchak - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Salome Wanglek - Member, Hon. Philip Jwe - Member and Hon. Kalama Idris - Member.

Finance:

Hon. Cornelius Doeyok representing Qua'an Pan South Chairman, Hon. Bala Fwangje - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Ibrahim

Agbalak - Member, Hon. Ibrahim Adamu - Member and Hon. Danjuma Azi - Member.

Information:

Hon. Agbalak Ibrahim member representing Rukuba/Irigwe is the Chairman, Hon. Timothy Dantong - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Cornelius Deoyok - Member, Hon. Joseph Bukar - Member and Hon. Gabriel Dewan - Member.

Works and Transport:

Hon. Nimchak Rims representing Langtang South Chairman, Hon. Philip Jwe - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Maren Ishaku - Member, Hon. Joseph Bukar - Member and Hon. Paul Datugum - Member.

Public Accounts and Petitions:

Hon. Isa Madaki member representing Jos East constituency Chairman, Hon. Ishaku Maren - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Paul Datugum - Member,

Hon. Gabriel Dewan - Member, and Hon. Nimchak Rims - Member.

Lands, Survey and Town Planning:

Rt. Hon. Gwottson Fom Dalyop the Deputy Speaker and member representing Jos South constituency Chairman, Hon. Gabriel Dewan - Deputy Chairman, Hon. Nimchak Rims - Member, Hon. Ishaku Maren - Member and Hon. Paul Datugum - Member.

Selection:

Rt. Hon. Moses Thomas Sule the Speaker and member representing Mikang constituency Chairman, Rt. Hon. Gwottson Fom Dalyop Deputy Chairman.

Rules Business and Inter-governmental:

Hon. Ishaku Maren the House Majority Leader and member representing Bokkos constituency Chairman, Hon. Agbalaka Ibrahim - Deputy Chairman.

House Services and Welfare:

Hon. Bala Fwangje representing Mangu South constituency Chairman, Hon. Kalamu Idris - Deputy Chairman.

Labour and Security:

Hon. Joseph Bukar the Deputy Minority Leader and member representing Shendam constituency Chairman, Hon. Timothy Dantong - Deputy Chairman.

Fund Management:

Rt. Hon. Moses Thomas Sule Speaker and member representing Mikang constituency Chairman, Rt. Hon. Gwottson Fom. - Deputy Chairman.



SUNDAY MAGAZINE



Tinubu



Adelabu



Mbah

Nigeria: A country still in darkness

Within this year alone, the country has suffered not less than five collapsed electricity grid that has caused nationwide blackout with incalculable consequences on homes, businesses which has also become a major clog in its wheel of socio-economic progress. KENNETH DARENG writes.

THE recent collapse of the national grid suggests that all may not be well with the electricity generation and supply across the country despite repeated assurances by the Transmission Company of Nigeria [TCN], which had made frantic efforts to partially restore the national grid.

SUNDAY STANDARD sources gathered that TCN engineers had to put in extra man hours to remedy what many pundits refer to as, a national embarrassment which had once again exposed the gaps and lapses within the energy sector.

Although the latest collapse of the national grid was attributed to a fire incident on the Kanji/Jebba .330KV Line 2, which in a statement by the TCN General Manager, Public Affairs, Nddi Mbah, disclosed that the cause of the collapsed grid was being investigated by the agency.

However, the persistent power collapse of the nation's electricity grid witnessed in recent times has put to question the viability or otherwise of the entire sector. In a chat with **SUNDAY STANDARD**, Engineer Mark Bot, a Jos based energy expert remarked, "What we are seeing today with the

constant collapse of the national power grid is just a testimony of the amount of decay, mismanagement and lack of vision on the part of successive administrations in the country,

"Since Independence, the Federal Government has not been able to leverage on the very foundation laid by its founding fathers in terms of boosting the capacity of power generation and supply, rather, lack of turn-around maintenance and coupled with unfavourable Government policies has stagnated its progress." Bot noted.

Meanwhile, the collapse that occurred after the fire incident on Kainji/Jebba 330KV line 2, had thrown the entire country into darkness occurred at a time the President Ahmed Bola Tinubu was at the UN General Assembly trying to meet on the sidelines with both foreign leaders and captains of Business Communities with a view to attracting foreign investments into the country which had been on a steady decline in the recent past.

Also by coincidence, the incident happened while the nation's Minister of Power, Mr. Adebayo Adelabu was reportedly in Busan, South Korea, where he was participating at the Korean-African Economic Cooperation Ministerial Conference 2023.

According to Mr Ignis Okoro, a social commentator, "When are we as a country going to get it right especially while the President is leading talks with investors in New York, the country was already in total darkness. Now tell me who is that investor that will be willing to come and put his money in a situation where electricity supply is erratic and in some cases absent for several days and weeks depending on where the location is. Another sad thing is that the Federal Government has not been forthcoming with tangible policies that can propel any meaningful generation and distribution of electricity in a system that the Defunct Nigerian Electricity Power Authority [NEPA], and the manner which it was unbundled and privatized showed lack of genuine interest to move the energy sector as a springboard of our economic development.

"Rather, our leaders have been paying lip service on matters as important as the Power sector. I wonder how Nigeria can reach where the Asian Tigers are at the moment without stable supply of electricity, or just look at African countries like Ghana and South Africa who have maintained not only steady supply but uninterrupted power over the years.

"We have failed to even expand the capacity we have despite the surge in population and increasing demand. Why has it been difficult to complete the Mambilla Hydro Power Plant to boost generation and why has it been in possible to even diversify to our sources of power such as the Windmill, Solar or even the Gas turbines which could have reduced the dependence on electricity supply.

"The greatest mistake the Federal Government of Nigeria made was the Privatization of the Power sector which has not only slowed our development, but has denied us the expected Direct Foreign Investment [DFI], and perhaps a contributing factor to the fall in our local currency against other notable currencies like the British Pounds, Euro or the U.S Dollar." Okoro opined.

It would be recalled, Ghana had some few years ago celebrated 50 years of uninterrupted power supply and this according to most energy experts could have challenged Nigerian Leaders to take urgent steps that could have given the country a quantum leap as an economic power house to address the issues surrounding electricity supply across the country.

Mathias Rivi, is a former employee of Nigeria Electricity Supply Company [NESCO],

Kurra Falls, Plateau State, told **SUNDAY STANDARD** that, "If NESCO can supply stable electricity in Jos and its environs, or if Akwa Ibom and some other states can provide Independent power, it therefore means Nigerians do not deserve being in darkness for a day because the alternatives are there waiting to be tapped." Rivi said.

However, the latest grid collapse to some experts, should not have arisen considering the fact that Nigeria has been battling insecurity challenges for many years now and plunging the nation into total black-out connotes a high level of negligence and maladministration in the energy sector.

Although some citizens have tried to argue that, besides the technical challenges, there is the question of lack of patriotism on the part of some individual electricity consumers who have not deemed it right to pay electricity bills while some have resorted to connive with officials of electricity companies to perform illegal connections thereby short changing the distribution companies of their legitimate gains.

Recent reports have indicated that some households do not even have metres and in such a situation,

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NEWS

Governor Mutfwang commissions Clinic in Vwei

By PETER TITLE

PLATEAU State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, commissioned a clinic in Vwei community, MararabanJama'a, in Jos South Local Government Area of the State.

The Governor noted that the clinic which has been strategically sited at the entry route to Jos, the state capital, will cater for the healthcare needs of both the local residents and passersby.

Governor Mutfwang praised the efforts of Hon. Peter Vwang Dung, the Transition Committee Chairman of Jos South Local Government Area, who oversaw the construction.

The governor expressed his administration's strong commitment to significant investments in the healthcare sector, emphasizing fiscal responsibility and the completion of beneficial projects.

"I assure the people of Plateau that this administration will prioritize prudence and ensure that every penny spent benefits the citizens. We have directed all local government chairmen to



Mutfwang

assess and complete abandoned projects that serve the community. Our focus is on projects that truly benefit our people," Governor Mutfwang affirmed.

Governor Mutfwang called upon the community to collectively safeguard and utilize the facility for the well-being of all residents.

Hon. Peter Vwang Dung, while welcoming Governor Mutfwang to the site, said work on the clinic started in 2010 but was later abandoned until his appointment a few months ago. He said the clinic is

significant in view of its potential to meet the health needs of the local populace.

He reaffirmed the commitment of Jos South residents to support the Time is Now administration's vision, which is aimed at enhancing the lives of the people through the delivery of quality healthcare services.

The Gbong Gwom Jos, Da Jacob GyangBuba, on his part, urged the community to make optimal use of the facility, and stressed the need to always preserve the people's identity.

FOLLOWING thorough security briefings and diligent investigation, the Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, has acknowledged a significant breakthrough by Operation Safe Haven (OPSH) troops.

This was revealed in a statement signed by the Director of Press and Public Affairs to the Governor, GyangBere. The statement said through credible intelligence, the troops have successfully recovered the remains of the missing Ardo of P a n y a m , AdamuIdrisGabdo.

In a statement, Governor Mutfwang strongly condemned the heinous act and lauded the perseverance and tenacity of the security personnel.

He praised their professionalism and determination in locating the body of the late Ardo.

The Governor assured the security forces of the government's unwavering support in conducting further investigations to apprehend those responsible for the crime.

Governor Mutfwang reassured of the government's commitment to upholding the rule of law in

Governor Mutfwang commends OPSH for recovering Ardo's body



Ibrahim

addressing all forms of criminal activities. He urged communities in the state not to resort to self help but to report any criminal acts to security agencies for swift action.

He reiterated his administration's dedication to ensuring fairness and justice for all citizens, regardless of their ethnic or religious backgrounds.

The Governor expressed

his condolences to the late Gabdo's immediate family and his community.

He called upon community members, as well as traditional and religious leaders, to collaborate harmoniously with the government and security agencies in order to aid in the fight against criminal activities in the state.

Governor Mutfwang reaffirmed his determination to exhibit the political will required to

introduce policies, programmes and engagements that foster peace, progress, and prosperity for the citizens of Plateau.

Gyang Bere Director of Press and Public Affairs to the Executive Governor of Plateau State 7th October, 2023.

Kogi : PDP stalwarts, Women Leaders, supporters embrace APC

From

AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

A former House of Representatives member who represented Idah Federal Constituency in Kogi State, Hon. Ismail Inah Hussein, popularly known as Soul Lover, has dumped the Peoples Democratic Party for the All Progressives Congress, along with hundreds of supporters.

Soul Lover was at the weekend, dressed and decorated with APC's robes by the Kogi State Party Chairman, Abdullahi Bello, in Ajaka, Igalamela-Odolu Local Government Area, as a sign that he had fully pitched

his tent with the ruling party.

Inah, who was a dedicated member of the ruling PDP in Kogi State attributed his decision to join the APC to his desire to contribute to the development of Kogi State and the country as a whole.

He said the APC government, under Governor Yahaya Bello, had instituted unity, security and overall development of the state, hence, his decision to support the APC governorship candidate, Alhaji Usman Ododo for consolidation.

Speaking during his

admission into the party, which was witnessed by a mammoth crowd, the heavyweight political leader in Kogi East, vowed to mobilise massively for his new party and ensure that APC wins overwhelmingly in the November 11 governorship election.

Also decamping was the former Women Leader of the PDP in Igalamela LGA, as well as the Women Leaders of the wards in the area.

The Commissioner for Transportation in Kogi State, Baron Okwoli, in his address, commended Inah and his followers for their decision to

join the APC and assured that they would work together to ensure victory for the party.

Similarly, the Deputy Governorship candidate, Joel Oyibo, said he was impressed by the high turnout at the ceremony to receive the former lawmaker. He noted that the attendance was evidence that people believed strongly in the APC despite propaganda by opposition parties.

He assured the people of Igalamela-Odolu and the entire state that the governorship candidate, Usman Ododo, when elected, would consolidate on the unity, security and infrastructural development instituted by Governor Yahaya Bello.

The state party chairman welcomed the former lawmaker and his supporters, and expressed the confidence that the APC would win, landslide, in the forthcoming election.

He assured victory for APC in Igalamela-Odolu and urged the new members to remain steadfast and committed to party functions with a promise of equal opportunities alongside existing party members.

Dignitaries present at the event included former State Chairman of APC, Hadi Ametuo; Deputy Governorship candidate, Joel Oyibo; Zonal



Inah

Mutfwang congratulates Ngas on Pusedung festival

By PETER TITLE

PLATEAU State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, has congratulated the Ngas nation on the joyous occasion of the 2023 Pusedung Cultural Festival.

In a message, signed by his Director of Press and Public Affairs, Gyang Bere, Governor Mutfwang lauded the event as a splendid socio-cultural celebration that strengthens the bonds of fraternity among the sons and daughters of Ngas land, both within the state and across the globe.

He was of the view that the festival was an opportuned time for reflection, for the Ngas people to assess their achievements and make pivotal decisions that will drive growth and progress in the land divinely entrusted to their care.

The governor emphasized that the annual Pusedung Festival is pivotal in promoting a purposeful vision, fostering unity, and cultivating a distinct national identity for the Ngas people in Northern Nigeria.

He advocated the harnessing of Plateau State's rich cultural heritage, and urged the people to leverage these assets to attract international tourists and investments, thus unlocking the state's vast tourism potentials.

He reaffirmed his administration's commitment to providing a conducive platform for cultural festivals to thrive within the state.

Governor Mutfwang called on the citizens of Plateau to unite as one formidable entity, working collaboratively to promote peace and harmony throughout the state.

SUNDAY FEATURE

Nigeria: Who controls the environment?

"The environment is no one's property to destroy; it's everyone's responsibility to protect. – Mohith Agadi In many countries, including Nigeria, the control and regulation of environmental matters often lead to conflicts and legal disputes between state and federal governments. This contest arises from the complex nature of environmental issues, which can span multiple jurisdictions and levels of government. Environmental concerns encompass a wide range of topics, such as air and water quality, land use, pollution control, natural resource management, and conservation. DANIEL ADE-PETERS writes.

THE Nigerian Constitution delineates the powers and responsibilities of both the federal and state governments, creating a framework for governance. However, environmental matters fall into a grey area, as they often intersect with both state and federal jurisdictions. This has led to disagreements regarding who has the authority to legislate, regulate, and enforce environmental laws and policies.

Key issues at the heart of these disputes include defining the scope of "environment" as outlined in the Constitution, determining whether certain aspects of environmental control fall within the concurrent or exclusive legislative lists, and clarifying the powers of regulatory agencies at the state and federal levels.

The Nigerian judiciary plays a crucial role in resolving these disputes, with landmark cases, such as Attorney General of Lagos State v. Attorney General of the Federation & 35 others (2003) 6 SC (Pt. 1), Attorney General of Ondo State v. Attorney General of the Federation, and IHS (Nigeria) limited v. attorney general Ogun state & 3 ors., providing legal precedents that influence how environmental matters are handled.

Impact of the judicial contest

These legal battles have significant implications for environmental protection, natural resource management, and sustainable development in Nigeria. Clarification of the roles and responsibilities of each level of government is essential for effective environmental governance and ensuring that the environment is preserved for future generations while balancing economic interests.

In the case of Attorney General of Lagos State v. Attorney General of the Federation & 35 Ors. (supra) the term 'Environment' was defined as the natural conditions, including land, air, and water, in which people, animals, and plants live. This definition implies that the environment encompasses both land and air, which are essential for human habitation. Furthermore, Section 61 of The Environmental Impact Assessment Act, 2004, provides additional clarity on the concept of the environment. It enumerates its components, including land, air, and water, encompassing all layers of the atmosphere. It also includes all organic and inorganic matter, living organisms, and the interdependent natural systems that involve land, air, water, atmospheric layers, organic and inorganic matter, and living organisms.

It is evident from the cited case that the term "environment" encompasses both measurable and immeasurable elements that we interact with as humans, including land, air, water, and natural resources like oil, ore, and coal. However, complications arise when dealing with immeasurable components of the environment, such as air. It is well-established that laws and nation-states regulate nearly every aspect of human life, even down to the minutest details. Nevertheless, there is often ambiguity regarding the ownership of rights concerning the environment, leading to conflicts, with airspace being a prominent example.

Environmental law is a comprehensive field that addresses various aspects of the law aimed at safeguarding the environment and its components. The overarching objective



of environmental law and associated regulations is the protection of the environment. These laws aim to protect a range of elements, including but not limited to mineral resources, forest resources, water resources, pollution control, and addressing issues related to climate change. It is crucial to emphasize that environmental protection is fundamental to the survival and well-being of all living organisms within the atmosphere. The detrimental consequences of unchecked technological growth and failure to adhere to these fundamental environmental principles are severe and far-reaching.

Nigeria's approach to environmental protection has seen remarkable growth, akin to a mustard seed maturing into a thriving tree bearing fruit. However, like any tree, it can become unruly without regular pruning. It's essential to note that the prevailing trend, as influenced by various laws, leans heavily on the 'polluter pays' principle rather than the 'prevention principle.' While the former may address immediate concerns, it proves detrimental in the long run. The only sustainable path to reaping the continuous benefits of a healthy environment and its offerings is through proactive protection.

The legal framework governing environmental matters in Nigeria comprises several key statutes, including the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended), the National Environmental Standards Regulations and Enforcement Agency (Establishment) Act 2007, the Environmental Impact Assessment Act 1992, the Harmful Waste (Special Criminal Provisions, etc.) Act, the Endangered Species (Control of International Trade and Traffic) Act, the National Oil Spill, Detection, and Response Agency Act 2006, the National Park Services Act, the Nigerian Minerals

and Mining Act 2007, the Water Resources Act 2004, the Hydrocarbon Oil Refineries Act, the Associated Gas Re-injection Act, the Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection Act, and regulations concerning oil in navigable waters, in addition to various state laws on environmental protection. Each of these laws has its corresponding administrative agencies.

However, despite this comprehensive legal framework, and perhaps partly because of it, disputes have arisen concerning jurisdiction and authority over environmental matters. There continues to be an ongoing debate about which statutory body or agency possesses the authority to grant permits, collect levies and taxes, regulate licenses, monitor effluent discharge, address oil spills, and more. This conflict primarily unfolds between the federal and state governments, complicating the landscape of environmental protection.

The root cause of this discord lies in the language employed within the legal framework. As American sociologist Deborah Tannen aptly noted, "We tend to look through language and not realize how much power language has." The use of language, including specific words and terminology, can significantly impact the interpretation and enforcement of laws. Language has the potential to clarify, confuse, incite conflict, or promote harmony. The legal system is not immune to the influence of language and words, as they serve as the tools through which societal rules are conveyed. The failure of the law to articulate its intentions succinctly has contributed to the perplexity currently observed in the Nigerian environmental sector.

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, as amended, plays a central role in this conflict. Section 20 of the Constitution mandates that "The state shall protect and improve the environment and safeguard the water, air, land, forest, and wildlife of Nigeria." However, the interpretation of the term 'state' in

this context has sparked numerous disputes involving environmental matters. State governments argue that environmental issues fall within the concurrent list, granting them legislative and regulatory authority, including the ability to execute orders, regulate emissions, and control activities within their airspace. To resolve this dispute, it is imperative to conduct a comprehensive analysis of other constitutional provisions and the jurisprudential leanings on environmental matters. Such an approach is necessary because Section 20 does not exist in isolation, and reconciling the conflict requires a holistic reading of the constitution, taking into account the primacy of federal laws.

Section 4(2) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria empowers the federal legislature to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the federation, specifically relating to matters included in the Exclusive List of the Constitution. Subsection 3 further clarifies that all issues within the Exclusive List fall exclusively within the purview of the national assembly, with no interference allowed from the state house of assembly. This strict rule is reinforced by Subsection 7a, which outlines the powers of the state house of assembly, except for matters explicitly stated in the Exclusive List.

However, the majority of the Supreme Court ruled that matters strictly within the purview of the term 'Environment' were the responsibility of the national assembly to legislate upon. Their decision rested on the precedent set in the case of Attorney General, Ondo State v. Attorney General of the Federation (2002) 6 S.C (PT 1), where the court defined the term 'state' as contained in Section 20 to refer to the federation as a whole rather than individual unit states. The subsequent case followed this conclusion by reading the constitution as a whole rather than

in a piecemeal fashion. The court emphasized its authority to consider materials or information that aid in determining the true intention of a statutory or constitutional provision, utilizing a purposive interpretative approach to assess the correctness of the meaning it has assigned.

As the Supreme Court's decisions are binding on all lower courts in Nigeria due to the principle of 'stare decisis,' all subsequent cases have upheld the ruling in favour of the federal government. For instance, in the case of IHS (Nigeria) limited v. attorney general Ogun state & 3 ors FHC/AB/CS/40/2022, where Ogun state argued that it had the responsibility for controlling emissions within its state according to the Ogun State Emission Control Regulations 2012 and that it was beyond the purview of the federal government, the court, through Justice [Name], relied on the Supreme Court's decision. The court held that, regardless of the minority decision in A.G. Lagos State v. A.G. Federation & 35 others (Supra), the majority decision of the Supreme Court in attorney general of Lagos state v. attorney general of the federation & 35 ORS (SUPRA) was binding. Consequently, it affirmed that only the federal government, through the appropriate agency (NESREA), had the authority to enforce environmental laws, including emission control. See also IHS (Nigeria) limited v. Abia state government & ors FHC/UM/CS/146/16

In conclusion, it is the opinion that, although no one truly owns the environment as it is a natural entity, the law has structured it in a manner that places responsibility for its protection squarely on the federal government. It is incumbent upon the state to ensure the safeguarding of the environment, rather than exploiting it merely as a source of economic revenue. With the environment, the old adage "garbage in, garbage out" rings true, emphasizing that the quality of what we invest in its protection directly impacts what we reap from it.

SUNDAY FEATURE

Nigerian railways and need for collective action

The recent successful transportation of containers along the Standard gauge rail line from Apapa Port to Ibadan stands as a remarkable testament to the potential of the Nigerian railway industry. It signifies a significant leap forward in our quest for economic development and modernized transportation networks. However, in the midst of our celebration, we must acknowledge and address the pressing issues that threaten the sustainability and security of our rail infrastructure. DAVID ADEDIGBA, writes.

FOREMOST among these concerns is the imperative need to foster a culture of rigorous maintenance throughout our railway system. To ensure that this notable progress endures, we must instil a commitment to regular maintenance and vigilant care for our rail assets. The consequences of neglecting maintenance are stark, ranging from expensive repairs to service disruptions and, in the worst-case scenarios, accidents that jeopardize lives and property. To fully capitalize on the potential of our railways, it is essential that we make their sustained well-being a top priority.

The significance of the successful movement of containers by rail cannot be understated. It is a harbinger of economic growth and a testament to the transformative power of a modernized rail network.

Unfortunately, disheartening incidents of individuals pillaging rail tracks for personal gain have surfaced. Such actions not only contravene the law but also pose a significant threat to our economic growth. It is crucial to unreservedly condemn this criminal behaviour as a form of economic sabotage. Recognizing the gravity of this issue is paramount, as the theft of rail tracks disrupts rail operations, poses safety risks, and undermines the colossal potential of our rail network.

To effectively combat these challenges, a comprehensive approach involving various stakeholders is imperative. Government agencies, policymakers, and private sector entities must collaborate to formulate and implement comprehensive strategies aimed at maintaining and safeguarding our rail infrastructure. Equally important is the role of the public in embracing a culture of vigilance, promptly reporting suspicious activities, and actively supporting efforts to protect our railways.

In alignment with the renewed hope agenda advanced by President Bola Ahmad Tinubu,



collective action by all stakeholders is fundamental. We must acknowledge that our railways represent a gateway to prosperity, security, and a sustainable transportation framework for our nation. Achieving this vision demands unwavering commitment and collaboration from all quarters. As we collectively fortify and enhance our rail system, we chart a course toward a brighter future for Nigeria and its people.

The significance of the successful movement of containers by rail cannot be understated. It is a harbinger of economic growth and a testament to the transformative power of a modernized rail network. Not only does it reduce the cost of transporting goods, but it also alleviates road congestion and reduces emissions, fostering a more sustainable mode of transportation.

The economic benefits are substantial. With rail transport

becoming a more cost-effective option, businesses can expect reduced operational costs, which, in turn, lead to improved profit margins. This cost-efficiency ultimately translates into lower prices for consumers, benefiting the entire economy.

Moreover, the reduction in truck traffic resulting from the use of rail transport alleviates the chronic congestion that has plagued the Apapa area for years. The notorious traffic bottleneck has been a significant hindrance to economic activities and has driven up costs for businesses operating in the region. With containers being transported by rail, there will be a notable reduction in the volume of trucks on the road, easing the burden on road infrastructure and improving overall road safety.

Beyond these economic advantages, the railway project holds the potential to stimulate economic growth along its corridor. Stations

along the route can become hubs for commerce and trade, attracting businesses and creating job opportunities for the local population. The improved connectivity between Lagos and Ibadan will encourage industrial development and urbanization in the surrounding regions, fostering economic prosperity.

However, it is imperative that we remain vigilant in safeguarding the rail infrastructure that is now a vital component of our economic development. Regrettably, incidents of individuals pilfering rail tracks for personal gain have been reported. Such actions not only endanger lives but also disrupt rail operations and undermine the enormous potential of our rail system. We must strongly condemn these actions as economic sabotage and recognize them as a grave threat to our nation's progress.

To combat this menace effectively, we must enhance surveillance and security measures along our rail facilities. This includes deploying advanced technology for monitoring and increasing the presence of security personnel to safeguard lives, properties, and goods transported via the railway. We must send a clear message that these acts of sabotage will not be tolerated, and those involved will face the full force of the law.

Furthermore, safety should be paramount in our railway

operations. As we transport goods and passengers, it is crucial to uphold the highest safety standards to protect both lives and property. Adequate training for railway personnel, regular safety inspections, and adherence to international best practices are essential components of ensuring that our railways are a secure and reliable mode of transportation.

No doubt, the successful transportation of containers via the Standard gauge rail line from Apapa Port to Ibadan stands as a monumental achievement with far-reaching economic and transportation implications. It represents a significant leap forward in efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability in Nigeria's transportation sector. To harness the full potential of this initiative, we must prioritize maintenance, condemn theft of rail tracks as economic sabotage, and enhance surveillance to protect lives, properties, and goods.

The railway project has the potential to reshape Nigeria's economic landscape and improve the lives of its citizens for generations to come. Together, we can ensure that the promise of our railways becomes a reality, driving economic growth and enhancing security for all Nigerians.

Adedigba, a research officer writes from Abeokuta, Ogun State via Adedigbadavid2@gmail.com

"Beyond these economic advantages, the railway project holds the potential to stimulate economic growth along its corridor. Stations along the route can become hubs for commerce and trade, attracting businesses and creating job opportunities for the local population. The improved connectivity between Lagos and Ibadan will encourage industrial development and urbanization in the surrounding regions, fostering economic prosperity."

YESTERDAY, I was on TikTok. I like TikTok because I get to see what falls through the cracks of the mainstream media. TikTok for me, represents the ticking of the clock. An onomatopoeia of time. The times that we live in and the people of today. It could be a report or it could be live.

Yesterday, On TikTok, I saw this university student wailing about the increment in her school fees which had been increased from N25,000 to N200,000. I felt very sad to see such a young person crying out for help over school fees. The young lady said that she was not supported financially by her parents and as such she was fending for herself in school.

The increase in school fees in most universities came after the increase in the pump price of fuel or petrol. Unfortunately, these increase affects the students and their parents in ways that could only be imagined. Imagine a parent who has two children in the university with an increase of about 200%, how can a parent cope? how can a parent cope with even one child? Not to mention a student who fends for his or herself? Even a civil servant can hardly cope these days.

The Guardian Newspaper, in its publication of July 13, 2023 said and I quote: "Many institutions have increased their fees by 100 to 200 per cent, which may force some indigent students out of school. Already, most federal and state universities have raised their fees, to cushion the effects of funding challenges in public institutions. They justified the hike on poor government funding of tertiary education and rising inflation in the country, which shot up to 22.4 per cent, the highest in 17 years, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)."

Looking at the forgoing it is evident that the universities took their decisions without looking at the consequences of their actions on the students. The decision was hinged on operational reasons. One may not blame the universities because they have a school to run and they are not getting the necessary financial support from the government.

Any society that places a premium on education will do well to make it as cheap as possible especially for the less privileged. Government universities used to be the only option for parents and students who could not afford private universities. As we speak, the government universities are competing with the private universities as far as school fees are concerned. It means that the common man and his children may not be able to afford University degrees. Consequently, no matter how much we try to reduce the rate of educational development in our society we may not achieve much if we do not start considering the subsidization of education.

The importance of education in an increasingly globalized and digitalized world cannot be overstressed. While the world is moving into artificial intelligence and robotics,

we are still coming to terms with providing tertiary education for our teeming youths. In order not to be left behind in the global scheme of things, we need to critically look at our budgeting and finance as far as education is concerned. Education is the bedrock of every development. Education is what moves a society from ignorance to enlightenment. As such education has great returns on investment. UNESCO explains: "Literacy drives sustainable development, enables greater participation in the labour market, improves child and family health and nutrition, reduces poverty and expands life opportunities. UNESCO's approach to literacy continues to evolve as the definition of what it means to be literate changes in an increasingly digitalized world." Evidently, every society would like to increased participation in the labour markets to say the least not to mention improving child and family health and nutrition. UNESCO goes on to say: "Literacy empowers and liberates people. Beyond its importance as part of the right to education, literacy improves lives by expanding capabilities which in turn reduces poverty, increases participation in the labour market and has positive effects on health and sustainable development. Women empowered by literacy have a positive ripple effect on all aspects of development. They have greater life choices for themselves and an immediate impact on the health and education of their families, and in particular, the education of girl children". From the foregoing, it is evident that education should be a critical priority in our society.

One of the benefits of education is poverty alleviation. One of the consequences of poverty is crime and insecurity. When a student is unable to pay his or her school fees and is forced to drop out of school, these students may turn to unsavoury ways and means to pay his or her school fees. This means that these students could easily turn to crime if the government does not do something urgent to address the difficulty that they face in paying their school fees. While the government tries its best to create a crime free and secure environment on one hand, it may be unintentionally creating the reverse on the other hand, if students turn to crime to pay their own school exorbitant fees. It may become a desperate survivalist situation for them, it may become a desperate plea from

The value of tertiary education in Nigeria



them and if that plea is not heard, they may unwillingly turn to crime. Consequently, subsidizing education, funding universities and ensuring that students can pay their school fees is one viable way of preventing crime in our society,

Due to hardship and poverty, many university students especially female, have turned to prostitution which they call hook up. In the same vein many young men have also turned to cultism and robbery. This increase in school fees will only further justify all their choices. The assets of any society include its youth. It is said that the youths of today are leaders of tomorrow. The quality of youths we have today will determine the quality of life in our society tomorrow. When a youth repeatedly turns to crime in order to be able to afford the basic needs of life such as education, food and shelter, it becomes a lifelong lifestyle. Ensuring that our youths become citizens of repute is ensuring the future of our society. It is cheaper to provide free education than it is to prevent crime or stop it.

I remember the days of yore, when I was in the university and the state government provided a yearly bursary to complement our parents' financial efforts in our education. It gave us a lot of focus because we did not have to leave our studies to go and do other jobs in order to pay our school fees which in fact, was next to nothing. Most of us came out with good grades because we could focus in class and we could focus when we read our books. We expect our graduates to be polished. How can they be polished? how can they speak good English? how can they be grounded in the subjects or courses that they read when their minds are not in their lecture halls? How can they be focused when they are simply waiting for the lectures to end so that they can go and clean somebody's room, wash somebody's clothes, do somebody's hair or assignment, paint somebody's room or sleep with somebody for money so that they can afford their school fees? This is the reality.

I go back to the video that I watched of the young lady crying about her school fees and saying that she did not want to become a school dropout. I watched this video with an older person whose perspective was different. I said to her that I wished that the government would prioritize the subsidization of education above everything. She said to me everything is a process. I agree that everything is a process.



these school fees for students? Are state universities going to declare free university education for their indigenes, are our federal universities is going to declare free education for every Nigerian youth.

The money budgeted for palliative could also be channeled into subsidizing education by providing all round free education for our youths. Parents pay school fees so the palliatives that are spent on school fees would also alleviates these struggle to pay school fees by parents or by students. Similarly, government can also provide buses for the transportation of students across town.

It is important to keep our young demography motivated and happy. It is important to give them a sense of belonging and inclusion by way of supporting them financially in the education and creation of jobs for them when they leave the university. I can bet my last dime that the crime rate will drop and government will spend less on hunting down kidnappers, 419 agents, Yahoo, and Yahoo-plus boys.

Let us remember that in addition to exorbitant school fees, the students often spend half of their academic sessions at home because of incessant strikes. In essence, after toiling to pay their school fees, they are unable to effectively learn and absorb that which they should learn and absorb to become well-rounded graduates. Furthermore, when some of them are at home during these strikes they engage in various forms of crime ranging from prostitution to armed robbery and advanced fee fraud.

Let us also remember that the youth of today are leaders of tomorrow. What we sow today we shall reap tomorrow. Our focus should therefore be fully on how we can solve the problem of these students starting with fully subsidizing their school fees and fully funding universities. We should also ensure that the lecturers are well paid and taken care of so that they can effectively transfer their knowledge to the next generation. Ensuring that the students and the lecturers are comfortable means that we will have no strikes at all. It also means that our students will be more focused on their education and the incidents of half-baked graduates will become a thing of the past. Half-baked graduates who can barely speak English, will not happen anymore and Nigerian University degrees will become more about learning and less about paper qualification.

In conclusion, I borrow from an a research paper written by Gregory Deborah Mallo and unpublished in The Middle European Scientific Bulletin. The writer says and I quote: "Nigerian higher education is plagued with many challenges. This paper discusses the various challenges facing higher education in Nigeria. To do this end, the researchers employed the use of secondary data. These data were sourced from online and print materials. Inadequate funding, corruption, inadequate infrastructural facilities, shortage of academic staff, Strike actions, Braindrain, poor research, weak administrators and insecurity. To resolve the challenges facing higher education in Nigeria, the following have been recommended: adequate funding of higher education, employment of more academic staff, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, motivation of academic staff, appointment of qualified administrators, fight all forms of corruption in higher institutions, provision of adequate security in all higher institutions and implementation all agreement with union groups."

However, I also believe that we can prioritize the most important things first. The education of by youths is a critical priority because it ties itself into many things in our society. When our viable demography is focused on money making rather than education, skill acquisition, and self-development, we will wake up one day to a breed that values money inordinately and believes that the end justifies the means.

The youth of today are traumatized. Imagine them having to pay a big sum of money on school fees which they have to toil for. Imagine that after graduating they still have to search for jobs that are almost nonexistent or few and far apart. It is no surprise that we have many frustrated youths in our society. We salute government efforts in filling these gaps but while government is busy trying to create jobs, we encourage that government should also subsidize education so that these students will focus on their studies and come out as ready material for the local and global labour markets.

The quality of our manpower and human resources as a society is tied to the quality of our graduates. The quality of education may be excellent but if a student must pay through his or her nose to get it, if a student has to divide his or her attention in the lecture hall, he or she may come out half baked. Half-baked graduates are everywhere today. I don't blame them. I often wonder what type of support they were given in the process of acquiring their education.

The propensity for young women to become prostitutes or high-flying escorts is turning our young ladies into epitomes of decadence. These are the mothers of tomorrow. A mother cannot give what she does not have. If a young lady believes that prostitution is justified and it is an easy way out, she will not bat an eyelid if her daughter does the same.

Young men go to the university and join Cults sometimes because the cults provide financial support for them. When they graduate into the larger society, they simply continue in that path. We cannot fight cultism if it provides succor for our young men. No amount of convincing will stop a hungry youth or a poor youth from joining a cult if the court care for him or her more than the society does. As such we need to look at our priorities again. Are we going to reconsider this school fees issue? Are we going to encourage universities to backtrack a little? Are we going to subsidize

I consider it a privilege once again to share God's Word with you, precious people. In our last series, we began to look at the benefits of being of a sheep of His sheepfold. Of course these benefits are inexhaustible, but as the Lord helps us, we shall look at a couple of them. *This edition will be a continuation of the last series.*

Again, let's look at Psalm 16:5-6. It says: **"The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot..."** What this Scripture is saying is simple-it means that I have an inheritance, which is my part, my place, and **"mylot"** is talking about my place, my allotment. Verse 6 says: **The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.**

I love to give this example whenever I share Psalm 16 with God's people. When you go to the Ministry of Lands and Survey, for instance to carry out checks for property or whatever it is that you want to buy or have bought, you find out that they have the records, the surveyors, and they map out or demarcate the entire place, and divide them accordingly; they draw lines. Physically speaking, those pieces of properties signify places. You can refer to them as places or lot-like we say 'a parking lot' or place where we park.

Now, just as you have in the Ministry of Lands and Survey, so it is in Christ, to every believer, to every sheep of His sheepfold. So what Psalm 16:5 means is that I have a place (which is my 'lot') and you also have a place, and that it is the Lord Himself that **"maintainest my lot"**. So as He, the Lord, **maintainest my lot**, so does He maintain yours. Glory to God forevermore!

Listen, I am not saying these things to please you, or so you can be shabby or be careless with your life, but I'm just saying the Word of the Lord; I'm telling you the truth in Christ, you have a place in God. You have a lot, a place. Praise the name of the Lord! You have your own husband, you don't need to take somebody else's own. You have your own wife, you don't need to take somebody else's own. You have your own stuff. God has your own stuff for you! When you understand this, a security will

come to you in life. It is the understanding of this that will divorce you from jealousy. It's understanding this that will sever you from unhealthy competition.

Friends, dare to believe that you have a place! As unique as you are, you have a place. There are millions of preachers on the earth but DunkaGomwalk has a place. There are millions of singers on the earth but Pastor Obed has a place- his unique identity, his

people's gifting. That's simply because nobody can take your place! It says, **thou maintainest my lot.**

It may seem now like you've lost so many chances, but listen, God is your chance, not the things you have lost. I repeat: It is God that is your chance! It may seem that you've messed your life up but it's God that is your chance! You may think that position just seemed to have slipped you but that position is not your life, it's God that is your



I shall not want



You Have a Place in this Life

thumbprint, nobody can take his voice- God is not bankrupt! God has enough success for all of us! When you understand that, you can celebrate other

life. You may think something has slipped out of your life, no, no, no! You don't need to weep about it because God is on the throne. God is your portion. Your place is secured in Him.

Not only is He the portion of your inheritance, your cup, your ability to receive, the Bible says He takes it upon Himself to maintain it for you. He is waiting for you. Don't tell me God does not have your time, He is the ancient of days. He created time. And the demarcation, the **lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage...** and so do you!

Another important benefit for you as a sheep of His sheepfold is that God has reserved unto you appointed weeks of harvest. The Lord has told me that: "I have reserved unto my people certain things". This is confirmed in Jeremiah 5:24, which says: **"Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the**

harvest."

Now, there are things called the appointed weeks of harvest. They are seasons of God. Praise the name of the Lord forevermore! What I'm trying to say is that God has reserved unto us appointed weeks of harvest. That's what the Lord told me: I've reserved unto my people certain things. The Lord told me that He is releasing His people into their appointed places.

Indeed the Lord has appointed, reserved certain things for us! Glory to God! And the things that He has reserved for you, He has maintained for you, and He is releasing you into them. Glory to the name of the Lord! Listen friends, you're going to know the meaning of this statement, **I Shall Not Want**, when you put yourself under the lordship of the Lord, and submit to His order. Submit! Don't be a freelance believer. Get under the authority of a good pastor that knows what he's doing. Find your place in the Body of Christ, submit yourself to God. Surely, there are appointed weeks God has appointed and reserved for us.

He is releasing us unto us.

Ezekiel 12:21-22 says: **"And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, what is that proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, the days are prolonged, and every vision faileth?"** You see, it was like a proverb in Israel because God had said certain things about them, taking them from the land of captivity, returning them to their own land, giving them their own place after they had been scattered all throughout the nation. He said, Son of man what is that word that has spoken and is being like almost a proverb now, almost like a parable repeating it? **"Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel; but say unto them, The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision,"** (Ezekiel 12:23).

It says "Tell them..." And I'm telling you in the name of Jesus, that word that has been hanging over your life, now is the appointed season for it to land. It's landing time for that word. It's been circling round that airport of your life too long. I say in the name of Jesus, it's landing time, it's landing season, because the Lord has appointed unto us weeks of harvest.

Friends, I decree that nothing in your life, nothing round about you shall be used as a proverb in Jesus' name. It shall not hang anymore. Listen, I unhang that word under the unktion of the Holy Ghost and by the directive of God's Spirit, I unhang that word, I untie that word and it will land in your life; it will find expression in your life; it will find manifestation in your life and you shall not 'want'.

What has your heart been wanting for? What has your faith been unlined for? I decree to you today, you shall not want in Jesus' name! **But say unto them, The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision,** (effect means the manifestation of it. Glory to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ!) Verse 24 says, **"For there shall be no more any vain vision nor flattering divination within the house of Israel."** Verse 25: **"For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged."**

Friends, I tell you today is not a long day for me, I will have other long days I assure you. But today is not a long day for me! **"for in your days, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD..."** Glory to God forevermore!

To be continued...



INTERNATIONAL

Mexico - Biden approves new border wall

US President Joe Biden's administration is to build a section of border wall in southern Texas in an effort to stop rising levels of immigration.

Around 20 miles (32km) will be built in Starr County along its border with Mexico, where officials report high numbers of crossings.

Building a border wall was a signature policy of Donald Trump as president and fiercely opposed by Democrats.

In 2020, Mr Biden promised he would not build another foot of wall if elected.

In a statement on Wednesday night, the US Customs and Border Protection defended the latest move, saying it was using funds already allocated for a border barrier.

The rising number of illegal border crossings has made the issue a vulnerable one for the president.

More than 245,000 crossings have been made this year in the Rio Grande Valley area alone, government data shows, and September is expected to be a record month.

Several US cities say they are feeling the strain of the influx.

New York City Mayor Eric Adams predicted the cost of housing the more than



Biden

100,000 new arrivals since last year will rise to \$12bn over the next three years.

President Biden's secretary of homeland security referred to an "acute and immediate need" to build the new section of wall and prevent unlawful entries.

US cities far from border grapple with migrant crisis

The Texas town caught in America's border battle

Dozens of federal laws have been waived in order to approve its construction, including the Clean Air Act and Safe Drinking Water Act.

The move has angered environmentalists, who say the structures will cut through the habitats of endangered plants and animals.

According to a proposal by US Customs and Border Protection, the barriers will consist of large bollards embedded in a concrete base, as well as gates, cameras and CCTV equipment.

Homeland Security said it would use funding secured during Donald Trump's presidency to build the new section.

It is the first time the Biden administration has used its powers to approve the construction of new walls - something that was done often during Mr Trump's time in office, when around 50 miles of new wall was built and 400 miles of existing barriers were upgraded.

Mr Biden has been facing increasing criticism over his immigration policies in the wake of a recent surge of migrants crossing into the US.

US Border Patrol apprehended 181,059 people along the southern border in August compared with 132,648 in July, according to the latest data.

Mexico's president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, said that 10,000 people arrived at the border

Ukraine : Russia attack khakis village

Emergency workers search for victims of a Russian missile attack. At least 51 people have been killed and six wounded in a Russian missile attack on a northeastern village, Ukrainian officials say. Oleh Syniehubov, governor of the Kharkiv region, said the afternoon strike on Thursday hit a cafe and a store in the village of Hroza, about 30km (20 miles) west of the front-line town of Kupiansk, with many civilians present at the time of the attack. He added that a six-year-old

child was among the dead. Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko said residents of the village of about 330 people had been holding a memorial service in the cafe that was struck.

"From every family, from every household, there were people present at this commemoration. This is a terrible tragedy," Klymenko told Ukrainian television. There was no immediate comment by Russia, which in the past has denied hitting civilian targets.

The attack was the deadliest in the Kharkiv region since Russia's

invasion began more than 19 months ago, a regional official told public broadcaster Suspilne. It appeared to be one of the biggest civilian death tolls in any single Russian strike. Footage released by Ukrainian authorities showed rescue workers sifting through piles of rubble and bodies coated in dust laid out next to the site of the attack.

Syria mourns dozens in Homs drone attack

Syrians have begun burying the dozens of people killed in a large-scale drone attack on a military academy in the western city of Homs.

Coffins draped in Syrian flags on Friday lined the streets outside the Homs military hospital as a military band played somber music and soldiers saluted.

On Thursday, several drones attacked a graduation ceremony in the academy's courtyard, where families had gathered with the new officers.

Syria's Ministry of Health said at least 89 people had been killed, including 31 women and five children. The Syrian Observatory for Human

The Nobel peace prize-winning gynaecologist Denis Mukwege, renowned for helping victims of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, has announced plans to run for president in December.

Mukwege, who won the award in 2018 for his nearly two-decade campaign against sexual violence, made the announcement to a jubilant crowd of supporters at a conference centre in DRC's capital, Kinshasa.

"My only motivation is to save and develop our country," he said, in a speech that was heavy on criticism of the current regime but offered little in the way of specific policy proposals. He said he would give details on his programme later.

"What I am going to do is the continuation of my action and my commitment over the last 40 years in the service of my people," added Mukwege, saying that peace and security would be a priority.

Nicknamed the "man who repairs women", the 68-year-old doctor has treated hundreds of war rape victims at the Panzi hospital he founded in 1999. The hospital is located in eastern DRC where militia groups left over from two civil wars

Police officer jailed for rape, sexual assault

A "predatory" police officer who raped one woman and sexually assaulted another has been jailed for 16-and-a-half years.

Nobel-prize gynaecologist to run for DRC president.

between 1996 and 2003 continue to fight and attack civilians despite military interventions.

Mukwege has previously denounced DRC's culture of impunity toward war crimes and crimes against humanity recorded by the United Nations. He survived an assassination attempt in 2012. There had been growing calls for him to stand in the 20 December election.

No sleep for Congolese mothers trying to save their girls from rape

Read more

"You have healed many women and today we are asking you to heal this country too," said one supporter, Justine Mafu, as she awaited Mukwege's announcement.

Mukwege will be running

against the incumbent president, Felix Tshisekedi, whose first term was mired by economic hardship, epidemics and worsening insecurity in the east.

The opposition leader Martin Fayulu, who came second to Tshisekedi in 2018, also confirmed at the weekend that he would be running.

The lead-up to the polls has been tense, with several opposition candidates complaining of delays and issues with electoral process, which they say disadvantage them.

Mukwege said it would be important to protect the vote. "We have the right to contest the results of a rigged election before, during and after the poll," he said.



Mukwege

Police officer jailed for rape, sexual assault

PC Ravi Canhye was convicted of two counts of rape, one count of attempted rape, three counts of assault by penetration, and sexual assault.

The attacks happened took place over the course of a weekend in April 2022.

A judge at Winchester Crown Court told him he was "selfish and uncaring" and had abused his position of trust.

The jury heard Canhye slapped and mauled the first victim, before pinning her down and raping her.

In a statement read to the court, she said that she was no longer a "happy and confident" person as a result of the attack.

"Battered and bruised" She said she felt "shame and embarrassment" and suffered from anxiety, nightmares and flashbacks. She added she was "battered and bruised" after the incident and that "the indignity of it was almost unbearable".

The second victim said she was shocked Canhye was a police officer

She said: "I couldn't believe someone who behaved like that could be one, he has abused his position of trust."

She added that she now felt "frightened to leave my home".

Judge Jane Miller told him that the first victim was subjected to "a persistent, degrading and truly overwhelming episode of sexual and physical humiliation".

She said: "Your behaviour was predatory, selfish and uncaring towards these two women."

"Your being a serving police officer is an aggravating feature, your status means your victims placed a level of trust in you."

Dorset Police said Canhye, who had been in public service for more than 20 years, was suspended after the allegations were made and faces misconduct proceedings.

Sarah Jones KC, prosecuting, told the jury he had "span out of control" after drinking heavily which "changed or disinhibited" him and he behaved like an "animal".

James Newton-Price, defending, said Canhye had resigned from the force.

He added: "He would not have behaved as he did other than for his heavy alcohol consumption."



Zelensky

INTERNATIONAL

Can India-Europe corridor rival China's Belt?

US President Joe Biden and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman upgraded their frosty relationship from an awkward fist bump last year to a firm handshake as they announced the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). (Biden had once vowed to make Saudi Arabia a global pariah.)

The project launched to bolster transportation and communication links between Europe and Asia through rail and shipping networks, while beneficial for the region, was also telling of American foreign policy, "which, to put it simply, is anything that would further US interests against China," Ravi Agarwal, editor-in-chief of Foreign Policy magazine told the BBC.

America does not benefit materially from being part of the project, "but this can be put in the category of the Japan-South Korea summit at Camp David," says Parag Khanna, author of Connectography. The US marked its diplomatic presence at the presidential country retreat by brokering a thaw in the relationship of the two pacific nations in the face of growing Chinese expansionism.

The IMEC is also being seen by many as a US counter to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a global infrastructure-building project that connects China with Southeast Asia, Central Asia, Russia and Europe.

This year marks a decade since President Xi launched the BRI.

Some say the project's grand ambitions have dwindled significantly, as lending to projects has slowed down amid China's economic slowdown. Countries like Italy are expressing their desire to withdraw, and nations such as Sri Lanka and Zambia find themselves caught in debt traps, unable to meet their loan obligations.

BRI has also faced criticism for numerous other reasons from its "underlying objectives of gaining strategic influence through developmental footprint... aggressively linking different regions with Sino-centric value chains, inadequate attention to local needs, lack of transparency, disregard for sovereignty, adverse environmental impact, corruption, and lack of sound financial oversight," Girish Luthra, a fellow at the Observer Research Foundation think-tank wrote in a recent paper.

Despite the hiccups the Chinese have achieved a "staggering amount" and IMEC isn't even close to being a "rival" says Mr Khanna, adding that it can at best be a moderate volume corridor.

"It is not a game changer on the scale of BRI. It is a good announcement but you don't look at the proposal and say, oh my god, the world can't live

A new transport corridor announced on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Delhi will become the basis of world trade for hundreds of years to come, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a recent radio address. Can it really? NIKHIL INAMDAR Writes



Mohammed bin Salman, Narendra Modi and Joe Biden at the G20 summit in Delhi

without it," Mr Khanna told the BBC.

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a global infrastructure-building project You can see why.

China has a 10 year head-start with BRI with total investments under the initiative crossing an eye popping \$1 trillion this July. Over 150 countries have joined as partners, which as Mr Luthra writes has significantly expanded its geographical scope "from a regional to a near-global initiative."

IMEC isn't the first effort by the developed west to use infrastructure as a counter to contain China's growing footprint.

The G7 and US launched a Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment in 2022, aiming to mobilize \$600bn in global infrastructure projects by 2027. The Global Gateway is the EU's answer to BRI.

Neither match its scale or ambition. However the fact that the past five years have witnessed a surge in these projects in response to China's initiative is evidence that BRI has been a "global economic multiplier," says Mr Khanna.

Some analysts caution against exclusively viewing IMEC through the lens of opposition to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), suggesting that such a

binary perspective may not be fruitful.

Its formation gives a further boost to the ongoing trend of transactional partnerships, where countries engage in collaboration with multiple partners simultaneously. "Most countries these days tend to participate in multiple fora and alliances," says Ravinder Kaur, a professor at the University of Copenhagen.

IMEC's memorandum of understanding document is thin on detail but an action plan is expected in the next 60 days. As of date all it has done is map out the potential geography of a corridor.

Making it happen will be enormously complex. "I'd like to see an identification of key government agencies who will underwrite the investments, the capital each government will allocate, and the time frames," says Mr Khanna.

A new customs and trade architecture will also be need to be put in place to harmonise paperwork, he adds, giving the example of the Trans-Eurasian railway through Kazakhstan that passes through 30 countries. "That transit is seamless. You need clearances only at the beginning and end of the journey. We don't have this with IMEC."

Then there are also the obvious geopolitical complexities of

navigating ties between partner countries such as the US, Israel and Saudi Arabia who often don't see eye to eye. It wouldn't take very much for tactical cooperation of this kind to go awry, say experts.

The corridor will include the Haifa port in Israel

The IMEC will compete with the Suez Canal, the sea-level waterway in Egypt used to transport freight between Mumbai and Europe. "To the extent IMEC improves our relations with the UAE and Saudi Arabia, it will hurt relations with Egypt," economist Swaminathan Aiyar wrote in his column for the Times of India.

Transport by sea through the Suez Canal is also cheaper, faster and considerably less

cumbersome. "It may make excellent political sense, but it goes against all the tenets of transport economics," Mr Aiyar adds.

But IMEC's ambitions transcend the narrow scope of trade and economics to include everything from electricity grids to cybersecurity - building on conversations that have taken place in security forums like the Quad, points out Navdeep Puri, a former Indian ambassador to the UAE in a column for The National News.

"If the lofty ambitions outlined in New Delhi can become a reality, they would make a singular contribution to a safer, more habitable planet. For now, let's live with that hope."

BBC News.

"Gen Nguema has so far taken a conciliatory approach towards the deposed president, saying he is free to go abroad. This is in contrast with Niger further north, where President Mohamed Bazoum has been held captive - with his wife and son - by the junta that overthrew him just a month before the military takeover in Gabon. But Mr Bongo has up to now rejected the offer to go abroad, preferring to remain at his private residence in Libreville - something that the junta's newly-appointed Prime Minister Raymond NdongSima confirmed to me when I met him at his office."



Mohbad; glory that should have been



Mohbad after death is estimated to be worth more than 1.2 billion made from songwriting royalties as well as streaming revenues and downloads.

He also became the 46th best selling digital artist in the world side stepping internationally recognized artist like Nicki Minaj, Lady Gaga, Eminem, 21 savage, Chris Brown, Wizkid and Burna Boy.

Meanwhile before his death he was worth only 15million naira. Like the hashtag #Endsars protest there were protest processions in different Nigerian states and outside Nigeria there was a massive billboard in New York with Mohbad's images as calls for a probe into circumstances surrounding his death continued to gain global mileage mostly led by young people.

Popular tracks of his like 'ko por ke', 'ponmo' 'feel good' 'peace' 'marlian anthem' have continued to top mainstream and streaming platforms because most people didn't hear his songs until after his demise. He sang mostly in Yoruba but his lyrics carried crypted messages about his realities not until his



death did it make sense he was fed up with life and his life being threatened but nobody was paying attention.

For a 27-year-old to stomach such glory there was definitely more from where that came from. Ilerioluwa Oladimaji Aloba was better known by his stage name Mohbad. He was born on June 8, 1996 in Lagos. He was a rapper, singer and songwriter from Lagos state.

He was a signee under Marlian Records owned by Naira Marley. He rose to stardom with hit songs like 'feel good' and his collaboration KPK (KO POR KE) with rexxie which earned three nominations at The Headies awards in 2022, stamping his rank as a rising star in the Nigerian music industry.

However, in 2022 he parted ways with the Marlian records and started his own record label IMOLENIZATION. He died on September 12 2023 under disturbing circumstances.

In a report by punch Newspapers 6 October Mohbad alleged that he was assaulted by his management team after he demanded a change of manager. He further explained that he with his producer and a friend went to Naira Marley's house to discuss the issue of him demanding a change of manager but it resulted in an outburst and they were attacked and beaten.

He said Naira Marley was fully present and coordinated some of the attacks as he instructed the boys to beat them up. In a video clip that went viral mohbad decked in a white singlet was seen with bruises on his back, neck and hand.

Naira Marley debunked the claim describing the incident as a "family affair". After MohBad's death, it was reported that he had filed a police report in June 2023 alleging that Samson Erinfolami Balogun, a music promoter nicknamed "Sam Larry" and a known associate of Marley's, had assaulted him and destroyed some of his property. In the report, MohBad said that Larry had interrupted a video shoot, leading a group of 15 men armed with firearms and cutlasses who claimed to work for monarch Oba Elegushi.

Police later said MohBad had not attended a subsequent meeting to address the allegations, and that Balogun and others accused of the assault had then filed a defamation complaint.

Elegushi released a statement distancing himself from Balogun and expressing condolences on MohBad's death. Sam Larry also released a

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Where is Mrs Helen Oritsejafor?

THIS was the question on the lips of guests who graced the Esama of Benin kingdom, Chief Gabriel Osawaru Igbinedion's 89th birthday celebration. Pastor Ayodele Oritsejafor who was a onetime President of the Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, and later Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, PFN, an umbrella body for Pentecostal churches, was one of the special guests at the lavish birthday ceremony where he spoke a few words of adulation about the celebrant. Conspicuously missing by his side was his wife, Pastor Mrs Helen Oritsejafor. Instead, a dark skinned, slim looking woman was his companion at the birthday party. Mrs Oritsejafor's absence naturally re-ignited talks about the state of their marriage.



It is recalled that late last year, there were talks that the 25-year marriage of the founder and Senior Pastor of Word of Life Bible Church, located in Warri, Nigeria had shockingly collapsed. The former couple was alleged to have been bickering these past few years over allegations of infidelity and fraud, which compelled Mrs Oritsejafor to move out of her matrimonial home and relocate to the United Kingdom.

The rumour that the marriage was troubled began when Mrs Oritsejafor shunned church activities, including the week-long celebration of her husband's 50th anniversary in ministry. She released a statement, claiming that all was well with her marriage. But later, she spent the Christmas holiday with her three children abroad away from her husband. She shared photos taken while having fun with them and posted it on her Instagram page. She captioned the photos "Christmas time out with my kids".

Today, a glance at their individual social media pages says it all. They have only photos or videos of themselves individually without the other. Perhaps, it is safe to say, they prefer their arrangement this way. Pastor Oritsejafor got married to Helen in 1997, 13 months after the death of his late wife Stella with whom he founded the World of Life Bible Church on November 15, 1987.

Filmmaker and actor Charles Granville is dead

A friend of the deceased, Umanu Elijah, made the announcement on his Facebook page on Saturday.

According to the obituary shared by Elijah, Granville died on Thursday, September 21, after a protracted illness.

The family also noted that the burial arrangement for the Tinsel actor will soon be communicated.

The obituary read, "It is with a heavy heart that the family announces the passing of Amb Dr Charles Alexander Atomposoba Granville after a protracted illness on Thursday, the 21st of September 2023.

"Words truly can't describe the impact this sudden demise is having on family, friends and well-wishers, taking solace in the phrase 'God knows best!'.

"Funeral arrangements will be communicated in due course."



I have no hands in Mohbad's death

- Naira Marley

MARLIAN Music record owner, Azeez Fashola, popularly known as Naira Marley, has once again cleared the air about his non-involvement in the death of Nigerian singer, Ilerioluwa Aloba, better known as Mohbad.

Naira Marley, in a statement shared on his Instagram handle on Tuesday, expressed his readiness to assist the police in unravelling the circumstances surrounding the death of his former signee, Mohbad.

This is coming exactly two weeks after Mohbad was reported dead at the age of 27 in Lagos State.

He was buried on September 13. However, following an

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EVERYBODY'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Health

By **LEAH HARDY**

5 Breakthroughs pushing for a cancer cure

THERE are five breakthroughs pushing us closer to a cure for cancer as a new drug that could 'annihilate' cancerous tumours is announced, here are some of the other landmark treatment options.

Last month, news broke of an experimental drug that could "annihilate" cancerous tumours. And not just one type of cancer but many. AOH1996 is just one of a tsunami of new medications and treatments which have the potential to transform the outcome of a cancer diagnosis.

Cancer survival has doubled in the past 40 years, but around 167,000 people still die of the disease in the UK every year. Much of this is down to ever-growing waiting lists – health officials are now considering ways for patients to skip the GP stage and go straight to see specialists.

But, in the meantime, there are also exciting steps forward in medical science. Kevin Harrington, a professor of biological cancer therapies at The Institute of Cancer Research and an honorary consultant oncologist at the Royal Marsden (RMH) and St George's Hospital in London, is optimistic that advances in treatment will improve outcomes.

AOH1996 drug Cancer oncology check biopsy. Cancer cells before, left, and after being treated with the AOH1996 drug.

"In 20 years, I confidently expect we will cure a substantially larger number of cancer patients," he said. "And we will cure them with far smarter and kinder treatments than current approaches."

This does not mean there will ever be a single cure for cancer, said Dr Claire Bromley, the senior science communications manager for Cancer Research UK. "Cancer is not a single disease", she added. "There are over 200 types of cancer, and all of them can be split into different subtypes. It's unlikely that there will be one silver bullet. However, a combination of many different treatments means we can ultimately beat cancer for everyone."

Here are the newest breakthroughs to celebrate:

1. The tumour annihilator

What is it?

The AOH1996 drug is named after Anna Olivia Healy, who was born in 1996 and died aged nine after being diagnosed with neuroblastoma, a rare childhood cancer affecting the nerves.

Researchers in the US have developed a molecule that "appears to annihilate all solid tumours" in preclinical research – while leaving healthy cells unharmed.

The experimental cancer-killing pill is taken twice a day and blocks a protein called proliferating cell nuclear antigen (PCNA). In a



mutated form, PCNA is critical to the growth and repair of tumours.

"PCNA is uniquely altered in cancer cells, and this allowed us to design a drug that targeted only the form of PCNA in cancer cells, killing tumours while leaving healthy cells untouched," said Prof Linda Malkas of the department of molecular diagnostics and experimental therapeutics at the City of Hope Hospital, Los Angeles.

What will it treat?

PCNA is found in all cancers, and AOH1996 has shown promise in 70 cell lines, including breast, prostate, brain, ovarian, cervical, skin and lung cancers. It is now being trialled in people for whom standard treatments, such as chemotherapy, have not worked.

When will it be ready?

Prof Harrington said that the drug is "extremely promising". However, AOH1996 has only just entered phase 1 human trials.

"Even with accelerated trials and evaluation to test AOH1966 for safety and effectiveness, the treatment will take at least five to 10 years to gain approval in the UK," he said.

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A drug to supercharge your immune system

What is it?

Immunotherapy, which harnesses the power of our immune system to attack cancer, has revolutionised cancer treatment.

Nicholas Turner, a consultant medical oncologist at The Royal Marsden NHS Trust and professor of molecular oncology at The Institute of Cancer Research, said: "Twenty

years ago, metastatic melanoma [skin cancer that has spread to other organs] had an average survival of around seven months with virtually nobody cured. "Today, thanks to immunotherapy, survival rates are around 40 per cent."

But cancers are wily: they can reach out to press "off switches" on our immune cells, calling off their attack. As a result, said Prof Harrington, cures occur in "far too few patients".

New drugs called "checkpoint inhibitors" block cancer's ability to hit off switches on the immune system. The best-known checkpoint inhibitors target an off-switch protein called PD-1.

Prof Harrington said: "The problem is that there are dozens of these 'off switches'. If we find a way to block one, cancer will find another. We need drugs to back cancer into a corner by blocking all the ways it turns off the immune system."

A new drug, relatlimab, blocks an off-switch protein called LAG-3, making immunotherapy likely to work on more people and more types of cancer.

What will it treat?

Opdualag, a new drug which combines relatlimab with a PD-1 checkpoint inhibitor called nivolumab (Opdivo), has recently been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration for advanced melanoma which cannot be removed by surgery or has spread to other parts of the body.

Other drugs targeting LAG-3 are being trialled for the treatment of multiple myeloma, oesophageal and gastric cancer, among other types of cancers. Opdualag is also being studied in clinical trials of other

cancers, including lung, colorectal and liver cancer.

When will it be ready?

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence is currently evaluating these drugs to treat advanced melanoma with a decision due in December, with more approvals expected in the coming years.

3. Cancer radiotherapy treatment cure BioNTech medicine health

The Government and BioNTech signed a deal to provide up to 10,000 UK patients with precision cancer vaccines by 2030.

Vaccines that can cure cancer – and prevent it coming back? What are they?

We tend to think of vaccines as treatments we have when we are well. They teach the immune system to recognise a virus so it is destroyed before it can make us sick – or at least make us less sick than we would otherwise be.

However, cancer immunisations are different. While some are being developed to prevent the disease in high-risk patients, most are given when a person has been diagnosed. And they are bespoke treatments, tailored to the patient's own unique cancer.

Cancer vaccines may be able to cure even advanced, previously terminal cancers and stop cancer coming back and spreading after it has been treated. Three out of four cancer deaths occur because cancer spreads to other organs, which often happens after a period in which stray cancer cells go to "sleep", becoming undetectable before waking up and forming tumours.

A cancer vaccine not only trains the immune system to recognise and fight off the initial cancer, but also teaches the immune system to recognise any stray cells so they can be picked off if they become active. "The key to effective anti-cancer treatments is to create an immunological memory response," said Prof Harrington. "We want the patient to have a standing army of immune cells trained to recognise and kill cancer if it wakes up."

There are several different types of cancer vaccines in development which all work in slightly different ways. Many employ the mRNA technology used to create Covid vaccines.

What will they treat?

More than 20 mRNA-based vaccines entered clinical trials by 2021 targeting hard-to-treat cancers including pancreatic and the brain cancer glioblastoma.

When will they be ready? In July, the Government signed an agreement with the pharma company BioNTech SE to provide up to 10,000 UK patients with precision cancer

vaccines by 2030.

4. Flash radiotherapy

What is it?

Radiotherapy is often considered an old-fashioned treatment. It uses X-ray energy to kill cancer cells but can also burn and damage healthy tissue in vital organs such as the brain and heart.

However, in flash radiotherapy, radiation is delivered a thousand times faster than in conventional radiotherapy. A therapeutic dose can be given in a fraction of a second. This intensity damages the DNA in cancer cells but is up to 50 per cent less damaging to normal cells.

Cancer Research UK-funded scientists in the UK have found that flash radiotherapy speeds up oxygen use in the tissues being treated. In normal cells, this creates a condition called hypoxia, and this protects the normal cells from DNA damage. This protection means clinicians could potentially increase radiation doses to levels that would cause unacceptable side effects with conventional radiotherapy.

What will it treat?

In future, flash could be used for hard-to-kill cancers in the brain, lungs or gastrointestinal area, where healthy tissue surrounding tumours is particularly vulnerable to damage from radiation exposure. "The potential is enormous," said Dr Bromley.

When will it be ready? So far, flash is only being used in trials. Dr Bromley added: "It could take as long as 10 years before Flash becomes routine."

6. Super-viruses that can infect cancers

What is it?

What could be cleverer than giving cancer a disease? That's the premise of a new breed of engineered viruses created to infect cancer cells but not healthy ones. The viruses essentially trick cancer tumours into destroying themselves.

First, the virus is injected directly into tumours. It then hijacks and replaces the tumour DNA to replicate itself. As the virus grows within cancer cells it bursts them open, and then spreads to other cells while also prompting the immune system to combat the cancer throughout the body.

A new therapeutic virus, RP1, has been created from the herpes simplex virus, which causes cold sores. Tumours are categorised as "hot" or "cold" depending on how much they trigger an immune response. Melanoma is "hot" while breast, pancreatic and prostate cancers are "cold".

RP1 is designed to work on "hotter" tumours, including in patients for whom immunotherapy hasn't worked. Sister viruses RP2 and RP3 have been designed to treat more immunologically "cold" tumours.

What will it treat?

In trials, researchers have used an engineered virus to make immunotherapy more effective on brain tumours. It is also being trialled on patients with organ transplants who often develop skin cancers. A quarter of patients saw their cancer disappear. It has also been trialled in the UK on a small number of last-chance patients with advanced cancers including skin, eye, oesophageal and head and neck cancer. All had failed to respond to other treatments, including immunotherapy.

A quarter saw their cancers shrink and one patient with salivary gland cancer saw his tumour disappear completely. He remains free of cancer 15 months after starting treatment.

When will it be ready?

Availability will depend on the benefit of treatment and the cost of therapy. "In the next three to five years, RP viruses could be available to NHS patients," said Prof Harrington.



THE EYE'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Women's health

Signs you're wearing the wrong bra

By **RACHEL REIFF ELLIS**

EXPERTS disagree on whether improper bra fit can cause neck and back pain. Some studies say it's not related, but others show people with large breasts are more likely to wear a bra that doesn't provide enough support. This may lead to posture problems and pain.

If your breasts spill out over the top of your cups, are squished into your armpits, or are poked with underwire, they'll hurt in a hurry. One of the biggest reasons that nipples hurt? Friction. A bra that's too loose or too tight and that rubs you the wrong way can make for chafed, irritated nipples.

Breasts that aren't well supported can sag and cause stretch marks on your skin that last a lifetime. You can also get grooves in your shoulders from the straps digging into the skin over time. If you have head pains you can't explain, you may have your bra to blame. The tension you can get in your muscles from a badly fitting bra can cause headaches.

Key places to focus to ensure a good fit: the cups, front band, and straps. Be sure your band is tight enough that it stays in place without slipping but loose



Tight bra can cause neck pain enough to slide a finger between it and your skin easily. Choose straps wide enough that they

don't dig into your shoulders, and cups that fully contain your breasts. To get your bra size, you can either visit a store that will do measurements for you, or do it yourself. First, measure your chest just under your breasts and round up to the nearest whole number. This is the number part of your bra size. Be sure to keep the measuring tape below your shoulder blades -- this is where the back strap of your bra should be.

Find Your Cup Size. Next measure your chest at your nipples. The difference between this measurement and your chest measurement tells you your cup size: One inch is an A cup, two is B, three is C, and four is D, and so on. If your breasts are different sizes, you can find inserts to help even them out for a better bra fit. You need double the breast support during workouts: choose a sports bra that stays put when you jump, twist, and bend. But don't try to get that support by wearing a bra that's too tight: This can cause neck pain and compression that leads to numbness in your arms. A bra



that rubs will chafe and even several years, if you care for it cause bleeding, especially around well. Wash it about every two to the band. It may help to dab three wears so the fabric doesn't some petroleum jelly or sports wear out too quickly. Watch for lubricant on any problem areas. signs of underwire exposure or When do you say goodbye? Your stretching that could mess with bra should serve you well for your fit.





Reality Bites

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By RACHEL ELLIS

Medications seniors should use with caution

IT'S no secret that when you get older, your body doesn't work the way it used to. And that's true for how you react to medicine. Your digestive system might not absorb medications as quickly. Liver problems might mean the drug builds up in the bloodstream or doesn't get into it as fast as it should. And kidney trouble could affect how well medicine moves out of your body as waste. Ask your doctor about the impact of your meds as you age.

Over the counter drugs, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), like ibuprofen, aspirin, and naproxen, can keep some prescription medications you take from working the way they should. They're often not a good combo with blood thinners, diabetes drugs, diuretics, or blood pressure drugs. NSAIDs are also rough on major organs when your body gets older, such as your kidneys, liver, heart, and the digestive system.

Your doctor may suggest muscle relaxants drugs to ease muscle spasms. Muscle relaxants like cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril), methocarbamol (Robaxin), and carisoprodol (Soma) can have side effects like feeling woozy and confused. That could raise your chances of falling and hurting yourself. Certain diabetes drug

Long-acting sulfonylurea drugs for diabetes, such as chlorpropamide (Diabinese) and glyburide (DiaBeta, Glynase), can cause low blood sugar, a condition called "hypoglycemia." You might get confused, shaky, sweaty, hungry, and tired. If the condition is severe or long-lasting, it can cause seizures and, in rare cases, could be life-threatening.

Antihistamines. If you have hay fever, your doctor may suggest over-the-counter drugs called antihistamines. They can keep you from sneezing, but some come with more side effects than others. Some antihistamines may leave older adults extra drowsy and confused, which raises your chances of a taking a tumble. Certain Sleep Aids/drugs that help you go to sleep can cause problems when you wake up. You might feel groggy and have trouble with balance when you get out of bed in the morning. Your ability to think clearly might be affected. Diphenhydramine, the main ingredient in many sleeping pills, can also lead to dry mouth, blurred vision, and bladder problems.



Anxiety Medication.

Benzodiazepines are drugs that treat anxiety. They include diazepam (Valium), alprazolam (Xanax), and chlordiazepoxide (Librium). Some of these medications stick around in your system a lot longer than others. Their side effects, like confusion, can last past the day you take them and raise your chances of falling. Anticholinergics. Your doctor may prescribe these drugs to help treat conditions like Parkinson's disease, irritable bowel syndrome, and depression. But anticholinergics can cause confusion, dry mouth, and blurry vision, especially in older adults. In older men, they are more likely

to cause problems with peeing. In addition, common medications with anticholinergic properties include antihistamines, tricyclic antidepressants, cimetidine, muscle relaxants, and some cold medications.

Tricyclic Antidepressants.

They're an older class of drugs that doctors don't prescribe often. But if you take tricyclics, such as amitriptyline and imipramine, keep in mind they have side effects that can be worse in older adults. These include problems like constipation, irregular heartbeat, blurry vision, confusion, memory trouble, and dry mouth. Men could have



problems with peeing. Antipsychotics These drugs treat mental disorders, such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, and are risky for some older adults. Taking antipsychotics raises your chances of a life-threatening heart problem or a brain bleed if you have dementia. Cimetidine (Tagamet). It's an over-the-counter treatment for heartburn, indigestion, and ulcers. If you're an older adult and take this medicine, it can have side effects like confusion, even at regular doses. **Combination drugs.** Look carefully at the labels of over-the-counter medicines to see if they have more than one active ingredient. Some cold and sinus medications, for example, have decongestants along with antihistamines. The combination can make you confused, drowsy, and groggy. It can also raise your blood pressure and cause problems going to the bathroom. Laxatives too. A lot of older folks take medications to help ease constipation. But it isn't wise to take some medicine, like bisacodyl (Dulcolax), as long-term, regular treatment. Over time, laxatives can cause permanent problems with your bowels.

THEY'RE SLOW WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Living

Knee pain do's and don'ts

By **TYLER WHEELER**

THERE are many do's and don'ts to help you from knee pain. Take a break so your knee has time to heal. You'll only need 1 or 2 days of rest to ease minor knee pain, but severe injuries may keep you off your feet longer. Talk to your doctor if it doesn't get better after a few days.

Don't stay on the couch too long.

Exercise builds strong muscles around your joints, and that helps prevent injuries. Once your knee has had enough rest, get back out there. Low-impact water workouts or tai chi are good options. But don't overdo it or you'll risk more pain.

Try the RICE formula to treat a knee injury:

Rest for a day or two to heal. Ice your knee to calm inflammation. Compress (wrap) your joint for support and to stop fluid buildup.

Elevate it on a pillow or stool to curb swelling.

Don't risk slips, trips, or falls. Wear shoes with good tread on them to cut your risk of a slip. Choose low-heeled ones with soft, rubber soles. Keep your home's hallways and stairwells well lit, and clear floors of things you could trip over.

Do use a cane if you need one. Feel unsteady? Use something to steady you as you move around. Choose a sturdy, strong, light cane with a rubber tip and a handle that's easy to grasp. Hold it at a 45-degree angle to be sure it's the right height. Find one in a color or style you like so you'll be more likely to use it.



Use a cane if you need one to support your knee

Do watch your weight. Extra pounds add strain to your knees and raise your risk of painful arthritis and injuries. But even moderate weight loss can make it better. If you need to drop a few pounds, set a goal to lose just 5% of your current weight over the

next few months.

Also consider Acupuncture. Tiny needles are put into the skin around your sore joint. Research shows it can ease knee arthritis pain, though it's still unclear how. Look for someone who's trained and experienced. Many states license acupuncturists. Don't forget to stretch. The muscles around your knees can get tight, and that can lead to painful injuries. Daily stretches can prevent that and muscle pain. Ask your doctor or physical therapist for easy moves to help you limber up before you walk or do any other activity.

Do use heat and cold.

If your knee pain flares, try hot or cold treatments. Moist heat is better for pain relief than dry. Soak in a warm bath, or zap a damp washcloth in the microwave. To ease a swollen knee, press a bag of frozen veggies wrapped in a towel against the joint. Don't sleep in the wrong position.

This can make your knee pain worse. Try out different positions, and put a pillow between your knees if you sleep on your side. Don't prop up a bent knee on a pillow, though -- that can make it harder to unbend your leg the next day. Try Braces or Sleeves. Support a sore, weak knee with a brace, sleeve, or tape. Ask a physical

therapist to fit you with one or to tape your knee. A simple sleeve that fits over your knee can offer short-term pain relief, too. You can find them at the drugstore.

Don't wear out your knees. You may get knee pain because you overload your joints. Movements you do over and over again, like go up and down stairs every day, can jar and wear down your knees. But don't sit for long periods, either. That puts extra pressure between your knee and leg bone that can cause pain. Support your arches. Choose shoes that support your arches, or get slip-in inserts at your local drugstore. If those don't work, you can ask your doctor about custom supports. But those can be expensive and don't always work better than the ones available over the counter. Don't keep wearing the same old shoes. Shoes can stretch and wear out after a while. Don't keep wearing your favorite pair after their support and tread have worn out. You may find that new shoes that support your feet and ankles well ease your knee pain. Talk to Your Doctor. You don't have to deal with knee pain alone. Your doctor might prescribe medication or give you a steroid shot to help. They also might talk with you about surgery to replace worn joints or ligaments.



BUSINESS WORLD

Boost living standards quality of life

The growing cost of living is having an effect internationally, but in various ways, and it is certain that costs and bills are continuing to climb sharply, including the number of impoverished on the African continent. Though the cost of food, household products, and other necessities has risen widely in recent years, from Delhi to Shanghai, Rome, Manchester, Dubai, Houston, Mexico City, Belfast, Islamabad, Dublin, and Manila, to mention a few, the effect has been greatest in Africa. Where the standard of living and the quality of life continue to deteriorate. This price increase has been on the rise as a result of the new coronavirus (COVID-19) conflict in Ukraine, and it is continuing to reduce the majority's accessible discretionary income. TIMI OLUBIYI, writes.

IN Nigeria, for instance, a quality loaf of bread that was N350 in 2020 is now over N1,000 which is a 300% increase in just three years. Similar percentage increases are in the cost of flight tickets, health care, rent, energy cost (fuel), a bag of rice, a crate of eggs, a kilo of chicken or turkey and many other essentials due to inflation, yet income has remained the same or even less. Nothing is cheap, and everything is out of reach for the majority of people. Given the country's current position, which is similar to that of many other African countries, and the fact that many individuals have not experienced an increase in their income, this has resulted in lower or no savings, increasing irritation, mental health difficulties, and unhappiness with meeting basic needs among many. Regardless of the length of service, experience gained, or available connection, there is always the chance and fear of losing jobs or firms closing down, and the effects may be more severe.

Employers, in fact, are hesitant to implement any wage increases for economic reasons. Inflation continues to have a severe negative impact on man's mental, emotional, and physical well-being, as well as on marriages and livelihoods. Currently, even with a steady, regular salary, living has become costlier with heightened uncertainty, high inflation, and weak purchasing power, especially for the masses including civil servants, entrepreneurs, and small business owners. As a result, one of the ways to have protection is by diversifying sources of income and having multiple streams at this time. You have multiple bills; why not have multiple streams of income to support the inadequacy?

Therefore, in addition to salary or business income, it is important to source other income avenues to satisfy the rising



needs, poor business performance and inflation. Because if financial capacity is weak and daily expenses continue to rise, individuals, businesses, and even households will be threatened with sustainability. Therefore, there is a need to take action because having multiple streams of income has proven to be priceless. According to my observations, the majority of people and homes on the continent rely solely on earned income, be it salary or daily income from a business, and they are always hoping that nothing bad happens. It is critical to understand that if salary is the sole source of income, you are on the verge of financial pressure. With the high inflation, unemployment crisis, and unstable economy, having many sources of income may help spread the risk and guarantee

that homes and businesses are stable and financially protected. We live in a world where one source of income is insufficient and becoming increasingly unsustainable. If you ask me, having multiple sources of income is no longer a luxury; it is a necessity. To be safe, it is never rational to depend on a single income source, full-time job, or a single market. Remember, change is the only constant thing in life, and this change happens rapidly in this period and is always unpredictable. Living paycheck-to-paycheck, can severely affect mental health, and increase anxiety, depression, and stress and many are unaware of the implications on their health.

Consequently, having multiple sources of income is the best way to protect yourself, your business, and your family against drastic

financial change at this time. The tools for generating these multiple streams of income are readily accessible on the internet or by engaging a professional. We have greater access than ever before to information, people, ideas, and opportunities with social media, so tap into this. If the average billionaire or millionaire has more than one way to make money, it is important for professionals and business owners to think the same way and have stable passive income streams to stay on top of financial and economic woes.

While active income will require your full attention and effort, like being available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, passive income is generated with no or insignificant effort and attention; it can work while you sleep. So, to complement active income, passive income such as investing can generate income through dividends, interest, and return on capital. Depending on the market and your financial circumstances, investing in real estate might provide you with high returns and rental income. But if you cannot construct to generate rent, acquire a piece of land and protect it; no matter how far away it is, it will rise in value. If you have years of experience in your field, you can start giving paid advice and consulting services or giving lectures as a means to earn another stream of income from your regular job or business. Another reliable way is

by acquiring assets that can generate consistent and steady cash flow. Looking inward might just help as well, talents, abilities, and passion can be used to create potential that can give income streams.

Clearly, research has shown that having multiple streams of income as a plan aids retirement and provides the necessary comfort in old age. Hear this: if a solid retirement plan is your goal, savings alone will be insufficient; instead, the objective should include developing numerous streams of income sufficient to replace your principal active income (salary). The main benefit or advantage of having multiple streams of income is that when one stream is challenged or things are very volatile, there is a backup for extra income to attain financial stability. That can give the necessary hedge against uncertainties in a business as well as during illness, and disability of the entrepreneur.

In conclusion, it is reasonable to live below your means to make room for savings and then investment, no matter how little it helps along with side hustles. Relying on a salary or daily business income alone is a danger at this time. In an environment where job loss and unemployment are chronic, the decision to create multiple streams of income and secure financial stability is expedient. However, do not let your side-income streams put the primary and full-time job or business at risk unless you can survive without it. Good luck!

"While active income will require your full attention and effort, like being available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, passive income is generated with no or insignificant effort and attention; it can work while you sleep. So, to complement active income, passive income such as investing can generate income through dividends, interest, and return on capital. Depending on the market and your financial circumstances, investing in real estate might provide you with high returns and rental income. But if you cannot construct to generate rent, acquire a piece of land and protect it; no matter how far away it is, it will rise in value. If you have years of experience in your field, you can start giving paid advice and consulting services or giving lectures as a means to earn another stream of income from your regular job or business. Another reliable way is by acquiring assets that can generate consistent and steady cash flow. Looking inward might just help as well, talents, abilities, and passion can be used to create potential that can give income streams."

BUSINESS WORLD

W'Bank cautions CBN against FX control

THE World Bank on recently advised the Central Banks of Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Uganda to refrain from unconventional measures that might undermine their monetary policies.

According to the Washington Bank, these measures include "monetizing the fiscal deficit, direct lending interventions, untariffed subsidy programs, and foreign exchange controls."

The lender emphasised the critical challenge of inflation faced by monetary authorities in the region, particularly in countries struggling with "underdeveloped financial systems, a substantial informal sector, and a lack of coordination between monetary and fiscal policies."

The organization highlighted the potential consequences, stating, "If monetary and fiscal actions are not adequately coordinated to bring down inflation, the risk of de-anchoring inflation expectations would fuel further inflation, accelerate interest rate increases, and exacerbate the deceleration of economic activity."

In its Africa's Pulse report, the World Bank underscored the persistent inflationary challenges faced by most regional countries.

Africa's Pulse is a bi-annual publication of the Office of the Chief Economist in the World Bank Africa Region. It analyses the continent's short-term economic prospects, current development challenges, and a special development topic.

The 2023 edition of the report attributed the inflationary challenges to several factors, including "a global demand slowdown, eased supply chain disruptions, lower commodity prices, and stricter monetary policies."

Despite a projected decrease to 7.3 percent in 2023 from 9.3 percent in 2022, 18 countries are still contending with double-digit inflation.

The report highlighted the impact on households, particularly the poor, who allocate a significant portion of their earnings to food, due to rising food and fuel costs and weakened domestic currencies.

Regarding fiscal matters, the report expressed concern over the slow progress of fiscal consolidation efforts in some countries. In 2023, fiscal deficits remain higher than pre-pandemic levels for nearly two-thirds of the region's nations.



Cardoso

The World Bank stressed the urgency of addressing these issues, emphasizing the need for "domestic resource mobilization and efficient spending" to mitigate fiscal and debt sustainability risks, curb inflation, and create room for development expenditure.

The World Bank acknowledged the efforts

of certain countries, such as Kenya and Ghana, in implementing revenue reforms, and Angola and Nigeria in subsidy reforms, signifying the region's commitment to fiscal consolidation.

Additionally, the adoption of digital tools for tax administration and compliance has become a recent trend in the region.

Petrol marketers decry supply monopoly.

Petrol marketers have disapproved of the monopoly in the supply of the product into the country, even as they confirmed that subsidy has crept in following the government's intervention.

They said the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPC) Limited should not be the sole importer of petrol into the country, considering the provisions of the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA).

"First of all, we need to get out of the bottleneck we have created for ourselves, in which the NNPC is the sole importer of fuel into Nigeria," said Tunji Oyejobi, MD/CEO of 11 Plc, said on Thursday at the annual conference of the Association of Energy Correspondents of Nigeria in Lagos.

Oyejobi, a former chairman of the Major Oil Marketers Association of Nigeria (MOMAN), said the NNPC's monopoly has to be broken. "The monopoly of a single supplier in the country needs to be dismantled because it's inefficient and not sustainable."

On May 29, President Bola Tinubu announced the removal of the petrol subsidy – a development that led to an increase in the pump price of the product from N186 per litre to over N500. The price was further raised in July to as high as N617.

The subsidy removal coupled with a foreign exchange reform that led to a sharp devaluation of the naira in mid-June was expected to encourage private marketers to join the NNPC in petrol

In a bid to tackle food insecurity, the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Senator Abubakar Kyari, has expressed his readiness to partner with International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to strengthen food security in the Country.

This was made known during a courtesy visit to his office by the Country Representative of the International Fund for Agricultural Development in Nigeria (IFAD) Mrs. Dede Ekoue, on Wednesday 4th October 2023.

The Minister revealed that since 1985, IFAD had been Nigeria's trusted partner for reducing rural poverty, pointing out that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu was committed to his Renewed Hope Agenda to implement programmes and policies that would enhance food security, job creation and poverty eradication.

He pointed out that to achieve these, the President declared a state of emergency on food security.

Sen. Kyari thanked IFAD for its support and opportunities presented to the country. He noted that Nigeria is faced with challenges, stressing that the door was open for contributions and assistance to ensure food availability for the populace.

The Minister also pointed out that, four out of the eight point agenda of Mr. President was devoted to food security,

Agric Ministry to collaborate with IFAD

hence the Ministry has a critical role to play to achieve the Agenda.

Speaking further, he stated that the country's yield was low due to insecurity, flood and climate change thus needs all assistance from International partners.

He stressed the need for capacity building in IFAD programmes with a designed exist strategy that would ensure continuity.

In her remarks, the Country representative, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Mrs. Dede Ekoue noted with delight, the cooperation of the Ministry with IFAD at different fora as well as the commitment of the country towards food security.

She recalled that Nigerian's cooperation with IFAD dates back to 1985 with support to small holder farmers which gave rise to food security.

Mrs. Ekoue noted that her visit was to renew the commitment of IFAD to food security, pointing out that IFAD had developed a new cooperation strategy that would guide its investment and cooperation.

She rolled out many opportunities available to Nigeria to include; strengthening technology and mechanization, strengthening women participation, integration of animal husbandry, strengthening the private sector contributions to food systems among others.



Kyari

(MOMAN), said the NNPC's monopoly has to be broken. "The monopoly of a single supplier in the country needs to be dismantled because it's inefficient and not sustainable."

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The subsidy removal coupled with a foreign exchange reform that led to a sharp devaluation of the naira in mid-June was expected to encourage private marketers to join the NNPC in petrol importation. One or two operators brought in the product but the government's announcement that pump prices would not increase further amid rising global oil prices and naira devaluation put a damper on marketers' efforts to import the product.

"We have to find ways of bringing other players into the importation business so that there's competition and efficiency. Then we need to look at the whole logistics chain," Oyejobi said.

"Today, there may be three or four facilities that can take vessels of the size of 120,000 metric tonnes. If we have more of those kinds of facilities, we will bring larger vessels into the country," he added.

He said the regulators should be careful not to take actions that go against the PIA.

According to him, the PIA has established that

petroleum prices have to be fixed or determined by market forces "That is the law, and it is very clear."

Since the last increase in the pump price of petrol in July, the product has been held constant. This is despite the rise in global oil prices which has pushed the pump price of diesel to over N1,000 from around N640-N700 in July.

In August, Tinubu assured Nigerians that there would be no increase in the pump price of petrol anywhere in the country.

"Is there still subsidy? I will say yes, in some areas," Clemen Isong, executive secretary of MOMAN, said during a panel session at the event. "The subsidy, as it was, must never come back."

He said while the government can intervene, the intervention should be clear and time-bound.

He said the higher prices should force the consumers to be more efficient and the operators to look for innovative ways of pushing down their costs to be competitive in the market.

"If the pump price of petrol had stayed at N185 per litre today with the current global oil prices Nigeria would have collapsed, Isong said. "So the subsidy is much less than it used to be, but for us to get to where we want to be, we must make some adjustments."

He said the adjustments would be in the area of infrastructure and operational investments "This will have an impact on working capital and cost of fund and we still have local investments to make respect to public health awareness and safety."



Kyari

ENTREPRENEUR WATCH

WITH CELESTINE D. ATTSAR

Business growth and the internet at this time

Businesses in Africa, large, small, and micro, continue to bear the brunt of inflation, high energy costs (diesel and electricity), and, more broadly, global economic turbulence, particularly the crisis in Ukraine and Russia which has snowballed into a slew of challenges that increasingly threaten the survival of many enterprises across all sectors on the continent. **Timi Olubiyi, writes.**



AT TENTION to businesses, particularly small businesses, continues to be heightened because of the increasingly difficult times and widespread uncertainty in many countries of Africa due to post-pandemic consequences. Therefore, more and more businesses are looking for ways to fight back against the harsh economy and hostile environments.

One of the ways widely noticed across Africa in recent times, based on the author's observation, is the continual change of business location by operators and business managers to reduce the cost of doing business, in particular for rent reduction.

Lately, it has been observed that more businesses with headquarters and main base of operations or offices in choice locations, where they have established connections and network with customers, continue to relocate to neighbouring states and remote areas.

This trend has been increasing in all sectors and industries post-pandemic. The probing question is why? According to a survey conducted in Lagos State, Nigeria's economic capital, the most common reason given by many business operators why relocation of businesses is receiving high consideration, was

that it is a way to minimise the high rising cost of doing business and remaining in business seems to be a top business priority for many of them.

The view is that location or relocation factor in a business should be more on overall business gains, that is to, maximise income, access to competent workforce, be closer to customers and business resources amongst others.

Many of them are not aware that these key variables adequately and effectively give a competitive advantage to businesses. Location or relocation should not just be determined based on cost of doing business. It can be concluded that location decisions at this time are typically driven by financial factors.

However, such linear decisions can have serious consequences on non-financial factors such as customer retention, sales or market share growth, proximity to resources, or more broadly, the long-term sustainability of the businesses.

Let the truth be told, the choice of a business location is an economic decision and should only be considered strategically with thorough evaluation rather than just for maintaining low rent, that is reducing operating costs or on mere sentiments.

Because such sharp decisions can influence the conditions in

which the business activity is subsequently conducted. If a business selects a wrong location, it may have an adverse effect on access to customers, competent workers, good transportation, access to resources, and so on. Consequently, it should be done with caution and strategically because location plays a significant role in overall business success.

The criteria dictating the location of businesses in the past were, for example, access to raw materials, low costs of the labour force and production means, costs of transport or benefits from government amongst others. But presently, in most city capitals across Africa what drives business location is the cost of doing business. Whereas globalization and technology, have been the most important factors in industrialised countries, where remote work and digital adoption have been on the rise.

A location strategy is especially critical now because where a business is set up can have a significant impact on its success; a poor choice can jeopardise potential income, dissuade existing customers, increase delivery costs, and compromise future business growth and related supporting industries.

When examining the role of location, it suffices to mention that some start-ups and small businesses may just require a

website and a presence on the Internet. That can offer better proximity to customers than a physical location where the cost of running the business is high. For businesses in retail, traditional stores may be complemented with technology and an online presence, reducing the number of outlets or branches.

The new normal has clearly demonstrated that technology and digital adoption can provide a competitive advantage while also lowering the cost of doing business, particularly the cost of running a business activity (rent, electricity, remuneration, local taxes and fees).

The COVID-19 crisis has brought rapid change in the way businesses in all sectors and regions conduct their operations. Largely, the COVID-19 crisis has removed the technology barrier in business and the introduction of many applications to improve operations and globalisation is now available. Adopting digitization and the use of technology to improve customer and supply-chain interactions is increasing globally.

Some businesses have even re-strategized and moved part of their business operations online, implementing more than 60% of their business operations on the Internet. This is also a location for a business to stay competitive

and reduce the cost of doing business in a hostile environment, not just physical change or relocation.

Many businesses are currently struggling as a result of their adherence to the old-fashioned brick-and-mortar business model, even though the new normal has been established through the effective use of technology and digital channels.

The important thing to note is that new strategies, business models, and practices are required for businesses to stay profitable and stem the tide of high inflation, harsh environmental conditions, and weak consumer spending. Technology's strategic importance has to be recognised in business dealings going forward and as a critical component of the business.

It can provide a source of business cost efficiencies and also global accessibility. Research has shown that the location of a business is one of its most important factors for success, and online is also a location. Perhaps, across sectors, businesses may need to refocus their offerings, fill the technology gaps by adopting digital channels, increase their online presence and develop digital products more. This may just be the strategic location businesses need to consider at this time. Good luck!



Mohbad; glory that should have been

Continued from page 18

statement explaining why he attacked Mohbad at a video shoot he said he had given Mohbad N2 million two years ago to perform at his mother's annual remembrance concert in Ikorodu but he failed to show up and when he challenged him about it, the singer claimed to have not been feeling fine. According to the note, Sam Larry asked Mohbad for a refund but the singer claimed that he lost his phone and money after the NDLEA raided where he was staying so he was broke.

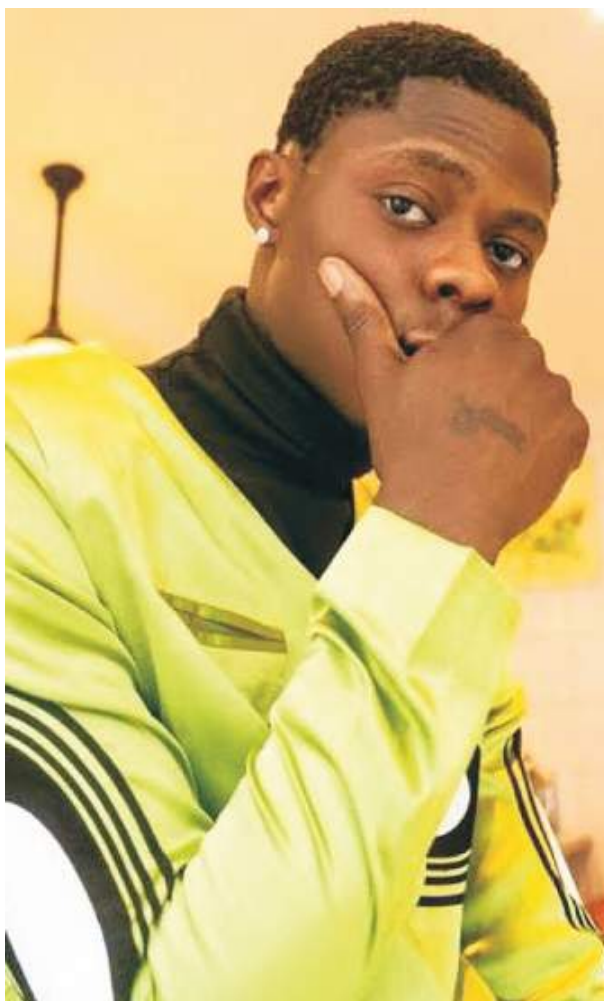
The statement revealed further that Sam Larry later heard Mohbad was shooting a music video somewhere close to his house and he went there to ask for his money before an argument ensued and one of the singer's friends promised that the money would be refunded.

Sam Larry allegedly claimed in the statement that he later traveled to Kenya to find a new African musician to perform at his mother's annual remembrance and he has been away since August 20, even before Mohbad died. These incident as reported by Mohbad before he died expressly made Naira Marley and Sam Larry prime suspects in the leading cause of his death which was why a lot of people were angry and in all the procession for Mohbad kept calling for the heads of Naira Marley and Sam Larry.

More inquest into some of the leads Mohbad left behind was his time with the Marlians. In Naira Malays response to Mohbad's assault he said it was a family affair. The next question that comes to mind is, What kind of family could this be?

Groups and individuals who offer a similitude of togetherness, care, concern, growth, cooperation, friendship, commitment easily pass for the title family. Most times they have structures and big platforms that could give an Upper hand in succeeding at different endeavors with promises of unending possibilities.

But they do not exist without rules and regulations, way of life, standards and tenets it is mostly binding on members by legal agreements and in obnoxious cases result in violent and fetish means of enforcing binding rules on members. Mohbad obviously didn't have a healthy relationship with this so-called family of his as he said in a tweet as reported by punch newspaper "I have always just



wanted to create good music and to provide for my family and myself through my music.

As an Artiste from the street, I thought the Marlian Family would be a good place for me. "However, recent events and certain truths have come to light which threaten my peace, health and career. The kind of relationships and affiliation one keeps can either stabilize or cause mental stress their activities will often rub-off on you whether you approve of it or not.

Many young talents have good intentions of creating good music thereby creating sustainable income for themselves and their families but have gullibly fallen into the trap of some of these vicious families without knowing in toto what the cost can be. Young people need to be weary of associations and their activities.

All that glitters is not gold. Excessive use of drugs is also tagged a possible cause of his death. From testimonies about his life, it was obvious that he was messed up already by drugs He could have died of drug related psychosis due to endorphins and neurotransmitters like serotonin that controls the mood. Drug consumption has from time in memorial been the bane of many music and musicians.

It's an affliction that's always lurking in every sniff and sip. It has dragged many musicians down the drain. Even outside the shores of Nigeria there exist this subsisting and notorious notion that drug consumption contributes highly to artistic inspiration. In an article from Cable newspaper titled 'The Mohbad in Nigeria at 63' written by Festus Adedayo highlighted a one-time renowned artist who lost her life to drug addiction after suffering brain damage - Brenda Fassie.

She was a south African diva who was so talented in the art of singing so much so that times magazine dubbed her the Madonna of townships. She was a wonder to behold the memory of her stage performance of her famous song 'vulindlela' still resonate so much energy and excitement.

Unfortunately, she died at the age of 40 before she could climax her career. Drugs is a temporary joy giver. For the pleasure it gives it reduces your life span.

The human body is designed to enable performance optimally. Instead of drugs enhancing performance as many have claim it does to them, drugs could conspire to cut your life short without notice. The situation is one which we cannot ask the dead what happened. people will continue to pucker until they can come to a logical conclusion to the cause of Mohbad's death the Autopsy carried out should expose vivid cause of his untimely death.

Without pointing fingers, the behavior and conduct of some of his immediate family and some well-wishers have raised suspicions therefore the Nigerian police should look in all direction in fact victims should be treated as suspects. It has now become a matter of public interest.

It is public outcry that has open up this can of warms and in a very positive way it is good for our society, relevant authorities are on their toes; the police, media, judiciary, and the legislature.

There is constant update and media has tagged it developing story in other to pacify the public. If only Nigerians can find a common threshold where it hits everyone with the same gravity then we can unite stronger than #justiceformohbad and #endsars protest and call out the common evil and uphold what is true and just for our society, for the common good of everyone and the generation to come.

I have no hands in Mohbad's death

- Naira Marley

Continued from page 18

investigation by the Lagos State Police Command to unravel the cause of his death, Mohbad's remains were exhumed for an autopsy.

The Lagos State Police Command last Thursday confirmed the conclusion of the autopsy.

The Lagos State Police Command Public Relations Officer, Benjamin Hundeyin, who confirmed the developments to our

correspondent in an exclusive telephone interview said, "Mohbad's corpse has been exhumed and medical experts have successfully concluded the autopsy on the corpse tonight. Our concern as the police is the outcome of the autopsy, as we're expecting the result soon."

But in the statement on his Instagram page on Tuesday, Naira Marley said all manner of stories had been peddled against him in respect of Mohbad's death, adding that, "Permit me to categorically state that I have no hand in the death of Ilerioluwa, either directly or indirectly. It is not unusual in the industry, just like in several other industries, to have family friction, even amongst blood relatives."

While praying for the soul of the deceased to rest in peace, Naira Marley said, "As it is traumatic for a lot of people to bear the reality of Ileri's death, so it is to me."

He said the reason for his being silent since the death of Mohbad was in order not to jeopardise the investigation being carried out by government agencies.

In addition, he noted, "I have been out of the country since the 31st of August, 2023 and I'm yet to return."

Expressing his readiness to assist relevant agencies in the investigation process, Naira Marley added, "In light of the police invitation, I am making arrangements to return to the country to assist the investigation and give my version of the events. I am fully cooperating with the Police team and I certainly have no reason to be a fugitive when I have no hand in his death."

"In due time, the circumstances surrounding Mohbad's death will be unveiled and the world will know the truth. This kind of scenario of attempting to set someone up is not novel in the industry as other great musicians have experienced the same and came out better and stronger. Mine will not be an exception as I am innocent of the accusations," part of the statement read.



Shakira faces eight years jail term

COLOMBIAN singer and songwriter, Shakira, 46, has once again been accused by prosecutors of defrauding the Spanish treasury of £5.75 million, and may face up to eight years in prison if convicted.

The singer is already due to go on trial on November 20, at a court in Barcelona, for six counts of tax fraud she allegedly committed in 2012, 2013 and 2014.

If found guilty of the six counts of tax fraud, amounting to £12.6 million, Shakira could face a prison sentence of up to eight years, Daily Mail reports Tuesday.

Shakira, however, has denied any wrongdoing and insisted she would fight the accusations levied against her in court instead of seeking a last-minute deal with Spanish state prosecutors.

She said she had acted in accordance with the law and under the advice of the best tax experts.

Spanish tax inspectors reportedly spent more than a year checking up on Shakira, even visiting her favourite hairdressers in Barcelona and checking her social media to try to show she spent most of the three years in dispute in Spain.

They claimed she had spent 242 days in Spain in 2012, 212 days in 2013 and 243 days in the country in 2014 before indicting her with six counts of tax fraud for those three years.



SUNDAY FEATURE

Checkmating philandering in our ivory towers

The conversation about sexual harassment in Nigerian public institutions requires the serious attention of all stakeholders. The recent protest by the students of the law faculty of the University of Calabar (UNICAL) Cross River State against the law faculty top management accused of sexual harassment of female students, which culminated in the suspension of law professor Cyril Ndifon, is a serious issue for concern. ROTIMI BELLO writes.

STRIKINGLY, sexual harassment against women is as old as humanity. Most men are brutes and sometimes lose their thinking faculties and composure when they see women or ladies. Sexual harassment against women is a global phenomenon that is becoming rampant in all nooks and crannies of the world. It is bereft of social classes or ranking.

It happens in all strata of life. Even the so-called men of God are not immune to the temptation of sexual harassment. Many men of God lost their coveted position to their inability to control their "third leg" manhood against unholy sexual advances towards women.

The former president of the U.S., Donald Trump, was enmeshed in sexual harassment against many women prior to his emergence as president. Another former U.S. president almost lost his presidency to the sexual escapade with a lady; the secret affairs were blown open and unleashed to the public by a third party, even against the wishes of the two adults (President Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinski) involved.

One of the worst countries for sexual harassment is Afghanistan. Not only are women being harassed frequently, but they are also being raped almost on a regular basis by highly placed individuals both within the government sphere and community axis.

Therefore, it is called the world's most dangerous place for women. Similarly, India is another dangerous place where women's and children's honour is often violated with impunity. To forestall recurrent instances of women and female children harassment and violation, which India has gained notoriety for in the community of nations, the Indian Government, in collaboration with its Police Authority, has resorted to self-help by instituting a self-defense training taekwondo program for women to defend themselves from rapists and assailants.

I thought that the nasty



experience of some lecturers imprisoned, suspended, and whose jobs were terminated because of sexual harassment would serve as a lesson to other randy lecturers, but far from it, one is amazed to read about the students protesting about sexual harassment in the faculty of law at the University of Calabar.

Also, in June 2022, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Abuja, Prof. Abdul-Rasheed Na'allah, announced that two lecturers were dismissed over sexual misconduct. Interestingly, a 2018 World Bank survey discovered that 70 percent of female graduates were sexually harassed in class by their classmates and lecturers.

This shows that our ivory towers are riddled with sex-for-mark corruption. This means that some public university lecturers are indulging in sexcapade.

Obviously, there are many lecturers and teachers out there who take advantage of the meekness of girls and ladies to violate their honour against their wishes.

If politicians are being accused of corruption and stealing of public money to glaze their lives and self-egos, then sexual harassment perpetrated against students in whatever forms by lecturers is not only against the professional ethics of the profession but a grand moral corruption that destroys the carrier of many young women who refuse to surrender their womanhood to sex maniac opportunists.

While corrupt politicians could be accused of plundering the wealth of nations, lecturers or teachers who indulge in sexual harassment are corrupting the societal fabric by making unholy advances to sleep with their

students for free marks. Sexual corruption is worse than financial corruption because most victims have been perpetually imprisoned in the bunker of their hearts by the assailant for as long as they live.

All over the world, women are asserting their freedom by openly reporting sexual assault and harassment. This culminated in the institutionalization of the #MeToo hashtag, which gained momentum in every nook and cranny of the world.

This is to say that girls and women should be bold enough to speak up by challenging the perpetrator and never hesitate to inform a third party at the inception of these nefarious activities. Like Obafemi Awolowo University's anti-sexual harassment policy, other tertiary institutions across the country should put mechanisms in place to checkmate philandering in our ivory towers.

Female students and women should be encouraged and supported to resist attendant intimidation by reporting to the designated credible, unbiased authority that will investigate the allegation. Women are the future of the world; without them, humanity will face extinction like the flora and fauna of Siberia.

Sensitization seminars should be instituted by the university community and championed by experts to enlighten and educate undergraduate girls about their fundamental rights as students.

The Sexual Ethics Committee (SEC) should be established by all higher institutions to monitor cases of sexual harassment and intimidation on campus.

A marking scheme should be prepared for all examinations, which must be submitted to the HOD immediately after the paper is written. In the case of suspected harassment, students should be encouraged to call for their papers to be remarked. Everything humanly possible should be done to protect the sanctity of girls in the custody of other randy lecturers.

Historically, men could equally be the object of sexual harassment and disdain in the hands of sexpots ever ready to exchange sex for marks. Joseph in the Bible was sexually harassed by Potiphar's wife in the book of Genesis. Joseph's resistance to Potiphar's wife's attempted seduction made the woman furious, and she in turn accused him of rape, which landed him in prison.

To forestall harassment from girls who may intentionally flaunt their bodies to torment lecturers, dress codes should be strictly designed and adhered to by the higher institutions and departments across the country. Finally, an anti-sexual harassment policy should be applicable to men to protect them from wild sex kittens on the prowl on our campuses.

Bello a social commentator, writes from Canada.

If politicians are being accused of corruption and stealing of public money to glaze their lives and self-egos, then sexual harassment perpetrated against students in whatever forms by lecturers is not only against the professional ethics of the profession but a grand moral corruption that destroys the carrier of many young women who refuse to surrender their womanhood to sex maniac opportunists.

NEWS

Elders pledge to support Governor Sani

From **JOHN FWAH Kaduna**

THE Kaduna State Elders and Senior Citizens have pledged their commitment to support the Kaduna State Governor, Senator Uba Sani to succeed in his efforts to free the state from the shackles of insecurity, poverty and hardship.

The Elders who expressed concern over the social and economic plight of the State, said they are determined to lend their support towards Governor Sani's mission of revitalizing agriculture and boosting the rural economy.

Speaking on behalf of the elders after a meeting with the governor at Sir Kashim Ibrahim House, Kaduna, former Military Administrator of Rivers State, General Zamani Lekwot (Rtd), said Governor Sani has started well.

According to him, "As elders, our duty is to offer seasoned advice, building on our experience of the past. Today's session was very vibrant, full of facts and hope.

"The key issues had to do with insecurity, and how to free Kaduna State from the shackles of insecurity. If that is done, the rural areas and urban centers will be free so that the citizens can freely move in pursuit of their happiness.

"The other crucial issue is the economic empowerment, how to resuscitate agriculture in particular. We know that agriculture is our cultural heritage. If enough food is grown and circulated, inflation will come down and every citizen will have something to eat.

"Another good area he (the governor) touched which impressed us is how to make sure that every school-age going child goes to school in order to lay a good foundation for their future progress. If that area succeeds, that will curb the current insecurity that we are facing. So, as elders, we have promised to do our best to support him to succeed in order to take our state to the promised land," he stressed.

In his remark, Alhaji Abubakar Mustapha, former Kaduna State Head of Service and National Organising Secretary of the People's Democratic Party, (PDP), noted that,

"We listened attentively to the submission of our governor on his 4-month scorecard. Very articulate, down to earth. We have seen in him a person who will transform the rural areas. By doing that, people



Sani

will be employed, peace will be maintained, and less instances of insecurity."

The elders called on the people of Kaduna State to give Governor Sani maximum support for him to succeed.

"We are appealing to everybody, to please give support to the Governor on what he intends to do. He is very detribalized. In his dictionary, there is no ethnicity, no differences or religion. Everything should be based on merit, need and the fear of God. So, this is our appeal to all our people in Kaduna State to give our Governor maximum support for him to succeed."

Earlier in his remarks, Governor Sani stated that his government has been very lucky since it came in. He said that the senior citizens and the elders

have been giving the government all the support it required.

"Today, you can see that they are the leading statesmen in our state. In the past, they held various positions. They contributed their quota towards the development of our state and Nigeria, that is why we identified them and we invited them.

"Today's meeting was very fruitful. We talked about a number of issues, the issue of insecurity and how we can work together with them to address the problem of insecurity.

"We also discussed the issue of infrastructural development, particularly in our rural areas. We listened to their own advice, their input, and of course, we are going to use their advice because most of them held positions like I said in the past."

Governor flags off back to school campaign

From **ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi**

IN partnership with UNICEF Bauchi Field Office, Governor Bala Mohammed recently flagged off the 2023 enrollment drive/ back to school campaign in a bid to reposition and uplift the standard of education in the state.

Governor Bala Mohammed made this known at the new Government House Banquet Hall, Bauchi while flagging off the campaign. He said his administration is committed to ensuring judicious utilization of available resources towards the implementation of educational policies that will foster gender inclusion, promote equity, deliver quality learning and guarantee safe and violence-free schooling for all citizens in the state.

Governor Mohammed said his administration is concerned with the state of

education and is always proactive in taking measures to address observed lapses in the education sector. Hence, the need to approve promotion of all teachers, renovation and construction of more schools, payments of examination fees, including JAMB in an effort to improve the working condition and welfare of teachers in the state in addition to the recruitment of additional 1,000 teachers to support teaching and learning.

"It is our moral and constitutional duty to ensure that every child in Bauchi State has access to quality education. I wish to use this occasion to express my special appreciation to UNICEF Nigeria and the Bauchi Field Office for their partnership and support to uplift education in the State.

"I am also grateful to FCDO, USAID, and the World Bank, UNESCO and European Union as well as the organized private sector

By **DORCAS PANKYES**

THE Nigerian Information Technology Reporters' Association (NITRA) has praised Prof. Umar Garba Danbatta, the Executive Vice Chairman of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), for his exceptional leadership and groundbreaking achievements in the country's telecom sector.

NITRA commends Danbatta for his visionary approach, which has transformed the telecom sector and positioned it as a symbol of progress. Under Danbatta's leadership, the sector has attracted an impressive \$77 billion in investments, making it a significant contributor to Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with a 16 percent contribution. This represents a remarkable increase from the 8 percent contribution in 2015.

The recent first-quarter report from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) revealed that the telecom sector contributed N2.508 trillion to the nation's GDP, accounting for 14.13 percent. NITRA also applauds Danbatta for embracing 5G technology, making Nigeria an early adopter and generating \$820.8 million in revenue for the federal government through 5G spectrum license fees.

The issuance of a license to SpaceX for Starlinks broadband services has been seen as a game-changer, highlighting Danbatta's forward-thinking approach.

Danbatta's visionary leadership transforms Nigeria's Telecom sector - NITRA

Additionally, the sector has experienced significant growth in telephone users, internet subscribers, and broadband users, reaching 218.9 million, 159.5 million, and 88.7 million respectively, under Danbatta's leadership. This growth has also led to job creation, demonstrating the sector's crucial role in Nigeria's economic development. Despite challenges such as infrastructure vandalism, regulatory complexities, and power supply issues, Danbatta's commitment to innovation, regulatory

excellence, and stakeholder engagement has set a powerful precedent for success.

The ICT community urges the federal government to replicate the telecom sector's success in other industries, aiming to position Nigeria among the world's top 20 economies. Danbatta's transformative leadership in the telecom sector serves as an inspiring example of how visionary leadership can drive growth, innovation, and prosperity in the Nigerian economy.



Danbatta

for the role they have been playing in this regard. I want to assure them that we shall expand and deepen our collaboration with them for quality education in Bauchi State."

He explained that the establishment of the committee is a testimony of his administration's unwavering commitment to providing quality education to every child in the state and the need to adapt to changing educational paradigms by ensuring effective learning and the acquisition of relevant knowledge, skills, and competencies.

The governor said the terms of reference of the committee are to undertake specific actions that will promote quality education (school attendance, transition and completion) in the state, including (Islamic, Quranic and Tsangaya Education), Nomadic and Second chance education at the local government and state

levels.

According to him, the committee is expected to build partnership with relevant bodies for collaborative efforts and actions in the promotion of all citizens' education in the state and to ensure that education issues are on the front burner of government agencies in the state.

Others include embarking on high level advocacy to the state government and relevant decision makers and to initiate and implement state enrolment drive activities at the local government and state levels, monitoring and evaluation of school projects and activities, to take responsibility for the effective implementation of the state education plans and to source for funds from donor agencies and other relevant organisations to supplement government's effort in funding the education sector.

"I have no doubt that members of this Steering Committee are fervent supporters of educational reform in addition to being authorities in their respective disciplines. Your selection to serve on the committee is therefore based on your record of success, your commitment to the socio-economic development of the state and determination to make sure that no child is left behind in the acquisition of knowledge.

"Our goal as a government is to make Bauchi State a centre of educational excellence, where every kid has the chance to obtain a top-notch education that equips them with the capacity to face the challenges of the 21st century. To achieve this goal, we must work together tirelessly, leveraging your expertise, innovative ideas and a shared vision for a brighter tomorrow."

POLITICS

Emir charges title holders on loyalty

From **ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi.**

THE Emir of Bauchi, Dr. Rilwanu Sulaiman Adamu, has charged all traditional title holders in the state to remain upright, loyal and diligent in the discharge of their responsibilities.

The Emir gave the charge while officially turbaning a popular business mogul, Alh. Yakubu Ibrahim as the Santurakin Bauchi in his palace.

According to the Emir, "This would help in upholding the sacred nature of the Bauchi Emirate Council and enhance its mutual trust and reverence of the good people of Bauchi State".

He however, urged the newly installed traditional title holder to always tread the footprint of his late father, Alh. Yakubu Lame, who held the title with absolute dignity, patience and fear of God.

"Your late father had been a good ambassador of the emirate whose enormous contributions to the upliftment of the living standards of the people of the state and the emirate in particular were unquantifiable, especially as regards to their livelihood," the Emir said.

Speaking shortly after his installation, Ibrahim appreciated the Emir for finding him worthy of wearing his late father's shoes at the Emirate Council.

He promised to abide by the culture and traditions of the institution, as well as assuring to positively contribute to the emirate and pledged his unalloyed loyalty to the emir,



Adamu,

praying to God to enable him succeed in the tasks ahead.

"By the grace of the Almighty Allah, I will do what will push the emirate, Bauchi State and the country at large, forward.

"Santuraki is a post that has been in existence for a very long time and it means the most trustworthy amongst the sons of a king in Kano.

"If a child is very close to the king and does all his biddings, he will be bestowed the title Sarkin Turaka which is Santuraki in abbreviation.

"Thank God the name Santuraki came to Bauchi and I was chosen as one which I inherited from my late father," he explained.

Also, one of the kingmakers, Alh. Aliyu Yakubu, District Head of Lame, who lauded the

Emir for putting a round peg in a round hole, said the installation was not only important to the people of Lame District but to the Bauchi Emirate Council as well as the people of the state in general.

"We believe that the new title holder is equal to the task because he is such a person that is obedient.

"I want to believe that this Emirate has done the real thing they were supposed to do by fishing out somebody that is dedicated, honest, sincere and hard working.

The colourful ceremony was graced by a number of the emirate council members, relatives, friends, supporters and well-wishers who prayed for the guidance and blessings of the emir on the new Santurakin Bauchi.

THE Benue State Commissioner of Information, Culture and Tourism, Mr. Mathew Abo who was abducted at his residence in Zaki-Biam on Sunday September 24th, 2023 has regained his freedom early today.

Sources disclosed that his abductors released him in the early hours of today and he has already reunited with his family.

The sources which did not state whether the N60 million or any money demanded as ransom was paid or not, said the commissioner returned in good health

He spent 10 days in captivity before freedom came his way.

His release could be attributed to intensified security operations, spirited negotiations as well as prayers by individuals and groups.

Staff of the Benue State Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism mounted concerted prayer sessions for the safe release of the commissioner.

Benue State Governor, Rev Fr Dr Hyacinth Alia who condemned the abduction, also directed the security

Kidnapped Benue commissioner regains freedom

From **TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi**



Abo

agencies to ensure the release of the commissioner.

It could be recalled that gunmen came on four motorcycles, ordered everyone in the house including the commissioner's wife and children to lie face down

and took him away to an unknown destination on one of the motorcycles.

The abduction took place after 8 pm on Sunday 24th September, 2023.

Abo was sworn-in as a member of the Benue State Executive Council on August 29th, 2023.

Benue Executive Council approves demolition of illegal structures

From **TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi**

THE Benue State Executive Council has approved the demolition of all structures that failed structural integrity tests as well as those built on

waterways.

Briefing newsmen at the end of the State Executive Council meeting held recently and presided over by the state Deputy Governor, Barr Dr. Sam Ode, Commissioner for Works and Housing, Mr. Tiza Imojime explained that the Council also frowned at the collapsed church building at North Bank area in Makurdi which claimed the life of a pastor.

He said the Council approved that all structures within the state that failed structural integrity tests as well as those built on waterways should be pulled down.

He said the decision was to ensure protection of lives and property of people of the state.

"The EXCO concluded that every building in the state that lacks structural and integrity tests and those on waterways should be removed," he said

The commissioner added that exco also directed Ministry of Rural Development and Cooperatives, Urban Development, Works and Housing as well as that of Lands, Survey and Solid Minerals, to carry out an integrity test on the collapsed church building with a view to ascertaining the cause of the collapse to

enable government to make informed decision.

According to the commissioner, exco also directed Benue youths to avail themselves to the Ministry of Youths, Sports and Creativity to be captured in its database for proper planning. He added that the move was to enable government get the exact database of youth in the state for effective planning and implementation of youth related policies

The commissioner explained that the Council also called on Benue people to embrace agriculture as an enabling environment has already been created by the administration of Governor Hyacinth Alia.

He added that plans have already been concluded to address the immediate needs of the people to enable them to get the best in the sector.

On the general state of infrastructure in the state, the commissioner said plans were underway to address the same.

"I have embarked on an assessment of roads infrastructure in the state in order to have first-hand information on their status. Federal roads in the state have also been assessed and efforts are on to meet relevant federal agencies to intervene" he said.

Don attributes crisis of development to poor governance

By **EZEKIEL DONTINNA**

A retired professor from the Department of Sociology, University of Jos, Professor Etannibi E. O. Alemika, says, the crises of development and security in Nigeria were as a result of growing governance failure and government decline in its responsiveness and

performance in our country. He sated this recently while delivering his Valedictory Lectures and Public Presentation of a book in his honour, held at the conference hall of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Jos, the Plateau State capital.

The Professor said,

"Nigeria has been embroiled in a lingering deepening of underdevelopment and insecurity. The crises of development and security in the country are due to governance and government failures caused by labyrinth of forces that are interwoven and caused by anomie.

Nigeria's potential for mobilisation towards development and security is impaired by wide disagreement over virtually all issues except unrestrained and obsessive wealth acquisition and ostentatious lifestyle not predicated on industry and hardworking.

"I argue that growing governance failure and progressive decline in government's responsiveness and performance in Nigeria, are consequences of growing disruptive, dysfunctional and discordant value priorities since the late 1970s", he enthused.

According to the celebrant, "major manifestations of development and and



Prof. Etannibi

NEWS

Committee discovers irregularities in appointments by last administration

BY PETER TITLE

THE committee set up by Governor Caleb Mutfwang to review the employment exercise in the state civil service by the immediate past administration has presented its report.

It observed that slots were shared 50-50 percent between the institutions, some MDAs with the office of the Head of Civil Service which were then allocated to the then ruling party, some traditional rulers, religious bodies, groups and individuals.

Presenting the report to the Executive Governor recently at the New Government House, Little Rayfield, Jos, the Chairman of the Committee, Dr. Ishaya Agaldo also observed that the approvals and the employment exercise was carried out in a haste with some MDAs exceeding their approval limits.

The committee which was constituted in June this year with terms of reference to review the employment exercise to ensure that due process was followed, to authenticate the actual number of persons engaged, determine the current status of staff on government payroll and to review the exercise to ensure that there was an even spread across the state, therefore recommended the exercise be reviewed to ensure due process was followed.

Dr. Agaldo who made the committee's position known



Mutfwang

also recommended that the engagement of ad hoc staff by MDAs which was a form of casualization be seriously discouraged. This is because it has been greatly abused. He advised that MDAs that followed due process be exempted from such reviews.

They also recommended that in reviewing the exercise, the ad hoc staff who had previously been engaged and used over the years, should be given priority. And added that employment into state service be carried out on a regular basis to replace retired, deceased and other staff who may leave the service for other reasons.

Receiving the report on behalf of the Executive Governor, the Secretary to the

Government of the State (SGS), Arc. Samuel N. Jatau, thanked the committee for a thorough job saying it was not meant to witch-hunt anybody.

According to him, everybody has a stake and it was incumbent on every one to do the needful. He explained saying that the actions of each person would be judged by history.

Jatau explained that most MDAs do not follow due process which he said was unfortunate. He assured that it was their intention to make the state civil service amongst the top ten in the committee of nations.

Arc. Jatau, while commending the committee, called on them not to hesitate whenever they were called upon to serve in any capacity. Atul.

By HOSEA NYAMLONG

ACTING General Manager of Plateau Publishing Corporation (PPC), publishers of THE NIGERIA STANDARD and SUNDAY STANDARD, Mr. Paul Jatau has warned staff of the corporation to take their work seriously.

Jatau made this disclosure while addressing staff at the Paste-up Hall of the corporation recently.

He stated that it has come to the notice of the management that staff have developed the habit of indiscipline and nonchalance towards their duty and as a result, don't report to duty on time.

He said that time book would be provided in all the Directorates of the corporation in order to monitor the movement and reporting time of staff.

He added that it would not be business as usual as visitors visiting the corporation should ensure that they have business with the corporation or its staff. Unauthorize persons within the premises of the corporation would no longer be entertained.

Jatau in his submission during the address maintained that the corporation has recently witnessed cases of stolen property and also an attempt to steal one of the air condition compartment belonging to Express City line Machine of the corporation.

He warned that any staff that would be caught in any act of stealing or be found in

Ag GM PPC warns against indiscipline

connection or found spearheading any criminal act of stealing property of the organization would be made to face the full wrath of the law and if found wanting, dismissed according to civil service rules.

He urged staff to be diligent in their work and also be vigilant in safeguarding properties of the organization from theft.

Earlier in a speech by the Director of Admin and Personnel (DAP), Mrs. Victoria Arin, she reiterated that staff are to adhere to the ethics, rules and regulations guiding the Civil Service Scheme.

She stressed that staff

must be disciplined in discharging his or her duty accordingly. And that any staff found wanting would be punished according to the rules and regulations guiding the establishment.

Arin advised staff to ensure that they are always at their duty post, for staff roaming about would not be tolerated anymore. "We must give value to our work and to sustain the legacy the corporation was known for."

However, the acting General Manager in response to staff comments, questions and contributions, assured staff of the management's readiness and commitment to address the situation in no time.



Jatau

ASUSS urges government to prioritise welfare of members

From JOHN FWAH Kaduna

THE Kaduna State chapter of Academic Staff Union of Secondary Schools, Nigeria (ASUSS) has urged the state government to prioritise the welfare of secondary school teachers in the state because they impact on the future of students' produce and their careers.

The call was made by the chairman of the union, Comrade Isaiah Dauda, during the 2023 World Teachers Day held in Kaduna recently.

The chairman noted with dismay the impact of teachers' welfare, not only on their

families but pointed out that it has a direct impact on students in terms of quality service delivery.

According to him, "The welfare of a teacher has a direct impact on his family, students and his employer in terms of quality service delivery".

"Secondary schools tutors in Kaduna State deserve an increase in their salaries and other welfare packages, so as to stimulate them to redouble their energy towards better service delivery in the education sector in Kaduna State."

"An increased in the

teachers' minimum wage and other welfare packages, such as a provision of accommodation for tutors within the school premises to ease hardships, re-introduction of science allowance for science tutors, introduction of rural allowance to tutors working in rural areas, provision of soft loans to tutors and introduction of hazard allowance to our members will enhance better service delivery in education sector," the Kaduna ASUSS Chairman said.

Meanwhile, in his lecture, the guest speaker, Dr John Silas of the College of Education, Gidan Waya, emphasized on the need to be objective in the area of teaching and learning. In the same vein, the representative of the Director General of Quality Assurance, Mrs Mercy Binta, implored the state government to employ more teachers. She also tasked every teacher to look inward through self examination, adding that self-examinations are one of the qualities of a good teacher. In his speech, the representative of the Commissioner for Education, Labaran Hassan who is also the Deputy Director Public Schools in Kaduna, extolled the importance of teachers as mother of all professions. Labaran said, the theme of this year's World Teachers Day: "The Teachers We Need For Education We Want", is

very apt. And pointed out that the teachers should come up with a proposed plan on how to bring back out of school children.

Active mobile subscriptions reach 220715961 million -NCC

By DORCAS PANKYES

THE Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has announced that the number of active mobile subscriptions in the country has reached 220,715,961 million as of August 2023.

The Executive Vice Chairman of NCC, Prof. Umar Danbatta, disclosed this at the 18th Abuja International Trade FAIR. He stated that the

number of active internet subscribers was 159,034,717 million, with broadband penetration at 45.57% as of the same period.

Danbatta emphasized the importance of businesses in Nigeria leveraging new technologies and acquiring necessary digital skills to compete internationally. He noted that the competitiveness of Nigerian businesses depends on their ability to adapt to the digital

landscape and stated that NCC's regulatory efforts in deepening access to digital services will benefit Nigeria, contributing to job creation and GDP growth.

To sustain the growth of the telecoms sector, Danbatta assured that NCC would continue to create a conducive environment for the deployment of robust broadband infrastructure, improving the quality of service for consumers and enabling industries transition into ICT-driven sectors.

The Director of NCC's Consumer Affairs Bureau, Mr Umar Alkasim, reiterated the commission's commitment to ensuring fair competition and a level playing field for all stakeholders in the telecommunications industry.

Alkasim stated that NCC is safeguarding the interests of consumers and protecting them from unfair practices in the telecom service value chain through various consumer-centric initiatives.

The announcement highlights the significant strides made in Nigeria's telecommunications industry, as the country continues to expand its mobile and internet connectivity. This growth presents opportunities for businesses to embrace digital technologies and contribute to the country's economic development.



Sani



Danbata

SUNDAY MAGAZINE



Continued from page 10

it becomes quite a significant loss to the companies apart from the constant cases of vandalism of electricity installations such as transformers and supply wires and cables. Such has become a daily occurrence in some towns and cities across the country resulting in loses running to millions of Naira worth of equipment that often force a black-out in some communities and a setback to the economy entirely.

SUNDAY STANDARD also gathered that this time around, in the course of the grid restoration, the process initially suffered a setback but was at the long run addressed. But according to Mbah the TCN General Manager Corporate Affairs, "In the course of any grid restoration process, challenges may be encountered which does not amount to another collapse."

The latest grid collapse appears to be one in the series when power generation on the system crashed from 3,700MW to as low as 38MW. This send shivers across the country considering the level of black-out and impact on the general public.

SUNDAY STANDARD also

gathered that it was because of such implication that the Discos had to alert their customers to be aware of what was happening. As a result of such collapse, electricity generation from all the generating plants dropped to OMW, including Afam VI [Gas/Steam], Dadin Kowa GS [Hydro], Delta [Gas], Gengu [GAS], Gengu NPP [Gas], Jebba [Hdyro], Okpai [Gas/Steam] and Olorunsho [Gas].

Nigeria depends on just between 3,500MW and 4,500MW for its over 200million population, making it one of the least electrified nations in the world. This is despite the power sector's partial privitisation by the Federal Government in 2013 and the trillions of Naira sunk into it.

The national grid is operated by TCN from Osogbo in Osun State, and in the event of any collapse, many plants become vulnerable particularly AfamVI, which produces 0.70MW, Dadinkowa [zero MW], Ibom power has 32.90MW, while Jebba is still struggling with 240MW and Olorunsho which suffered zero generation has been shut down.

It would be recalled, it was the Enugu Distribution Company that first alerted its customers on the latest grid collapse which followed by other Discos across the country and was later confirmed by the Minister of power Adebayo Adelabu who explained via his twitter handle.

The development has brought to bare the depth of challenges within the power sector which like a cancer had spread to other plants coupled with high level of corruption and constant policy changes over the years that had left most power plants unattended to which has further depleted the fortunes of the sector.

Even as Nigeria celebrates its Independence anniversary, most energy experts have solicited for serious Government intervention with a view to revamping its energy capacity that would increase electricity generation and supply in the light of the efforts being made by the Tinubu administration to attract investors in order to turn around the nation's ailing economy.

And just to recall what the late MKO Abiola once said while campaigning for President and was asked by pressmen on how he was going to change the narratives on power generation in the country and his reply was,

"there is nothing too big about it, all that Nigeria required is just 'transformers'.

It is a stark reality that the huge unemployment rate in Nigeria cannot be wish away. It is a monster which must be tamed or else it consumes the society in its entirety. It has been on record-severally that a lot of vices like armed robbery, banditry amongst other security challenges have been blamed on unemployment. The visible exacerbation of unemployment in Nigeria as mentioned earlier is a time-bomb waiting to explode. Therefore, government must evolved concerted efforts to tackle this perennial albeit monstrous problem.

"Recent reports have indicated that some households do not even have metres and in such a situation, it becomes quite a significant loss to the companies apart from the constant cases of vandalism of electricity installations such as transformers and supply wires and cables. Such has become a daily occurrence in some towns and cities across the country resulting in loses running to millions of Naira worth of equipment that often force a black-out in some communities and a setback to the economy entirely."

METRO-FOCUS

Menace of uncompleted buildings to the society

By JIDAUNA DARING,

UNCOMPLETED buildings are structures that are erected by some developers right from the foundation level, but unfortunately, some of these projects are sometimes stopped, either as a result of financial challenges or due to some personal reasons that are best known to the developers.

What is more worrisome about the existence of some of these abandoned uncompleted buildings in our communities, is the fact that such structures have become a meeting point or hideout for criminal elements. And or meeting points for delinquents, drugs addicts.

It is also observed that some of these abandoned uncompleted structures have been in that condition for more than 10 years. Some of the developers sometimes stop work on site even when they have reached an advanced level of the work. A handful have been completed but waiting for roofing. While some have been abandoned immediately after the roofing of such structures.

In the same vein, such abandoned structures have not only become dangerous for the activities of our young ones who have become wayward in the society. Snakes also take advantage of such buildings to stay inside and hatch. This has posed a serious threat to the lives of the people who live around or close to such structures.

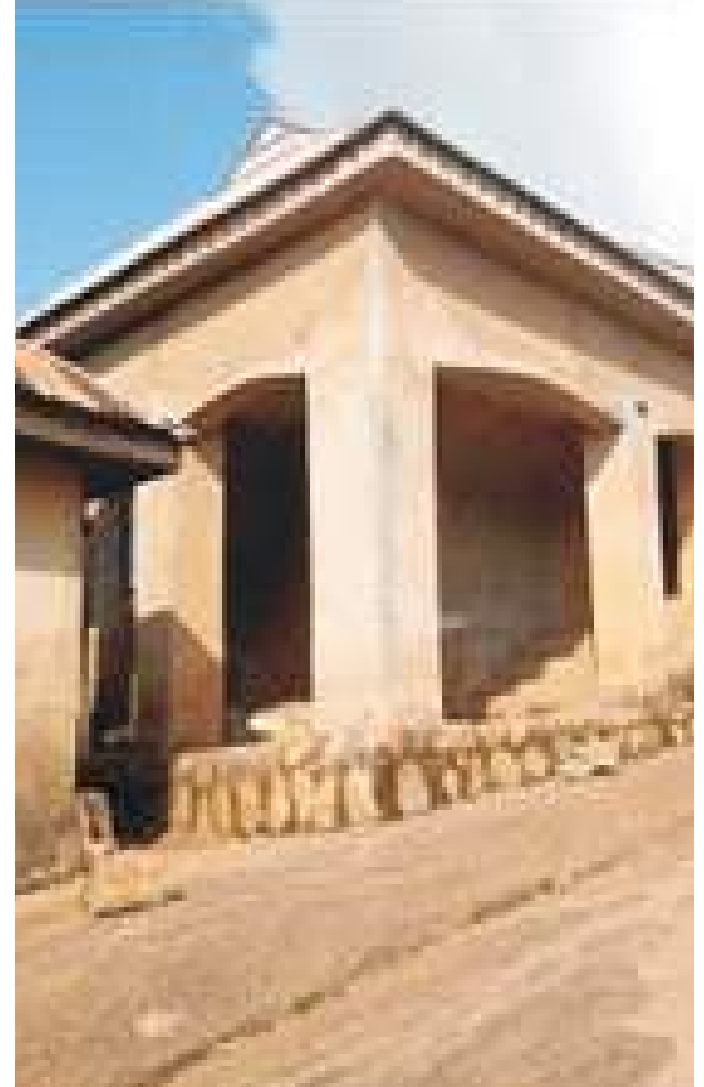
Since snakes are nobody's friend, it would be wise for any developer who abandoned a site for some time, to as a matter of urgency and safety, ensure that the site is fumigated to drive away reptiles. It is imperative to sound this warning after experts have blamed the existence of snakes in a house, which grows and later appears to threaten the lives of house owners; on abandoning of projects only to resume after reptiles like snakes have made it their home.

This is necessary because some developers did not take into cognizance the issue of fumigation against snake. It has obviously been observed that because of the available cracks on the wall of some of these abandoned structures, snakes gained access into the cracked walls and even some available hole and remain in hiding. After the completion, such snakes can strike on the occupants because it was not fumigated.

In this regard, it is very necessary for anyone who leaves a building uncompleted, to take measures against snakes. People are advised to plant lemon grasses around such building. Something about the grass repels them and will keep the property safe from them.

It is against this background that a resident of Agingi in Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State, Mr. Plangan John Christopher who spoke with **SUNDAY STANDARD** said abandoned uncompleted structures are littered around in the communities because of various challenges. Some developers will start the building process and then, at a point stop the work.

Mr. Christopher pointed out that such structures pose a lot of danger to the people living within the



community. He said that criminals also use such structures to perpetrate whatever evil they want to do particularly against passers-by.

"In fact, there are those that one sees hanging around, and stalking unsuspecting people. When gaining entrance to your house, they stop you by your door or gate and rob you of your belongings. I must say again that such abandoned buildings pose a lot of dangers to the inhabitants of the communities".

He called on government to take proactive measures on abandoned buildings. He pointed out that Jos Metropolitan Development Board (JMDB) is the agency that is responsible for getting in touch with owners of abandoned buildings.

Mr. Christopher maintained that the board should as a matter of urgency, address this issue by specifying a period of time within which the structures should be completed so as to reduce the increasing number of abandoned buildings in the communities.

He added that JMDB should on its part roll out measures that would help the board to monitor people who are developing their personal structures to know that they have been given a specific period of time to complete work on site.

Also speaking separately with our correspondent, Wunuken Obed and Idris Isa Magaji both of Wukari in Taraba State said that such buildings serve as a point where nefarious and immoral activities like smoking of dangerous substances, rape, prostitution and kidnapping are

carried out. They also serve as temporary hideout to hard criminals.

It is also glaring that such buildings make an area ugly and unkempt. Most of them are overgrown with grasses and shrubs and the owners only attain to them when they resume work.



SUNDAY PEOPLE

GENERAL MANAGER ADDRESSES STAFF

The Acting General Manager, Plateau Publishing Corporation (PPC) Jos, Mr. Paul Jatau, recently addressed Staff of the Corporation at the Paste-up of the Corporation, JD Gomwalk House, Jos



Mr. Paul Jatau, addressing the Staff, flanked by some of his Management Staff



Cross section of Staff listening attentively



Cross section of senior Staff at the meeting



Cross section of Head of Directorates

PHOTOS: JOHN LAR

NDLEA HONOURS FIRST LADY

The Plateau State Command, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) paid a visit to the First Lady of Plateau State, Barr. Mrs. Helen Mutfwang at Government House Rayfield, Jos



DSC Grace Guyo (right) decorating the First Lady of Plateau State, Barr. Mrs. Helen Mutfwang as Ambassador of NDLEA while Mustapha Umar Yahuza of Plateau State Commander looks on



Shadrach Dapiye, ASC, Investigation and Training (left) with Muhammed Assi, Asst. State Commander



DSC Murtala Sono, Deputy State Commander, Operation and Training (right) with DSC Ibrahim Musa, Deputy State Commander



Barr. Mrs. Helen Mutfwang, wife of the Governor (middle) in a group photograph with the NDLEA Staff

PHOTOS: JOHN LAR



Road Runner

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Risk factors with reference to cyclists, motorcyclist and pedestrians

Cyclists and motorcyclists are particularly vulnerable road users, mainly because we often fail to see them. Vehicle drivers are programmed to look out for other vehicles of similar or bigger size, as such anything of lesser size is not registered. The campaign THINK ONCE, THINK TWICE, THINK BIKE was designed to help drivers overcome this peculiar challenge.

Look out for **cyclists** at road junctions especially and try to allow them as much room as possible when overtaking. If you can't give them enough room, you need to slow down. Cyclists, particularly the young or those laden with shopping and bulky objects, can wobble or swerve suddenly. Even professional looking cyclists in cycling shorts and wearing helmets will not wish to risk damaging their wheels in potholes or drain covers, so be prepared for them to avoid poor road surfaces. Many cyclists may suddenly dismount if the hill they are climbing becomes too steep. Try to anticipate the actions of a cyclist. A glance over the shoulder for instance could mean that they intend turning right or will move into your path. The same goes for motorcyclists. Remember that they are exposed to bad weather, slippery or uneven road surfaces and crosswinds. Motorcyclists have the same rights and privileges as vehicles and other road users. It is important to make allowances and give them plenty of room.

Pedestrians: all pedestrians are vulnerable road users and should be seen as such; particularly children, the elderly, the mentally retarded and people living with disability. It is dangerous to assume that every pedestrian is physically and mentally fit enough not to step out and finish up under the wheels of a car. Generally speaking, you should give way to pedestrians who are crossing the road as you turn into a junction. If they are still at the pavement as you turn into the road, make sure before continuing that they have seen you and are not going to step out. In particular, look out for elderly people crossing the road. Their hearing and eyesight might not be so good. They cannot necessarily judge traffic speed so well and do not always realize the dangers involved in crossing the road. Nor will they be able to move quickly if they have misjudged the gap, so be prepared to slow down and give them time to clear the road.

Disable people need particular consideration. It is obviously difficult to tell if someone is deaf but take care if someone fails to look your way as you get closer. In civilized world, there are guide dogs for the hard of hearing as well as the visually impaired. The guide dog for the hearing impaired usually has an orange lead and collar while that of the visually impaired pedestrian has a loop type of harness. A white stick indicates the carrier is visually impaired. If the stick has two reflective red bands around it, the bearer is hard of hearing. Again, give these people plenty of time to cross the road.

As a driver, take great care near **children**. Children can dash impulsively across the road simply because they have spotted friends on the other side. Children are particularly unpredictable and you really need to be driving slowly and with special care in residential areas, near schools, parks and ice-cream vans. Be aware of the time of day when children are going to and from schools. If there is a school-crossing traffic warden holding a lollipop stick, or Stop-Children sign, then you must of course stop.

As a driver or any other road user for that matter, you just need to recognize where the risks lie, the types of conditions vehicles and road users that can potentially increase these risks. You identify the risky situation, assess it and adjust your speed and general driving habits accordingly. It is entirely up to you to decide how to deal with things. Just



NEWS

From
AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

Kogi : 21 LP LG Chairmen defect to APC

ALL the 21 Local Government Chairmen of the Labour Party in Kogi State have defected to the ruling All Progressives Congress.

The chairmen said they collapsed their structured in order to support the APC governorship candidate, Usman Ododo, in the November 11, 2023 election.

At the official decamping ceremony at the weekend in Lokoja, the defectors said LP was no longer viable in the state.

They further anchored their reason for abandoning their party for APC on the conviction that the APC candidate, Usman Ododo, had shown that "he is a unifier whose nationalist qualities are needed to consolidate on the achievements of Governor Yahaya Bello."

Leading the chairmen, scores of their supporters and other members of Labour Party in the state to APC at the defection ceremony, Kogi Coordinator of the Obidient Movement, Awe Kayode, said the Labour Party structure in the state was a formidable one that delivered massive votes to the party's presidential candidate, Peter Obi without inducement or support.

He stresses that their decision to collapse the LP structure into the APC was to join forces with the Progressives to actualise the 'Kogi Agenda' which seeks to further unite the people and ensure even development across board.

Kayode said, "I was in APC before I left to join the Labour Party. I am back today with more people and we are ready to add value. LP got over 76,000 votes in the last presidential election. We still have the same people that worked to achieve that feat."

"Kogi State belongs to all of us and we have decided to jettison ethnic or religious agenda to support the candidate of APC who



Yakubu

promotes the Kogi Agenda."

In his submission, the LP Chairman of Bassa Local Government Area, who doubles as Chairman of LP Chairmen Forum, Jimba Emmanuel, noted that political party was just a platform to power and that good governance was not about the party "but individuals who are passionate about development and attracting dividends of democracy to the people."

He maintained that the governorship candidate of the Labour Party lacked the required quality, hence their decision to abandon what he described as a "sinking ship".

The Forum chairman promised that his colleagues had agreed to mobilise all their structures across the 21 local government areas to deliver massive votes for the APC candidate.

In his remarks, the Commissioner for Education, Science and Technology, Wemi Jones, commended the leader of the Obidient Movement in Kogi State, Awe

Kayode, for his doggedness and mobilization ability.

He said the crowd seen at the decamping event was a testimony of the genuineness of their decision to join the Progressives.

Receiving the new members, the Kogi State APC Chairman, Abdullahi Bello, said "APC is a party that believes in development, equality and has a good reward system". He added that the new members would enjoy all the privileges as other members of the party.

According to him, aside from the character and leadership qualities of Usman Ododo, being a critical member of the New Direction Administration had further equipped him with the needed knowledge and experience to lead the state and consolidate on the achievements of Governor Bello.

Bello urged members of the APC to disregard noise makers in opposition parties and go all out to ensure massive victory for the APC candidate, adding that as far as the November election was concerned, the APC has the upper hand.

Over 1000 children immunized against polio

From
JOHN FWAH KADUNA

THE activities of a non-governmental organization, Journalists Initiative Against Polio JAP, has led to the successful immunization of more than one thousand children during the third round of the 2023 Polio Immunization Exercise in Kaduna State.

State coordinator of the organization, Mallam LawalDogara made this known in a statement made available to newsmen in Kaduna.

He said since 2007, JAP has been conducting road shows, drama performances, sensitization programmes and town hall meetings with community leaders for the promotion of Polio vaccines.

The statement notes that for every round of polio exercise in Kaduna State, JAP usually do its programmes as a follow up in various communities across Local Government Areas to get to children who



Sani

missed out in the house to house vaccination.

It says during the Sept/October Polio vaccination, the organization visited 4 Local Government Areas which are, Ikara, Igabi, Zaria and Chikun all in Kaduna State where over 1,000 children were vaccinated in the process.

The statement commended

WHO and the Kaduna State Government which is working through the State Primary Healthcare Agency for the success of all vaccination programmes in Kaduna State.

It advises parents not to relent in the efforts towards ensuring a polio free Nigeria by bringing out their children from age 0 to 5 years to receive the vaccination at every round of the exercise.

SUNDAY FEATURE

Subsidy Removal...Inverter technology to the rescue

With the prevailing high cost of petrol in the country occasioned by the removal of subsidy on the product about three months ago, Nigerians who hitherto used generating sets as alternative sources of electricity in their homes and offices are turning to inverters to save cost and consequently reduce noise pollution, writes MARIA DIAMOND.

AS Nigerians continue to face the harsh reality of fuel subsidy removal, individuals and businesses all over the country are relentlessly looking for ways to save costs, especially in the area of the volume of petrol they consume in the course of their daily activities.

With electricity generation, transmission and distribution still challenged and waiting for solutions from President Bola Ahmed Tinubu administration, millions of homes and businesses depend on power-generating sets to satisfy their electricity needs. However, the removal of fuel subsidy, which has shot up the pump price from about N258 in May this year to between N580 and N617 now, depending on the state of the federation, is forcing people to embrace the installation of power inverters as a cost saving measure. Interestingly, this measure serves another purpose as it reduces noise pollution and saves people from the harmful effects of Carbon Monoxide (CO) emitted by power-generating sets.

What would you have us do? This country has become almost unlivable and the trending joke 'let the poor breathe' is no longer a mere joke for the masses as it's becoming more and more difficult to survive in Nigeria. The pump price of petrol is so high that a lot of people have parked their power generating sets; they just stay without electricity when power suppliers withhold it. I have parked my car and now move via commercial vehicles, which are not cheap as they also buy fuel.

"However, because I have to work from home four days in a week, I decided that it is more cost effective to install an inverter. Initially, the cost seemed huge but when I calculated the cost of the fuel my generator could consume in a month now and multiplied it by two months, the total figure approximately covers for the price of the inverter that would last me for five years if properly maintained," said AzubuikeChukwuebuka.

A banker, AdemolaOgunjimi, told The Guardian that he also recently installed a solar inverter due to the high cost of fuel. According to him, he has been wondering why he didn't consider the idea a long time ago.

This is because the noise from the generator is horrible and I don't know how we are all still sane in this country with such a magnitude of noise pollution that is not healthy for anyone.



But many Nigerians don't pay attention to their health. In a country that works, the noise pollution from generators would have been punishable by law such that no one would consider the use of a generating set as an alternative power source. But again it's Nigeria where power suppliers also have to use generating sets to power their offices and homes.

"As a Nigerian who lives in Lagos, on a night that you or your neighbours run generator till daybreak due to power outage, you find yourself waking in the morning with a headache due to the noise.

Also, the air pollution from the exhaust is another health concern. I had a fight with my neighbour some months back because he repositioned the exhaust of his power generating set towards my flat and the choking smoke filled the entire space. Interestingly, he was the first to install the solar inverter and I followed suit as nothing beats the calmness of having power in your space when the public power supply source goes off. So, in this dispensation of high pump price of petrol, sourcing electricity through a noiseless solar inverter is a win-win situation," he said.

A power inverter is an electronic device or circuitry that changes Direct Current (DC) to Alternating Current (AC). The resulting AC frequency obtained depends on

the particular device employed. Inverters do the opposite of rectifiers which were originally large electromechanical devices converting AC to DC. The input voltage, output voltage and frequency, and overall power handling, depend on the design of the specific device or circuitry. The inverter does not produce any power; the power is provided by the DC source. A power inverter can be entirely electronic or may be a combination of mechanical effects and electronic circuitry. Static inverters do not use moving parts in the conversion process.

Power inverters are primarily used in electrical power applications where high currents and voltages are present. Circuits that perform the same function for electronic signals, which usually have very low currents and voltages, are called oscillators. Circuits that perform the opposite function, converting AC to DC, are called rectifiers.

The differences between AC and DC are clear. In DC, the electric charge (current) only flows in one direction. Electric charge in AC, on the other hand, changes direction periodically. The voltage in AC circuits also periodically reverses because the current changes direction. An inverter converts DC from your batteries to AC and then supplies your house with either 110/220V

current.

While there are different kinds of inverter, the solar inverter seems to be predominantly used by most Nigerians now because of the zero need for other powering sources for charging except solar.

A solar inverter also known as Photovoltaic (PV) inverter or solar converter, converts the variable DC output of a PV solar panel into a utility frequency alternating electricity, thus making the energy usable in homes and offices.

The PV solar panels are widely regarded as ideal methods of generating electricity. The materials in the panels, usually silicon, create an electric current when met with natural daylight and this current is then used as standard electricity within properties. The energy is renewable and therefore considered green.

The most common location for the installation of solar PV panels is the roof. Most roofs typically have the desired specifications for the installation so that panels get the maximum sunlight. Nevertheless, if installation on the roof is not applicable or desired, the panels could also be mounted on the ground. However, if it must be mounted on the roof, there is a need to get approval from the landlord or landlady of the house if it's a rented apartment.

Contrary to popular belief that

solar panels on the roof need sunlight to work, findings showed that they actually draw energy from daylight but deliver the best results with sunlight.

An inverter maintenance expert, who identified himself simply as Mr. Sunday, explained that solar panels use the energy from daylight, as opposed to sunlight, to produce electricity.

"So, it does not necessarily need direct sunlight to work. The photon in natural daylight is converted by solar panel cells to produce electricity," he explained.

He, however, underscored the need for the installation of an appropriate inverter in homes and offices.

"It is imperative to monitor the efficiency of an inverter for a home energy system. Inverters are generally most efficient when operated at or near their peak output; for example, a 1,500W inverter powering close to a 1,500W load. Most of the time, your inverter will be running a wide range of loads, usually not at its peak capacity. So, choose an inverter that has high efficiency over a broader range of loads. Other considerations are to match the inverter to the system's input voltage and an output AC voltage that matches the loads. The size is also important as you need to know the amount of total watts in your solar panel," Sunday said.

SUNDAY SPORTS

Newcastle win worth the 20-year wait

By PHIL MCNULTY

NEWCASTLE United and the Toon Army had waited two decades for a Champions League night like this and when it came it was worth every day and all the disappointments in between after an electrifying night on Tyneside.

As the Geordie hordes filed down the hill past statues of Sir Bobby Robson and Alan Shearer - manager and player when Barcelona won 2-0 in the last Champions League game at St James' Park in March 2003 - it almost looked like they were walking on air.

When Eddie Howe arrived at Newcastle almost two years ago, the first major appointment of the club's controversial Saudi Arabian owners, they were 19th in the Premier League and five points from safety.

It is the result of Howe's shrewd management and high finance that has led to a return to the Champions League and a night that saw Paris St-Germain thrashed 4-1 in another statement about the transformation this club had undergone.

PSG and their superstar Kylian Mbappe were touted as the true test of Newcastle's Champions League credentials. It was an examination Howe and his players passed with distinction.

Yes, PSG were poor but to simply put Newcastle's comprehensive triumph down to their deficiencies is to do the Magpies the greatest disservice as this was their night, their control, almost from start to finish.

This game provided a storyline and scoreline that Newcastle fans will talk about for years, a night to treasure for supporters who have to cast minds back to



Fabian Schar crashed in a brilliant late fourth

1969 and the long-gone Inter-Cities Fairs Cup for their last major trophy.

Just driving into Newcastle hours before kick-off was to see a fanbase almost in a frenzy of anticipation, thousands gathered in the roads and around the stadium barely able to wait for the game to start.

As Howe walked along the perimeter of the pitch towards the tunnel before kick-off, one elderly fan festooned in club colours from head to foot leaned out towards the pensive looking manager and shouted: "You've got this Eddie."

It transpired that he had.

St James' Park was a cauldron as PSG were greeted by four thick black and white walls of flags in each stand and banners,

including a mosaic behind one goal that read: "Hello Hello."

It was not meant as a warm welcome off the pitch and PSG did not get one on it either. Newcastle made a fast start and barely let up.

Anthony Gordon whirled his arms in a demand for greater noise - not that it was needed - in the opening seconds while Bruno Guimaraes and Dan Burn reacted to winning relatively routine challenges by turning to the crowd with fists clenched and roars. And how this packed house lapped it all up.

Mbappe offered an early threat when he set up a chance for Ousmane Dembele but that was about it. Outnumbered, marginalised and shut down,

Mbappe was the picture of frustration long before the final whistle.

The opening phases almost felt like an emotional release for Newcastle and their followers after two decades with their noses pressed up against the Champions League window. Newcastle simply overran PSG from the moment Miguel Almiron fired them in front after only 17 minutes.

And how sweet it was that two Geordie boys, the towering Burn and Sean Longstaff, provided the next two goals that put Newcastle out of sight and into the healthy position of four points from their first two Champions League group games after the draw against AC Milan in the San Siro.

The potential battle between Burn and Mbappe had been

flagged up before kick-off, with the suggested sub-plot that this was where PSG would probe a Newcastle weakness.

In the end their paths never crossed as Mbappe patrolled the left flank, occasionally wandering in lacklustre fashion, while Burn covered himself in glory. Only one will remember this night with fondness and it will not be Mbappe.

Even Lucas Hernandez's header did nothing to disturb Newcastle's momentum and this perfect night was given the perfect finish when central defender Fabian Schar drilled a 20-yard finish high past PSG keeper Gianluigi Donnarumma in stoppage time. A stunning long-range piledriver from a pillar of Newcastle's rearguard? It just about summed up the whole occasion.

The final whistle was greeted by a noise that could have been heard across the Tyne Bridge.

Newcastle are only at the start of this Champions League campaign but after faltering footsteps in the San Siro, even though they earned a goalless draw, this was a performance and atmosphere that Borussia Dortmund may approach with trepidation as the next visitors to St James Park.

The traditional old Newcastle watering holes on the doorstep of the stadium such as The Strawberry were in the process of being drunk dry after the game and the Toon Army will hope they have more opportunities to do the same in future Champions League games.

Newcastle still have much to do in this group and their fans will know it - or at least they will once they come down from the highs and likely hangovers after this night of pure elation.



Newcastle fans enjoyed a special night at St James' Park

SUNDAY SPORTS

Ancelotti reveals secret to caging Victor



Victor

REAL Madrid's head coach, Carlo Ancelotti, has shed light on how his team successfully contained Victor Osimhen during their encounter with Napoli on Tuesday, Soccer.net.ng reports. Osimhen was expected to be a standout player for Napoli in the encounter as he arrived on the back of netting goals in two consecutive Serie A games. However, facing Real Madrid proved to be a different challenge for the Super Eagles striker, as he found himself

under constant surveillance by two defenders. Although Osimhen managed to win a penalty for Napoli's second goal, it was ultimately in vain, as Real Madrid secured a 3-2 away victory. At the post-match press conference, Ancelotti was questioned about whether he had deployed former Chelsea defender Rudiger to mark Osimhen during the match. The former AC Milan manager acknowledged the necessity of double-marking a player of Osimhen's caliber, stating,

"We wanted to be two against one with him (Osimhen), the central defenders did very well and didn't give him any space behind them." He further added, "Against Osimhen, it's difficult not to suffer, especially on aerial balls, but we did well." Osimhen, who netted five goals in the UEFA Champions League last term, was a key factor in Napoli's historic journey to the quarterfinal stage. In the current season, he is still seeking his first goal in the competition after facing Braga and Real Madrid.

THE 2030 World Cup will be held across six countries in three continents, Fifa has confirmed.

BBC SPORT said that, Spain, Portugal and Morocco have been named as the co-hosts, with the opening three matches taking place in Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay.

The opening matches in South America are to mark the World Cup's centenary as it will be 100 years since the inaugural tournament in Montevideo.

The decision is set to be ratified at a Fifa congress next year.

Fifa also confirmed only bids from countries from the Asian Football Confederation and the Oceania Football Confederation will be considered for the 2034 finals.

Following that decision, Saudi Arabia announced it would be bidding to host the tournament in 2034 for the first time.

The deadline for prospective hosts to submit confirmations of interest is 31 October.

Fifa's decision to host the 2030 tournament across multiple continents has drawn criticism, with one supporter's body accusing football's world governing body of engaging in a "cycle of destruction against the greatest tournament on Earth".

"[It's] horrendous for supporters, disregards the environment and rolls the red carpet out to a host for 2034 with an appalling human rights record. It's the end of the World Cup as we know it," said Football Supporters Europe.

Fifa president Gianni Infantino said: "In a divided world, Fifa and football are uniting."

"The Fifa Council, representing the entire world of football, unanimously agreed to celebrate the centenary of the Fifa World Cup, whose first edition was

World Cup to be held across six countries



Lionel Messi's Argentina are the current world champions

played in Uruguay in 1930, in the most appropriate way.

"In 2030, we will have a unique global footprint, three continents – Africa, Europe and South America – six countries – Argentina, Morocco, Paraguay, Portugal, Spain and Uruguay – welcoming and uniting the world while celebrating together the beautiful game, the centenary and the Fifa World Cup."

Montevideo in Uruguay, the city which hosted the first World Cup match in 1930, is poised to stage the opening game in 2030 with matches in Argentina and Paraguay to follow.

The rest of the 48-team tournament will then move to north Africa and Europe.

The change of hemispheres means World Cup teams could find themselves playing in two different seasons at the same tournament.

If the 2030 proposal is approved, Morocco would become only the second African nation to host a World Cup, after South Africa in 2010.

Spain has been named as joint-host weeks after former football federation chief Luis Rubiales resigned following criticism for kissing Jenni Hermoso at the Women's World Cup.

Appearing in court, Rubiales was given a restraining order by a Spanish judge, but denied sexually assaulting Hermoso.

Spain last hosted the World Cup in 1982, with Italy winning the tournament for the third time.

Portugal has never hosted the tournament, but Euro 2004 was held there.

As in previous World Cups, Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, Spain, Portugal and Morocco will all qualify automatically as co-hosts.

In November, BBC Sport reported how environmentalists called Fifa's carbon-neutral claim "dangerous and misleading" and warned the tournament could have had a carbon footprint three times greater than stated.

Freddie Daley, a researcher for Global Economy Policy at the University of Sussex, says Fifa's decision to expand the World Cup across three continents is "concerning" after its false promises on reducing carbon footprint.

"A World Cup of this size and scale will involve a lot of air travel, a lot of fan travel, a lot of athlete travel and I am very unsure whether Fifa will be able to deliver this in a sustainable and climate friendly way," said Daley.

"I think Fifa's actions so far point towards them not being very credible on what they have promised to do in regards to climate and climate action."

"Fifa as an organization has huge responsibility to citizens around the world to help educate on climate, raise awareness and also bring them on that journey to net zero as part of the energy transition."

"Announcements like this today make me question their integrity on climate and their support for the energy transition."

Frank Huisingh, founder of Fossil Free Football, a group aiming to stop the use of fossil fuels in the sport, said the move was "outrageous but also not surprising".

"We know Fifa's track record and we know they want to go for big tournaments with a lot of fan travel and a lot of emissions," he said.

"It is just a very bad idea."

"This is Fifa showing complete disregard for fans as fans and fans as humans," said Katie Cross, CEO and founder of Pledgeball, a fan charity which campaigns for greater sustainability in football.

Alvarez help Man City to late Leipzig win

SUBSTITUTES Julian Alvarez and Jeremy Doku scored late goals as Manchester City recovered from back-to-back defeats to beat Leipzig in the Champions League. According to BBC SPORT, the defending champions City, who came into the game on the back of losses to

Newcastle in the Carabao Cup and Wolves in the Premier League, looked in complete control in the first half. Phil Foden gave them a deserved lead with a difficult shot on the bounce following a cutback by Rico Lewis, who impressed in a central midfield role. Leipzig scored with their only

shot on target, as Lois Openda raced onto a through ball before slotting the ball past Ederson via the inside of the post. But it was all City from then with Foden hitting the post with a free-kick and Erling Haaland missing a host of chances. Five minutes after coming off the bench, Alvarez lifted a

perfectly weighted shot into the top corner from the edge of the box following a pass by Doku.

The Argentine then found Doku in space and he sped away to score a late third and seal the points.

City have now equalled the longest European unbeaten run by an English club - level

on 16 with Leeds (1967-1968), Tottenham (1967-1972), Chelsea (2018-2019) and West Ham, whose run started last year and is still going too.

Pep Guardiola's side will be relieved to get back to winning ways as they prepare to visit title rivals Arsenal on Sunday.

Beckham 'proud' to have been ambassador for Qatar 2022

FORMER England captain David Beckham says he was "proud" to have been a Qatar 2022 World Cup ambassador.

BBC SPORT said that, Beckham was criticised for associating himself with a country where same-sex relationships are illegal.

The Gulf state's treatment of migrant workers has also been questioned by human rights campaigners.

"I had a lot of conversations with the LGBTQ community when I was there and they said they'd been treated perfectly fine," Beckham, 48, told Sky Sports.

"They felt it was the safest World Cup they have had for a

long time."

Some LGBT fans boycotted the tournament over Qatar's treatment of gay people, where homosexuality is punishable by up to seven years in prison.

The conditions migrant workers lived and worked in while building the World Cup stadiums and male guardianship rules that curtail women's freedoms also came under intense scrutiny.

Days before the World Cup began comedian Joe Lycett appeared to destroy £10,000 of his own money in a protest against Beckham's role with the tournament, saying he was shredding it along with Beckham's "status as a gay



Julian Alvarez came off the bench to help Manchester City back to winning ways

SUNDAY SPORTS

How a sex abuse ring target child footballers

By **SUZANNE VANHOOYMISSEN & TAMASIN FORD**

FOOTBALL's governing bodies face accusations they failed to protect young victims of sexual abuse in Gabon. BBC Africa Eye spoke to more than 30 witnesses who told of a network that has plagued all levels of the game for three decades.

The allegations of sexual abuse in the central African country of Gabon date as far back as the early 1990s.

One victim, who wanted to remain anonymous, described what happened to him as a teenager at an Under-17 football camp. He said he and his best friend were woken up in the middle of the night and taken to a room with red lights, full of naked men.

"They started touching me and my friend and I just didn't understand. I started to pray. I wanted to get out, but the door was locked. They grabbed me and threw me on to the floor. There were two security men. It was like they were prepared," he said.

"I saw how they started to rape my friend. I looked him in the eye, and he looked back at me as if to say: 'Let's just go along with them and get it over with.' I cried and screamed and screamed and screamed."

"They told me I would never be selected to play ever again and that if I dared speak to anyone about what happened, my family would be killed."

He never played for Gabon again.

In 2019, former Gabon international Parfait Ndong returned home to set up his academy Jardin de football au Gabon. With 45 caps to his name and an illustrious playing career in Europe, he is a respected figure in Gabonese football. When he found out what was happening, he said he alerted authorities.

"I took all the steps I possibly could," he told the BBC, adding that he spoke to the president of the league, the president of the national football federation, known as Fegafoot, and the sports minister at the time.

He said after these efforts were ignored, he turned to local media: "No-one wanted to hear what I had to say."

It was not until the UK's Guardian newspaper reported the abuse in December 2021, that four coaches were arrested. Three of them remain in prison.

At the heart of the most damaging allegations was Patrick Assoumou Eyi, widely known as "Capello". For decades, he was the



Former Gabon international Parfait Ndong, pictured here at his academy, says he was ignored when he raised the alarm

head coach of Gabon's national youth teams. Crucially, Capello had the power to decide who would play for Gabon at that level.

"He basically held the position of a god because everyone idolised him. Those in charge of training centres, the academies," said Ndong.

In December 2021, Fifa's independent ethics committee began preliminary investigation proceedings into reports of sexual abuse allegedly committed by Capello, and suspended him from all football-related activities. This probe was led on the ground by Fegafoot's newly installed ethics committee, and in May 2022 Fifa's investigatory chamber formalised the preliminary investigation.

For Loïc Alves, a senior legal counsel at Fifpro - the global union for professional football players - allowing Fegafoot to initially lead the investigation constituted a "conflict of interest at every level".

"How could a victim trust the same institution that has abused them?" he asked.

Capello admitted charges of raping, grooming and exploiting young players and remains in prison awaiting sentencing. The other arrested coaches deny the allegations made against them.

Questions have been raised about which authorities were aware and when.

Alexis, whose name has been changed to protect his identity, climbed through the youth ranks in Gabon and went on to play in Europe. He told the BBC the only reason he could speak openly was because he was no longer in the

country. If he was, he said, his life would be in danger.

"So, they arrested Capello but how long have they known and not done anything about it? They stopped at the lowest level. It goes all the way to the top, but they will do anything to cover it up. Capello is a scapegoat. It is the heads at the top that should be rolling."

Another footballer, who we will call Julien, told the BBC that he too was abused from the age of 14. He played for Gabon's national team for several years and believes the number of boys affected is hard to fathom.

"I don't know how many coaches were abusing boys, but for a moment let's look at Capello alone. He is the most well-known and he has been doing this for the last 25 or 30 years. Every year he has had access to at least 50 boys, if not more," he said.

"Now let's consider how many others were part of that network. We are talking about thousands of boys."

Despite calls for Fegafoot chief Pierre-Alain Mounquengui to resign, he remained in charge and was re-elected in April 2022.

Mr Alves believes he should have been suspended: "The severity of the alleged cover-up should have triggered an automatic suspension, temporary suspension, before the election."

As head of Fegafoot, Mr Mounquengui could either be considered incompetent for not knowing what was happening or guilty of covering up years of reported abuse, he said.

Three weeks after his re-election, Mr Mounquengui was arrested and accused of "failing to report crimes of paedophilia". Unlike Capello, Fifa did not suspend him, and he continued to manage Fegafoot from prison.

Fifa's child safeguarding policy states: "Suspending a staff member from his/her duties while an external investigation takes place should be standard practice."

Former Gabon international Rémy Ebanega, who set up the country's first professional football players' union in 2014, is - like Ndong - one of the few figures in Gabonese football who feels he can talk openly. He himself was not

abused but said he has several friends who were.

"The local justice system has imprisoned the president of the federation, and Fifa did nothing. Why was he not also suspended while investigations are ongoing like they did with Capello?" he said.

"He continued to manage the federation while he was in prison. I don't think that has ever happened elsewhere."

In May 2022, Fifa formally suspended Capello, two other coaches and the football league head, but did not sanction Mr Mounquengui.

Meanwhile, the Confederation of African Football (Caf) said Mr Mounquengui was considered innocent until proven guilty and wrote to Gabon's then Sports Minister Franck Nguema in April 2022 to question the detention. Caf president Patrice Motsepe then visited the Fegafoot boss in jail four months later.

After almost six months in prison, Mr Mounquengui was provisionally released. Three weeks later, at the opening of the Fifa 2022 World Cup in Qatar, he was pictured hugging the Caf president.

For Ebanega, the invite to Qatar by Fifa boss Gianni Infantino made it seem like football's world governing body was satisfied with Fegafoot's performance: "Is that what you call a job well done? For the federation not to act on sexual abuse?"

Three months ago, Mr Mounquengui was re-elected to the highest ranks of Caf as a member of its executive committee. Last week, he was pictured alongside Caf executives in Cairo for the Africa Cup of Nations hosts announcement.

Nearly two years after the allegations

were exposed in international media, many senior figures in Fegafoot remain in power.

"I believe the system was able to continue and that it is still able to continue because nothing has changed," Ebanega said.

There is a real fear among many people who spoke to the BBC about the alleged abuse that children are still at risk.

"I am convinced the abuse is still happening," Julien said.

We put the allegations in BBC Africa Eye's documentary to Fegafoot, Caf and Fifa. All parties condemned child abuse in any form in the strongest possible terms.

Fegafoot and Mr Mounquengui denied all the allegations made against them and said appropriate action was taken as soon as any allegations of sexual abuse in Gabonese football were made public.

They said they did not recognise any criticism of the investigation set up by the Fegafoot ethics committee in December 2021 since it was set up in accordance with the federation's regulations.

Fifa and Caf denied all allegations made against them, and said the Fifa investigation formalised in May 2022 was still ongoing.

Both bodies stressed all their investigations were handled in accordance with requirements made by the Fifa Code of Ethics, the Court of Arbitration for Sport, the European Court of Human Rights and Swiss law.

Caf said that Mr Motsepe visited Gabon primarily to emphasise the organisation's zero tolerance to sexual abuse and to support investigating authorities.

It further stated that Mr Mounquengui was a guest at the World Cup when greeted by Mr Motsepe and had no pending charges against him.

Mr Nguema, who is no longer sports minister following last month's coup, strongly denied having been informed by anyone about the sexual abuse allegations before they became public.



Witnesses estimate that thousands of boys were abused



Fegafoot boss Pierre-Alain Mounquengui (R) was warmly greeted by the Caf chief at the World Cup opening ceremony on 20 November 2022

SUNDAY SPORTS



Super Eagles

Osimhen, others ready to hand Peseiro headache

25 Super Eagles players are slated to tackle Saudi Arabia and Mozambique in a preparation match in less than 10 days, Soccer.net.ng reports.

The head coach of the Super Eagles Jose Peseiro, is facing a delightful yet daunting task as he gears up for the national team's upcoming friendly clashes scheduled for October 13 and 16.

Playvolume00:00/00:00Mb app & PSG train on eve of

The Portuguese boss has assembled a formidable arsenal of forwards, all in blistering form, making the task of selecting the starting lineup an intricate puzzle.

Among the eight forwards in contention—Kelechi Iheanacho, Samuel Chukwueze, Moses Simon, Ademola Lookman, Victor Osimhen, Taiwo Awoniyi, Terem Moffi, and Victor Boniface—each boasts a unique set of skills and a track

record of delivering when it matters most.

Recently, the 63-year-old manager has leaned towards a formation featuring four strikers, with two playing out wide and two positioned centrally.

In their previous encounter against Sao Tome and Principe in September, Iheanacho and Lookman operated on the flanks, while Osimhen and Awoniyi held the fort in central positions. With the two friendly matches scheduled in quick succession, Peseiro enjoys the luxury of rotating his squad.

The remarkable form of these forwards presents him with a pleasant predicament in terms of team selection, as any combination seems potent enough to rattle any defenses. Iheanacho has been a revelation for Leicester City this season, notching up four goals and two assists in 12 appearances.

Moses Simon has emerged as a linchpin for FC Nantes, contributing two goals and three assists in seven French Ligue 1 outings. Lookman has ignited Atalanta's attack, finding the net twice in their last three fixtures.

Despite being embroiled in a club controversy, Osimhen continues to shine for Napoli, with five goals in seven games, placing him second in the Serie A top scorers list.

Nottingham Forest's Awoniyi has been a breath of fresh air, with three goals and two assists in seven games. Moffi mirrors Awoniyi's impressive stats for OGC Nice, matching his goal tally and assists.

Among this crop of talent, Boniface has arguably been the standout performer in Europe this season. The 22-year-old sensation has contributed to an astonishing 11 goals in just eight games, with eight goals and three assists across the Bundesliga, Europa League, and DFB-Pokal for Leverkusen.

Enoh congratulated Stephanie for her spectacular achievements and promised that the Ministry would pay close attention to her growth and development.

"I am very proud of you, there is greater pride and joy competing for your country and on the national stage. I will be interested in following up with your career, as you develop through the coming years.

"The country is excited about talents like this. She has demonstrated huge potential and she is a microcosm of the talent abundance in Nigeria. We are enthusiastic and focused on their development and transition, up to the level of one day being Olympians" he added.

At the National Youth Games in Asaba, Stephanie Onusiriuka won gold medals in the gymnastics beam event, floor event, and vault event and topped it with another gold as the best all-

Minister receives gymnast after winning 4 gold

THE Honourable Minister of Sports Development, Senator John Owan Enoh on Tuesday, received rising gymnastic sensation, Stephanie Ogechukwu Onusiriuka, in his office in Abuja, after the outstanding performance of

the 13-year-old at the recently concluded National Youth Games in Asaba, Delta State.

Sporting Tribune said that, Little Stephanie won four gold medals in gymnastics, blazing the trail in the sport and displaying huge potential of promise during the Games.



Sport Minister and the 4 gold medalist

AFRICAN female 100m record holder, Marie-Josée Ta Lou, has revealed that she cried alone in her room when she placed fourth in the 100m final at the last World Championships in Budapest, Hungary. She said her target for now is a podium finish at the Paris 2024 Olympics Games.

"My calling in athletics is bigger than winning multiple medals," Marie-Josée Ta Lou told BBC Sport Africa, reflecting on a season she called "great for me".

The Guardiansaid that, there is a feeling that the fastest woman in Africa has given everything but fallen short of complete success during her decade-long love for the track.

The Ivorian star's accomplishments transcend the continent. To put things into perspective, if the fastest female 100m athletes of all time were lined up in a race today, Ta Lou would automatically have a lane. She achieved an African record time of 10.72 seconds during the 2022 Monaco Diamond League, making her the sixth-fastest woman of all time.

However, this achievement alone has not been enough to push her to the highest level of the sport, where victories at the World Athletics Championships and Olympic Games carry greater weight.

Ta Lou has just ended another athletics season in which she came agonisingly close to a podium finish at the World Athletics Championships in Budapest in August.

I cried when I finished fourth in 100m final - Lou



"It really hurts and I still can't say I am over it. I wanted to get a medal but finished fourth. I have been in a situation where I have been crying alone in my room.

"The support I received from fans across the world and my fellow competitors has been my saving grace," says Ta Lou. Ta Lou is not new to being the athlete who almost makes it against the dominant Americans and Jamaicans.

The 2017 World Championships remain her most successful season, winning silver in the tightly-contested 200m and the 100m, when she narrowly lost her grip on gold on the line to America's Tori Bowie.

She has competed in four Olympic finals, finishing fourth in three and fifth in one. But it's her fourth-placed finish in Budapest that sent Ta Lou's head spinning.

"When I participated in the 2016 Rio Games, which were my first Olympics, I had

hoped to make it to the final, and so finishing in fourth place was a great experience," she says.

"Unfortunately, the 2020 Olympic Games turned out to be a disaster that I would rather forget. But out of all the disappointments, this year's loss hurts the most. I had felt completely prepared mentally, physically, and emotionally, and everything was within my control. But despite my best efforts, it just didn't happen.

"I was so crushed and even considered ending my season in Budapest. But my strong faith in God is what strengthened me to show up for a double shot at the Diamond League finals in Eugene."

Understandably, Ta Lou's hopes were at an all-time high going into Budapest following a sizzling 2023 season. She was unbeaten in 10 consecutive races, including Diamond League wins in Florence, Oslo, Lausanne, and London.

NFF targets AFCON, WAFCON trophies

THE Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) has said it is targeting the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) and the Women's Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON) trophies which will be held next year in Cote d'Ivoire and Morocco respectively.

Sporting Tribune said that, NFF president, Ibrahim Musa Gusau, stated this during a

media parley to mark the one-year anniversary of his board in Abuja on Tuesday. Tribune Sports recall that Gusau was elected as NFF president during the Federation Elective Congress which was held in Benin City, Edo State capital, on September 30, 2022.

According to Gusau, "all hands are on deck to make sure that the Super Eagles win the AFCON trophy for the fourth time when hostilities get underway in Cote D'Ivoire in January 2024."

He said the time has come for Nigeria 10 years after its last triumph in South Africa to lay its hands on the coveted trophy again.

The NFF president also added that the Federation will not relent in its efforts to see that the three-time African champions get all the support it need to qualify for the 2026 World Cup.

"We are working with Jose Peseiro and his crew to harmonise strategies to see that the Super Eagles win the AFCON which is very key. We are now working hard and planning a befitting camp for them and all they require for us to see how they can win the Nations Cup. It is 10 years now since we have won the AFCON and by the grace of God, we'll keep doing our best working with the secretariat and the Ministry of Sports to see how we can achieve that and bring back the trophy

after 10 years. "We are trying to see how we can work hand in hand with the secretariat (of the NFF) and closely with the Ministry (of Sports Development) to ensure that we have smooth preparations and support for the Super Eagles in their quest to qualify for the World Cup in 2026 which will take place in the USA, Canada and Mexico."

On what the NFF was doing to make sure that the Super Falcons win the next WAFCON, Gusau said, "We will work patiently with the head coach to see how the Super Falcons will play in the Women Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON). Last year was in Morocco and we are still going back to Morocco. By the grace of God, we are going to qualify in November. We'll see how we can bring back the cup. We are also going to play against Ethiopia for the qualifiers for the Olympics. We are working hard to see that we go back to the Olympics because it is not good for us that we have missed the Olympics. We are working hard to see that Super Falcons are in France."

Giving the reason the NFF is organising Mozambique friendly for the Super Eagles taking place later in the month, he said the Federation will always try as much as possible to make use of FIFA windows to organise quality and grade A friendlies for the Super Eagles.



Arsenal and Manchester City will play the game of the day when the Gunners play host to City today at the Emirate.

The game will see the Gunners at their most vulnerable since both teams started going neck and neck for the Premier League title last season.

The Gunners are dealing with many injuries and fitness issues in their squad, and Mikel Arteta is stretched thin. The lack of adequate staffing in all positions on the pitch was evident against Bournemouth for Arsenal. The Spanish manager will be even more worried with Manchester City on the horizon.

A loss to his former boss, Pep Guardiola, will not be seen as a big issue due to the former Barcelona and Bayern Munich manager being the undisputed best coach in the world. However, it will cause worry for Arteta, who has failed in all his attempts to get the better of Guardiola.

This time around, he could have his thin squad to blame. However, it will not just be a normal loss. It will be a loss that could significantly affect their chances of finishing in the top four at the end of the 2023/24 Premier League season.

Arsenal's incredible run inspired so many in the league that the title race is now more diverse than ever. Brighton & Hove Albion and Aston Villa have joined the race this season, while Liverpool and Tottenham Hotspur have put their houses in order after both teams' disasters last season.

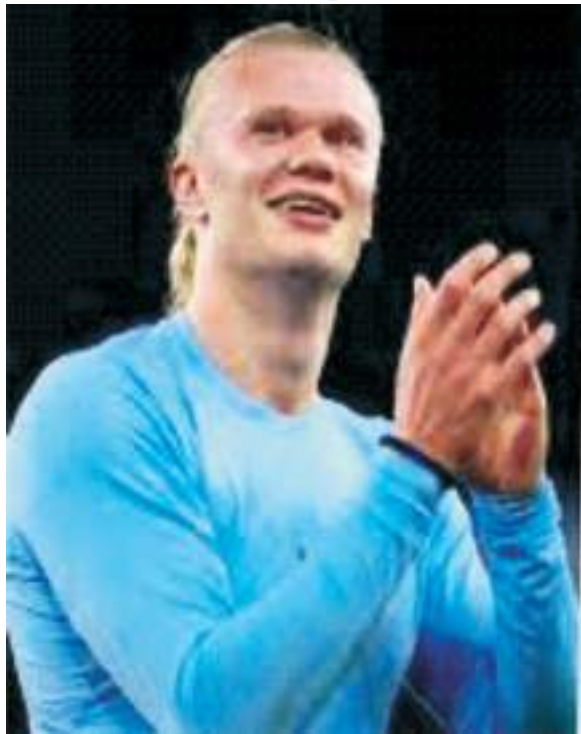
The race looks more even with these teams who make up the top six. There is also the threat of a resurgent West Ham United, buoyed by their European success from last term. Despite faltering at the start of their campaign, Newcastle United is not counted out either.

However, one thing Arsenal have got going for them this season is their renewed grit not to lose games without a fight.

Going into matchday seven of the 2023/24 Premier League season, Arsenal was one of 10 teams in Europe across various league tiers to be unbeaten in all competitions.

Manchester City will be traveling to North London

Arsenal, Man City clash at Emirate



to try and put that grit to the test, especially after the Gunners beat them to the Community Shield just before the start of the season.

The game promises to be interesting and very different from their clashes in the 2022/23 season. Read on for match ticket information, team news, and our prediction on the game's outcome.

The 60,704-capacity stadium is expected to be chock-full of screaming

fans thanks to the brewing rivalry between both teams.

Declan Rice had a back injury in the North London derby, where Arsenal could only pick up a point. The English-record signing played only the first 45 minutes of that game before being taken off, but Arteta is confident that the player's issue is not serious.

He will not be rushed back into the game but depending on his fitness level, the Spanish manager may take the risk of starting

him against City.

Bukayo Saka also left the North London derby with a knock but with the 22-year-old's rapid recovery rate, he could be fit as a fiddle for the Manchester City clash. Arteta is also sweating over the fitness of Gabriel Martinelli, who was initially scheduled to return to the pitch two weeks ago. It is still being determined if he will be fit to start against Manchester City.

On the other hand, the

Premier League defending champions will be without Kevin De Bruyne for the clash, a fact that Arsenal fans will appreciate greatly.

The Belgian midfielder has made it a point to always contribute towards goals against Arsenal every season regardless of his overall form. De Bruyne's absence will be a breath of fresh air for Arsenal.

Mateo Kovacic, Bernardo Silva, and John Stones will be back in time for the match, which will please

Guardiola. Handing them will be a different issue, thanks to the Spaniard's penchant for crazy squad rotations.

Arsenal will start Rice if the medical reports are positive because it is their biggest game of the season. The same goes for Martinelli. Gabriel Jesus will occupy the number 9 spot in the game as Arteta still considers him the first-choice forward ahead of Eddie Nketiah despite what the team sheets have shown in recent games.

Manchester City midfielder Rodri will miss the clash after getting a straight red card in their matchday six win over Nottingham Forest.

He will return to the City squad in late October as the international break begins with the final whistle of Arsenal vs. Manchester City.

With De Bruyne out of the game and squad until 2024, Bernardo Silva, Guardiola's second most trusted lieutenant in the squad, will return to the starting lineup, especially with Rodri's absence. Stones could hold down the fort without Rodri in a lineup that will not be lacking technical and star power.

The last time Arsenal defeated Manchester City in the Premier League was in 2015, before Pep Guardiola. Since that loss, the Gunners have only triumphed three times, with all three wins coming in the FA Cup and FA Community Shield. That is three wins from 21 games in all competitions.

Arteta has the chance to make history in their 2023/24 Premier League season matchday 8 clash. As has become typical of Arsenal vs. Manchester City matches, both sides will look to outplay each other in possession football.

Both teams are not significantly separated by possession, shot, and passing stats. Still, the slightly better players on the City team and the tactical superiority of Guardiola have made it such that Arteta's team have struggled.

The same outcome is expected from this clash at the Emirates: both teams looking almost equal on the ball and off it, but City coming out top after creating higher quality chances.

NPFL to begin random doping tests

The board of the Nigeria Premier football league (NPFL) has announced that it will commence random doping tests for players.

According to a statement recently, Gbenga Elegbeleye, chairman of NPFL said the initiative will aim to arrest and stamp out illicit drug use in the league.

He said testing equipment had been acquired from UK, and the process would begin soon

"we are committed to join the NFF, CAF, FIFA and the global campaign for eradication of illicit substance use in sport, and this will commence soon with random tests of our players" he said.

Meanwhile, medical experts have raised concerns over the introduction of "random doping" in the Nigeria Professional Football League by the Interim Management Committee,

the organisers of the league, The PUNCH reports.

The NPFL announced on Tuesday that they had acquired test kits for doping from the United Kingdom, while also giving the clubs and players a two-week notice.

"We are committed to joining the NFF, CAF, FIFA and the global campaign for eradication of illicit substance use in sports and this will commence soon with random tests of our players", IMC chairman, Gbenga Elegbeleye, told npfl.com.ng.

On Wednesday, the league body also posted an infographic on its X account stating, "NPFL players say no to doping."

However, some experts have questioned the move by the NPFL, especially as it concerns the modality of carrying out the exercise, which they say is not

supposed to be a one-off.

A drug in sports and physical activity expert, Jimi Osinaike, noted that the announcement was vague.

He stated, "Good development. Some key issues that need clarity:

are NPFL players well educated on which substances are prohibited? How often will players be tested? Will there be in and out of competition testing? Is the league management financially capable to analyse the samples?"



Elegbeleye