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THE Nigeria Standard



FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1972

VOL. 13 NO. 875

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023

N200

www.nigeriastandarddailynewspaper@yahoo.com

FG to clear FX backlog, attract more investors



Tinubu

PRESIDENT Bola Tinubu has reiterated his pledge to clear the foreign exchange backlogs, as a way of

resetting the finance ecosystem and attracting fleeing investors back to the country.

The reassurances came as forex scarcity bites

harder, leading to further slump of the Naira at the parallel market, where it exchanged for N1,205 to a dollar in Abuja, on Monday.

Tinubu spoke on Monday at the opening of the 2023

Nigeria Economic Summit holding in Abuja.

The President said: "All foreign exchange future contracts will be honoured by this government."

"I assure you we have a

line of sight to the foreign exchange we need to refloat this economy. And we will get it".

Before the Tinubu administration came onboard, the Central Bank

of Nigeria (CBN) sold forward contracts to several Nigerian businesses with an arrangement to buoy them with foreign exchange at

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PLSG forges partnership with Houston, Texas

By PETER TITLE

In a significant step toward propelling Plateau State into a future of progress and prosperity, Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang has spearheaded a pivotal collaboration between the state and the City of

Houston, Texas.

This was revealed in a statement by the Director of Press and Public Affairs to the Executive Governor of Plateau State, Gyang Bere. This partnership aims to reinforce the energy sector, enhance port infrastructure, improve healthcare, and

strengthen the agro economy of Plateau State.

During an official meeting with Christopher Denon, Director of Trade and International Affairs, City of Houston, State of Texas, United States of America, Governor Mutfwang said the state has abundant potentials

which are ripe and safe for investment and economic growth.

Governor Mutfwang highlighted Plateau's advantage in hydro power plants, emphasizing that this initiative will catalyze industrialization, thereby stimulating the state's economy and enhancing

internal revenue generation.

He also emphasized the importance of standardizing agricultural products, specifically from Plateau State, to enable agro entrepreneurs to benefit from the AGOA

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The newly appointed Permanent Secretaries taking the oath of office being administered by Governor Mutfwang ably represented by his Deputy, Her Excellency, Josephine Piyo yesterday at the new Government House Rayfield, Jos. Photo: DANLADI DUK

Naira to stabilise if announced \$10bn flows into economy

NIGERIA'S currency will stabilise in the short-term if the expected \$10 billion flows through the economy, analysts said on Monday.

Naira on Monday strengthened against the dollar, gaining 1.85 percent at the Nigerian Autonomous Foreign Exchange Market (NAFEM).

Naira appreciation comes after Wale Edun, the finance minister said Monday that Nigeria is expecting as much as \$10 billion in new foreign currency inflows in the next few weeks to ease acute dollar shortages in the foreign exchange market.

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FG to clear FX backlog, attract more investors



Tinubu

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an agreed price in future.

Riding on that, the banks opened Letters of Credit (LCs) to honour contracts, which importers used to buy goods from foreign suppliers. Sources, however, explained that

the apex bank, since February, has been unable to settle the obligations estimated at \$3 billion. A broader backlog, which includes unsettled foreign investors' contracts, is estimated at about \$10 billion.

These have muddled the

Naira to stabilise if announced \$10bn flows into economy

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After trading on Monday at the NAFEM, one dollar was quoted at N793.34, which was stronger than N808.27 quoted on Friday, data from the FMDQ showed.

Willing buyers and willing sellers offered and sold at a bid rate of N900/\$ high and N701/\$ low. The daily FX market turnover increased marginally by 2.89 percent to \$81.55 million on Monday from \$79.26 million recorded on Friday at the official market.

Charlie Robertson, head of Macro Strategy, FIM Partners UK Ltd, said \$10bn should help but still the interest rate differential with \$ bonds will weigh against the naira. If domestic and foreign investors make similar amounts in \$ as naira, most will choose foreign exchange.

"If the inflow actually comes in as indicated, it will stabilize the Naira in the immediate. However, we need to block the leakages from oil theft to increase FX inflow to the

CBN to sustain supply. \$10bn is a huge amount but the question on everyone's mind is if this is possible in the short term, Ayodeji Ebo, managing director/CBO, Optimus by Afrinvest, said.

Ayodele Akinwunmi, relationship manager, corporate banking at FSDH Merchant Bank Limited, said inflow of US\$10 billion into the Nigerian economy and foreign exchange market will greatly help to clear the backlog of FX obligations.

This will help to stabilise the value of the Naira. However, as more FX is required by both, government, businesses and households for various transactions, there is the need for the country to continue to generate foreign exchange earnings through export of goods and services so that it can avoid another round of

waters just as the lingering forex scarcity has tossed several companies into the intensive care unit and crumbling foreign obligations.

Many are gradually cutting their operations in readiness to move to their economies with better business environment.

Companies that took dollar loans are already gnashing their teeth as their losses swelled following the twin challenges of forex scarcity and Naira depreciation that have battered their operations. The multinationals are lamenting the impact of persistent dollar scarcity triggered by inadequate supply from key economic agents and the CBN.

excess demand of Dollar over supply," he said.

Aminu Gwadabe, national president of Association of Bureaux De Change Operators of Nigeria (ABCON), said that is very good news and it will no doubt provide the needed liquidity to reverse the dwindling fortune of the local currency.

He said there is actually no empirical evidence to back up the volatility in the markets that continue to pervade and preclude a true market price mechanism.

According to him the mindless depreciation is just a combination of illegal economic behaviours like currency substitutions, hoarding and speculation. There is no justification for the whole indefensible and unacceptable frivolous demands.

Our economy is not in

THE Federal Government has promised that Nigeria's economy will grow to \$1trillion in 2026 and \$4 trillion by 2035.

Declaring open the 29th Nigerian Economic Summit (NES #29), on Monday in Abuja, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, said his administration was working hard to ensure there will be no strike in the economy as the children's future and that of the economy should to be protected.

To this effect, he said, all agreements entered into by the government must be honoured.

Tinubu said his government would focus on enduring poverty

recession and we are not in a war situation to be going through this word of mouth pricing strategy. It is also germane for the apex bank to leverage on the BDCs to meet the critical retail end needs of the market in their demand management.

"The BDCs have robust monitoring transactions mechanisms and client identification systems that enable them to be the most pass-through effect of the apex bank foreign exchange policy.

"Over time the BDCs in 2006, 2009, 2019 have played a very significant role in eliminating the gap between the official and the parallel markets.

"The BDCs play the role of moderating and regulating the speculative activities of the parallel markets and ensuring price discovery and accessibility," he said.

But the election court in a unanimous decision, on 6 September, dismissed the suits, affirming Mr Tinubu's election.

Ahead of the Supreme Court's hearing of Atiku Abubakar's case against President Tinubu's election on Monday in Abuja, Mr Greenspan had last Friday earnestly sought the US court's intervention to order the FBI, the CIA and others to fast-track the process of releasing the documents on the Nigerian leader.

A seven-member panel of the Nigerian Supreme Court on Monday heard Atiku and Peter Obi's appeals seeking to overturn Mr Tinubu's victory in the 25 February presidential election.

The report says that Atiku through his lawyer, Chris Uche, sought to tender fresh evidence before the apex court against the president.

FG eyes \$1trn economic growth in 2026

-Tinubu

alleviated programme, food security, economic growth and job creation; inclusive growth, security of lives and property, anti-corruption and implementation of sound economic policies.

The president equally charged NESG and the private sector to work toward a prosperous Nigeria saying that his administration will deliver on its promises.

In his remarks, chairman of NESG, Mr Niyi Yusuf, said that with more than 133 million multidimensionally poor Nigerians, there are potentially more risks of stagnation and distress if a low-growth and low-investment era persists.

According to him, the future of the Nigerian child is at stake, across every geopolitical zone and the Nigeria's ageing population is also at risk.

He said that the low access to and increasing cost of foreign exchange (FX), high cost of inventory, imported inputs and operations, coupled with the diversity of taxes, continue to erode business balance sheets, with resultant contraction in production and employment.

Yusuf said that the large firms are battling low-capacity utilisation, while medium, small and micro-enterprises are grappling with multidimensional complexities.

These poor economic outcomes, he observed, have created worsening social conditions that cannot be taken for granted.

"With more than 133 million multidimensionally poor Nigerians, there are potentially more risks of stagnation and distress if a low-growth and low-investment era persists. The future of the Nigerian child is at stake, across every geopolitical zone.

The Nigerian ageing population is also at risk.

"There is a high prospect that a retiree's savings and investments will be eroded entirely just a few years into the first or second decade of retirement. Our high fertility rate which is driving a much higher population growth than economic growth poses a risk of an unproductive population bulge, with an unmanageable social infrastructure cost and burden for supporting our children's health, nutrition and education.

"We know a multi-trillion dollar economy is viable within a decade of serious reform, consistent economic action and deliberate institutional reforms. Our nation stands at a critical precipice, and our challenges demand immediate, concerted efforts.

We need to act now with a shared sense of urgency.

"The NESG stands ready to support the government to model the tough choices required and the associated palliative measures to ameliorate the short-term impact on the populace

"On the global stage, the first years of this decade have been a significantly disruptive period in human history. The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic was followed by the outbreak of war in Ukraine, ushering in a fresh series of crises in global supply chain, food and energy. The transmission effects of which has aggravated economic challenges in Africa and Nigeria in particular. In Nigeria, we have seen a return of older risks - inflation, cost-of-living crises, capital outflows, widespread social discontent, risk of geopolitically motivated regional confrontation, and marked risk of democratisation of West Africa.

PLSG forges partnership with Houston, Texas

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initiative and attract substantial Foreign Direct Investments.

Expressing gratitude for Governor Mutwang's visit, the Director, Christopher Denon said Houston is the energy capital of the world, which boasts of being the largest port and medical facility globally.

He conveyed Houston's eagerness to collaborate with Plateau State by offering their expertise to further enhance the state's development.

Court refuses order of dossiers on Tinubu

THE United States District Court for the District of Columbia has declined an emergency application seeking to compel top US law enforcement agencies to hasten the release of confidential information on President Bola Tinubu.

The judge, Beryl Howell, refused the application on Monday.

An American, Aaron Greenspan, had filed a suit in June under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) against the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, Department of State, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Internal Revenue Service, Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

In his complaint, Mr Greenspan accused the law enforcement agencies of violating the FIOA by failing to release within the

statutory time "documents relating to purported federal investigations into" President Tinubu and one Mueez Adegboyega Akande, who is now deceased.

According to Mr Greenspan, the records being requested were from the Northern District of Illinois and/or Northern District of Indiana "involving charging decisions" against Messrs Tinubu and Akande.

In 1993, Mr Tinubu was said to have forfeited \$460,000 to the American government after authorities linked the funds to proceeds of narcotics trafficking.

The issue of Mr Tinubu's forfeiture of the funds featured prominently at the Presidential Election Petition Court where Atiku Abubakar and Peter Obi, challenged the president's eligibility to contest Nigeria's presidency.



Edun



Business & Economy

Failed start-ups and the Nigerian business environment

IN recent times, there has been an increase in major news platform capturing seemingly promising start-ups who arguably started out somewhat well or so it seems but would turn around to join the long list of failed starts up. Even more worrisome is that some of those start-ups would end raising considerable amount of capital to not only stay afloat but shore up through venture capital and private equity firms. Rather unfortunately and barely had such start-ups 'broken through' with the new capital infuse from investors, than such start-ups start to lose touch what makes business profitable, not only for the short run, but also to remain in the business game for years, decades and even much longer. BUKKY TAILOR and JOSEPH ONELE writes

WHILE existing literature on this topic has attempted to explain away what could have accounted for this rather disturbing occurrence and though not unaware of the challenges posed by the unsustainable foreign exchange rates and Naira depreciation as well as the seeming hostile business environment in Nigeria, this article seeks to narrow down on an aspect of business often overlooked or neglected in the rush to float a new venture – particularly one that is largely consumer driven.

In a 2011 Harvard Business School publication by Carmen Nobel on 'Why Companies Fail – and How Their Founders Can Bounce Back', Nobel notes that while it is not news that a good number of relatively new companies fail, experience gotten from running a company that failed could actually come in handy to help one in better advancing one's entrepreneurial journey, provided such persons "are willing to view failure as a potential for improvement." Failure, as used in this context could mean all assets of the start-ups being liquidated and investors losing most, or all the funds put into the company.

Carmen Nobel (in the 2011 Harvard Business School publication) would go on to cite Shikhar Ghosh, a senior lecturer at Harvard Business School who is credited to have made the point that "Very few companies achieve their initial projections...Failure is the norm." While the assertion that only few companies go on to actualise their initial projections and failure being common among start-ups might not be farfetched given the statistics in this regard, the present writers are largely concerned with how best to reasonably reduce the number of failed start-ups, particularly, in a society like ours.

Perhaps, a good start in fixing the problem of why a good number of start-ups fail in this climate is to examine first why Start-ups fail generally. Writing on this, Carmen Nobel notes that most "Start-ups often fail because founders and investors neglect to look before they leap, surging forward with plans without taking the time to realize that the base assumption of the business is wrong." Further highlighting the problem with most entrepreneurs and a good number of them fail, Nobel writes: "They believe they can predict the future, rather than try to create a future with their customers." The point made by the need for entrepreneurs to ensure goods and/or services they are offering customers are customer friendly or client-centric cannot be over emphasised. The ultimate test of any successful venture is not about how much of investors funds can be raked in but rather how much of customers patronage and turnover is secured from sales be it of goods or services. Better put, the success of any business enterprise would largely rely how much of customers or clients can repeat patronage and perhaps also go on to make referrals, further to excellent



customer service enjoyed.

It would appear a good number of entrepreneurs jump into the execution stage of a business idea before such is even fully formed and properly tested through initial test phase

While a good number of entrepreneurs 'tend to be single-minded with their strategies' as rightly noted by Carmen Nobel in the Harvard Business School publication, the popular saying that consumer/client/customer is king could not be more right as such the customer/client can make or mar a business. Put differently, a truly happy and satisfied customer would make a successful business as such business stands a lot to gain in repeat patronage and possible referrals. On the other, a dissatisfied customer or disgruntled client is unlikely to repeat patronage of such good or service and would likely go on to make negative remarks about the good or service paid for but for which expectation was below that expected. Hence, why it is critical that when opening any profitable business enterprise, the target customers must be decided on, carefully studied, and well understood.

What the present writers have seen happened a good number of times in the Nigerian Business Environment is some business enthusiasts cutting across different sectors and industries alongside some specific industry centred investors or private equity firms deciding to float and fund the idea of a business enterprise before a seasoned and highly pragmatic business feasibility audit phased plan capturing: (a) the execution of the business idea through carefully thought and customer-centric phases; (b) understanding of the patronage culture of the target customers or clients alongside long

standing industry culture for such good or service; (c) more sustainable route to keeping the business afloat through increasing cashflow for the business enterprise by repeated customers patronage, as opposed to focusing solely on the investors fund. The earlier businesses can realise that going the extra mile and putting in the work to secure customers patronage consistently and not realising too late that revenue generation through sales is the most sustainable way to keep such business afloat, the better.

From our experience, it would appear a good number of entrepreneurs jump into the execution stage of a business idea before such is even fully formed and properly tested through initial test phase as proposed. What we observe is missing in some cases, beyond the other sundry factors, is the involvement of seasoned locals who understand the business terrain well and able to help the business achieve longevity through a customer-centric feasibility study done detailing target customers and past behaviour of patronage of such good or service as well as possible future predictions of patronage. Our position finds great support in a 2020 Vanguard publication where the point was made thus: "Despite the many possibilities and potentials in the Nigerian market, not so many new businesses are able to scale through the fundamental stage, and as such are either forced to relocate or perhaps fold up...many of these businesses share similar key issues that led to their respective failures, including a lack of proper research before entering the market, spending investor funds and never hitting the profitability mark...Sadly, a couple of existing Start-ups with seemingly great potential are still towing this familiar path to failure." No doubt, the importance of a

carefully implemented market research capturing the essentials we highlighted in the preceding paragraph cannot be overstated.

In our view and had such business enterprise done their research well in enough or at least, in advance of opening their spaces, they might have been saved the touching story of becoming other statistics in the growing list of failed start-ups. Realising perhaps the poor execution done on the market research particularly as it pertains to customers preferences, a good number of these entrepreneurs find out once they open their doors to the public for patronage that their offerings are not so much in tandem with what the customers truly want. Putting it simply – once doors are opened to the public, it is a wrap! Less can be done to save the brand at such time as the first impression a customer gets from such experience is likely to account for whether the customer comes back or makes referral. It would take a miracle to turn things around and more reason it is advised to study your customer behaviour for the goods or services to be offered in such a new business outlet. Taking a restaurant or bar for instance, it is imperative to understand how the prospective customers eat, drink and other choices or tastes that are likely to influence their habits. Gone are the days when you open for opening sake. competition is heavy, understand business. It applies to any and every business set up. It is always imperative to know who one's target clients/customers are, so one can be saved touching stories. These restaurants and bars putting in millions of dollars investments and failing at the opening.

In an August 2022 Business Day publication by Timi Olubiyei addressing predictive causes of business failures in Nigeria amongst other things, Olubiyei writes: "...at

least 1.9 million SMEs have been lost since 2017...business closures persist at an alarming rate... Convenience shops and grocery stores, dry cleaning and laundromat services, taxi services, trucking and transportation businesses, beauty salons, local restaurants, and several other small businesses operate with no data sets or registration databases...The worry is that many of these business operators are inexperienced and pay no attention to business structure, technology, skill sets, accountability, or the importance of business continuity...Poor and negative customer relations; poor pricing techniques; lack of innovative drive, ignoring product or service innovations and new ideas; ignoring competitors' pressure and offerings; resource mismanagement...in the business operations can kill businesses."

Riding on the back of some of the points made by Timi Olubiyei in the 2022 Business Day publication, the present writers could not help but assert that the failure of start-ups and SMEs (running into millions) might have been best saved by a sustainable business or ensuring business continuity, good customer relations and a customer-centric product or service innovations that is built on a solid foundation of a properly researched market need as well as sound understanding of customers behaviour. Lending credence to the above stated position, Bernard Marr, in a 2022 Forbes publication on "The Top 10 Reasons Why Businesses Will Fail Over The Next 10 Years" notes that some of the reasons explored businesses fail include: Not prioritizing sustainability; Not putting Customers first; Not relentlessly innovating and; Not treating data as a key business asset and realising that data is the lifeblood of successful companies as 'data helps to make better business decisions, understand customers and market trends, create smarter products and services... improve...business processes.'

While Nigeria may indeed be a volatile business environment to float a successful start-up on account of the uncertainties permeating the foreign exchange market, galloping inflation as well as recent Naira depreciation, quite a lot can still be done with smart entrepreneurs and investors who are keen to thrive in Nigeria by floating start-ups that can stand the test of time and add value to stakeholders. For one, engaging the services of seasoned market research experts who understand the Nigerian business terrain well enough and able to help conduct an impartial study of the customers behaviour in the specific industry or sector will go a long way. Beyond the cutting-edge market research will be having in place a management team that understands the need to prioritize sustainability, putting customers first, pragmatically pursuing innovating and interpreting relevant data to day-to-day operations, with the understanding that satisfying customers continuously through great value offerings is the lifeline of a sustainable business in a business climate like ours.



Business & Economy

FG to achieve N24.54 trn revenue inflow

Revenue accruals to Federation Account is projected to rise to N24.54 trillion in 2024 from N11.86 projected in 2023.

Of this figure, revenue from the main pool is projected to be N20.70 trillion while Value Added Tax (VAT) pool and Electronic Money Transfer Levy (EMTL) are projected at N3.66 trillion, N174.26 billion respectively.

Director General of Budget Office of the Federation, Mr. Ben Akabueze, said this at the ongoing Nigeria Economic Summit in Abuja.

Giving insights into the on the 2024-2026 Medium Term Framework and Fiscal Strategy document, Akabueze said the draft 2024-2026 paper was prepared against the backdrop of democratic transition to reflect current realities and new direction of the President Tinubu administration in addressing key policy and fiscal challenges.

The document showed key parameters to drive the medium-term revenue and expenditure framework for Nigeria in 2014 include: Oil benchmark: 2024- \$73.96; 2025- \$73.76; 2026- \$69.90. Oil Production (Mtps): 1.78; 1.80; 1.81. Exchange rate N/\$: 700/\$; 665.61/\$; 669.79/\$. Inflation: 21.40 per cent; 20.30 per cent; 18.60

Other parameters are: Non-oil GDP: Non-Oil GDP (N'bn): N223,989.2; N249,188.0; N278,251.7. Oil GDP (N'bn): in 2024- N12,316.0; 2025- N13,225.7; 2026- N14,272.0. Nominal GDP (N'bn): N236,305.2; N262,413.7; N292,523.7. GDP Growth Rate (%): 3.76; 4.22; 4.78. Imports: 32,453.5; 33,401.3; 34,515.4 and Nominal Consumption (N'bn): N163,227.8; N189,992.8; N218,594.2

The projected exchange rates for the Nigerian Naira (N) against the U.S. Dollar (\$) are 700 Naira to 1 Dollar in 2024, 665.61 Naira to 1 Dollar in 2025, and 669.79 Naira to 1 Dollar in 2026. These rates reflect the assumed values used for currency conversion in economic calculations.

The oil benchmark reflects the expected price of oil in the years 2024, 2025, and 2026, which increases slightly in 2025 before decreasing in 2026. Oil production is expected to increase slightly over the three-year period.

The exchange rate is expected to fluctuate, decreasing significantly in 2025 before increasing slightly in 2026 while inflation is expected to decrease over the three-year period.



Akabueze

Non-oil GDP is expected to increase steadily, while oil GDP is expected to increase slightly. Nominal GDP which represent the estimated total value of goods and services consumed in the Nigerian economy is expected to increase steadily, with a growth rate of around 4% each year. Imports which are the estimated total value of goods and services imported into Nigeria are expected to increase over the three-year period, while nominal consumption which represents the estimated total value of goods and services consumed in the Nigerian economy is expected to increase steadily.

These figures indicate that Nigeria's economy is expected

to maintain steady growth over the next few years, with some fluctuations in key parameters such as the exchange rate and oil benchmark. However, there may be continued challenges with inflation and a heavy reliance on oil as a primary source of revenue.

"Accordingly, economic growth is projected to increase to 3.76 per cent, 4.22 per cent and 4.78 per cent in 2024, 2025 and 2026, respectively, mainly due to strong political will to take tough decisions and implement necessary reforms.

The document added that "most of the growth in real GDP during the period will be driven by the anticipated increase in

FG approves \$3.45bn World Bank loan for power

The Federal Executive Council, yesterday, accepted a \$3.45 billion loan proposal to fund five projects.

Projects in the power industry, renewable energy, state resource mobilisation, teenage girls' initiative for learning and development, and a women's empowerment project are among them.

Wale Edun, Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, told State House correspondents that the FG will accept the \$3.5 billion "zero-interest" loan with a 10-year moratorium, with payments beginning in 2033.

"Today at the Federal Executive Council, I presented five memos which were gracefully approved by the Council. They had to do with concessional and, in man

cases, zero-interest financing by the World Bank and the International Development Association, which is the very concessional financing arm," he said.

"The projects that were approved for funding were in the power sector and then the renewable energy sector. There was funding for states for resource mobilisation programmes to help them with

the internally-generated revenue efforts.

"There was a project for adolescent girls' initiative for learning and empowerment. And then finally the fifth financing that was approved was for the Women project."

The Finance Minister went on to say that the \$700 million girls' program would help young girls in secondary school gain marketable skills in addition to their academic successes.

Edun put a price tag on the project, saying, "\$700m is the size of the current project."

"So those were five loans totalling \$3.45bn. And as you know, the tenure is all around 40 years, with a moratorium period of around 10 years and interest very low, or in the cases of loans, zero interest. However, some fees would be incurred," he added.

Tahir Mamman, Minister of Education, went on to say that the girls' initiative, which began in seven states initially, has now been expanded to 11 states.

"Initially, from seven participating states, we will now have about 11 additional states participating in this project, which will lead to the empowerment of girls between

The Federal Government has tasked oil and gas experts to proffer permanent solutions to challenges ranging from low productivity, oil theft, pipeline vandalism and gas flaring in the local oil industry.

Sen. Heineken Lokpobiri, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil), made the call on Monday in Abuja, at the opening of the third Biennial International Conference on Hydrocarbon Science and Technology (ICHST 2023).

The conference, organised by the Petroleum Training Institute (PTI) and hosted by the Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF), aimed at resuscitating the observable decline in the nation's oil production and embracing innovative research as practiced by the developed nations.

Lokpobiri said Nigeria had played major roles in the global oil industry and Africa in particular, hence the need to sustain its position.

"Nigeria has been a big player in the oil and gas industry both in Africa and globally. For us to sustain our place globally, we need to tackle challenges and key into what is trending globally.

"My expectations at the end of this conference is for us to come up with home grown solutions to address our problems in the petroleum industry.

"Nigeria have so many problems in the industry, I believe that the conference would come up with solutions to address those challenges and also produce

FG tasks oil experts on local industry challenges



Lokpobiri

document that will be implementable," he said.

Also speaking, Dr Henry Adimula Principal/Chief Executive, PTI, said the conference underscored the need to shape the destiny of Nigeria's oil/gas industry.

Adimula added that the essence of the conference was to explore, dissect, and contribute to a future teeming with possibilities.

He acknowledged the pioneering research conducted by the PTI which had substantially influenced the discussions.

"PTI's development of economic models for gas investment, spanning the upstream, midstream, and downstream sectors, and creation of Modified Unit

Technical Cost Model for oil and gas investment, ensures precise determination of the cost to produce a standard cubic foot of gas.

"These achievements underscore PTI's dedication to innovative and environmentally responsible hydrocarbon resource utilisation," he said.

Adimula said its collaborative research with the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation Research and Development Division had resulted in steps towards efficient storage system for Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) in powered tricycles.

According to him, this pioneering initiative marks a substantial stride towards sustainable energy solutions and cleaner transportation methods.

He said its strides in research and innovation also yielded results especially in securing a patent for the 'Method of Improving the Rheological Properties of Potassium-Based Bentonite Clay' under Nigerian Patent No NG/P/2020/200 as duly registered with the Nigerian Patents and Designs Registry.

These innovations, he said, reflected its steadfast dedication to sustainable and eco-friendly practices, serving as a testament to our unwavering commitment to pioneering research and development.

Mr Ahmed Aminu, the Executive Secretary PTDF, represented by Mrs Ifeoma Nwokike, General Manager Projects, in his address said the oil/gas sector, especially in Nigeria, was at an intersection of complex challenges and unprecedented opportunities.

According to Aminu, the industry grapples with a myriad of issues, from technological hurdles, research limitations, and the dwindling landscape of investments and finance.

The situation, he said underscored the importance of bolstering research funding and technological development to boost the sector.

"The imminent commencement of the Dangote Oil Refinery, the completion of pivotal pipeline infrastructure like the AKK, and the



Edun



Business & Economy

Sustaining agric-related value chains in Kogi

It is obvious that man has three basic essential needs like food, clothing and shelter; hence, government at all levels prioritise food productio. OYIBO SALIHU writes

NIGERIA'S initial greatness was hinged on agriculture when the country was renowned for mass production of cash crops such as cocoa, kolanut, palm oil and others.

However, the country's story changed with the discovery of crude oil in the 1950s and agriculture experienced a nose-dive but even at that, subsistence farming became a major vocation for many communities in the country.

In spite of the place that oil came to occupy in Nigeria's national life, agriculture still remains the most reliable and sustainable avenue of income for many Nigerians. Food security is deemed as one of the surest ways to gauge the strength of any country.

Need to accord agriculture a priority

In recognising this fact, government at all levels have in diverse ways through well-thought-out programmes and policies, continued to accord the agricultural sector topmost priority, introducing one programme after the other to stimulate and sustain the interest of citizens in agriculture.

Till date, an estimated 70 to 75 percent of Nigerians still live in the rural areas and agriculture has remained a viable alternative to crude oil and a major source of employment, income and survival.

In terms of arable land, Nigeria is a blessed country and to sustain and effectively tap the vast agricultural potentials of the country, successive administrations at one point or the other, initiated agricultural programmes to enhance the livelihoods of the people.

IFAD intervention

Following the steps of successive administrations, few years ago, the federal government in collaboration with International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) introduced Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP) in several states of Nigeria, including Kogi state.

Kogi, given its vast arable land, remains Nigeria's food basket. This fact is not lost on the present administration which has made agriculture one of its areas of concentration.

It is interesting to note that the objective of VCDP is to among other things reduce rural poverty using the instrumentality of agriculture; increase food security and accelerate economic growth on a sustainable basis.

For more specifics, the programme is designed to improve the incomes and food security of rural households who are engaged in production, processing and marketing of rice and cassava in targeted pilot local government areas.

In implementing the programme, the respective



benefiting states are to adopt holistic and demand-driven approach to address constraints along the cassava and rice value chains; hence, the need for inclusive strategy to strengthen actors along the chain i.e producers, processors, marketers and their respective organisations.

Given the fact that upon assumption of office in 2016, agriculture was accorded a front burner position by the government of Alhaji Yahaya Bello as one of the thematic areas of the New Direction Development Blueprint, IFAD VCDP and Kogi state government entered a partnership that would change the ugly narrative in the agricultural sector in the state. It is a partnership that has paid off and it is still paying off.

There is no denying the facts that Kogi IFAD/VCDP has demonstrated unequal feat with arrays and galaxies of positive impacts on VCDP farmers and the state in general. These are intended to stem the tides of poverty in the system.

How it works

Explaining how the VCDP-IFAD works, the programme coordinator in the state, Dr Stella Adejoh said strong emphasis is placed on developing commodity-specific value chain action plans at the local government levels and this, she explained, serves as the basis for rolling out relevant and sustainable activities.

Adejoh further explained that the programme strategy is anchored on a long-term vision of value chain development for poverty reduction and accelerated economic growth and setting the fulcrum for fundamental organisation and functional capacity of key actors in the agricultural sector.

The overall aim, she enthused further is to enhance food security, increased production and productivity, as well as expand income-generating activities and

create larger employment opportunities.

To achieve this objective, Kogi VCDP has consistently kept its eyes on the ball and has through its activities put smiles on the faces of farmers in the state.

The programme which started in Kogi fully barely over two years ago has, with the support of His Excellency Governor Bello, made tremendous impacts on the lives of rural families with testimonies following.

The programme has become a dependable burden-bearer for farmers across the state with the farmers seeing it as a friend in times of dire need. This is understandable given the fact that between 70 and 75 percent of the total farming population in the state is made up of small-holder farmers.

Against this backdrop and the fact that poverty has remained a rural phenomenon, with at least two-third of the rural population captured in the poverty net, the programme has come at a very crucial time and making impacts in the lives of people who are in dire need of help in terms of funding and technical know-how on how to improve their yields and enhance their livelihoods.

IFAD/VCDP programme is a success story in Kogi given the testimonies of beneficiaries spread across the benefiting pilot local government areas of the state.

Speaking on some of the completed and ongoing projects of the IFAD/VCDP programme, Dr Adejoh identified the provision of rice processing centre with a drying slab located at Kungbani cluster also provided with solar powered borehole and a transformer for the community.

Others include the construction of a market stall/store and crèche for the marketers where passers-by and travellers can easily stop

over to purchase agricultural products and items at the Gaskiya Rice Processing Centre at Kungbani Lokoja local government area.

Similarly, the programme also constructed a market store for Ejule-Ojebe community, drying slab at Ichalla Ajode, solar-powered borehole at Ayeke, market stall at Egah and a solar-powered borehole and drying slab for rice farmers at Aluko-Ina in Ibaji local government area of the state.

Like other benefiting pilot LGAs, market stall and solar powered boreholes were also constructed for farmers in Oke-Dayo and Bolorunduro communities as well as a cassava processing centre with a solar-powered borehole and a creche for Agalupa community in Kabba/Bunu local government area. Also in Okebuku, a creche and solar-powered borehole as well as a processing centre were constructed for the community.

Continuing in its drive to lift rural residents out of poverty by helping them create sustainable livelihoods, Kogi VCDP built a rice processing centre, aggregation centre, solar powered borehole, creche, access road with culverts with a drying slab and 30KVA transformer at ASCO Camp while a creche was built for Geregu community in Ajaokuta local government.

The Dr Adejoh-led VCDP through the poverty alleviation strategies of the present administration in the state, installed solar powered borehole for garri processors at Igah-Ikeje and Ogugu communities as well as a market stall, solar powered borehole and a processing centre at Imane in Olamaboro local government area of the state.

Out of a deliberate strategy to assist farmers with a view for

increasing production, Kogi VCDP developed 200 hectares of cultivable land for farmers across the three senatorial districts in the state.

Several advocacy and training programme had also been held to sensitise small householder farmers on the adaptation and mitigation measures on climate change.

As a deliberate attempt to ensure youths and women participation in the project implementation, Kogi IFAD-VCDP sponsored 20 youths on entrepreneurship at the National Institute of Roots and Tubers for training on the production on cassava stems and Badegi for rice seed multiplication.

The list is endless, but being conscious of the role of partnership in networking for the success of the programme Kogi IFAD-VCDP entered into bilateral partnership with some reputable organisations and stakeholders for effective and efficient project implementation.

The organisations, according to Dr Adejoh include UNICANE, Crest Agro, Vertex Nigeria Limited, JOSAN, Seed Council, NRCRI, NCRI and BADEGI, among others.

This was why the state programme coordinator ascribed the modest achievements over two years of the programme implementation in the state to the commitment and political will of the present administration to the programme's move to achieve greatness in agricultural sector.

Also, Beneficiaries, IFAD/VCDP officials at different fora have consistently showered encomiums on Governor Bello for creating the enabling environment and full support for the implementation of the IFAD/VCDP activities in the state.

Politics

Ganduje wants constitutional roles for Deputy Governors

Dr Abdullahi Ganduje, the National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC), has called for specific constitutional roles for deputy governors in Nigeria to keep them busy.

Ganduje said this at an annual conference of the Forum of Former Deputy Governors of Nigeria (FFDGN) with the theme: "Partnering in the shared vision for good governance and sustainable development" in Abuja.

Ganduje, represented by Mr Emma Eneukwu, the APC Deputy National Chairman, South, said that assigning constitutional roles would prevent unnecessary clash between governors and their deputies.

"I am happy that you the deputy governors, have decided to come together and form yourself into a forum and embark on this advocacy.

"As you create awareness, as you meet people and talk to leaders of our country, there is need to constitutionally give roles to the deputy governors," he said.

Also speaking former Attorney General of the Federation, Chief Kanu Agabi advised political leaders to be guided by patriotism in all their endeavours.

He said that nothing was wrong with the Nigeria Constitution, but the inability to observe it.

"There are some of us who feel that the constitution is an invalid document, it is illegitimate, it is a product of the military. Even if it is a broken down vehicle it is the vehicle.

"It is a good constitution; there is nothing wrong with it. However good a constitution is, it is not a self-executing document, it doesn't enforce itself. It requires good people to enforce it.

"Of course it is not intended to be a perfect document, but this nation must begin to respect the constitution.

"We must begin to respect the nation's history and not go on describing it as an artificial creation. As we hear so many people doing. There is no nation that is not artificial. All nations are artificial," he said.

Agabi, who was the chairman of the occasion, appealed to people in power to come to terms with those who agreed with them.

He appealed to the Federal Government to make the nation self-reliance, tackle corrupt and released dissidents in prison to allow them contribute their quota to national development.

"I appeal to the federal government to release all those dissidents who are in detention so that they can come out to unite the state and move it forward.

"I am not afraid of those dissidents, bring them over, release them, let them recognise that we can teach them unity and peace.

"For ever since we became an independent nation, we have been living in peace," and also urged Nigerians to come together and be united as a country.

"Once a nation adopts presidential system of government, unity is not optional."

The Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Sen. George Akume, appealed to the governors to find it expedient to delegate



Ganduje

some relevant and key roles to their deputies.

Represented by a Director in SGF office, Mr Simon Tyungu, said such would give them a sense of belonging.

"Nigeria is presently facing a lot of very demanding challenges and this is because the effect of governance is not being felt by the majority of Nigerians as should be.

"To this end, I want to use this platform to advocate for a shared national vision between the federal government, state government and local government to be implemented within four years.

"This will be in form of the three tiers agreeing on very critical projects, that is the food and development centre," he said.

G o v . A b d u l R a h m a n AbdulRazaq of Kwara and the Chairman, Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) urged all serving and former governors and their deputies to continue to work together for nation building.

"One recognizes your contribution to nation building and engagement in national and subnational discourse.

"Your experiences and institutional memories and knowledge must not be allowed to go to waste.

"I urge us all to work together, governors, deputy governors, former deputy governors, to work together in nation building.

"The NGF looks forward to a greater and robust collaboration and engagement with this forum," AbdulRazaq said.

The Chairman of the forum, Mr Chris Akomas, pledged the forum's commitment to continue to strive hard in the quest for nation-building and in the bid to deepen Nigeria's democratic process.

Akomas, a former Abia deputy governor, said the objective of the summits was to proffer workable solution and better understanding to eliminate the incessant rifts between Governors and their deputies.

"We have evolved over the years and have come up to the stage where we need to play critical roles to advance the cause of building on our democratic structures.

STAKEHOLDERS in the electoral process have tasked the National Assembly to further amend the Electoral Act to strip the Presidency of the powers to appoint Resident Electoral Commissioners (REC) and commissioners for the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

The stakeholders stated this at a roundtable organised by Yiaga Africa and the Kofi Annan Foundation themed "Unpacking Nigeria's 2023 General Elections and Prospects for Electoral Reform" in Abuja on Monday.

Speaking at the event, Mr Samson Itodo, the Executive Director, Yiaga Africa, said that the roundtable was convened to conduct a post mortem of the 2023 General Elections and to seek priority areas for reforms.

Itodo said that INEC needed to be unbundled adding that the current arrangements where the appointment of the chairman and national commissioners were vested in the executive, needed to be reviewed.

He said that the Justice Uwais committee recommended that the president should not appoint the Chairman and commissioners into INEC rather the power should be vested in another institution.

"You cannot have an electoral commission that is composed of persons who are appointed by the President and in some cases you have the incumbents as part of a political party or leading a political party.

"So in line with Justice Uwais, one of the recommendations is to review the appointment process of commissioners and RECs into INEC.

"In fact, one of the proposals is that the President should not appoint RECs.

"INEC when properly constituted with individuals that have impeccable character, competence and capacity should appoint its own resident electoral commissioners or directors of elections to manage elections," he said.

"This is it just a way of protecting the independence of the commission to prevent it from any form of political interference or manipulation," he said.

'Remove powers to appoint INEC RECs, Commissioners from president'



Itodo

Itodo said that the legal framework for Nigeria's elections needed to be reformed because they revealed that there were inconsistencies and ambiguities in the law.

He however, said that elections were not just about laws because Nigeria could have the best of laws but if politicians do not change their attitude towards politics, toward elections and towards democracy citizens, it would not inspire confidence in citizens.

He said that there were also issues around the ambiguities in the results coalition process adding that both the law and the guidelines issued by INEC had some inconsistencies and there was need to strengthen the law to make it compulsory for electronic transmission of results.

Sen. Abdulaziz Yaradu'a, the Deputy Chairman, Senate Committee on INEC, said that the National Assembly (NASS) was working on plans to build the election process to global standards for the benefit of Nigeria's democracy.

Yaradu'a however, said that one of the issues being faced by NASS was that while elections had been conducted and completed, most of the members of the assembly were

still in court trying to protect their mandate.

Mr Sebastian Brack, a member of the Kofi Annan Foundation, said that Nigeria was not just a key country for West Africa, but Africa as a whole and given all the pressures on democracy facing the world, Nigeria's successful democratic experiment was a priority.

"This particular roundtable is looking at how we can improve the situation for the next elections in a constructive and forward looking way."

Brack said that different stakeholders from the parliament, civil society, security forces, media and others were brought together to agree on a consensus or list of key recommendations that would come out at the end of the day.

Prof. Mohammed Kuna, the Special Adviser to INEC Chairman, said that although elections were important, they were not enough in terms of deepening and consolidating democracy.

Kuna said that there was need to focus also on governance, political accountability, conducting elections among others saying that the commission had noted them.

Igala people promise to deliver for APC

From
AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE people of Kogi East Senatorial District, who trooped out in their thousands in Anyigba recently to demonstrate their support for the All Progressives Congress' governorship candidate, Usman Ododo, have promised to strengthen the unity of the state by delivering massively for the APC in the November 11 governorship election in the state.

The Igala indigenes, especially the critical stakeholders of the Social Democratic Party, Peoples Democratic Party, African Democratic Congress, who defected publicly to the ruling APC at the Kogi East Senatorial District Rally, as well as other illustrious Igala sons and daughters, said the crowd witnessed recently was an unprecedented one in the history of electioneering in Kogi East.

They promised to deliver massively for the APC in the election to pave way for the continuity of what they described as the detribalised and purposeful leadership of Governor Yahaya Bello, which had brought unity and sincere development to all parts of the



Ododo

state, noting that there was nothing like ethnic agenda in the dictionary of patriotic citizens.

In his remarks, the Director General, Kogi APC Governorship Campaign Council, and Minister of Steel Development, Shaibu Abubakar Audu, said the only agenda for the APC was the Kogi Agenda, adding that the party's candidate was coming to build and consolidate on the

laudable legacies of Governor Yahaya Bello.

"The only agenda for the APC is the Kogi Agenda. The party has the interest of the whole state. Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo has a vision for the development of the entire state. He will build and consolidate on the legacies of Gov Yahaya Bello.

"We are proud today that Kogi is the most secured state in North Central Nigeria. The

APC will provide massive jobs for our teeming youths through agricultural revolution. The APC is working on expanding the capacity to be able to produce several agricultural products, particularly in Kogi East.

"I urge you to support the APC and Alhaji Ododo. President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, who appointed me as Minister of Steel Development, is interested in the vision and success of Kogi State through the development of Ajaokuta Steel.

"This will enable the provision of massive jobs for the entire youths of our dear state. He has asked that we do not hand over the state to a hustler government or to an opposition government. The President is concerned about the state and has said we cannot afford to hand over a strategic state to the opposition," he stated.

The Chairman of APC in Kogi State, Abdullahi Bello, expressed satisfaction with the massive turnout and enthusiasm displayed by the people of Kogi East and urged them to sustain the tempo to pave the way for landslide victory in the governorship election.

Also, the lawmaker representing Kogi East in the

National Assembly, Senator Jibrin Echocho, called on the people of Kogi East who had yet to come into the APC fold, to embrace the party, pointing out that elections are won on party structures.

"Let me appeal to our people to be passionate about the APC. Our candidate is marketable. Elections are won based on party structures. The people of Kogi East voted APC in the general election. We cannot afford to do otherwise in the forthcoming election.

"Governor Bello has laid a solid foundation in infrastructure, human capital development across the state. His achievements have done the major part of the election. Let's all join hands in ensuring collective victory for the APC," Echocho said.

Addressing the people, the Deputy Governor of Kogi State, Edward Onoja, urged the people of Kogi East to vote on the strength of continuity and cautioned against sentiments, saying that elections are about political parties and not tribe, religion or region.

In his speech, Governor Yahaya Bello cautioned the people against ethnicity, stressing that tribal politics had no place in this time and age. "Ethnic politics is a selfish interest.

Politics

Hon. Dewan: The journey so far

Words are triggers for human action(s). This is so, especially, when the words spoken or written come from one's conviction. Words triggers and get even more contagious when they come from a leader. Their words can be so compelling in inspiring and/or motivating positive or negative actions, depending on what is being said, AYUBA YILGAK'HA writes.

THIS exposition is motivated and anchored on one of such words coming from one of our legislators. "The most useless day in my life will be the day I spend 24 hours without putting a smile on at least someone's face." I stumble on these beautiful and touchy lines from Hon. Dewan Gabriel Kudangbena, a member of the Plateau State House of Assembly (PSHA) representing Pankshin North.

Those words can only come from a welfarist who has value for humanity! I, personally, met Hon. Dewan on two occasions. The first encounter was when I met him at an interdenominational program organised by the youth in Mwel, Ampang East with the topic: "the gains and pains of youth participation in politics: lesson from Ampang East" and held at COCIN LCC Mwel on December 18, 2022 with me as the guest speaker. The second time we met was at the second edition of J. D. Gomwalk Memorial Lecture with the theme: "JD Gomwalk legacies and prospects of sustainable development in Plateau State", organised by the National Association of Ngas Students (NANGS) and held at FCE Pankshin on February 14, 2023, where I was invited to be one of the discussants of the lead paper scheduled to be presented by Nde Yakubu Gomos. On both occasions, Dewan was introduced as a candidate for the state assembly office under the Young Progressives Party (YPP), a seemingly new and unpopular party platform but spoke passionately about the issues of selfless service to humanity.

Because of those two encounters, I became interested in the aspiration of the politician and on the eve of his election, I wrote him a note that read in full: "In stoic philosophy, courage is perceived as the virtue that can champion the cause of right. You have shown great courage in the pursuit of your ambition to represent Pankshin North State Constituency.

You are commended for being a dogged fighter and a determined goal getter! I do not know the dynamics and issues involved in the politics of your constituency but one thing that is evident is that you have creditably done all that is required to market your manifesto to the electorates. However, you will miss my vote because my PVC was registered somewhere else but my prayers are earnestly with you. May grace and favour speak for you. Best wishes, House member in the making! "The rest, they say, is history.

Hon. Dewan won the poll and, interestingly, he was the only



Dewan

person elected under the platform of YPP in northern Nigeria. What a unique history and statement in his popularity with his constituents. Against all odds, the politician won against well established and rooted political platforms like the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP).

In a reaction to his electoral victory, I wrote to him once again saying, "Glad you made it! Resounding congratulations, House Member Elect!". He duly acknowledged the receipt of my notes with thankgivings and since his inauguration, I have been following his activities from a distance. The point though is to encourage where he needs encouragement and to criticise in love when situations demand. In other words, a leader is worth commending when he delivered on his promises but that does not mean such leader cannot be criticised when he defaulted.

Let me categorically state here, that it is too early to

call: This piece is not meant to rate and praise the performance of Hon. Dewan because he is just starting, barely four months in office. Even though, Dan Ciampa and Michael Watkins in their classic leadership book, "Right from Start: Taking Charge in a New Leadership Role", which was published in 1999 argued that "what you do in the first few months on the job can spell the difference between success and failure", there is need for moderation the assertion.

As a Development economist, I know that the shortest development plan anyone can undertake takes, at least, a year; a medium term blueprint takes between four and 7 years while a long term development plan takes between 8 to 15 years. Therefore, it will be too early to say if the legislator has failed or not. What I know at a glance, however, is that he is doing well at the moment. One of the most critical tests of performance or success is sustainability.

First impression matter, really, but the end of every matter, they say, is better than the beginning. Starting well and finishing well is the optimal goal for those who genuinely aspire

to make a difference. Therefore, I would rather reserve my comments on the scorecard of the House member until he is, at least, two years in office or, better still, at the twilight of his four years tenure.

All I can say at the moment is to encourage him to work harder and sustain the tempo of the good works he has started towards the good of the state and, particularly, his constituents! In his inaugural address, on January 20, 1989, former President Bush of the United States of America said to the Congress, "This is the age of the offered hand." That same year, he, also, said to young people on the South Lawn of the White House: "I'm telling you today, you can find what you're looking for in helping others. If you walk this path with me, I can promise you a life full of meaning and adventure."

The take home for us and for Dewan in these words on marbel is that each of us has a dream, the only sure way to find it is to be lost in the service of others. The present age belongs to those who serve others at the wow level, that is,

the act of service to be rated above excellent performance! May we together be committed to this gospel of service as by Bush Still: "We must not and will not rest until every man and woman with a dream has the means to achieve it".

If any of us are doing well, encourage him or her; even those that are doing badly can be encouraged in love to do better. There is always room for improvement! The journey has just begun. I have no comment on Dewan's private life but his public service.

I can see the parliamentary building network across board and deepening consultations to mobilising opportunities and attracting the dividends of democracy for his people. He is always in touch with the activities of his constituents and doing his utmost best to support them. That is the way leadership should be. However, because he is dealing with people whose morality cannot be predicted or legislate upon, I prayed to God to bless him with extended intellectual capacity, social and emotional intelligence to serve with even greater distinction. He must not lose sight of his commitment which is to put "a smile on, at least, someone's face"!

Leadership is not a title but an opportunity to serve. It is a sacred responsibility which cannot be delegated; trust that goes with the demand transparency and accountability. Leadership is about integrity but, also, about competence. There has to be a striking balance amongst these virtues in the life of a leader and, it takes personal discipline to cultivate them. My best wishes for him are that, at the expiration of his four years tenure, he will be confident to address his constituents in the manner Samuel did after serving Israelites in the book of 1 Samuel 12:2b-4 (NIV):

"I have been your leader from my youth until this day. Here I stand. Testify against me in the presence of the Lord and his anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Whose donkey have I taken? Whom have I cheated? Whom have I oppressed? From whose hand have I accepted a bribe to make me shut my eyes? If I have done any of these things, I will make it right." and the people will reply: "You have not cheated or oppressed us; you have not taken anything from anyone's hand." It is not rocket science but a feat that is very possible. Best wishes!

IMAGES

MUTFWANG SWEAR-IN 8 PERMANENT SECRETARIES

Plateau State Government recently appointed 8 Permanent Secretaries in the state and the Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, yesterday administered the oath of office at the new Government House Rayfield, Jos through his Deputy



Newly sworn-in Permanent Secretary, Mary Fom (left) receiving her appointment letter from the Deputy Governor, Hon. Josephine Piyo who stood in for the Executive Governor



L-R: Head of Service, Barr. Rauta Dakok, CoS, Engr. Jeremiah Satmak, SGS, Arc. Samuel Nanchang, Jatau, and the representative of PDP State Chairman, Hon. Bitrus Golen



From left are, Gen. Shipi, Coordinator, Operation Rainbow, Commissioners of Works, Adams Bulus Lekshak, Information, Musa Ibrahim Ashoms and Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Ephraim Usman



Cross section of Permanent Secretaries at the swearing in ceremony



Emr of Kanam, HRH Muhammad Babangida Mu'azu (left) exchanging greetings with the Speaker, PLHA, Rt. Hon. Moses Sule and the Long Gamai, HRH, Miskoom Martin Shaldas



Permanent Secretaries, Mr. Stephen Godongs (right) flanked by his Staff Cabinet and Special Service



Cross section of invited dignitaries



Cross section of invited guests during the ceremony

Photos: DANLADI DUK

Politics

Mutfwang's achievements in 100 days : A post -mortem

In any democratic dispensation, the social contract between the leaders and the governed is for the leaders to lead well. The provision of basic social amenities to the citizens is a necessity which is always well appreciated by the majority. To showcase their plans and which has become a norm, our elected Governors in their first 100 days in office always roll out their achievements, PETER TITLE writes.

THIS is not different in Plateau State, led by His Excellency, Barrister Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang who was elected and sworn in May 29, 2023. A man of capacity who came with a vision to take out his people from the wilderness, immediately swung into action the first day he assumed office. The unassuming leader on the Plateau kick-started the leadership prowess by transversing the nook and crannies of Nigeria and abroad even before his oath taking canvassing for entrepreneurs to come and invest in the state he as well visited all the service chiefs seeking to find a lasting solution to the incessant attacks meted on innocent citizens by herdsmen and mercenaries in Mangu, Bokkos, Barkin -Ladi and Riyom Local Government Areas of the state.

Despite the daunting challenges, and the indebtedness this administration inherited from the immediate past regime, the leader of the "Time Is Now" never for once relented in his efforts of developing the state in all spheres for the benefit of all and sundry.

Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, a man who places God first before any other thing, inherited civil servants in the state on strike for non payment of accumulated salaries and promotions arrears as well, swung into action and commenced the payment of salaries, pensions and other entitlements which he has since cleared despite the inherited debt of over ₦300 billion from the immediate past government.

Tertiary institutions owned by the state government were in Comatose. They were facing serious threats and other challenges regarding accreditation of courses. They were left at the mercy of God. Staff too were on strike for non payment of salaries and other emoluments which resulted to students becoming bored for being at home for many months. The leader of "The Time Is Now", in a pragmatic approach and his quest at uplifting the standard of education pumped over ₦300 million and ₦200 million to the Plateau State University (PLASU), Bokkos as well as Plateau State Polytechnic, Barkin - Ladi for the accreditation of courses and for other sundry needs in that order.



Mutfwang

Jos - Bukuru metropolis roads network were a death trap which had been left unattended to for sometime despite the cries and hues from the citizens for attention. Nothing was done. But with the emergence of this Governor, almost roads which needed attention were indeed attended to as can be visibly seen. The epitome of humility as Mutfwang is, promised to focus on developmental projects all over the 17 local government areas of the state for the benefit of all citizens.

Weeks before his assumption in office, there was unleashing of terror on the people of Mangu, Bokkos, Barkin -Ladi and Riyom Local Government Area, innocent people were killed and thousands displaced, Governor Mutfwang vowed to faced it headlong and that informed his visitation to all the service chiefs in Abuja, where he solicited for immediate intervention and stoppage to the carnage meted on the citizens.

That they did, the Operation Safe Haven (OPSH), did not only stay in their theatre office in Jos but relocated to the conflict zone in Mangu with their Commander and who is the

and trained in the state to boost the Operation Rainbow.

Neighbourhood Watch is given a boost to curb with criminals and criminality in the state and established a call centre to get information across the state to deal with criminal elements from the onset before it gets out of hand.

The affected local government areas as a result of the crisis brought colossal damage to the agrarian nature of the affected areas. The mercenaries and or bandits maimed and killed farmer that had gone to cultivate his or her land. The lands were left unattended to for fear of being attacked and the abled Barrister Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang sensing the danger this posed regarding food shortage in the future, used his initiatives to cultivate 900 hectares of land across the crisis prone local government areas so as to cushion food scarcity.

He equally procured over 200 trucks of fertilizer, worth hundreds millions of naira for distribution to farmers including the affected as well as the indigent in the society which will help boost the yields in a all year round farming. Taking all these into cognisance, he called the attention of the World Bank assisted projects saddled with the responsibilities of assisting farmers to intervene with technical know-how and funds to promote agriculture.

The state capital is now wearing a new look unlike before. Governor Mutfwang on assumption declared a state of emergency on environmental sanitation. The visible heaps of refuse have disappeared. The state ministry of environment and PEPSA were directed to work 24/7 to maintain the

cleanliness of the state and as a result, the ugly trend of the past is now history. Environmental Sanitation is observed monthly and erring defaulters are punished accordingly.

Taking the state to the next stage of development, the Governor said, it's will not be a one man show. He therefore organised a Retreat at the prestigious National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru for all his cabinet members and appointees. On - Boarding was the topic and alot was digested. He did not mince words during the retreat where he charged the participants on transparency and good governance. Resource persons of high repute were brought and alot was achieved at the end of the retreat.

As Barrister Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang would always say "I owe Plateau a debt. A debt of good governance, for which my team and I intend to pay and that by God's grace we shall". Indeed, he is living to his words. He intends to leave a remarkable mark in the state and so needs citizens collective support to achieved his set goals. Having achieved these in his 100 days in office, many more is yet to come as Mutfwang is committed to living the state better than he met it. And with the Tribunal affirming his victory, precisely on 22nd September, 2023, the sky indeed is his limit in the quest of taking the state to the next level of development.

He in turn should embrace constructive criticism from all sides, be it from the opposition parties, religious bodies groups and or individuals provided it is well intended to move the state from the duldrum.

"Despite the daunting challenges, and the indebtedness this administration inherited from the immediate past regime, the leader of the "Time Is Now" never for once relented in an efforts of developing the state in all spheres for the benefit of all and sundry. Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, a man who places God first before any other thing, inherited civil servants in the state on strike for non payment of accumulated salaries and promotions arrears as well, swung into action and commenced the payment of salaries, pensions and other entitlements which he has since cleared despite the inherited debt of over ₦300 billion from the immediate past government".

NEWS

ABU student stabs 17 year old to death

From **ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi**

THE Bauchi State Office of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) has confirmed the arrest of Abdullahi Ibrahim, a 500-level student of Veterinary Medicine of Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria, for killing 17-year-old boy, Umar Usman in Misau Local Government Area of Bauchi State.

This was confirmed to journalists in Bauchi recently by Mr. Ilelaboye Oyejide, the NSCDC Commander in Bauchi State. He disclosed that the suspect was arrested in Misau Local Government Area of the state.

He explained that the command received information that 17-year-old secondary school student, Umar Usman in Misau was found wrapped in a cloth and dumped at Misau bypass.

"This is a case of culpable homicide. On the 20th of October 2023, the lifeless body of Umar Usman was found wrapped in a white cloth and dumped in Misau bypass.

"He was quickly taken to General Hospital Misau, where he was certified dead and handed over to the family for burial," Oyejide said.

"When we received the tragic report, without delay, we raised high-powered intelligence officers to go to Misau, investigate and bring the perpetrators to book.



Audi

He said after a series of investigations by the operatives, a suspect was arrested with the name Abdullahi Ibrahim, a 500-level student of Veterinary Medicine ABU Zaria.

"We came to realise that there was a chart communication between the suspect, Ibrahim and the deceased, Usman.

"In the communication, we saw where the suspect enticed the deceased with homosexual love by showing him his naked picture.

"When the deceased went to meet him, somehow, he was stabbed in the stomach and

wrapped in white cloth and dumped where he was found.

The Commandant said during the investigation, the suspect confessed to the crime and would be charged to the court accordingly for justice to take its course.

Abdullahi Ibrahim said that the deceased approached him with a knife which led to a struggle that resulted in stabbing the deceased to death.

"I was really afraid because it was something I had never encountered in my life. Which is why I wrapped the dead body in a cloth and dumped it along the bypass," he said.

From **AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja**

THE Federal University Lokoja has been ranked in the bracket of 51-60th by the Times Higher Education out of the 120 universities in the sub-Saharan Africa and 17th out of Nigerian universities and 9th among its peers established by the former President Goodluck Jonathan's administration.

The Vice Chancellor of the University, Professor Akinwumi Olayemi disclosed this at the grand finale of the activities marking the 6th and 7th combined convocation ceremony held recently at the main stadium of the university at the Felele Main Campus in Lokoja.

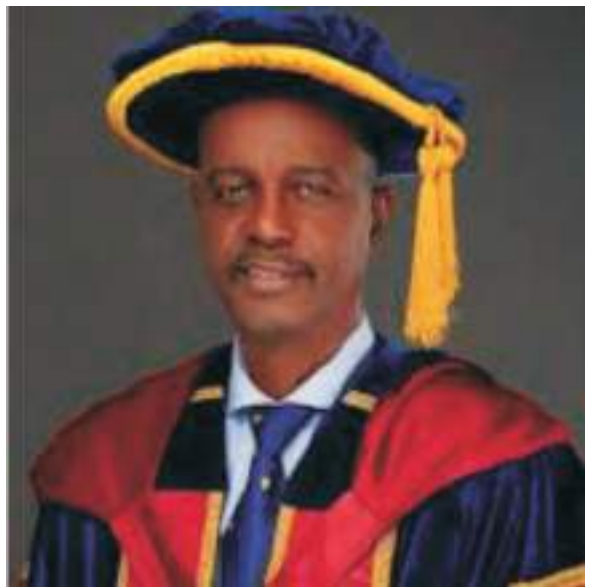
The Vice Chancellor said all the programmes of the university have all been relocated from the temporary site at Adankolo to the permanent site in Felele end of Lokoja, Kogi state capital.

Prof Olayemi added that the University has commenced the Department of Medicine, Nursing, Engineering, while Agriculture, law, Pharmacy, Psychology and Medical laboratory sciences programmes are in the pipeline.

He explained that the College of Health Sciences of the university has taken off fully with pioneer students now in 200 level. He further disclosed that maiden students admission exercise into the Engineering and Nursing programmes will take place in the 2023/2024 academic session.

The Vice Chancellor thanked former President Mohammed Buhari for the approval to convert Federal

FUL ranks 51 in sub-saharan african universities



Olayemi

Medical Hospital, Lokoja to Federal Teaching Hospital, to be used as Teaching Hospital for Medical programme.

In the area of community service in the university, the Vice Chancellor noted that they have established both primary and International secondary schools where quality education is guaranteed

The university, under his tenure, Prof. Olayemi disclosed constructed road networks, construction of entrepreneurship centre, construction of 12 blocks of lecture halls as well as the construction of the university health centre.

The Vice Chancellor added that under his tenure, the university has carried out two solar powered electrification of the streets as well as road

networks, constructed 40 blocks of shops under the build, operate and transfer model.

Furthermore, the university, he added, has carried out the renovation of the Faculty of Science Complex, renovation of the university library and ICT centre, equally constructed agriculture training centre, facilitated by the federal ministry of agriculture.

Within the period under review, is the connection of electricity from the Lokoja power substation to the university through the national grid; procurement of a fire fighting service truck, construction of security building, renovation of the male and female hostels at the Adankolo campus for the MBBS students

Similarly, his administration, the Vice Chancellor hinted, has carried out the construction of the 4 storey senate building, the construction of the Faculty of Engineering which is in progress. He added that the university has received two 18 seater buses, donated by Dr. Innocent Izoemena Exuma, while he also acknowledged the receipt of a grant of N250m from BUA Cement for the construction of Central Laboratory.

The Vice Chancellor assured the host community of more benefits that would be accrued in the future in terms of employment. He said the university has also made it a policy for the indigenes to benefit 75% from all the recently introduced professional courses.

Conflict resolution: Stakeholders urged to adapt EWER mechanism

By **KENNETH DAKOP**

IN an effort to mitigate conflict and halt violence in communities across Plateau State, there is need for the use of Early Warning Early Response (EWER) system in the state.

It is also necessary that a well defined, robust and highly inclusive mechanism is employed where stakeholders at community levels work in synergy with both conventional and non-conventional security operatives.

Those were some of the submissions made by participants at a One-day Sensitization engagements in Jos, Plateau State, organized by CLEEN Foundation and International Alert for members of Peace and Security Platforms (PSP) drawn from Mararaban Dare and Irigwe communities of Bassa and Rafin Bauna and Kuru communities of Jos South Local Government Areas of the state.

According to the participants, the linkages between the PSP members in

the various communities and the security architecture in the state was crucial if the persistent cases of conflict between farmers and pastoralists and, attacks on communities by armed groups was to be checked.

The Director Administration and Officer Overseeing Plateau Peace Building Agency, PPBA, Mr. Elkannah Izam in a goodwill message noted that the "gap between the early warning and early response components of the system was wide" especially the latter part which often led to violent conflicts or attacks on hapless citizens and communities.

Mr. Izam, however commended the two International Non-Governmental Organisations, INGOs, for stepping in to set up the local structures in order to fill in the missing pieces in conflict prevention and peace building in the state. He then assured the organizers and all other Non-Governmental Organisations that "PPBA would continue to partner and collaborate with them in entrenching the ideals of peace and peaceful coexistence amongst the diverse ethno-religious organisations that are found in the state".

Earlier in a welcome address, the Programme Manager International Alert, Mr. Anicetus Atakpu commended members of the

PSP which he said were inaugurated in the state some months earlier to serve as early respondents to issues of conflict as it affects peace and security in their respective communities.

He noted that the choice of the four communities in the two LGAs in Plateau State was deliberate, owing to their antecedents of violent conflict in the recent past. He however expressed delight that the PSP members were already working round the clock to ensure that peace, security and social cohesion was fostered between them and other neighbouring communities.

Mr. Atakpu disclosed that the report of a recent study conducted by the International Alert and CLEEN Foundation on the conflict in some parts of Plateau State would soon be made public and another session organized for members of PSP to carry out validation even as he charged them to continue to work closely with the traditional institutions in their domains, the security agencies and other well-meaning individuals and groups in rebuilding the peace in their communities.

In their separate remarks, the Senior District Head, Kwall in Irigwe Chiefdom of Bassa LGA and Ardo Mato Useini of Mararaban Dare community both sued for peace and peaceful coexistence amongst

their subject stressing that since the return of peace to their respective communities, they have been able to build bridges of tolerance and understanding across hitherto hostile communities.

The traditional leaders used the forum to call on government and other INGOs to provide their communities with social amenities such as schools, standard health facilities, pipe-borne water, electricity so as to enable them further engage in other entrepreneurial activities, as according to them, the high rate of unemployment amongst youth and its resultant effect of drugs and substance abuse was partly responsible for the persistent violent conflict in their communities and other parts of the state.

Our correspondent reports that the one-day sensitization roundtable witnessed various presentations from resource persons like Benard Ekobay of CLEEN Foundation and Nantip Joseph, PCR representative.

It would be recalled that the Peace and Security, PSP members from the aforementioned communities were inaugurated last June to amongst other things, engage with other stakeholders in their immediate communities and other neighbouring communities and to liaise with security agencies in the state to address issues of potential conflict.



Onyeka

CHANGE OF NAME

DASHE

I formerly known as **NANTIM SELFA**, now wish to be addressed as **NANTIM SELFA DASHE**. My date of birth is 10/10/2000 not 10/10/1996. All former documents remain valid. All concern authorities and general public to please take note.

DASHE

I formerly known as **YAKBUT RINGNAP DANGNAP**. My date of birth is 10/12/2000 not 10/12/1992. All former documents remain valid. All concern authorities and general public to please take note.

News

Lawmaker calls for good sanitation habits

By POLYCARP ISHAYA

The Transition Implementation Committee Chairman of Pankshin Local Government Council Hon. Samuel Shangka Go'ar has stressed the need for people to inculcate responsible fundamental sanitation habits especially by providing dustbins in their various houses, offices and business premises in order to control random disposal of waste.

Hon. Samuel Go'ar stated this while addressing officials of monthly environmental sanitation exercise at the Pankshin Youth Centre represented by his Personal Assistant (PA), Mr. Joshua.

He said that the re-introduction of the monthly environmental sanitation by the 'Time is Now' administration under the able leadership of Governor Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang of Plateau State, is commendable. He pointed out that the sanitation day no doubt marks another attempt to reinvigorate government's efforts in sanitizing the public towards putting into practice healthy habits.

He said many people had over the years undermined the environment, thus environmental sanitation had remained consistently poor, in spite of the high level of enlightenment and education on the part of the people of the local government area. The Chairman stressed that waste management services in the society are generally ineffective, while slum and shanties areas still characterize the local government headquarters-Pankshin.

He however called on corporate organizations to always show concern about the environment as well as sponsor sanitation activities in some Local Government Areas of the State.

The council Chairman representative added that Barr. Caleb Mutfwang led



Goar

administration in the state has made deliberate efforts to upgrade our urban slums and squatter settlements in the state in order to promote sanitation, security, aesthetics, recreation, tourism, especially for the general wellbeing and sustainable development of the state.

The Director, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Department of Pankshin Local Government Council, Mr. Bulus Joseph Ajang said communities on their part should also design and designate accessible areas for collection of waste, stressing that they should also organize local sanitation activities as part of their community development and self help programmes in order to achieve a clean and healthy environment.

He urged people to support the government in order to sustain the laudable projects of ensuring good sanitation among others. He added that people should also see themselves as major stakeholders in keeping our environment clean, pointing out that a healthy society is no doubt

desirable.

He therefore said as monitoring officials of the monthly environmental sanitation exercise in the local government area, they should step it down to the people in their various community, the importance of being a healthy society. And added that many residents still lack adequate sanitary facilities, adding that these negative attitudes exhibited by some members of the public tend to slow down government's efforts in ensuring a healthy and productive citizenry. and he warned the public against not adhering strictly to the environmental sanitation exercise time and that He warned that henceforth, anybody caught breaking the rule act will be made to pay a fine because the next environmental sanitation exercise, a special mobile court would be constituted to deal with defaulters during the exercise.

Therefore, directed all the monitoring teams for the exercise to carefully monitor all the areas visited, particularly the cleaning of drainages,

PLASU VC hosts accreditation panel

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

Vice Chancellor of the Plateau State University Bokoos, Prof. Bernard Malau Matur, has reaffirmed the university's unwavering commitment to partner with the National Universities Commission (NUC) in its mission to advance tertiary education across Nigeria.

This was contained in a press statement signed by the university's Public Relations Officer (PRO), John K. Agam, and made available to THE NIGERIA STANDARD in Jos, the State capital Monday, shortly after the VC played host to a three-man accreditation panel under the

leadership of Professor O.B.C Nwankwo of Anambra State University.

According to Professor Matur, the National Universities Commission (NUC) through the Visitation Panels has continued to play a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of education in Nigeria.

He assured the Accreditation Panel of the University's full cooperation by throwing open its records section, the academic division, the financial department, the works and physical facilities, and any other areas where information may be required.

Matur said, "The University is at the service of the regulating body as it understands the significance

of the visit which is to peer review and offer meaningful advice to uplift the University".

The leader of the NUC accreditation team, Prof. Obosco Bankole Nwakwo, clarified the primary purpose of the accreditation visit which is that of ensuring quality control, emphasizing that it was to focus on upholding the educational standards set by the NUC since it was established in 2015.

He thanked the Governor for releasing over three hundred million and two hundred million naira to the Plateau State University Bokoos and the State Polytechnic Barkin-Ladi respectively, for the accreditation of some of their courses.

In a related development, the leadership of the Pankshin Old Boys Association led by its National Treasurer, also paid a courtesy visit to the commissioner.

Mr. Reuben Mallah said their visit to the ministry was to congratulate the Commissioner who is one of them, on his recent appointment. And called on the State Government to complete the abundant legacy project in their college.

He called on the State Government to revive and increase the number of technical colleges in the state, adding that this will go a long way to help the students to be self-sufficient. .

Responding, the Commissioner thanked all the groups for coming and stated that the present administration will work together with them. He called on them to support and pray for them to succeed.



Prof. Malau



Restructuring health care delivery

The state of the healthcare delivery system of any society defines the level of the development of that society. When a society has a robust and functional healthcare delivery system, it saves and free for itself the fund to embark on developmental projects.

By PAUL JATAU

Nigeria just turned sixty- three, yes sixty - three years as an independent country. Going through the social media as a prelude to the celebration is some form of a nightmare. All that adorns most of the pages that has anything to do with the country are abuses by those who are supposed to be leaders of tomorrow. At the risk of being misunderstood, a lot of things are wrong with the contraption called Nigeria.

No sane person living in the country would claim to be happy with what is going on. Neither would one claim that everything will be alright in the next few years. Sixty-three years in the life of a human being is a significant milestone. Indeed, at that point, a normal civil servant would have retired and become a senior citizen.

It is expected that at that point too, one as a senior citizen would take time off and enjoy a deserved rest from the drudgery of life.

But can that be said of the lifespan of a country? Maybe yes. Maybe no. That we are a conglomeration of different nationalities is a pointer to the fact that it will take a longer time to weave us into a nation out of these disparate groups. No one region presents a common and formidable front to ease relationships. That weakness was taken advantage of by the elite who positioned themselves to take over at independence. Whenever it suits them, they play the regional card. And at other times, religion which is supposed to be a personal relationship with our creator, is bandied as the unifying factor even when the elites know that that does not matter to them

when it comes to to?

sharing the spoils of office. At some other points, the ethnic cards are played just so as to keep us all divided.

Yes, our leaders have not shown the resolve to lead the way but so too has the followership. They disobey laid down processes but so followers. They refuse to grow our institutions by starving them of funds, basic rules yet we expect those up there to do right. Are they not a product of our society? Let us resolve to change in all the little things we do yet think nobody is watching. I saw on social media someone calling Nigeria "stupid and useless country" yet he makes a living out of the stupid and useless country. Some said they wish they were not born in Nigeria. To these set, I say you are wiser than God. At the risks of sounding religious, God put you in this goddam country to help change its fortunes. Let me ask you what you have contributed since you were born?

Reading through the social media has been nightmarish. Insults are heaped at leaders for not doing what is right but no solutions are proffered by these critiques as a way out of the quagmire. So where are we heading to?

“ Yes, our leaders have not shown the resolve to lead the way but so too has the followership. They disobey laid down processes but so do the followers. They refuse to grow our institutions by starving them of funds, so too does the followership who flagrantly disobey these institutions by refusing to cooperate with them.”

“ We cannot, like Dominion said above, curse the grounds on which we plant and expect that same ground to yield bountiful harvest for us. We can change the course of our country if we want to by contributing our widow's mite in our little corners.”

News

Provost applauds Mutfwang's initiative for visitation panel

BY POLYCARP ISHAYA

The Provost of the Plateau State College of Health Technology Pankshin, Dr. (Prince) Francis Isah Fwangje has applauded the initiative of Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang of Plateau State over what he said is a very welcome idea and initiative by the state government for the constitution of visitation panels for all state owned tertiary institutions in the state.

Fwangje stated that this singular honour done to the tertiary institutions in the state would definitely enhance better productivity within the management, staff and students. And it would also uplift the standard of education in all the tertiary institutions in the state.

Dr. Francis Fwangje made these observations when he paid host to the Eight (8) man visitation panel during their assignment in the college in the school boardroom recently.

Dr. Fwangje added that he is optimistic that with the constitution of the visitation panel for all tertiary institutions, challenges confronting all the institutions would be a thing of the past.

He thanked Governor Mutfwang for his quick intervention and assured the panel that all information needed by the team would be made available to them at all times in order to make their work easier.

While addressing the college management staff earlier in the boardroom, the chairperson of the visitation panel, Prof. Naomi Rugu said they were in the college on a familiarization visit and also to have firsthand information on the college before they settle down for the business of the day.

She pointed out that the visitation panel to the college will need the maximum cooperation and support of the management, staff and students to enable them to do their work successfully. As they settled down to interact with the college community, she pleaded and also solicited for the mutual understanding of all stakeholders in order for the aims and objectives for setting up the Visitation Panel be realised.

Prof. Rugu urged them and said that all hands must be on desk for the exercise to record a huge success at the end of the assignment. She explained that the Visitation Panel was in the college not to witch hunt either the management team, staff, or students, but rather, they were in the college to fine tune better ways on how the college system would work effectively for the benefit of all and also for the growth and development of the college.

She maintained that the



Mutfwang

Visitation Panel would do justice to all the Eight (8) terms of reference, outlined to them by the 'time is now' administration under the leadership of Barr. Caleb Mutfwang as education is one of the major priorities of his administration.

The provost and his management staff took the Visitation Panel members to inspect some of the facilities including classrooms, (lecture halls), the Dariye Auditorium Hall, the college clinic, the central examination office, toilets, and the college library,

They also took time to address the Students' Union Government (SUG) of the college.

Rugu advised them to be law abiding and shun acts capable of destroying them and/or the college and that they should concentrate on

their studies, for that is what brought them to the college and not unionism.

Some of the documents at hand to show the visitation panel by the College Registrar, Barr. Paul Rabo was the Gazette of the law establishing the college and his mandate amongst others.

Submission of memorandum spelling out useful information, complaints, observations or recommendations to the visitation panel from relevant stakeholders, staff and students were requested by the chairperson of the visitation panel.

The memorandum which could be handwritten, typed or recorded should be submitted to the panel Secretary, Mr. Solomon Mwankon.

NGO tasks Taraba youths to embrace dialogue

From VICTOR GAI, Jalingo

A non-governmental organization, the Foundation for Peace, Hope and Conflict Management, has charged youths in tertiary Institutions to embrace dialogue in order to bring about lasting peace in the society.

The Foundation believes that if youths are educated on peace building, they will serve as agents of social change in

their respective communities.

The Executive Director, Foundation for Peace, Hope and Conflict Management, Rev. Fr. (Prof) Anthony Bature made the call while declaring open a two day workshop on promoting peace through dialogue among youths at the Federal University Wukari, Taraba State.

The Foundation for Peace, Hope and Conflict



Bature

From JONH FWAH, Kaduna

Kaduna State Governor, Senator Uba Sani has appointed Dr. Yahaya Saleh Ibrahim as the Executive Secretary, Scholarship and Loan Board. He replaces Rilwan Hassan who has been redeployed and appointed as the Special Adviser to the Governor on Student Affairs.

Additionally, Rev. Ishaya Jangado has been appointed as the Senior Special Assistant (SSA) on Religious Affairs, and Hon. Yunusa M. Ibrahim as the Senior Special Assistant (SSA) on Support Groups. All the appointments are with immediate effect.

A press release signed by Muhammad Lawal Shehu, Chief Press Secretary to the Governor of Kaduna State has said.

Dr. Yahaya Saleh Ibrahim is a long-standing academic, environmental public health and occupational safety expert, and astute administrator. From 2017 - 2018, he served as Administrator, of Giwa Local Government. He is currently the Director of the Centre for Energy and Environmental Strategy Research (CEESR). Dr. Ibrahim holds a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Occupational Health and Safety, a Masters of Technology (M.Tech) in

Governor Sani makes fresh appointments



Sani

Remote Sensing Application, and a Master of Science in Public Health.

Rev. Dr. Ishaya Jangado is a highly respected cleric, teacher, administrator, and peace advocate.

He is currently the President, of the Kaduna Baptist Conference, Secretary of the Baptist Conference Presidents Fellowship, Northern Nigeria, and Secretary of the Nigerian Baptist Convention Presidents Fellowship. Rev. Jangado holds a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Missiology and a Masters of

Arts (M.A) in Organizational Leadership and Management.

Hon. Yunusa M. Ibrahim is an accomplished administrator, teacher, development worker, grassroots mobilizer, and public relations specialist. From 2016 - 2017, he served as Acting Chairman of the Interim Management Committee, Giwa Local Government.

He was Chairman of the Committee on Project Monitoring and Evaluation, Giwa Local Government in 2015 and Supervisory Councilor, Education and

Early detection, most effective cure for breast cancer - ATBUTH

A coalition of CSOs have provided an opportunity for free screening of 300 women. Enlightening the women, Dr. Adamu Ningi, a Consultant at

From ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Teaching Hospital, Bauchi, has revealed that one of the most effective ways of curing the scourge of breast cancer in the community is early detection.

The consultant made it known during a one day five kilometer walk on breast cancer awareness within Bauchi metropolis after which over 300 women were given free breast cancer screening exercise by a coalition of organizations in Bauchi State known as Alheri YS and ALFO Foundations with support from BIK Foundation.

The grand walk which attracted thousands of volunteers, was colourful and fascinating and started from Dogon Yaro roundabout through Ahmadu Bello way, Wunti Market, Kobi and Nassarawa Streets, Yakubun Bauchi Road and eventually terminated at the Government House.

Dr. Ningi stated that breast cancer is one of the leading causes of deaths amongst women, and therefore urged women of reproductive age to always carry out intermittent breast screening in hospitals and also self examination for any signs of lumps in their breast.

The consultant revealed that with advancement in technology and early detection, breast cancer can be cured and

patients can live and achieve their full potentials in life.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Aisha Adam Bappa Life Foundation (ALFO), Aisha Adam Bappa thanked volunteers for accepting the invitation to participate in the awareness campaign which she described as "service to humanity".

Bappa said that accepting the invitation to participate in the event has given credence to the volunteers' commitment and contributions to the fight against breast cancer.

The CEO of ALFO then appealed to other humanitarian organizations to partner with the 2 foundations in sustaining such awareness campaigns beyond just an annual event.

Also speaking at the occasion, the Executive Director of Alheri YS Foundation, Alheri Sarauta said that the walk was an annual event aimed at raising awareness on breast cancer and promoting early detection especially amongst women of reproductive age.

The ED lamented that breast cancer affects millions of women around the world, and also proffered that early detection plays an important role in improving survival rates.

In a goodwill message, secretary to Bauchi State Government (SSG), Barr. Ibrahim Kashim commended the CSOs and volunteers for the impressive awareness campaign. And assured them of the government's full backing to achieve their goals.

Foreign News

US: Republicans Speaker crisis deepens

Republicans are back to square one. It's a game of congressional snakes and ladders, where every space on the board is a serpent. ANTHONY ZURCHER Writes

MORE than two weeks after a handful of House conservatives ousted Kevin McCarthy from the speaker's chair, the party is still looking for a someone who can successfully reach the top of the board.

No one yet has even come close.

Jim Jordan is only the latest, most determined casualty of a leadership drama that at every turn seems to get more chaotic and acrimonious.

His week-long quest to win the top job in the House ended up as futile as his party's first pick, Steve Scalise, who threw in the towel before any ballots had been cast.

Mr Scalise may have seen the writing on the wall more quickly because he is a traditional Republican legislator, who had come up through the ranks of his party's leadership. He had made deals and built relationships to become the second-ranking Republican in the House.

Mr Jordan, on the other hand, is a different character. He made his name in Congress as a political bomb-thrower. He co-founded the House Freedom Caucus, which has used political brinksmanship - under threat of government shutdowns and even a national default on the debt



US Temporary speaker Patrick McHenry

- to bend centrist and establishment.

He also has the backing of Donald Trump and his right-wing populist movement. He is embraced by a conservative media ecosystem anchored by Fox News evening talk-show hosts like Sean Hannity.

Where Mr Scalise's motivations were to cut his losses and maintain his position within the Republican hierarchy, Mr Jordan's incentives were to damn the political torpedoes and forge ahead. But the qualities that made

him successful as an insurgent ultimately created the kind of intra-party enemies who could block him from the prize.

After three very public failures in balloting before the full House, his end came quietly, by secret ballot, in a basement meeting with his fellow House Republicans. It is a fate that will make him a martyr for the party's right wing, which will view his defeat as further evidence of a party establishment that is insufficiently dedicated to conservative values.

"The most popular Republican in the United States Congress was just knifed by a secret ballot," Congressman Matt Gaetz, whose objection to Mr McCarthy started this whole crises, told reporters on Friday. "It's as swampy as the swamp gets."

House Republicans now head home for the weekend to lick their wounds. A grab-bag of politicians have already either declared their bids for the speakership or are seriously considering them.

With Mr Scalise and Mr

“
After three very public failures in balloting before the full House, his end came quietly, by secret ballot, in a basement meeting with his fellow House Republicans. It is a fate that will make him a martyr for the party's right wing, which will view his defeat as further evidence of a party establishment that is insufficiently dedicated to conservative values.



Biden



MC Carthey

”
 Jordan - two of the most high-profile House Republican names - off the board, Monday's candidate forum promises to be a raucous affair, where dark-horse candidates with little political baggage might find success.

When one candidate ultimately emerges from closed-door Republican meetings as the pick of the party, the slow grind to get to 217 votes - and the speaker's gavel - begins again.

With a Republican caucus so fractured, and nerves so raw at this point, it won't be an easy task. The snakes on the board aren't going away anytime soon.

Source: Reuters

Foreign News

Sunak supports Israel but demands aid for Gaza

The British prime minister met with Benjamin Netanyahu and Isaac Herzog on Thursday and emphasized the need to get food, water and medicine to the 2.4 million people blocked in Gaza. Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Thursday, October 19, pressed Israel to let more humanitarian aid into Gaza as he stepped up a campaign by Western leaders to reinforce support for Israel after attacks by Hamas. Sunak, following visits this week by US President Joe Biden and Germany's Chancellor Olaf Scholz, expressed strong backing for Israeli action after the October 7 raids in which at least 1,400 died and more than 200 people were taken hostage. But he said after talks with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Isaac Herzog that it was also important to get food, water and medicine to blockaded Gaza's 2.4 million population.

After meeting Biden, Netanyahu on Wednesday agreed to let aid through Gaza's only access to the West Bank. Israel has accused the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) of being behind the rocket attack that caused an explosion at Al-Ahli hospital. The second largest armed movement in the Gaza Strip maintains an uncompromising stance in its armed struggle against Israel and is also expanding its influence in the West Bank.

Activists of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad parade in the town of Khan Younis, in the southern Gaza Strip, on March 2, 2023, in support of Palestinians arrested in the West Bank.

Israel has accused the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) of being responsible for the explosion that killed hundreds of people on Tuesday, October 17 at the Al-Ahli hospital in Gaza. The Israeli army, which denies any involvement, claimed that it was a rocket misfired by the Palestinian group; the latter has condemned these accusations as unfounded.

Less well known than Hamas, the PIJ is characterized by its radicalism and uncompromising armed struggle against Israel. Classified as a terrorist organization by the United States and the European Union, the Palestinian liberation movement is currently the second largest armed faction in the Gaza Strip after Hamas. How was this organization founded, what battles does it wage, and how does it differ from Hamas?

A movement inspired by the Iranian revolution of 1979

At the heart of the movement were students and intellectuals who had returned from their studies in Egypt, eager to fight Israel's colonial policies. Inspired by Fathi Chikaki – a Palestinian who had affiliations with the Muslim Brotherhood during his medical studies in Egypt and who viewed the 1979



SUNAK

Iranian Islamic revolution as a template for the Arab world – these youthful activists initially attempted to persuade the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood to initiate an armed campaign for the liberation of Palestine. However, the Brotherhood declined.

Fathi Chikaki and Abdelaziz Awda, a teacher from Gaza who had also studied in Egypt, joined forces to create the Islamic Jihad movement in Palestine in 1981, six years before the creation of Hamas. In its early days, the movement was made up of young Muslims whose backgrounds "blended European literary culture and the Muslim reformist movement," as noted by Wissam Alhaj, Nicolas Dot-Pouillard and Eugénie Rebillard

It seeks to distinguish itself from the Brotherhood, which they perceive as excessively rigid in its interpretation of

Islam and having forsaken the anti-colonial resistance, as well as from the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which they criticize for its secular approach. "The PIJ, conceived from the outset as a third way, was formed in opposition to these two movements," said Leïla Seurat, a political scientist and researcher at the Arab Center for Political Research and Studies.

Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 triggered the movement's activism. The PIJ established itself in neighboring countries (Lebanon, Syria, Iran) and began to preach in universities and mosques (a former stronghold of the Muslim Brotherhood) to bring the armed struggle to the Palestinian territories. "While the movement spent its early years building its base in Gaza, it launched its first military operations in 1984, five years before Hamas.

Kyiv taken by surprise due to Russian offensive

The eastern Ukraine town of 35,000 residents, which was occupied by pro-Russian militias for a few months in 2014, is 'heavily fortified.' Officials say Russia is 'unlikely' to make significant breakthroughs.

The move took Ukraine and its Western allies by surprise. While Russia's military was thought to be on the back foot all along the 745-mile front line, it has for several days been carrying out a major counter-attack on Avdiivka, an industrial town in the Donbas region located nine miles north of Donetsk, in the eastern part of the country.

"Our troops are improving their position in almost all of this space, which is quite vast," Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed in a televised interview broadcast on Sunday, October 15, even though the advance of his military seems laborious.

According to the Institute for the Study of War (ISW), a US think-tank that monitors developments in the conflict on a day-to-day basis, Moscow's latest offensive began on October 10 and saw "Russian forces simultaneously attacking the northwest, west and south of Avdiivka using armored assault groups, rotary wing aircraft and concentrated

artillery," a joint forces maneuver previously rarely used by Russia because it had been poorly executed. "It is likely to be the most significant offensive operation undertaken by Russia since at least January 2023".

To carry out this operation, Russia would have committed over a thousand men, as well as a large amount of equipment, including some of the most modern in its arsenal – the BMPT Terminator armored fighting vehicle, the TOS-1 rocket launcher, and so on.

Analysts are puzzled by the sheer size of the attack, given

The battle to decide who will run crisis-racked Argentina is heading to a run off vote next month between left wing candidate Sergio Massa and far right libertarian Javier Milei, according to data released by Argentina's National Electoral Chamber after the first round of voting on Sunday.

After polls closed Massa received the highest number of votes – 8,877,325, accounting for 36.33% of the total, data revealed. Milei received 7,373,876 votes – roughly 30.18%.

Third place candidate Patricia Bullrich got 23.82% and conceded defeat late Sunday night.

Each is vying for the nation's trust at a moment of widespread disillusionment with the country's elite and its management of the country.

The results have highlighted a strong showing for the government coalition supporting Massa, who is currently Economic Minister as Argentina finds itself in the most serious financial crisis of the last twenty years.

Turnout was over 75%, with more than 25 million Argentines casting their ballots and over 90% of votes had been counted, the election body said.

"It has been a model day of Argentine democracy," Julio Vitobello, general secretary of the presidency, said at a presser on Sunday night.

Inflation in Argentina has soared to 138%, Reuters reports, piling pressure on ordinary people trying to manage the cost of living.

"It's so hard. Each day things costs a little more, it's like always racing against the clock, searching and searching," Laura Celiz told the news agency last month, she shopped on the outskirts of capital Buenos Aires. "You

Argentina presidential election heading to run-off



Milei,

buy whatever is cheaper in one place and go to the next place and buy something else."

After casting his vote in Buenos Aires on Sunday, current president Alberto Fernández celebrated the nation's democracy on the social media platform X.

"I call on every Argentine to defend it and decide the future of the country at the polls," he wrote.

Argentina presidential election heading to run-off with Massa leading Milei

By Abel Alvarado, Stefano Pozzebon, Esteban Campanella, Karol Suarez and Heather Chen, CNN

A polling station member works at a polling center in Tigre, Buenos Aires, during the Argentine presidential election on October 22, 2023.

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the Argentine presidential election on October 22, 2023.

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FILE - Presidential hopeful of the Liberty Advances coalition Javier Milei brandishes a chainsaw during a rally in La Plata, Argentina, Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023. During campaign stops and interviews Milei has hurled abuse against Argentina's political class, leftist Latin American presidents such as Mexico's Andres Lopez Obrador, journalists and Pope Francis, and leads the polls in the South American country's upcoming elections.

The 'chainsaw' candidate challenging Argentina's left and right

Inflation in Argentina has soared to 138%, Reuters reports, piling pressure on ordinary people trying to manage the cost of living.

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The town burning after attack

Feature

Insurgency: Ribadu should think out-of-the-box

In truth, the challenge in Nigeria is not absence of patriotic Nigerians to offer information on insecurity, but HOW their safety can be guaranteed after supplying intelligence on crime; thus Anonymous Mail-in Crime Report (AMICAR) intend to provide answer to this HOW? Nowhere in the history has insurgency been defeated by only force of arm; it has always been by carrot and stick. Often, people mistake separatist agitation for insurgency. EMEKA ORAETOKA writes.

MORE often than not, separatist agitation starts after complaint of marginalization by usually an organic group within a country, was ignored, by usually the dominant ruling group; while insurgency, particularly asymmetric variant in a multi-ethnic setting like Nigeria, is caused by combination of factors, like feeling of being "cheated" by ethnic group(s) within a geographical space. Political marginalization of a group within sub-nationals could also trigger insurgency within that enclave. Power struggle by political blocks within sub-national spaces, is another causative factor. Nigeria can easily contain the current asymmetric insurgency by strategic mobilization and deployment of the Collective Will of Nigerians to do so. The big question here is HOW?

It is hard to defeat known separatist group within a country, and even harder to crush asymmetric insurgency in multi-ethnic setting like Nigeria. Example will suffice here. In Sri-Lanka, for instance, the Sinhalese ethnic group-led government was able to defeat Tamil Tiger separatist agitation after more than 30 years of fighting. Initially, authorities in Philippines thought it could defeat Hukbalahap gorilla insurgent movement with only force of arm, but discovered it was losing the war and sought help. The assistance came when the then President, Ramon Magsasay was advised by General Edward Lansdale, to adopt a simple counter insurgency measures, this led to the death of Hukbalahap insurgent movement. What Nigeria needs to defeat the current asymmetric insurgency is the Philippines option, and that is, Strategic Mobilization and Deployment of the Collective Will of Nigerians to fight insecurity in the country. This is without prejudice to current effort of government in the fight against insecurity. In a nutshell, direct and indirect community based intelligence gathering system is solution to defeating insecurity in the country.

It appears to this writer that lack of understanding of the correlation between Insecurity and Insurgency, and how to go about it, is largely responsible for festering of insurgency in Nigeria. A simple dictionary definition of both words will suffice. Insurgency is defined as: "an organised rebellion aimed at overthrowing a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict". On the other hand; Insecurity is: "the state of being subject to danger or injury". A careful look at the two definitions shows insecurity as being a by-product of the first leg of insurgency, which is subversion. From the definition of insurgency, it has two components, (a) Subversion (b) Armed Conflict. It follows therefore that organised insecurity in Nigeria, is a product of successful subversion of the nation's security system. For clarity, organised insecurity takes the shape of kidnapping, banditry, unknown gunmen killing, organized armed robbery and any other crime involving conceptualisation and planning, and involves more than one person.

A brief interrogation of insurgency in the Philippines and separatist agitation in Sri Lanka will enhance understanding of insecurity in Nigeria and solution that may



Ribadu

complement the effort of security agencies in fighting the menace in the country. In 1950s in Philippines, Luis Taruc-led Hukbalahap gorilla group, said to be Communist inspired, was on the verge of toppling President Elpidio Quirino-led Philippines government, though, Quirino managed to handover to Ramon Magsasay after a democratic election. Account has it that after his election, Magsasay, determined to put an end to Huk guerilla movement, invited General Edward Lansdale, an American who was believed to be the best counter insurgency expert in the world at a time; to help him wipe out the insurgents.

After surveying and assessing Philippines political landscape, General Lansdale who was invited for help by the country, advised Ramon Magsasay to: 1. Wipe out corruption in the country 2. Bring his government near to the people. President Magsasay followed Lansdale's advice and achieved result. The situation was the opposite in Sri-Lanka. There are two main social groups in Sri-Lanka: Sinhalese ethnic group 75% and Tamil ethnic group 18%. The official language in the country is Sinhala. In a nutshell, what happened in Sri-Lanka was ethnic cleansing, but it took Sinhalese-led government more than 30 years to defeat Tamil Tigers. So, the argument in some quarters in Nigeria that Sri-Lanka option can be used to defeat insurgency, is at best, narrow because the setting is not the same.

The point this writer is trying to make is, though in Philippines, the then insurgent group was Huk gorilla only, but in Nigeria, the insurgent groups are amorphous in nature, worst still, they are working for different purposes. The insurgents are in almost all the geo-political zones in country. While it was easy for Philippines to localize Huk guerilla movement, it is difficult to realistically pinpoint insurgent groups' leadership in Nigeria. This writer believes Philippines approach can be adopted with modification in Nigeria. One of the advices General Edward Lansdale gave to President Ramon Magsasay was to bring government nearer to the people. The question here is how will

Effectiveness and Efficiency. According to him, efficiency is concerned with doing things right. Effectiveness is doing the right things. Similarly, management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things. If Drucker's thought on Effective Leadership – doing the right things, is juxtaposed with AMICAR, it will be seen that the task before President Tinubu under AMICAR, as the chief security officer of Nigeria, simple, ask police authorities data based questions and demand answers. Good enough, Nuhu Ribadu-led ONSA will coordinate the Data Harvesting, Management and Evaluation component of AMICAR, for efficiency and effectiveness.

It may interest Mallam Ribadu-led ONSA to note that research by statista.com on Trust in Police by country shows Denmark, Netherlands and Sweden as the top three (3) countries in the world. The citizens of these three countries have high trust in operation of their police. In Sweden, however, it was discovered that the country has National Council for Crime Prevention (NCCP). The Council's mission is to reduce crime and improve levels of safety in society by producing data and disseminating knowledge on crime and crime prevention work. It also produces Sweden's official crime statistics, evaluates reforms, conducts research to develop new knowledge and provides support to local crime prevention work. This is exactly what AMICAR under ONSA will be saddled with.

If the federal, state and local governments want to SCIENTIFICALLY end insecurity in Nigeria, AMICAR should be adopted as auxiliary National Security Policy immediately. AMICAR is purely intelligence gathering action plan that seeks to make every Nigerian a whistle blower on insecurity in the country. It ensures the safety of any Nigerian offering intelligence on crime in his community, as his or her identity will not be known. It is designed to prevent organized crimes in our various communities in Nigeria. It is non kinetic in nature. It ensures equality of access to intelligence offering in Nigeria. It gives the chief security in command (CSOs), the president, at the national level and governors at the sub-national levels, real power to oversight police managers via exact primary data. It is capable of enhancing professionalism in policing in Nigeria. It ensures the safety of policemen, in and out of duty, as they will be harvesting intelligence on crime on 247 because it is anchored on Sun Tsu's maxim: "if you know your enemy, in hundred battles, he will be defeated".

AMICAR will eliminate misinformation around insecurity like insecurity tag & profiling, hate speech and fake news. Most of, if not all the reports linking kidnapping, assassination, banditry, etc to activities of Fulani herdsmen, are not entirely true, but because Nigerians don't have the opportunity of utilizing a secured and protective intelligence gathering channel, to report criminal activities within their immediate environments; ethnic profiling has become the order of the day. When AMICAR comes on board, Nigerians will have the opportunity of divulging accurate information about Insecurity Masterminds and

Perpetrators unhindered. This will render Hate Speech, Fake and Hate news purveyors irrelevant, as they will be ignored for good.

The fundamental reason behind AMICAR is trust: It appears the mindset of Nigerians on Police is that of mistrust. This Trust problem leads to apparent lack of Confidence in the police in the area of supplying information on criminality. Confidentiality Hazard: In effort at offering intelligence via phone, the problem of trace back to source occasioned by wire tap and hacking becomes another impediment. Fear that useful information supplied may be swept under the carpet or complainant becoming an accused; generally militate against effective policing in Nigeria. Thus in AMICAR, NIPOST will serve as Intermediary or go-between the citizens' and Police towards intelligence gathering for crime prevention and fighting in Nigeria. In terms spread, NIPOST and Police run neck and neck, as far as presence in the nooks and crannies of Nigeria is concerned. With NIPOST having about 5000+ outlets scattered all over Nigeria, and with Police having even more outlets, hence the imperativeness of AMICAR.

It is instructive to note that work on AMICAR is about 95% completed. Both Police and NIPOST have been interfaced with, in line with directive from OSGF to the promoters, and report on the interface between the promoters and the two establishments on the action plan, had since been submitted to Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (OSGF). It is expected that the needful will be done on the report by OSGF in line with its constitutional mandate of monitoring, coordinating the implementation of government policies, and programmes, serves as the frontline advisory institution of the Presidency; drives policy formulation, harmonization, and implementation; and monitors Federal Ministries, Departments and Agencies. The report in question contained the video of the power point presentation which the promoters separately made at Nigeria Police headquarters as well as NIPOST headquarters. The Police and NIPOST are however, expected to turn in their report to OSGF. To this end, it is expected that the normal channel of communication between ONSA and OSGF is opened so that all concerned will make input towards implementation of the programme.

The urgent task before Ribadu-led ONSA is the coordination of the final part of AMICAR so that President Tinubu may issue Executive Order on it. Once Executive Order issued, AMICAR will automatically become a law in Nigeria. This will galvanize the interest of Nigerians on the programme. An Executive Order proclamation on AMICAR will give meaning to FG-led Community Policing, as every Nigerian will automatically take charge of security within their community. This writer believes that AMICAR represents a classical thinking out of the BOX towards solving insecurity in Nigeria.

Oraetoka, advocate, AMICAR, writes from Abuja via 09039094636, 08056031187 giltsdamesion@gmail.com.

EVER'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Health

Why your period might be late

BY LEIGH WEINGUS

IF you're someone who gets a regular period, it can be confusing and a little concerning when the day you expect menstruation to begin comes and goes without any sign of bleeding.

The definition of a "late period" varies by individual—some people get their period at the exact same time every month, while others see more variation—but Raquel Dardik, M.D., clinical associate professor in the department of obstetrics and gynecology at NYU Langone Health, says, "a late period is the lack of bleeding at the expected time for your menstrual cycle to start. A person who has 28 day cycles would have a late period after 28 days, while someone whose cycles vary between 26 to 31 days would not be late until after 31 days have passed."

The general rule in gynecology is that a period is not really considered late until a full week has passed, adds Dr. Dardik. So, what are some possible reasons for a late period? Here's everything you need to know.

There are a handful of reasons as to why your period might be late. These can include:

Pregnancy.

This is because when pregnancy occurs, the body needs its thick uterine lining, and stops shedding it every month. Pregnancy tests are typically most accurate after you miss your period, and experts recommend taking a pregnancy test as soon as possible if your period is late. If your period is irregular, consider taking a pregnancy test three weeks after sex for the most accurate results.

A Hormone Imbalance

Hormone imbalances occur when there is too much or too little of a hormone in your bloodstream. They can happen for a variety of reasons, but when they do, it can cause a delayed or missed period. "Sometimes abnormalities with your hormones can make you miss your period, whether it's from lack of ovulation, or an imbalance of the gynecologic hormones," says Dr. Dardik.

Medication

Medications can impact your period in different ways. "For example, many birth control pill users find that they occasionally skip their cycle, even when they have not missed pills or changed their medication," says Dr. Dardik.

Mostafa Borahay, Ph.D., director of the division of general gynecology and obstetrics at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, adds that certain medications, such as antidepressants, can elevate prolactin levels (a hormone made by the pituitary gland), which can



have an impact on the menstrual cycle and lead to a late period.

Stress

If your period is late and you've been more stressed than usual, that could be the culprit, as the gland responsible for hormones in your ovaries is linked to the part of your brain that regulates emotions.

"The inner lining of the uterus itself is controlled by estrogen and progesterone, which come from the ovaries," Dr. Borahay says. "The ovaries are under control of another gland that sits right beneath the brain called the pituitary gland. This is controlled by the hypothalamus, which is connected to the limbic system and the other parts of the brain that control emotions and other processes in the brain."

"So now we can easily understand that changes that happen in the brain—like more stress than usual—can easily affect the menstrual cycle," he adds.

Whether you're a seasoned expert or total beginner, Mindfulness.com will meet you where you are. Enjoy daily

mindfulness meditations, expert-led courses, and more. Start your journey to more peace and well-being today.

The years leading up to menopause, called perimenopause, typically begin in your 30s and 40s. During this time, estrogen levels in the ovaries start to fluctuate, and both Dr. Borahay and Dr. Dardik say late or irregular periods can be a symptom of perimenopause.

Being Overweight

Being overweight can impact your period in a number of ways, according to Dr. Borahay. "We don't understand the whole picture just yet, but most female sex hormones, estrogen and progesterone, are fat soluble," he says. "These hormones can be stored in fat, which can affect the rhythm that happens in these ovarian hormones."

Essentially, fat cells (along with ovaries) produce estrogen. Weight gain can lead to your fat cells growing and releasing more estrogen, which in turn, can cause your body to stop ovulating, leading to a missed period. Additionally, being overweight is associated with polycystic ovary syndrome

(PCOS), in which the main symptom is irregular or missed periods due to irregular ovulation.

Being Underweight

Just as being overweight can impact your hormones, being underweight can be correlated with late or irregular periods as well, and can lead your body to stop producing estrogen altogether. "The easiest way to think about it is that when a woman is underweight or malnourished, reproduction is no longer a priority," Dr. Borahay says. "When someone is malnourished, the body uses the resources it does have to prioritize survival."

Certain health conditions

Certain health conditions can have an impact on the hormones and lead to late or irregular

periods, says Dr. Borahay. Thyroid disorders are a common one, as is PCOS. "If a woman is of reproductive age and her period is usually regular, the first thing to do is take an at-home pregnancy test," he says. "If someone has a delayed period and a negative pregnancy test, I usually ask if there are other symptoms, and if there's not, I tell them to wait. If a woman is healthy and doing her annual exams, I think a week is reasonable. If a week passes and her period hasn't arrived, it makes sense to see a doctor." In general, a slightly late period isn't something to worry about. But if you have any questions about your period, you should always feel comfortable checking in with your doctor.



THEY'RE SOW WORLD

Mental Health

Strategies for controlling your anger

Uncontrolled anger can be problematic for your personal relationships and for your health. Fortunately, there are tools you can learn to help you keep your anger in check.

There are strategies to take control of your anger, wrath, fury, rage — whatever you call it, anger is a powerful emotion. Unfortunately, it's often an unhelpful one.

Anger is a natural human experience, and sometimes there are valid reasons to get mad like feeling hurt by something someone said or did or experiencing frustration over a situation at work or home. But uncontrolled anger can be problematic for your personal relationships and for your health.

Fortunately, there are tools you can learn to help you keep your anger in check. Understanding anger

Anger can take different forms. Some people feel angry much of the time, or can't stop dwelling on an event that made them mad. Others get angry less often, but when they do it comes out as explosive bouts of rage.

Whatever shape it takes, uncontrolled anger can negatively affect physical health and emotional wellbeing. Research shows that anger and hostility can increase people's chances of developing coronary heart disease, and lead to worse outcomes in people who already have heart disease. Anger can also lead to stress-related problems including insomnia, digestive problems and headaches.

Anger can also contribute to violent and risky behaviors, including drug and alcohol use. And on top of all that, anger can significantly damage relationships with family, friends and colleagues.

You need to keep anger at bay. Anger can be caused by internal and external events. You might feel mad at a person, an entity like the company you work for, or an event like a traffic jam or a political election. Wherever the feelings come from, you don't have to let your anger get the better of you. Here are some techniques to help you stay calm.

Check yourself. It's hard to make smart choices when you're in the grips of a powerful negative emotion. Rather than trying to talk yourself down from a cliff, avoid climbing it in the first place. Try to identify warning signs that you're starting to get annoyed. When you recognize the signs, step away from the situation or try relaxation



techniques to prevent your irritation from escalating.

Don't dwell. Some people have a tendency to keep rehashing the incident that made them mad. That's an unproductive strategy, especially if you have already resolved the issue that angered you in the first place. Instead, try to let go of the past incident. One way to do that is to focus instead on things you appreciate about the person or the situation that made you angry.

Change the way you think. When you're angry, it's easy to feel like things are worse than they really are. Through a technique known as cognitive restructuring, you can replace unhelpful negative thoughts with more reasonable ones. Instead of thinking "Everything is ruined," for example, tell yourself "This is frustrating, but it's not the end of the world."

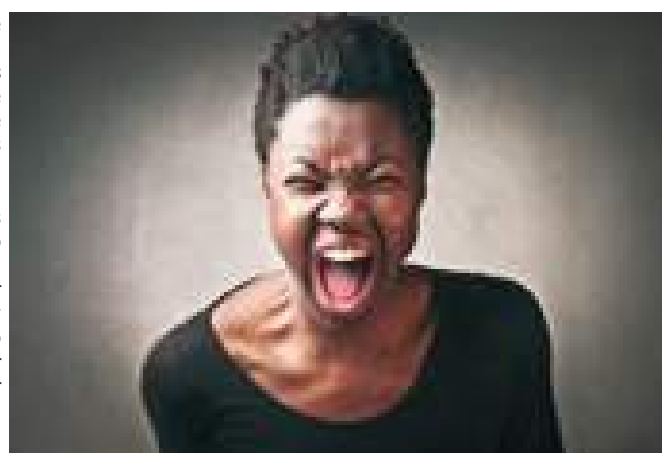
Try these strategies to reframe your thinking: Avoid words like "never" or "always" when talking about yourself or others. Statements like "This never works" or "You're always forgetting things" make you feel your anger is justified. Such statements also alienate

people who might otherwise be willing to work with you on a solution. Use logic. Even when it's justified, anger can quickly become irrational. Remind yourself that the world is not out to get you. Do this each time you start feeling angry, and you'll get a more balanced perspective. Translate expectations into desires. Angry people tend to demand things, whether it's fairness, appreciation, agreement or willingness to do things their way. Try to change your demands into requests. And if things don't go your way, try not to let your disappointment turn into anger.

Relax. Simple relaxation strategies, such as deep breathing and relaxing imagery, can help soothe angry feelings. If you practice one or more of these strategies often, it will be easier to apply them when angry feelings strike.

Focused breathing. Shallow breathing is angry breathing. Practice taking controlled, slow breaths that you picture coming up from your belly rather than your chest. Use imagery. Visualize a relaxing experience from your memory or your imagination. Progressive muscle relaxation. With this technique, you slowly tense then relax each muscle group one at a time. For example, you might start with your toes and slowly work your way up to your head and neck.

Improve your communication skills. People often jump to conclusions when they're angry, and they can say the first (often unkind) thing that pops into their heads. Try to stop and listen before reacting. Then take time to think carefully about how you want to reply. If you need to step away to cool down before continuing the conversation,



make a promise to come back later to finish the discussion.

Get active. Regular physical exercise can help you decompress, burn off extra tension and reduce stress that can fuel angry outbursts. Recognize (and avoid) your triggers. Give some thought to the things that make you mad. If you know you always get angry driving downtown at rush hour, take the bus or try to adjust your schedule to make the trip at a less busy time. If you always argue with your spouse at night, avoid bringing up contentious topics when you're both tired. If you're constantly annoyed that your child hasn't cleaned his room, shut the door so you don't have to look at the mess.

You can't completely eliminate angry feelings. But you can make changes to the way those events affect you, and the ways in which you respond. By making the effort to keep your anger in check, you and the people close to you will be

happier for the long run.

How can a psychologist help?

If you continue to feel overwhelmed, consult with a psychologist or other licensed mental health professional who can help you learn how to control your anger. He or she can help you identify problem areas and then develop an action plan for change in emotions.

Helping children articulate their feelings without acting on them and providing consistent consequences can help them regulate emotions.

Control anger before it controls you. Anger is a completely normal, usually healthy, human emotion. But when it gets out of control and turns destructive, it can lead to problems.

Psychologists can help people recognize and avoid the triggers that make them angry. They can also provide ways to help people manage the inevitable anger that sometimes flares without warning.

Source: American Psychological Association



Editorial

Otupo bank robbery: Lessons we must learn

THE Police in Benue State recently confirmed the gruesome killing of Otukpo Divisional Police Officer (DPO), CSP John Adikwu and three other policemen in a gun battle with robbers while robbing several banks along Otupo Taraku Federal Highway. According to the Police, many innocent pedestrians, bank customers including two of the robbers were killed with many of the criminals scooting into the forest. Though the Otupo robbery attack was not the first experienced in the country, the sophisticated nature of the operation and the casualties number have continued to generate heated debates in public domains. More significantly, questions are being asked as to how these armed robbers acquired their weapons and chose their targets without the security getting a tipoff of these operations.

CERTAINLY, the increasing rate of crimes and its global implications is becoming a source of concern and worry to many stakeholders. As it is, the average statistics of criminal gangsterism as of 2017 reveals about 105 robberies per 100,000 people unabatedly takes place around the world. Though research has profiled global nations with high robbery profile to include Chile, Belgium, Argentina, Sweden and Costa Rica, developing nations are also struggling to come to terms with these unceasing acts of criminality.

ARMED robbery became common in Nigeria after the Nigerian civil war which ended in 1970. This was as a result of the proliferation of arms and ammunitions across the country as a result of the 30 months' war.

FOR the records, armed robbery has signposted a four year rise over an eight-year period with devastating consequences on the citizenry. Noticeably, the prevalence of armed robbery in Nigeria has traumatized not only its victims but the entire citizens of the nation. Needless to say that the growing insecurity in the country has continued to create security difficulties for both stakeholders, security agents and the entire citizens.

CONSIDERING the harm these armed robberies have continued to affect the nation, it has become obvious that the Federal Government must take concrete measures towards tackling this menace. In this regard, there must be deliberate attempts to ensure that all criminal elements apprehended must be prosecuted and punished to serve as deterrent to others.

HOWEVER, if all these cases are anything to go by, the federal and state governments have certainly not done enough in the fight against criminal gangs and armed robberies. This development has in the past continue to ginger some of these armed robbers to smash banks in broad daylight with impunity.

NOW that the cases of banks robberies are becoming one too many in our societies, our security agents must be well equipped to overcome these daredevils who have unrepentantly continued to unleash terror on the citizenry. Therefore, more security agents must be routinely deployed to our banks if we really as a nation intend to find lasting solutions to all these challenges. The fight against armed robbery would be won unless critical security agencies begin to monitor the proliferation of small and light weapons across the borders into Nigeria.

ASIDE the need for the installation of more CCTV cameras and other sophisticated gadgets towards ensuring crime control in our respective banks, the citizenry should also be educated on the need to be security conscious as they transact their businesses in our banks in the country.

SKILLED and empower youth population can drive innovation, boost productivity, reduce crime rate, eradicate poverty, create employment and improve confidence and self-esteem.

Youth empowerment is set to be a process we're young people are encourage to take charge of their lives. They do this by addressing their situation and then take action in order to improve their access to resources and transform their consciousness through their beliefs, values, and attitude.

Gone are those day we're government offer job opportunity to youths that study hard in order to get a better live. Youth are the leaders of tomorrow according to a saying but is not anymore, because youth try their best in order to study, thinking after graduating from school government will offer a job but no.

An empowered young person's recognize their capabilities and self-determination. When a youth is empowered he gets the knowledge on how to manage and maintain his skills and it can also boost productivity in the sense that he uses his skills to influence the attention of some youth.

When youth are productive to the society it reduces crime rate in the sense that a youth who has something doing will not have the impression of putting eye on people things and property, he will



Investing in empowering youths lead's to a better future

only get time for his work in order to archive more in the future.

An empowered youth has the confidence, they feel comfortable trying new. They have the confidence to take risk and are aware that failure is a step towards progress not a sign to give up, by so doing their confidence give them the opportunity to create innovation that will help the society.

Youth are finding it very difficult to survive due to the economy situation the find their self. They don't have something doing which is causing trouble

and depression leading them to start misbehaving in the society which includes spooking, stealing, robbery, kidnapping and more.

There are many ways and things by which the government can empower youths which includes organising a program teaching youth hand work and to some who have family should give Keke nape for loan doing so will go a long way.

Therefore the government of plateau state should please look into youth situation in the state and empower them.

Gwamna Beckly Nehemiah IT student from Federal polytechnic Bauchi.

High rate of indesent dressing among students

THERE has been high and Increase in indecent dressing among young people and recently in the past few years. Are like Rusau, village hostel, Angwan Rukuba, Ring Road and Angwa Jarawa. These are some of the areas where there is high population of students and has witness increase in modest dressing among the youth.

Indecent dressing, has always been a common social gives among the youths which often results to other vices such as prostitution, rape and sexual and immoralities. These vices have in turn also led to the increment of other vices and it's create the moro degradation of

the society.

Students have always caused Increment in the immoral dressing among young people, due to the carefree among the student. Students in the university and other higher level educational institutions have always been admired by youths in the society who sees them as role models and do everything they see from the students, including their dressing carelessly.

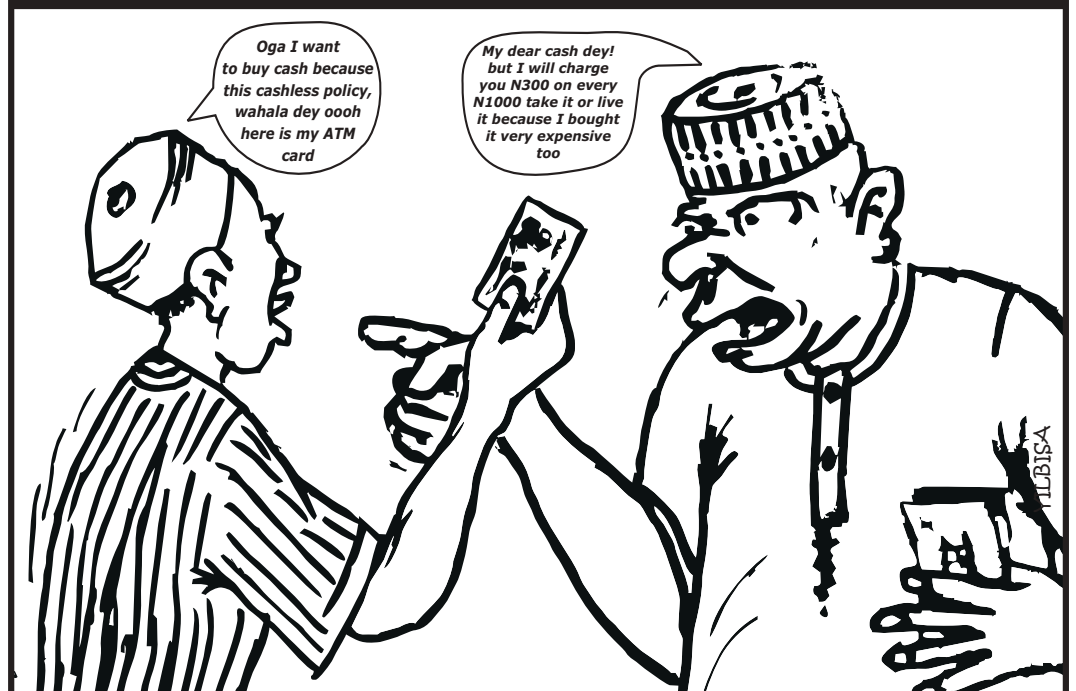
The areas mentioned above has the high number of students in it population. The high rates of indecent dressing is clearly an evidence in this area listed, where boys dress

like gangsters and call it fasion and ladies dress like prostitute and call it trend. These increases when student resume and decrease when student gone to holiday.

These trend can be reduced by mass orientation of students on the effect of indecent dressing and the danger it possess in the society. Orientation, should also be done for young people to avoid imitating bad behavior even from role models. These reduce social vice from causing the complete moral degradation in the society.

John Evelyn Maisaido an IT student from Federal polytechnic Bauchi

Standard Cartoon



Opinion

Delayed justice: Implications for Nigerian masses

Sir Walter Raleigh, a poet and a soldier, wrote in the 15th century in "The Soul's Errand"; 'Go, tell the Court it glows, and shines like rotten wood. It may not necessarily be an abuse but it denotes the rate of injustice prevailing over the court. As at that time, the court could no longer meet up the standard of natural justice, equity and fairness due to corrupt tendencies. In our age and time, the court which should have been the last resort of common man, is filled with miscarriages, delays of justice thereby making life miserable, unbearable and regrettable. Every lawyer talk about difficulties in getting criminal justice in Nigeria. The delays in getting justice is what has atrophied judiciary as a veritable organ of governance. The recent cases of Evans – the notorious kidnapper and Abba Kyari – the aiding and abetting police officer would signify the nature of getting justice in Nigeria especially in criminal matters. In the same vein, Nigerians went to the polls in the first quarter of 2023 and the electoral cases are still being decided in the various tribunals and appeal courts throughout the country. Some of the pending electoral matters have been shifted to Abuja, Lagos due to insecurity and logistics. The 2023 presidential election has been a very sensible issue which the courts are yet to give judgment on. Nigeria has become a peculiar case because her practice of democracy has snowballed into 'judocracy'. After every democratic election in Nigeria, even when the electoral commission has announced the

OBIOTIKA WILFRED TOOCHUKWU

results; the masses will have to wait for the courts, election petition tribunals to determine the actual winner. The ruling political party had taunted the opposition with the 'Go to Court' slogan in a flawed election that lacked transparency. The situation has hoodwinked the appeal court justices leading to delay or miscarriage of justice.

Furthermore, it was the Greek philosopher, Heraclitus who said; "If it were not for injustice, man would not know justice." And Benjamin Franklin said; "Without justice, courage is weak. Nigeria is actually sitting on a keg of gunpowder which might explode any time. We have often heard preachers tell us that when your blessings are delayed, it does not mean denied and that when God tells you no, it does not translate to never. Needless to say, without justice there can never be peace and progress. We are terrestrial not celestial; mortal not immortal. And we have witnessed a condition where the most wicked, corrupt and oppressive entities live large and prosper. It emphasizes the necessity of timely and efficient delivery of justice. When the legal system/structure in a country fails to provide justice in a timely manner, it can lead to frustration, death, loss of faith in the judiciary and even escalate injustice.

Unfortunately, from 2015 to 2023, Nigerians have had the course to refer to Malcolm Forbes, who said; "When things are bad, we take a bit of comfort in the thought that they

could always be worse. And when they are, we find hope in the thought that things are so bad they have to get better". The change mantra of 2015 was a betrayal and treachery and the renewed hope of 2023 cannot give breath even of polluted air. The situation of the country would collapse the entity and the nation Nigeria if nothing drastic is done. The legal maxim, "Justice delayed is justice denied" stresses the timely resolution, adjudication given to the injured, oppressed or neglected which if not forthcoming is the same as no remedy at all.

It must not be forgotten that problems with the administration of justice in Nigeria include but are not limited to executive suppression and intimidation of the judiciary, pervasive corruption, insecurity and poor standard of legal education. The time factor in the delivery of justice is paramount. The purpose of the criminal law is the prevention of crime. With the delay, neglect and silence; time heals and makes people forget and forgive. The Courts must take cognizance that the longer it takes to deliver judgement, the less effective and impactful the outcome will be. The presidential election in Kenya was ultimately annulled by the Supreme Court in 2017 after a two weeks delay. A likely outcome was witnessed in 2018 by Zimbabwe.

Notably, "No Coffin No Grave" is a poem by Jared Angira that satirizes the corrupt nature of African politicians in the drunkenness with power as they loot away the resources that were meant for the

benefit of all. The final end of the greedy ruler was never anticipated even though no one dared to speak out of his evil for fear of the consequences. Buhari told Nigerians in 2015 that they should kill corruption or it will kill Nigeria. Who can estimate the corruption indices in Buhari's tenure? Despite the suffering, hardship and poverty and the much-taunted corruption in Fuel Subsidy, the presidency during 'UNGA '78 in the United States spent ?509,920,920 for hotel reservations at St. Regis Hotel in New York from September 16 to 23 2023. Reps Members are ready to receive ?130 million Prado SUVs. And this is how Nigeria would survive? Within 4 months, it is speculated that the federal government has taken a loan of more than \$1.5 billion from the World Bank. What is actually wrong with political leadership in Nigeria? In addition, the forgery saga in the country was much less than the stolen mandate of Nigerians. Majority of the masses had expected that the Presidential Election Petition Tribunal would give them justice, restore hope and assuage the suffering being experienced all over the country. In the matter of presidential election, we do not foresee factors like cost of litigation, constitutional provision, undue reliance on technical rules or other issues inhibiting justice. It appears to be a case of undue allegiance inimical to justice. The APC government has made every institution of governance in Nigeria weak and ineffective. The Police, Judiciary and the electoral

commission are all shadows, skeletal impostors. This accounts for the difficulty in investigating crime, prosecution of criminals and the conduct of free and fair elections. A 2021 report by the Nigerian Bar Association found that over 70% of inmates in Nigeria prisons are awaiting trial. Nigeria has enough resources at her disposal to fund the agencies responsible for dispensation of justice. Sadly, public funds are spent on fanning the embers of corruption and promoting inefficiency.

Finally, to avoid negative outcomes, it is crucial for Nigeria to have efficient and transparent mechanisms for resolving electoral disputes in a timely manner. Delayed justice can also lead to increased crime rates. The free operation of terrorists, bandits without prosecution has resulted in continuous killing, destruction of property all over the country. Well-meaning Nigerians lose huge sums of money and cherished possessions due to delay and untimely delivery of justice. So far, the political instability has deterred foreign investment and economic growth. Money that could have been used for infrastructural development and philanthropy are wasted on lengthy legal battles. The delay has caused and engineered more electoral fraud. It is granted that the public trust in the electoral process has been completely eroded. The political tension in the country can further exacerbate to protests, conflicts, instability and social unrest.

At inception, N-Power scheme stood out as one of the best policies of the President Muhammadu Buhari administration to address the hydra-headed poverty in Nigeria because of its promise to ensure that none of its volunteers (participants) return to the street empty handed. Unfortunately, this seems to have turned to "a motion without movement" given the sudden suspension of the programme and the disengagement of the participants without any exit package.

On 7th October, 2023, the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Betta Edu, announced an indefinite suspension of the N-power programme with a promise to investigate the utilisation of funds disbursed since the inception of the scheme.

N-Power is a subset of the National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) launched in 2016 as part of the efforts of the federal government to reduce the level of poverty in Nigeria. It started with the enrollment of 200,000 participants in Batch A, 2016; 300,000 participants in Batch B, 2017; and 510,000 in Batch C1; and 490,000 in Batch C2 in 2021.

Though, the stipend attached to the programme is not attractive but some people applied in order to further contribute to the development of the country and escape the "sit at home syndrome" occasioned by the oversaturated labour market in an anticipation to transit to permanent job pool promised by Buhari while campaigning in 2015.

This hope was further raised by the promises by the then Vice President Yemi

N-Power, motion without movement?

Femi Oluwasanmi

Osibanjo that government will not allow the N-Power volunteers to go back to the streets empty handed.

However, this hope was dashed in 2020 when they were disengaged from the programme without any exit package at a time other countries were giving palliatives to their people due to the hardship occasioned by COVID-19 pandemic.

This seems to be repeating itself with the indefinite suspension of the programme at a time prices of goods and services have ascended 150% increase. Recently, the World Bank said over 7 million people are likely to join those living below poverty line in Nigeria if palliatives are not given to mitigate the hardship caused by the removal of fuel subsidy. This is becoming obvious with the suspension of N-Power.

Prior to the suspension, there have been reports of diversion of funds meant for participants. In 2022, a popular artist, Oladipo Daniel Oyebanjo (aka, D'Banj), was arrested by the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related Offences Commission (ICPC) for alleged collusion with government officials to introduce ghost workers into N-Power consequently diverting millions of naira into their coffers.

Also, in the process of trying to justify the reasons for the suspension of the programme, the minister said preliminary findings of her audit shows that some consultants are holding on to the beneficiaries' funds disbursed to them

long ago even when their contract ended in March 2023.

Due to the diversion and delay in the payment of stipends, some of the participants have abandoned their places of primary assignment (PPA) while those that have other means to augment their stipends have turned to visitors. This has negatively affected the objectives of the programme and contributed to the "firmament of frustration" across the country.

In a society where policies are really designed to address poverty, the stipends would have been increased long ago because of the realities in Nigeria. For instance, in 2016, when the N30,000 monthly stipend was introduced, the value of a naira to a dollar was N350 but today it has jumped to over N1,000. Yet, the minister is talking about an enlargement in the scope of the programme without any plan to increase the monthly stipends.

The most surprising aspect is that the president that rode on the mantra of "renewed hope" to power seems not to see anything wrong with the stipends. Instead, the president reechoed the voice of the minister on 1st October by promising to increase the number of people on the social investment platforms to 15 million.

That is why some have argued that N-Power and the likes are more of political calculation than poverty alleviation. This seems not to be far from the truth if the monthly stipends of N-Power volunteers are measured on the scale of those living below poverty line.

Based on the World Bank updated report in September 2022, the new international poverty line is \$2.15 using 2017 prices. This means that anyone living on less than \$2.15 a day is considered to be living in extreme poverty. This shows that the increment of N-Power volunteers' monthly stipends is overdue if truly the aim of the federal government is to alleviate poverty and reduce unemployment.

In fact, increasing the stipend will motivate the participants to be regular at their PPA, increase their service delivery and in the long run make them employers of labour. Most of the participants disengaged from the platform in 2020 would have become employers of labour if they were given start up packages after their service. This would have directly or indirectly accelerated the quest for self-sufficiency, reduced the number of people at the "colony of unemployment," and tame insecurity.

Most of the funds earmarked for the war against terrorism in the country would have been used to build schools, hospitals, construct more road networks and other social amenities begging for attention in the country if unemployment and poverty are properly addressed.

That is why government needs to increase the monthly stipends of N-Power volunteers, create an exit start up packages for them, and subject them to two or three weeks training at the end of their service so that their business ideas can be fine-tuned to fit in the realities at the world of business.

Femi Oluwasanmi, Ibafo, Ogun state

Feature

The need to eradicate poverty

In a world grappling with persistent poverty, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, celebrated every October 17, provides the entire humanity an opportunity to call to mind the uphill battle millions face daily. This year's theme brings to light the grueling realities of those trapped in extreme poverty, highlighting their relentless struggle to make ends meet. The statistics are stark, with about 9.2 per cent of the world's population, approximately 719 million people, living on less than \$2.15

Nigeria, unfortunately, is no exception, as the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reported that over 133 million Nigerians, constituting about 63 per cent of the nation's population, live in multidimensional poverty.

To put it into perspective, the number of people living in poverty exceeds the population of the United Kingdom. Maybe that was why that country's former Prime Minister, Mrs Theresa May, had to describe Nigeria as the poverty capital of the world.

It is a circumstance to be ashamed of that out of 719 million poor people in the world, Nigeria accounts for 133 million. This is unacceptable and has to change.

In the considered opinion of this newspaper, this global issue isn't confined to economic statistics; it's a harrowing tale of human suffering, where many are forced to cook with dung, wood, or charcoal due to a lack of access to cleaner energy sources.

The recent removal of fuel subsidy resulting in a surge in the prices of goods and services, has further exacerbated the crisis. It's evident that addressing poverty is not just a moral obligation but also crucial for social stability and economic growth.

As the nation commemorates this day, it's essential to consider the steps needed to uplift the most vulnerable in the society.

We note that the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Betta Edu, has commended President Bola Tinubu for initiating conditional cash transfers to 15 million households.

She rightly points out that conditional cash transfers are effective interventions for pulling people out of poverty and providing immediate relief during economic shocks.

This approach has been proven to work globally and is a commendable step towards eradicating poverty in Nigeria.

The finance minister and



Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Wale Edun, emphasized that the current situation is unacceptable, with 63 per cent of the Nigerian population living under crushing poverty.

He highlighted the government's commitment to poverty reduction and the effectiveness of various initiatives in stabilizing the

economy and enhancing productivity.

In our view, governments at all levels should brace up to the challenges of governance and tackle this head-on. What is required is the political will to take decisions that impact positively on the majority who are affected the most by the hassles of economic push and shove.

No doubt, there is a nexus between the rising insecurity in the country and extreme poverty. Tackling poverty will go a long way in reducing insecurity. This is even as security has become necessity for any meaningful economic activity to take place.

To find a ray of hope and inspiration, we can turn our eyes towards China, a nation that has made remarkable strides in eradicating poverty. That country's experience provides valuable lessons that Nigeria can learn from in its fight against poverty.

China's journey from poverty to prosperity wasn't achieved overnight. It required long-term vision and commitment. It also necessitated a coordinated effort across various sectors, from government to the private sector and ultimately to civil society.

As Nigeria commemorates the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, it's imperative to recognize that this issue is not insurmountable.

With a coordinated effort from government, civil society, and the private sector, Nigeria can

reduce poverty and provide its citizens with the opportunities they deserve.

Poverty eradication is not just a moral imperative but also a key to unlocking the nation's full potential.

China's success in eradicating poverty serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration for Nigeria. The path to prosperity may be challenging, but with unwavering commitment and a multi-faceted approach, it's a path that Nigeria can navigate successfully.

It's time for Nigeria to learn from the successes of others and chart a path towards a more prosperous, equitable, and poverty-free future.

As the country embarks on that journey, one of the lessons to learn is ability to manage resources judiciously. By implication, this entails the determination to do away with waste and corrupt influences that go with it.

Many countries have traversed this path in their development strides with brilliant tales to tell. Nigeria can and must do same if the poverty hangover must be wiped off of the nation's psyche.

"No doubt, there is a nexus between the rising insecurity in the country and extreme poverty. Tackling poverty will go a long way in reducing insecurity. This is even as security has become necessity for any meaningful economic activity to take place. To find a ray of hope and inspiration, we can turn our eyes towards China, a nation that has made remarkable strides in eradicating poverty. That country's experience provides valuable lessons that Nigeria can learn from in its fight against poverty. China's journey from poverty to prosperity wasn't achieved overnight. It required long-term vision and commitment. It also necessitated a coordinated effort across various sectors, from government to the private sector and ultimately to civil society. As Nigeria commemorates the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, it's imperative to recognize that this issue is not insurmountable. With a coordinated effort from government, civil society, and the private sector, Nigeria can"

News

Perm Sec inaugurates Agribusiness Incubation Centre

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Dr. Ernest Umakhihe recently inaugurated the newly built Agribusiness Incubation Centre (ABIC) in Federal University, Lokoja (FUL), to facilitate massive food production in Nigeria.

The inauguration was part of the activities marking the 6th and 7th Combined Convocation Ceremony of the university which took place recently.

The Permanent Secretary while commissioning the centre, said that the focus of the centre include: enhancing production capacity, value addition, quality control and standards, and opening access to local and international markets for our agricultural produce.

The Permanent Secretary explained: "The incubation centre is being established as a Special Centre of Excellence to support and promote food security in Nigeria, and to support youth and women empowerment as well as promote employment generation, wealth creation and poverty reduction.

"This will be through the development of viable agribusiness and entrepreneurship skills in different agricultural value chains across the country.

"The focus of the centre include; enhancing production capacity, value addition, quality control and standards, and opening access to local and international markets for our agricultural produce.

"The project is aimed at facilitating and attracting investments into the



Umakhihe

agricultural sector, ensuring survival and sustainability of agri-based businesses and increasing domestic food production and exports," he said.

According to him, these centres will also produce young generation of successor farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs who can adapt new technologies and innovations across the segments of commodities enterprise/value chain of production, processing, storage and marketing.

He added: "The centre is equipped to provide business basics through comprehensive training programmes along commodity value chains and business start-ups including access to bank loans and other funds and guarantee programmes."

"The centre will support market research, linkage to strategic partners, access to investors and the development of business plans and business networking etc."

The Permanent Secretary expressed satisfaction and appreciation with the

support and cooperation of the Vice Chancellor, the academic and management staff of FUL for the successful completion of the centre.

He also expressed the hope that the university would explore the opportunity the centre offers and make the best use of it and prove its support as a formidable institution in the concerted efforts of the government to grow the nation's economy using the agricultural sector.

Responding, the FUL Vice Chancellor (VC), Prof. Olayemi Akinwumi thanked the federal government for setting up the centre in the institution.

Akinwumi pledged to ensure that the institution makes good use of the opportunity offered to it to train the students into becoming big time agriculturalists that would contribute to the nation's food production and security.

Our correspondent reports that the minister also commissioned a six kilometer road the ministry constructed from the university's zoo to the main gate.

By POLYCARP ISHAYA

THE Provost of the Plateau State College of Health Technology, Pankshin, Dr. (Prince) Francis Isah Fwangje has debunked the rumor that the College Management staff have increased the tuition fee of returning students and also that of the students to be admitted in the 2023/2024 academic session.

Dr. Francis Fwangje stated this while briefing journalists on the recent familiarization visit of the Visitation Panel to the college in his office in Pankshin.

He said that there was no point in time that the management staff of the college took such a decision without consultation from stakeholders in the education sector and there is no plan to increase the tuition fee for both the returning and those to be admitted in 2023/2024 academic session or stopping the Student Union Government (SUG) from conducting their elections. Adding that such rumors are perpetrated by misconceived people that do not mean well for the management, staff and students of the institution. There has been no circular in respect to increasing the tuition fee in the college.

He said, he wondered why this would happen at the time when the Visitation Panel to the College are coming on a familiarization visit and he wanted to believe was a set-up planned by his enemies to tarnish his reputation and that of his management staff before the panel members.

Earlier, the students were on rampage, staging a protest in the college and the protest by the students almost blocked the main gate entrance to the college premises for the Visitation Panel to get access into the college. If not for the quick intervention of personnel of

Provost debunks school fees increment



Fwangje

the Director Security Service (DSS) and the Chairman of the Academic Staff Union of Polytechnic (ASUP) of the College Chapter, Comrade Phili Longben, the situation could have been worse even after the address of the Provost earlier to the aggrieved students on the matter, yet the students failed to give a listening ear to the Provost because the students had been instigated by some staff and not outsiders for reasons best known to them.

When the Dean of Students Affairs, Mr. Simon Gyang was contacted by our reporter to comment on the whole issue, he said that the tenure of the elected Student Union Government (SUG) leaders ended early this year 2023 and because students were writing semester and national examinations, there was no need for conducting fresh elections into the union at that time.

After consultation with the management, he was directed to constitute a caretaker committee for the SUG to serve for a period of three months in the first instance. He added that the caretaker committee spent over six months because of the labour strike that took place as of that time but when the strike was suspended by the NLC leaders, academic activities resumed in the college.

The Dean explained the reason behind the Directorate of Students Affairs decision to make a change in the leadership of the union. This came at a heels when the Directorate The Dean, on 3 occasions requested for the financial reports of the union.

Dean and on three occasions, the caretaker committee President of the SUG refused to submit the reports and he has not been committed to the students welfare because the monies of union is deposited in his personal bank account.

That prompted the Directorate of Students Affairs office to request for

the financial report and subsequently, making a change in the union.

Our source also revealed that there were two reasons that provoked the protest by the students. One is that elections should be conducted into the SUG offices and not caretakers committee to be constituted again by the Directorate of Students Affairs. And the already caretaker committee members on ground (SUG) should be immediately reinstated into offices. And two, the increase in tuition fee by the management staff of the college, should be reversed. The source further revealed that the students demanded for the list of the new caretaker committee officials of SUG should be withdrawn immediately and allow the old caretaker committee to continue and also to conduct elections of the Students Union Government (SUG) immediately.

The Provost, Dr. Francis Fwangje however has met with the re-instated caretaker committee officials in his office and the two parties have come to terms that union leaders should submit the fix date for the conduct of the SUG elections to the management for onward consideration and approval by the relevant authority.

He reiterated again that the management has no plan for now to increase tuition fee for both returning and admitted students for the 2023/2024 academic session. Lastly, the Dean of students affairs has officially withdrawn the list of the new caretaker and allowed the old ones to continue and to conduct elections as management staff have nothing to do with the union elections.

And as at the time of filing this report, normalcy had returned to the college. Efforts made to contact the caretaker committee President of the Students Union Government (SUG), Comrade Danjuma Yiltim Shekat to commend on the students protest, proved abortive.

Alleged N251.6m theft: Court commences trial November 4

From MUSLIUDEEN ADEBAYO

JUSTICE Ladiran Akintola of Oyo State High Court, sitting in Ibadan, the state capital on Monday adjourned till November 4, 2023, commencement of trial in a case of alleged stealing preferred against Obakin Emmanuel Ajibola.

Ajibola is standing trial on four -count charges bordering on stealing to the tune of N251, 685, 000 (two hundred and fifty one million, six hundred and eighty five thousand Naira), preferred against him by Ibadan Zonal Command of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission.

One of the charges reads: "That you Obakin Emmanuel Ajibola, adult, male sometime in December, 2022 at Ibadan within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, did fraudulently steal the sum of N120, 500, 000.00 (One hundred and twenty million,

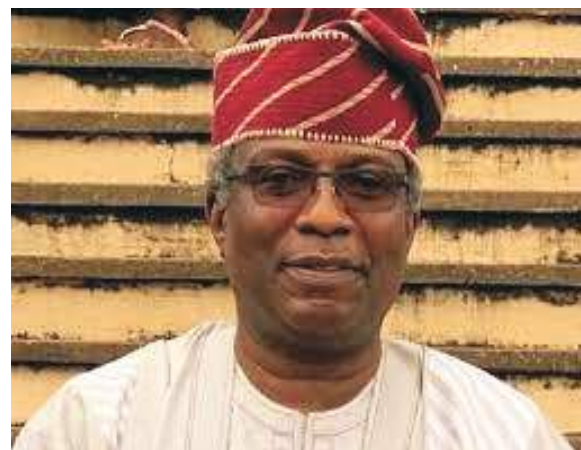
five hundred thousand Naira) belonging to Lee Fakino Nigeria Limited, an offence of stealing contrary to Section 390(9) Criminal Code Law."

At the resumption of the case on Monday, parties to the matter, including the victim of the crime, Mr Akindele Fajemiyo, managing director and chief executive officer of Lee Fakino Nigeria Limited, who is the first prosecution witness, were informed of an adjournment arrangement till November 4, 2023.

Ajibola was arraigned on September 12, 2023 before Justice Akintola on four -count charges bordering on alleged stealing of N251. 6million belonging to a firm, Lee Fakino Nigeria Limited.

The defendant, who was one of the two directors of the firm and signatory to the firm's account, allegedly withdrew the above sum from the firm without authorization and consent of the managing director and chief executive officer, Akindele Fajemiyo.

Investigations revealed that



Akintola

the defendant allegedly removed the telephone numbers and email address of the MD/CEO of the firm from the banking details of Lee Fakino Nigeria Limited, through which notification alerts of transactions were received, to enable him keep track of the account.

He allegedly withdrew the said sum from the account of

the firm, which was money paid for works executed by Lee Fakino Nigeria Limited for the Lagos State Ministry of Agriculture between December 22, 2022 and March 9, 2023 without any notification received by the managing director.

Upon arraignment, he pleaded "not guilty" to the charges preferred against him by the EFCC.

View Point

How 'misinvoicing' hinders trade growth in Africa

Trade misinvoicing, or deliberately falsifying import and export invoices, facilitates billions in illicit financial outflows annually across Africa. This endemic issue acts as a major barrier to unlocking the continent's immense trade potential. What is it then? Writes Tami Koroye

It mostly involves exporters and importers deliberately manipulating invoices to disguise capital flows. Under-invoicing exports lower declared value to illegally move foreign exchange earnings elsewhere while avoiding taxes and capital controls. On the other hand, over-invoicing imports enables bringing additional capital into countries informally. The African Development Bank estimates trade misinvoicing drains over \$50 billion in revenues yearly from the continent. In 2014, the Nigerian economy lost over \$2.2 billion in revenue due to misinvoicing. This was also the sentiment shared in Kenya and South Africa, by their respective national agencies. Not only does trade-misinvoicing starve these nations of incomes needed for necessary development and liquidation of the economy, but it also undermines the State's policy effectiveness and economic management. Trade misinvoicing has a significant impact on tax revenue in sub-Saharan Africa, reducing it by a considerable amount. Tax holidays and regulatory quality also strengthen the effect of trade misinvoicing, especially in African countries.

It is important to state that the issue of trade misinvoicing is not limited to Africa but is a global problem. The global shadow financial system, propped up by tax havens and financial secrecy, is equally responsible for the propagation of trade misinvoicing in Africa. However, this has more dilapidating effects on African countries like Nigeria that need the facilitation of trade to rejig their economy and boost private and public economic activities.

If this is a consistent problem that has been recognised by both state and international organisations, then is there a continuous appearance of trade misinvoicing in trade in Africa? There are several issues that foster the persistence of trade misinvoicing, such as:

Weak customs enforcement and lack of coordinated trade data make detection difficult: Insufficient resources for customs inspections and incomplete trade documentation pose challenges in identifying invoice discrepancies across Africa's numerous entry ports.

Opacity in global financial transactions obfuscates tracing of illicit flows: When financial transactions are not easily traceable, it becomes challenging to monitor and identify illicit flows of money. Illicit actors take advantage of the lack of transparency to engage in trade misinvoicing, a practice where the value of goods declared in cross-



border transactions is manipulated to facilitate the illicit movement of funds.

iii. Abundant global tax havens and shell companies facilitate anonymity: Many tax havens and shell companies make it easy for exporters and importers to hide money secretly, consequently making it harder to uncover trade misinvoicing schemes.

Lack of oversight, accountability, and corruption across jurisdictions: The dearth of accountability mechanisms exacerbates the situation, allowing individuals and entities to evade responsibility for their actions. In such an environment, there is a systemic failure to hold wrongdoers accountable, fostering a culture where improper conduct may go unchecked and, in some cases, become normalised. Also, the lack of harmonised international efforts to combat corruption allows illicit actors to exploit jurisdictional gaps, hindering the pursuit of justice and accountability on a global scale.

The issue of trade misinvoicing leakages, regardless of the is complex, and there can be valid logistical reasons why exports to create a single market for reported by one country do not goods and services, which would match with imports reported by reduce trade barriers and another country for the same promote transparency in trade. product. However, estimates of This increased transparency can trade misinvoicing should be help to reduce the incidence of taken as a risk indicator for illicit trade misinvoicing by making it activity in specific industries, easier to track and monitor trade especially in African countries. flows.

The African Continental Free AfCFTA also seeks to harmonise Trade Area (AfCFTA) presents a trade policies and regulations significant opportunity for African across African countries, which countries to boost growth, reduce can help to reduce the complexity poverty, and broaden economic and cost of doing business in the inclusion. By increasing regional region. This will help to reduce the trade, lowering trade costs, and incentives for trade misinvoicing streamlining border procedures, by making it easier and more full implementation of AfCFTA cost-effective to conduct would help African countries legitimate trade.

However, African States can also face of future disruptions, tackle the scourge of trade including trade misinvoicing. With misinvoicing through consistent the implementation of the efforts on multiple fronts: - by AfCFTA, it is hopeful that the improving transparency of trade current trade regime will be documentation, banking records, replaced by something more and corporate ownership efficient and sustainable. structures to remove anonymity However, deliberate steps must loopholes. States can also be taken to prevent these strengthen enforcement

capacities and institutions with advanced data analytics, forensic auditing, and stiffer penalties to boost compliance. Also, with the new wave of nascent technologies, States can adopt blockchain-based supply chain tracking to authenticate provenance and prevent discrepancies, whilst also forging stronger inter-agency and cross-border cooperation on investigations and information sharing.

With persistent efforts to enact multifaceted solutions, the widespread drain and market distortions from trade misinvoicing can be mitigated over the medium term. The payoff will be substantial in improved competitiveness, tax revenues, economic governance, and ultimately accelerated and equitable intra-African trade expansion.

Koroye is a PhD Candidate at the University of Bradford and a free trade fellow at Ominira Initiative.

Water scarcity and health hazard



By VICTOR AII

WATER is life, goes a very popular saying: This cannot be distant from the truth. "No homo sapiens and even animals and other things can survive without the usage of water. It is an inescapable necessity for human existence.

Its multi-purpose usage is legendary we need water to bath, we need water to wash our dirty cloths we need water to cook, we even need water to wash our cars and fill the water tanks.

Of recent, Jos city and its environs have been enmeshed with water scarcity. Virtually, all

the communities in Jos have been witnessing unprecedented, severely biting water scarcity. People cannot properly undertake their domestic chores because of scarcity of this very "essential commodity". While being austere with the usage of water, if available at all some domestic chores are left undone.

Needless to say, water vendors nay water tankers have now taken the centre stage, in the provision of this necessity. Apart from making brisk business, the water vendors have become lords onto themselves. An ugly incident was averted recently in one community in Jos.

The story goes thus: A desperate person who was desirous of water to cook his meal came across a water vendor to buy. The water vendor reported that the water was not available. Angered by the reply from the water vendor while he was seeing jericans full of water, the man lost his temper and was ready for fist-cuff.

It took the intervention of a passer by before the looming fight was aborted. Why the refusal to sell the water to the patronize? The water vendor dutifully reveals that, they said water had been booked. You find it funny and ridiculous? No, that was visibly the home truth because the water vendor said he was in business and if the water was not booked, he

would have sold same and went back for another round of water supply.

And what about the cost of the water, Hitherto, a 50 liters jericans of water in the said community sold for twenty (25) to thirty (30) naira, has now lip-frog to fifty (50) naira and above. In the face of the economic hardship, the poor folks who can not afford this "exorbitant" costs have only one rescuer only water-the dirty river of streams in the neighborhood.

Though boreholes (with all the attendant effects on the earth surface) abound in some of these vicinities, water scarcity still persists. It is either the boreholes are malfunctioning or those being powered by NEPA (sorry, JED) are out of use as a result of the "usual" power outage. In spite of this, whenever the water is available at the borehole, it is the same typical story of the Nigerian shylock. Must sell at the same price like the known water vendors.

Indeed, apart from the



boreholes, where those water vendors and the water tankerdrivers ferry their products' to the unsuspecting consumers remain unknown. No kidding, yours sincerely, feeling thirty attempted to drink water in one household at the neighbourhood, lo and behold, the

water smells. what about the rains? We are already at the twilight of April which by ordinary estimation, the heavens should have opened with bounteous rains. Alas, it has been some isolated cases of drizzling. The other day we were discussing with a friend on this precarious situation of water scarcity. What

he offers was not hope but stark gloom. He asked me rhetorically. Don't you know that there is climate change? He said what used to be obtainable then, may not be feasible now.

With this scurry scenario of water scarcity, particularly in a densely populated city like Jos, the propensity of the outbreak of water borne diseases is high. The committant effect, sure would be monumental. Without having hospital records at one's disposal, one can say that, this water scarcity might have sent some innocent citizens to their early graves. May the good Lord help us all.

"It took the intervention of a passer by before the looming fight was aborted. Why the refusal to sell the water to the patronize? The water vendor dutifully reveals that, they said water had been booked. You find it funny and ridiculous? No, that was visibly the home truth because the water vendor said he was in business and if the water was not booked, he would have sold same and went back for another round of water supply."



By KENNETH DARENG

IT is a fact that the Nigerian constitution stipulates that an individual participant in an electoral process has the right to seek redress due to any form of infraction particularly in matters relating to the conduct of elections which could be within the political party or at the general contest at local government, state or Federal levels.

The general trend which normally follows each election process is the setting up of election petition panels to give aggrieved parties the opportunity to ventilate their grievances through lawful means in order to get justice.

Based on the provisions of the Electoral Act as amended, the road to getting justice in some cases terminates at Appeal courts while those with a long lifespan end up in the Supreme Court which is the Apex Judicial arbiter in the

The danger of litigations in electoral process

land.

For those who emerge victorious through the judicial process, there is always a cause to praise the court's decisions and you hear phrases like...".the Judiciary is the last hope for the common man", or " this is a landmark ruling." While those who fail to secure victory at the courts would target the Judge or Judges by casting all manner of insults on them and would stop at nothing to say unprintable words that depicts nothing good with the entire judicial arm.

However, what has become of serious concern is how elections are conducted with varying degrees of challenges resulting in quite a number of litigations which are fast becoming a new normal in our political psyche that appear to serve as an alternative to the democratic process in Nigeria. Instances are bound where certain individuals have been sacked from their elected positions in controversial circumstances while others have had cause to thank the Judiciary for restoring their "stolen" mandate as the case may be.

In any democratic society, it is the right of the citizens to elect their leaders through the power of the ballot and it is

through such principles and values that the masses derive their freedom to express their views and hold such people to account for their stewardship. But sadly, the way things are going in the country, is an indication that the courts are now becoming the determining factor in any election which goes against the body language of the Nigerian Constitution which envisages that aggrieved persons could seek redress in the courts but nothing therefore suggests that the electoral process must be anticipated to end in the courtrooms.

The shocking data recently released by the President Court of Appeal, Justice Monica Dongban-Mensem, at the 2023/2024 Legal Year also indicates that, of the total of

1,280 political offices and the lack of political sagacity and maturity to contested for in the 2023 elections, 1,209 petitions accept defeat by the political ended up in courts for class in Nigeria.

Other factors such as politics of imposition of candidates, substitution of names either due to the powers of God fathers or other ulterior motives and above all, any act of compromise by those saddled with overseeing the process gives room for candidates to approach the courts for remedy.

Elections must by any means be free fair and credible and should not by any means be subjected to shifting the people's mandate to the courts for another round of decision which could end up being a sour taste for the electorates whose will might be emptied into the trash bin of history,

"The shocking data recently released by the President Court of Appeal, Justice Monica Dongban-Mensem, at the 2023/2024 Legal Year indicates that, of the total of 1,280 political offices contested for in the 2023 elections, 1,209 petitions ended up in courts for adjudication. This represents 94.453 percent while it is obvious that out of those figures only 71 offices representing 5.547 percent of the contested elections were not challenged at the courts."

JUST as the River Thames, known in ancient times as Tamesis or Tamesa, or the Isis when it runs through Oxford, is to United Kingdom in medieval times, so is Osun River to Yorubas including millions of Afro-Cuban and other Osun faithful across the globe. Osun, one of the popular traditional religions, according to traditional history originated from the founding of Osogbo by Olutimehin, a great hunter, during his expedition. He was in search of water and settled down beside Osun River.

According to folklore, in the course of preparing the ground for the settlement of Ipo-Omu people to the new Osogbo, one of the dye pots of the Osun goddess was broken and she exclaimed and said in reaction, "Oso igbo, gbogbo Ikoko aro mi leti fee fo tan", meaning, "Forest wizard, you have destroyed almost all the pots of my dyes."

The river goddess ordered Olutimehin and the then king, Larooye, who was the eighth Owaroki and the first "Atewogbeja" (stretches hands to receive fish), now called Ataoja of Osogbo, to vacate the river bank and settle far from the river on the ground that spirit and human cannot live together. The river goddess, Osun, asked Larooye to prepare a sacrifice yearly which has metamorphosed into the present Osun Osogbo festival. The river goddess also promised them healing.

The Osun goddess is largely regarded to be the purveyor of fertility, divine favour, healing, protection, creativity and prosperity. This has made it a goddess endeared to many, especially women not only in Nigeria, but across the globe.

The adoption of Osun as World Heritage Site by the United Nations Education Social and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has increased the patronage of the site not only by faithful but researchers, industrialists, academics, diplomats and cultural enthusiasts among others.

The Osun Osogbo Festival is a vibrant display of Yoruba culture, and one of the most striking aspects is the array of traditional attire worn by participants. Elaborate headwraps called 'gele', intricately woven 'Aso Oke' fabrics and ornate beads adorn festival-goers, paying homage to the goddess while celebrating the beauty and diversity of Yoruba dressing.

Each piece of clothing worn during the Osun Osogbo Festival weaves a story of Yoruba history and heritage. From the indigo-dyed Adire fabric to the symbolic motifs that embellish outfits, attendees engage in a sartorial conversation that connects them to their roots, fostering a sense of identity and pride.

Reviving culture

The Osun Osogbo festival is not just a celebration; it is also a powerful vehicle for the revival of traditional Yoruba clothing.

As younger generations embrace modern fashion trends, the festival serves as a reminder of the beauty and significance of Yoruba attire, sparking a renewed interest in traditional dressing and craftsmanship.

Also, the festival does not just showcase traditional garments; it

is a platform for Yoruba fashion designers to exhibit their creativity and innovation. From contemporary adaptations of classic designs to cutting-edge fusion pieces, designers find inspiration in the festival's cultural tapestry, contributing to the evolution of Yoruba fashion.

Bursting with vibrant hues and intricate patterns, the Osun Art and performance take centre stage, painting the festival city into a living canvas of colorful grounds with a symphony of movement and rhythm. Traditional dancers, adorned in resplendent attire, sway to the mesmerising journey into the

celebration. Participants cleanse not only their bodies but also their spirits, setting the stage for days of reverence and jubilation. The atmosphere buzzes with an energy that reflects the unity of purpose and the shared commitment to preserving Yoruba customs.

Art and performance take centre stage, painting the festival grounds with a symphony of movement and rhythm. Traditional dancers, adorned in resplendent attire, sway to the beat of drums, their movements



Osun-Osogbo festival: Beyond religious festivity



heart of Yoruba culture, where ancient traditions, spirituality, and art converge in a symphony of vivid expression.

The festival's epicentre, the Osun sacred grove, becomes a breathtaking tapestry of customs and rituals, each thread intricately woven into the fabric of Yoruba heritage. Against the backdrop of towering trees and flowing waters, participants engage in a dazzling array of ceremonies, paying homage to Osun, the revered goddess of fertility, water and motherhood.

The Iwopopo purification ceremony ushers in the festival, its symbolic cleansing mirroring the vibrant colors that

embodying centuries of cultural expression. The interesting patterns woven into their clothing mirror the intricate patterns that define Yoruba art and design.

Amidst the festivities, a bustling market of Yoruba craftsmanship unfolds, a testament to the customs that have thrived through generations. Beadwork glistens like scattered gems, brassware shines like polished gold and handwoven textiles showcase the artistry passed down from ancestors.

This colourful marketplace is a living testament to the richness of Yoruba art and the vibrant traditions that continue to

flourish.

'We still have more to do'

The grand finale of the annual Osun-Osogbo Festival ended on Friday with fanfare and merriment at the site of the Osun-Osogbo grove in Osogbo.

During the festival, Osun devotees, masqueraders, the traditionalists and royal fathers paid homage to the festival's host, the Ataoja of Osogboland, Oba Jimoh Olanipekun, at the grove.

Governor Ademola Adeleke, who spoke with newsmen on the sideline of the festival, said the state government had done so much to support the festival.

Adeleke said the government

assisted in renovating and beautifying the grove to make it more attractive to tourists.

"Since the inception of the Osun-Osogbo festival, they have not had the kind of support our administration gave them.

"We did the beautification of the grove in less than two months and we still have more to do," he said.

Oba Olanipekun, the Ataoja of Osogbo, in his remarks, thanked the governor and his entourage for gracing the event, praying that they would gather to celebrate it with him again in 2024.

Source: Tribune

IMAGES

MUTFWANG SWEAR-IN 8 PERMANENT SECRETARIES

Plateau State Government recently appointed 8 Permanent Secretaries in the state and the Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, yesterday administered the oath of office at the new Government House Rayfield, Jos through his Deputy



Cross section of commissioners at the swearing in of Permanent Secretaries



Chief Judge, Justice David Mann (left) with the President, CCA, Justice Blessing Lyop Dalyop



From left are, Barr. Luka Fwangyil, Hon. Sunday Abdu, Hon. Alex Chups and others



Coordinator, Operation Rainbow, General Shipi (left) with the Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Hon. Ephraim Usman



Permanent Secretaries, Ministry of Finance with the Government House Administration



Mr. Mike Dalohom Dakat, PPC, Director, Internal Audit (middle) with other invited dignitaries



Emir of Kanam, HRH, Alhaji Muhammad Babangida Mu'azu (right) and the Sum Pyem, HRH Charles Mato Dakat



Director of Protocol, Government House, Mr. Jibrin Sule Dakup Watle congratulating newly appointed Permanent Secretary, Mary Fom

Photos: DANLADI DUK

Odd World

Man living 'dream' after spending £12k to look like dog

IT'S very hard to not love dogs, but one person has taken his adoration for the four-legged animals one step further - and wants to become one.

A dog lover, known online as Toco, has spent two million Yen (£12,480) in order to fulfil his "lifelong ambition" of looking like a collie.

An odd video has now surfaced, showing the man from Japan wearing an eerily realistic, human-sized collie costume so he could look like his favourite breed of canine.

Toko has a YouTube channel with over 28k subscribers, where he regularly shares videos of himself learning how to eat, play and train like a pooch.

In his most recent bizarre clip, which has been seen over 650,000 times, Toco can be seen in his dog costume, on all fours, with piano music in the background. He then walks over to a dog cage, gets in,

and it is then locked by the person filming.

In the caption of the video, he wrote: "My name is Toco, I wanted to be an animal and I became a collie."

Hundreds of people have commented on the video, with many praising Toco for "living his dream".

One person wrote: "Though it may be weird for many of us, as long as they're not harming anyone there shouldn't be an issue."

"He's just living his childhood dream. These videos are interesting to watch!"

Toco ordered the bespoke outfit from a specialist movie and TV costume maker, and it took 40 days to be completed.

In an exclusive interview, Toco previously told The Mirror: "I rarely tell my friends because I am afraid they will think I am weird. My friends and family seemed very surprised to learn I became an animal."

He says he always "dreamed of becoming an animal" and he now dresses up a few times a month to live out his childhood fantasy, and enjoys "doing things that only dogs do" because it makes him feel like a proper pet.

Toco explained: "Since childhood, I have had this unspecific fantasy of becoming an animal. I wonder whether it was a desire for transformation." He added that he picked collie, because it's his favourite breed of dog.

In his videos, Toco can be seen rolling over for belly rubs, sitting, walking on a lead and generally mimicking the behaviour of a collie.

He also shared videos of himself in his collie costume while he eats fake "dog food", lays in a hammock - and most recently getting inside a cage.

Source: The Mirror



Have our Federal Lawgivers gone berserk again?

EARLY last week, the news of our Federal Lawmakers affirming to the National Assembly's scheme to purchase for themselves outrageously expensive vehicles worth over 100 million each shattered me like a thunderbolt. As the news would have it, before one could say Jack Robinson, this unimaginable and inhuman fiasco embarked upon by these lawmakers subsequently proliferated to all alcoves and crannies of the nation generating intense debates and brouhaha from several professional bodies.

As I write, available information has also confirmed that members of both the Senate and the Federal House of Representatives have started receiving their brand new 2023 model Toyota Land Cruisers worth the said amount. The National Assembly had earlier revealed plans to purchase these vehicles against the wishes and aspirations, a larger percentage of the population of this country.

For yours sincerely, with all sense of responsibility, this horrific misadventure is unreasonable, unacceptable and very unfortunate. It is also inhuman and catastrophic for our lawmakers to tour this line of action when our citizens are living from hand to mouth as a result of greed and successive administrative ingenuity exhibited by our leaders. The last yours sincerely checked the harsh economic indices of Nigeria, it was not palatable for over one hundred million people.

Indeed, the statistics are very glaring, Nigeria has the awful distinction of being the global capital of poverty with over 70 million people living in extreme poverty. In fact, the National Bureau of Statistics notes that a total of 133 million people are presently classified as multidimensionally poor. In 2022, an estimated population of 88.4 million people in Nigeria lived in extreme poverty. The number of men living on less than 1.90 US dollars a day in the country reached around 44.7 million while the count was at 43.7 million for women.

In June 2023, Nigeria Development Update of the World Bank disclosed that the accelerated inflation pushed an additional four million Nigerians into poverty in the first five months of 2023. This means that between 2022 and 2023, not less than nine million Nigerians have been pushed into poverty as a result of inflation.

Yet in the midst of this heat, the Debt Management Office also disclosed that Nigeria's total foreign debt for the period ending March 31st 2023 has risen to 49.85 trillion (106,30 billion dollars), from 46 trillion as at 23th June 2023. If all these statistics should be taken into consideration, it certainly means that it is not well with Nigeria this very moment. It equally means that this nation is surviving but by the grace of God.

While inflation has continued to picture every façade of our nation's economic fabric, the resultant effect is agonisingly traumatic and unimaginable. As it is, acquiring education is not as it used to be considering the increasing rate of school fees. Both private and public universities have increased school fees close to hundred percent. The issue of Amen.

infrastructural deficient is hurting and has crippled almost all educational institutions in the country. As a result of this sad development, Nigeria's global ranking has in the couple of years slumped into obscurity. The situations in our respective hospitals are not getting any better. Most of these hospitals particularly public ones have become visiting clinics without anything tangible to show for it. The mass exodus of medical and health personnel out of this country in the past couple of years has indicated a very bad omen for the nation. This is also not to think of the worrisome state of insecurity in the country which has continued to beat my imagination. Routinely, hardly does a day pass without one reading on the pages of our newspapers and or hearing of a community being held hostage and or people abducted for ransom by criminal elements. Yet, all these negative developments are not of any major concern to our Lawmakers.

Evidently, it is anticipated that the only option left is for the country to design a simple implementable and sustainable poverty eradication model and stick to it religiously over a period of time. This would certainly demand great sacrifice and long suffering on the side of policymakers for us to perhaps attain this goal.

So far, the fuel subsidy removal without provision of pragmatic palliatives have turnout to be one of the grievous mistake this incumbent administration has done. The cost of traveling from one point to another has become so difficult even as essential commodities in our market places have gone beyond the reach of a common man. This development has gone contrary to the yearnings and aspirations of the citizenry.

It is in the midst of these harsh economic uncertainties that our Lawmakers are thinking of buying a car worth 100 million for each of the over 400 members of the National Assembly. It is this very time when the citizens of this country cannot predict what will come their way tomorrow that these Lawmakers have decided to treat us this harshly.

For God's sake, these were the same set of people we queued under the harsh weather to vote them into office just some months back. Now that they are only thinking of improving their status in such a callous manner, all the Muslims and Christians of this assembly are on the same page. Obviously, because of their mind-sets and how these cars mean to them, they have decided to bury their political party differences and interests.

By now, these unfolding developments at the National Assembly should have taught the citizens of this country some fundamental senses. By now, I would have expected Nigerians to begin to question any of such misadventure which is not in the best interest of our country. If we really desire Nigeria to be better for the sake of our future generations, our people must learn to speak out if and or when our politicians are taking us for a ride.

This is the only way we can be able to help this nation move out of its present deplorable and disguising position. Amy God help us stand by what is right against all odds and always think before embarking on any adventure that would have severe implications on the polity, hundred percent. The issue of Amen.

View Point

Negotiating multifaceted identities for development in Nigeria

Apart from saying your name, if you were asked, "who are you?" What would be your answer? Would it be about your tribe (e.g. "I am Zaar, Igbo, Fulani"), religion (e.g. "I am a Christian, Muslim, Traditionalist"), region ("I am a Northerner, Southerner, Middle-Belter"), profession ("I am a teacher, nurse, politician"), social status ("I am a king, a governor, a leader"), or nationality ("I am a Nigerian")? As simple as this question may sound, therein lies the root cause of most cases of terrorism, ethno-religious conflicts, favoritism, and nepotism in Nigeria, write Dogara Ishaya Manomi

THE is a question of social identity. Social identity or group identity simply refers to how you define who you are in relation to your membership of a particular group and the value (e.g. self-esteem, sense of belonging) and emotion (e.g. happiness, hope, comfort) you derive from belonging to that group (Tafjel, 1978). For example, if you are asked, "who are you?" and you say, "I am a Christian," or "I am a Muslim," or "I am Zaar by tribe," you are stating your social identity as opposed to individual identity which would be mainly your name, your gender, or anything peculiar to you alone. Being a communal culture mainly, social identity normally overrides personal identity. This is why a sense of honor and shame (social) rather than guilt and innocence (personal) are the major determinants of people's actions, attitudes, and assessment of right or wrong. It accounts for why people feel less guilty if they can get away with corruption without being caught. Depending on the situation and place, we answer the social identity question "who are you (we)?" differently, since we belong to different social groups. But if you were to re-arrange these multiple social identities, which one would be first and which one would be last?

Is there a "nigerian national identity?"

Is there such a thing as "Nigerian National Identity?" An average Nigerian, in my estimation, has at least five significant multifaceted yet intertwined (but unequal) identities that play out more in communal or societal life, and which have significant impact on national solidarity, peace, and development. Those five multifaceted identities include: clan identity (e.g. Nhasiti and Morass among the Zaar people of Tafawa Balewa, Bauchi state), tribal identity (e.g. Ngas, Alago, Ibibio), religious identity (e.g. Christian, Muslim), regional identity (e.g. Northerner, Southerner, Middle-Belter), and national identity (e.g. Nigerian). However, two of



Tinubu

these identities seem to be more prominent and salient to many, if not majority, of Nigerians, namely, religious and tribal identities. A simple indicator to this fact is that, most cases of terrorism and violent conflicts in Nigeria are religious and/or ethnic motivated. For example, the case of Boko Haram and the violent conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farming tribes like the Tiv, Berom, etc. trope

Hence, it is accountable to argue that terrorism and ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria are primarily a function of "negative solidarity" that results from a sense of ethnic and religious social identity at the expense of national identity. In such a case, people regard their religious, sectorial, or ethnic identity as the most salient identity which deserves their absolute loyalty at all costs. As a result, any perceived disrespect or threat to that social group from outsiders is treated with extreme force, leading to terrorism and ethno-religious conflicts.

Negotiating a tapestry of

identities: salience and trope of national identity

For a multi-religious, multi-cultural, and secular nation (as Nigeria self-identifies constitutionally) to foster peaceful co-existence, national solidarity, and national development, it is time we renegotiate and promote a national identity above any other identity, at least in public domains. The good news is, promoting national identity in public domains above any other sense of social identity does not diminish the value of other social identities that we hold dearly. Instead, it places them in their rightful contexts, where they will find utmost expression without negatively affecting "the other" nor disrupting peace and stability. Promoting national identity as the salient social identity would imply conscious efforts in making national symbols more conspicuous and religious and cultural symbol less conspicuous in public spheres. While both Christians and Muslims in Nigeria are

actively trying to outdo each other in public visibility, evident in the way churches and Mosques are situated in strategic locations in cities and towns, worship in public spaces are promoted, and church worship and Sallah programs are done using loud speakers that compete to out-loud others, it is time to pause and ask ourselves: have our competing religious externalities contributed more to mutual understanding or rivalry, mutual trust or distrust, peaceful co-existence or conflicts? The answer seems obvious, right? The more religious and ethnic-conscious Nigeria becomes, the more we experience religious extremism and ethnic bigotry that promote violence in forms of terrorism and ethno-religious conflicts. This calls for a renegotiation of our sense of identity.

Way forward: Developing a moral vision for "the Nigerian identity"

From my stay, study, and interactions with people in different developed countries (Germany, UK, USA, Belgium, among others), I have observed that a sense of national identity has been entrenched in their thought-pattern such that majority of the citizens regard their national identity as their salient identity, and every other sense of social identity contributes or functions in the service of national identity. National identity is unmistakably the only umbrella identity that can promote peace, cross-body solidarity, and national development.

National cardinal virtues: A case for a virtue-oriented Nigerian identity

Developing a national identity, however, requires articulating national "cardinal virtues." To develop national cardinal virtues, we can glean wisdom from ancient Greek philosophers (e.g. Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics) who articulated four cardinal virtues that would summarize all other virtues: wisdom, courage, self-control, justice. These virtues were considered necessary for human flourishing. Those cardinal virtues provided the moral compass that would guide every unit of society to contribute to peaceful co-existence. The Greek cardinal virtues, however, need to be contextualized to address the peculiarities and quandaries of the Nigerian state.

In view of the current multifaceted and competing identities and the state of terrorism and ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria, what virtues do you think should be our "national cardinal virtues" that can find expression in each religion and ethnicity? In my opinion, the following should be our "Nigerian cardinal virtues": tolerance, peace, justice, self-

control. The National Orientation Agency and relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations can champion the course of a virtue-oriented national identity and engage in public awareness campaign. Parents and teachers are to complement the effort by integrating and inculcating these virtues in children at home and in school. Religious leaders are to preach and teach it to their congregations. Musicians, media personalities, artists, film makers and actors, etc. to integrate these virtues and a vision of national identity in their acts, and so on. In this way, we can imagine and emerge an overarching Nigerian national identity that trumps any "negative solidarity" (E. Durkheim) and fosters peace, patriotism, national solidarity, and development. In this way, Nigerians will learn to be more in solidarity with virtue and their nation than with any other sense of identity. For example, if any office holder acts unjustly in giving most political appointments to people from his tribe, religion, or region at the expense of the "federal character," his own people will not stand in solidarity with him, but with the virtue of justice, and would also lend their voices in protesting and calling him to distribute political appointments justly, in the interest of national peace and development. This may sound like some utopian imagination, but it is possible. Rwanda is a good example of a nation that (a)rose from the ashes of a deadly ethnic-identity-motivated genocide and promoted national identity above all other identities, which has resulted in sustainable national peace, stability, solidarity, and development. Nigeria can do the same.

In conclusion, it is time to stop taking pride (and actually be ashamed) in being described as one of "the most religious countries in the world," if our religious identity marker does not promote peace and development. Instead, it is time to renegotiate the multifaceted identities and their resultant "negative solidarity," leading to a "Nigerian national identity," which is to be encapsulated in a "national cardinal virtues" of tolerance, peace, justice, and self-control, which will promote human flourishing. In this way, we can truly imagine and emerge a Nigeria of our dream, such that, when you are asked "who are you?" you would be proud to say, first, "I am a Nigerian," or better still, "I am Nigeria" (without relegating your religious and ethnic identities), because a nation is its people, and the people are the nation!

Rev. Dogara Ishaya Manomi, PhD. Lecturer, Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN).

Hence, it is accountable to argue that terrorism and ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria are primarily a function of "negative solidarity" that results from a sense of ethnic and religious social identity at the expense of national identity. In such a case, people regard their religious, sectorial, or ethnic identity as the most salient identity which deserves their absolute loyalty at all costs. As a result, any perceived disrespect or threat to that social group from outsiders is treated with extreme force, leading to terrorism and ethno-religious conflicts.

News

CJ sentences suspects to 45 years imprisonment.

From Abbas Gungura, Bauchi

The Bauchi State High Court One, presided over by the State Chief Judge, Justice Rabi Talatu Umar, has convicted and sentenced four suspects (4) each to 45 years imprisonment effective from 1st January, 2019.

The convicts are Abdullahi Abubakar, Isma'il Adamu Musa, Usman Idan, and Umar Abdullahi, for offenses of criminal conspiracy, armed robbery and kidnapping.

Delivering the judgment at the High Courtroom in Bauchi recently, the Presiding Chief Judge, Justice Rabi Talatu Umar, however discharged and acquitted the fifth suspect, Abbas Abubakar from the offenses namely criminal conspiracy, armed robbery and kidnapping.

"On the 23rd day of November, 2018 at about 1:30am, gunmen numbering about five (5) stormed the residences of Alh. Bashir Bukar Rimin Zayam and Alh. Sha'anin Mohammed, APC Chairman of Toro Local Government Area at Rimin Zayam village and robbed them of cash and valuables worth N1, 000, 000 (one



Talatu

million naira).

According to the prosecution, the convicts also kidnapped the son of Bashir Rimin Zayam, and the daughter of Alh. Sha'anin Mohammed, and took them to an unknown destination, thereafter demanded and collected the sum of N1, 400, 000 as ransom before releasing the hostages.

The High Court charged them of the offenses of criminal conspiracy, armed robbery and kidnapping which, it said, contradicts

section 4 (1) of the kidnapping, theft of cattle and rape (special provision) Law 2017, Section 3 (2) of the kidnapping, theft of cattle (special provision) Law 2017 and Section 1 (2) of the robbery and Firearms special provision Act LFN 2004.

The case which was filed as the State versus the five suspects were adjudicated at the Bauchi High Court 1, handled by counsels S. A Gumba Esq, Patrick Owoicho Esq, and Dr. Ibrahim Dannuma Esq.

Marshal Abubakar commended the Governor for signing the Executive Order prohibiting illegal mining activities in the state. According to the CAS, "Putting an end to illegal mining activities will enable Taraba State to harness the wealth beneath its soil as well as discourage acts of criminality since it has now become clear that illegal mining activities are directly linked to terrorism and banditry."

On the security risks posed by the extensive border Taraba shares with Cameroun, the CAS informed the Governor that he was not unmindful of the vast expanse of porous border land measuring about 107 Km which Taraba State shares with the Republic of Cameroun and the security threats that this poses for Taraba and indeed the entire nation.

He then assured him that the NAF would collaborate with his government in patrolling the vast border while also giving confidence to Tarabans to thrive. According to the CAS, "Being one of our own, be rest assured of NAF's full cooperation and support until you succeed in delivering the dividends of democracy to your people."

From TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi

Benue State Governor, Rev. Fr. Hyacinth Alia has pledged his administration's commitment towards tackling issues threatening peaceful coexistence and harmony in the state.

The governor gave the assurance at the New Banquet Hall, Government House, Makurdi when he played host to a delegation from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

He thanked the United Nations for always offering help, restoring hope to the hopeless, giving respite to the traumatized, providing shelter to the homeless and helping to build a better future for those that have lost their livelihoods as a result of crisis.

"In short, you have not only been saving lives but have been ensuring that the rights and human dignity of those being violated, persecuted or subjected to violence get respite.

You find for them respect and safety that their own people or authorities sometimes deny them. Above all, you build for them a better future away from their original homes, thus bringing meaning and happiness into their lives again," the governor stated.

While reiterating his administration's resolve to return the internally displaced persons back to their ancestral homes, the governor assured the group of his government's genuine commitment to having a robust engagement that will usher in practical pathways to solving the

Alia commits to tackle threat to peace



Alia

multiple issues bedeviling peace and harmony in the state.

He appreciated the UNHCR for donating 10 Oxygen Concentrators to the state, saying the gesture will go a long way in helping the government to improve its healthcare delivery services to Benue people.

Earlier in her address, leader of the delegation and Head of UNHCR sub-office Ogoja, Ms Irene Omendi appreciated Governor Alia for welcoming the delegation to the state especially for allowing refugees of Cameroon descent to settle in Ikyogen, Kwande Local Government Area of the state.

She said the hospitality the state government has

granted the refugees and peaceful coexistence noticeable between the locals and refugees was commendable.

Ms Omendi while commending the Alia led administration for its efforts at returning the IDPs in the state to their ancestral homes, called for more support for the IDPs through provision of schools, hospitals and other basic amenities but assured of her organisation's continued support including in the area of capacity building.

She said because of the hospitality accorded the refugees by the state government, the UNHCR has decided to donate 10 Oxygen Concentrators at Abande, Ikyogen and at St. Monica's Hospital Adikpo, as medical intervention to people of the area.

Police investigate assassination of 58 year old woman

From Willie Attah, Gombe

Police in Gombe State has launched investigation into the gruesome hacking to death of a 58 year old woman in her residence in Jeka-dafari quarters of the State capital.

Information reaching our correspondent says Aishatu Abdullahi, a mother of eight (8), was slaughtered like a ram around 09:00 pm Friday (20/10/2023) night by suspected hired assassins who stormed the residence and escaped with the victim's mobile phone after the act.

It was also gathered that Police operatives visited the scene shortly after the incident and rushed the victim

to the Federal Teaching Hospital Gombe, where she was certified dead by a medical doctor.

Meanwhile, the Commissioner of Police in charge of Operations Department, Gombe State Command, CP Hayatu Usman on behalf of the State Commissioner of Police, has ordered the Assistant Commissioner of Police, Criminal Investigation Department, to personally investigate the murder incident.

The Police Public Relations

Officer, Gombe State Command, Asp Mahid Muazu Abubakar, in a statement said, on receipt of the information, police operatives moved to the scene where Mrs. Abdullahi was found in a pool of blood and was immediately rushed to the Gombe State Specialist Hospital, where she was sadly pronounced dead.

He added in a phone call with our correspondent that the corpse was then taken to the Federal Teaching Hospital.

While condoling the family of Aishatu Abdullahi, the police assured the public that it is doing everything possible to apprehend the perpetrators of the heinous crime and bring them to justice.

"We urge anyone with information that could help us in our investigation to come forward and give us the information", Mahid appealed.

The Command also urged residents to remain calm and vigilant and to report any suspicious activities or individuals to the police. He added that "without the support of the public, we may not get to the root of these problems because some of these criminals are from within the community being terrorized".

He reminded the general public that the restriction of movement earlier imposed in the state was still in place as anybody who violates the order will face the full wrath of the law. It also encouraged Okada and Keke NAPEP riders to help the police with information.



Oqua Etim

Alabi

Sports

Hojlund from Copenhagen struggles to Man U star

Manchester United have a point to prove when they face Copenhagen on Tuesday, and so does Rasmus Hojlund. After making their worst-ever start to a Champions League group stage by losing to both Bayern Munich and Galatasaray, Erik ten Hag's side's future in Europe's elite competition is on the line. Victory is a must if they want to stand a decent chance of staying in a competition in which they have barely made a dent since Sir Alex Ferguson's retirement. And Hojlund could hold the key to getting those crucial three points. RICHARD MARTIN writes

THE 20-year-old has made a flying start in the Champions League, scoring three goals in his first two games and doing his best Ruud van Nistelrooy impression against Galatasaray. Hojlund seems to come alive on the biggest stage, and he will be even more motivated on Tuesday as he comes face-to-face with his boyhood club, who broke his heart less than two years ago.

There are many ways to get to Manchester United, but Hojlund's is one of the strangest routes imaginable, the type you find right at the bottom of Skyscanner when searching for the cheapest flight possible. Copenhagen to Manchester, via Sturm Graz and Atalanta. Total price: €103m (£90m/\$109m).

Copenhagen, however, saw just €1.75m of that when they sold their homegrown striker to Sturm Graz in January 2022 and must have been horrified to see him blossom into one of the top centre-forwards in Europe on his travels.

Hojlund, who is from the outskirts of the Danish capital, began his footballing education with local side HUI and had a brief stint with Brøndby before joining Copenhagen as a teenager. He made his first-team debut at the age of 17 in October 2020, ending the season with four appearances in the Danish Superliga.

He was given more opportunities in his second campaign, making 15 appearances, albeit only one start between July and January. He failed to score in the league but did manage to fill his boots in their Europa Conference League campaign, netting five times across 11 appearances, only one of which was a start.

Hojlund had his work cut out as he was competing with fellow Danish striker Jonas Wind, four years his senior, for Copenhagen's single centre-forward berth. Wind had scored 15 goals the previous campaign, and after a strong start to the season he was snapped up by Bundesliga side Wolfsburg for €12m (£10.5m/\$12.7m) in January 2022.

Hojlund would have seemed a natural fit to take the baton from Wind as first-choice striker, but the club were not ready to put all their faith in the then-18-year-old and signed Senegal international Khouma Babacar instead on a free transfer from Sassuolo.

Envisaging more time on the bench, Hojlund left Copenhagen three days before the transfer window shut for Austrian side Sturm Graz.

Moving to Graz side felt like a sideways move at best, if not a step down, especially considering Hojlund's emotional ties with Copenhagen. But being snubbed by his boyhood club did not seem to affect his confidence. Indeed, when asked by his new employers what his playing style was like, he compared himself to Erling Haaland! He was thrown straight into the starting line-up for the next game at WSG Tirol and scored twice on his debut.

"Both in our club and in the media, people laughed or didn't take it seriously, because he was only 18 and hadn't really shown anything," coach Christian Ilzer told *The Daily Mail*. "But for me it showed how confident he was. After his first game, where he scored twice, all the journalists knew what he was talking about and saw that there are similarities, with their size, power and finishing ability."

"The pitch is a concert stage and he is a rock star that excites the crowd. He is naturally comfortable in the spotlight. That's why he is made for the biggest stages."

Tirol defender Raffael Behounek was one of Hojlund's first victims and was left in awe after his debut. "He will be worth every penny," Behounek told



Laola1. "He is an absolute machine. When he has space, he is very difficult to defend against."

Hojlund scored in his next two games for Sturm Graz and finished the season with six league goals. He was even more prolific at the start of his second season, notching three league goals and scoring in a Champions League qualifier against Dinamo Kyiv. Atalanta came in with a €17m (\$18m) bid in August and the Austrians did not hesitate in cashing in.

"We were sure that he was a diamond that needed polishing. He had everything we were looking for in a striker," Ilzer added. "He surprised me in all aspects. His confidence and attitude for an 18-year-old was exceptional. Also his height, speed, finishing ability and presence in front of the goal was even better than expected. It was like he had been held back before. I wish I could have worked with him longer."

Just like at Sturm Graz, Hojlund scored on his full debut with Atalanta, netting in a 2-0 win at Monza. That proved to be his only goal until the start of the new year as he was forced to make do with substitutes' appearances in Serie A.

He truly settled into the team at the start of 2023, netting in each of his first

four matches before producing an exhilarating display in a 2-0 win at Lazio, ravaging the home defence for 90 minutes and sealing victory by sliding in to score.

"Hojlund has this spirit, energy, intensity, but also technical quality that is just remarkable," said Atalanta boss Gian Piero Gasperini. "He still has so much margin for improvement, too. He is so quick, he's under 11 seconds over 100m and that's not even trying very hard. Considering his height, he has a low centre of gravity and can move his legs very fast. I am convinced he'll have a great career, he just gets stronger every day."

Hojlund ended the season just as he had begun it, by scoring against Monza. That rounded off the campaign with nine Serie A goals in only 20 starts and put United on alert.

"His talents came much later" Having turned away from a potential move for Harry Kane due to the England striker's age, Tottenham's huge asking price and a sense of dread at doing business with Daniel Levy, United saw Hojlund as a more attractive long-term investment.

They did not envisage paying the £72m (\$88m) fee they would eventually part with in exchange for

Hojlund, but Atalanta held all the cards and United felt the striker's potential and his track record for constant improvement meant their investment would be worth it in the long run.

What they have seen so far is what Sturm Graz coach Ilzer described, a rough diamond. Hojlund is capable of breath-taking surges down the pitch when he gets between the lines, as he produced against Galatasaray, but he is still far from the finished article, as demonstrated by the fact he is yet to score in the Premier League.

But United are in this for the long haul, unlike Copenhagen, who cut Hojlund loose just as he was about to blossom. The Danish giants are not the only club that were unconvinced by Hojlund's natural talent, either.

Christian Mouroux, his former coach at first club HUI, has said that Hojlund's brothers, twins Emil and Oscar, who are still at Copenhagen, "were more obvious talents". He told *The Daily Mail*: "Rasmus wasn't a standout. There were other players his age just as good. There was no single moment when we thought he was going to be a star. His talents you see today came much later. I won't lie, I'm very surprised by how much Rasmus went for."

"He is so hard-working, he is so

dedicated"

Hojlund compensated for any lack of talent with a bloody-minded quest for self-improvement, constantly practising his shooting and his skills through one-on-one sessions with his father, who built a football pitch in the basement of the family home. And when Hojlund returns to his hometown, he heads back to HUI to practice.

Given how he has witnessed Hojlund's remarkable development in such a short space of time, Mouroux does not blame Copenhagen for not sticking with Hojlund. "I would say the short story behind that is that Rasmus has always been insanely dedicated to his personal development," he told *The Manchester Evening News*. "Looking back on it, they had a lot of other talented strikers and he was super young, so to some extent I can kind of understand why they did it, they believed in some of the other strikers with more experience than him."

"But I do think they're surprised he has made this journey he has, that he's gone through this development at this speed he has. With the knowledge I have of him, it's not surprising to me because he is so hard-working, he is so dedicated, I cannot tell you how many times I have seen him on his own just training by himself."

"I've always known something special was there with him, just in regards to his commitment to his football, but that he has done it at this speed is definitely spectacular."

Under the bright lights of Old Trafford and on what is sure to be an emotionally charged night as United pay tribute to Sir Bobby Charlton, Hojlund has the chance to show Copenhagen first-hand what they could have had if they had shown a little more faith in one of their own.

"It is a special game for him," said ten Hag. "He grew up there at this club and you know he will be highly motivated. That's for me, for the team, but especially of course from him to send that in the right direction."

The right direction on Tuesday will be the Copenhagen goal and hopefully, for United's sake, back on the road towards the Champions League knockout stage.

Sports

We are working hard in our scoring ability-Mangut

By ANDRE D. BISYIT

COACH Mbwas Mangut of Plateau United Football Club of Jos has disclosed that he is working hard in the club's scoring ability to enable them score in both home and away games.

He revealed that, the sports journalists during a post match press briefing after his boys beat visiting Sunshine Stars Football Club of Akure 1-0 in the match Day 5 of the Nigerian Professional Football League, (NPFL) played at the Zaria Road Stadium Jos on Sunday.

"Actually we are lacking final touch in front of goal. In the few games we've played our goals are less and we created so much programs in order to deal with the situation and we are still going to work more to see how we are going to improve in our scoring abilities," he said.

He further described the visitors as a disciplined and a good side who blocked a lots chances created by his boys.

On his part, Edith Agoye, Technical Adviser, Sunshine Stars Football Club of Akure described that encounter as a tactical one.

"Today we came with a game plan to restrict their



Mangut

dominance on the field, especially in the center and I think we've achieved our objectives to a large extent," he maintained.

"Sunshine Stars is a club that is growing up, but unfortunately last season we

loss majority of our players and we are rebuilding another team".

" Though we are not getting the expected results, I believe once we continue to work hard the good results will start coming," concluded.

NFF contacted us for return tickets - Onazi

FORMER Lazio midfielder Ogenyi Onazi revealed that return tickets were purchased for the Nigerian national team in anticipation of their 2013 Africa Cup of Nations qualification tie against Côte d'Ivoire, Soccernet.ng reports.

At the time, the Super Eagles of Nigeria, led by the late Stephen Keshi, were considered underdogs and underrated due to their previous performances.

Reports suggest that the Nigeria Football Federation had already arranged return tickets, assuming they wouldn't defeat the formidable Ivory Coast team in the quarterfinals.

Onazi explained in an interview with Soccernet's Managing Editor, Lolade Adewuyi, that they were asked about their post-match plans to determine their travel arrangements.

"It was not handed out to us, but we were contacted. They were asking, 'Where are you going to? Are you going to Nigeria, or are you going back to your club?'" he said.

Onazi, who was an active member of Lazio at the time, felt embarrassed by the notion and questioned the pessimism surrounding their chances.

"It was really embarrassing. Not because they were asking per se, but I was saying, 'Is this how we are going to leave the tournament?' and we have not played the game. I didn't even say anything to the person who was asking. I said, 'Leave my ticket; I will find my way when the time comes.' But I had this positivity, and I said, 'No, it's



Onazi

not possible. We cannot come to this tournament and go just like that. So why should we give up when we have not even taken to the pitch?"

Prior to the match, team captain Joseph Yobo, who had a disagreement with former Chelsea star Mikel Obi, put aside their issues and delivered a motivating speech to his team mates, championing their victory against the Elephants.

"Something interesting happened before the match against Ivory Coast. The big boss had a meeting after our lunch. When he finished, Joseph Yobo, the captain, said we should all wait. So when he said we should wait, he had been having this little issue with Mikel [Obi]. So immediately the coaching staff went out, he just burst at Mikel [Obi] immediately." Onazi recalled.

After the team calmed down, Yobo addressed the squad: "I

know I have some issues with Mikel, but that's okay. We have a very important game ahead of us. And I know I am not starting this game, but I know you guys in there will do us proud. Yes, we must have these small fights, but it's to strengthen us and show us that we are strong as a team. And I am wishing you guys all the best. You guys go out there and prove that we can beat these guys. It's good that we are the underdogs, and it's better we are already written off by our country. We know that we have tickets already to go back to our country and clubs."

Mikel also spoke, saying, "Guys, yes, we will fight ourselves inside, but let's fight our opponents outside."

The Super Eagles won the game 2-1, with goals from Emmanuel Emenike, Cheick Tiote, and Sunday Mba, advancing to the semi-finals where they faced Mali.

Paris 2024 Olympic Games: Onyenezide replaces Ayinde

MIDFIELDER Esther Onyenezide, who impressed at last year's FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup finals in Costa Rica as Nigeria reached the quarterfinals, has been drafted to take the place of 2023 FIFA World Cup star, Halimatu Ayinde in Nigeria's squad for the 2024 Women Olympic Football Tournament fixture against Ethiopia's senior national team.

The Guardian said that, the delegation of home-based players, technical and backroom staff from Nigeria flew into Addis Ababa on Sunday for tomorrow's opening leg encounter at the Abebe Bekila Stadium. The foreign-based players have started arriving for the big match as well.

The Super Falcons will host the second leg of the second-round fixture at the MKO Abiola Stadium, Abuja on October 31, 2023.

Midfielder, Regina Otu, who missed the FIFA Women's World Cup finals in Australia and New Zealand in the summer, and defender Osinachi Ohale, who plays for Pachuca FC of Mexico, have been ruled out of the fixture. Another World Cup star, Christy Ucheibe of Portuguese club, SL Benfica, is also out of the encounter.

The winner on aggregate will confront the winner of the fixture between

Cameroon and Uganda. The Indomitable Lionesses drew a bye, while Uganda overpowered Rwanda 4-3 on aggregate.

Ethiopia's senior girls, nicknamed Lucy, turned back the senior women's national team of Chad 10-0 in the first round of the series, played in July. The Ethiopians won the first leg 6-0 in Addis Ababa on July 13, before lashing their hosts 4-0 in N'Djamena five days later.

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) has appointed Lamia Atman from Algeria as referee for tomorrow's encounter, with her compatriots, Asma Ferial Ouahab, Sara Kemmad and Ghada Mehat as assistant referee 1, assistant referee 2 and fourth official respectively.

The team to Ethiopia include goalkeepers Chiamaka Nnadozie (Paris

FC); Tochukwu Oluhi (Shualat Alsharqia FC, Saudi Arabia); and Monle Oyono (Bayelsa Queens).

The defenders are Comfort Folorunsho (Edo Queens); Oluwatosin Demehin (Stade de Reims, France); Michelle Alozie (Houston Dash, USA); Nicole Payne (Paris Saint Germain, France); Jumoke Alani (Edo Queens); and Rofiat Imuran (Stade de Reims, France), while the midfielders include Esther Onyenezide (FC Robo Queens); Peace Efihi (Sporting Club de Braga, Portugal); Rasheedat Ajibade (Atletico Madrid FC, Spain); and Toni Payne (Sevilla FC, Spain).

Among the forwards are: Omorinsola Babajide (Coasta Adeje Tenerife Egatesa, Spain); Ifeoma Onumonu (NY/NJ Gotham FC, USA); Asisat Oshoala (FC Barcelona Feminine, Spain); Uchenna Kanu

(Racing Louisville, USA); and Opeyemi Ajakaye (FC Robo Queens).



Nigeria's players pose for a team photo during the Australia and New Zealand 2023 Women's World Cup round of 16 football match

Falcons stars doubtful for qualifiers against Ethiopia

THE quartet of Gift Monday, Halimatu Ayinde, Christy Ucheibe and Regina Otu are doubtful for the second round Paris 2024 Olympic Games qualifiers between Nigeria's Super Falcons and Ethiopia.

The Guardian said that, the four players are likely not to be available for the two-legged fixtures against Ethiopia due to visa hitches and injuries.

All home-based players and officials are expected to departed

Nigeria on Sunday for Addis Ababa venue for the first leg of the qualifiers scheduled for Wednesday 25 October.

The home-based players will be joined by the foreign-based players for the away tie.

Meanwhile, former Falconets star and current Aribu Queens midfielder Esther Onyenezide has been invited for the qualifiers against Ethiopia.

The second leg between the Super Falcons and Ethiopia comes up on Tuesday, 31

October. World football governing body FIFA awarded CAF two slots for the 2024 Summer Olympic Games in France.

The last time the Falcons featured at the Olympic Games was at Beijing 2008 in China.

At the 2023 FIFA women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand, the Falcons reached the round of 16 before losing on penalty shootout to England.



Super Falcons

Sports



Enyimba

Moroccan authorities delay Enyimba's flight to Casablanca

ENYIMBA'S contingent to Morocco, by 7 p.m. on Wednesday. But as of past midnight on Monday, 23 October, Enyimba's travelling contingent was still stranded at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport in Lagos as Moroccan officials failed to give authorisation to the team's chartered aircraft from the international wing of the airport to land in Casablanca.

The team, which is still optimistic about upturning the one-goal deficit at the Godswill International Stadium in Uyo, was forced to return to their hotel after spending six hours and 30 minutes on the aircraft.

A 1-0 first-leg defeat has saddled Enyimba with a mountain to climb against Wydad AC of Morocco in the second-leg quarterfinal encounter in Casablanca, Morocco, by 7 p.m. on Wednesday.

They were waiting for authorisation to land from the Moroccan authorities.

The Enyimba management perceives this incident as a deliberate plot by the Moroccan authorities and Wydad AC to frustrate Enyimba FC.

The management of the team condemned the delay, which has prevented the team from having a smooth trip to honour the second leg tie of the AFL quarterfinal. As of the time of this report, Enyimba and Nigeria Football Federation officials had officially lodged complaints with the Confederation of African Football (CAF).

Son, Maddison send Spurs top of league

TOTTENHAM Hotspur returned to the top of the Premier League as goals from Son Heung-min and James Maddison comfortably saw off Fulham.

BBC SPORT said that, Spurs had only dropped points this season in London derbies - against Arsenal and Brentford - but they were always in control against a limited Fulham side.

Captain Son curled in an excellent goal in the 36th minute after Calvin Bassey's poor pass was cut out by Micky van de Ven.

Maddison doubled the lead in the second half with an almost identical goal, as another Bassey pass was cut out and the England playmaker was teed up by Son to slot home confidently.

Fulham went closest when Joao Palhinha forced Guglielmo Vicario into an impressive stop with a header from a corner.

Tottenham have made an impressive start to life under Ange Postecoglou and they began the game with the air of a team full of confidence.

Richarlison curled a shot wide when he should have done better after he was set up by Dejan Kulusevski, but Son soon curled in the opener for his seventh goal of the season.

Tottenham could have made it 2-0 before half-time but Kulusevski's effort was blocked from close range after some excellent play involving Maddison, Son and Destiny Udogie.

Fulham caused Tottenham problems on the counter attack at times but could not make Spurs pay before



son

Maddison's goal secured the win to move Spurs two points clear of Manchester City at the top of the league.

A lot was made of what life would look like for Spurs after Harry Kane left for Bayern Munich, but Postecoglou's impressive impact has masked their former striker's absence.

Son Heung-min continues to fill the goal void left by Kane and scored his seventh goal of the season in another superb

performance in the centre of Tottenham's attack.

The South Korea forward has taken on the armband as well as the central striker position and looks at home, with Kulusevski and Maddison for support.

Maddison has looked a perfect fit since he arrived in the summer and his goal against Fulham was surprisingly the first he has scored in his new home.

Romano reveals the scoop about Liverpool links to Osimhen

FOLLOWING the reports of Jurgen Klopp wanting to add another striker to his arsenal at Liverpool, Napoli star Victor Osimhen saw himself linked with a move to the Reds. The 24-year-old Nigerian international has been in top form for the last two seasons.

Newsnow said that, however, renowned football transfer expert Fabrizio Romano has provided an update that might quell the enthusiasm around these rumours linking Osimhen with a move to the Reds.

Romano shared some insights into Liverpool's interest in Victor Osimhen. Contrary to earlier reports claiming that Liverpool had already reached an agreement on personal terms with the Nigerian striker,

Romano clarified that Osimhen had not agreed to any terms with Liverpool or any other club, not even with his current club, Napoli.

Fabrizio Romano talks about Victor Osimhen links with Liverpool; clears rumours.

"Some media is reporting that Victor Osimhen already agreed contract terms with Liverpool,"

It appears that the situation regarding Osimhen's future is still very much up in the air, despite growing interest from several clubs, including Liverpool.

The Osimhen transfer saga has gained momentum due to reported issues behind the scenes at Napoli, which could potentially see the talented

HARRY Kane scored his ninth goal in eight Bundesliga games as Bayern Munich claimed a comfortable victory at Mainz.

BBC SPORT said that, England forward Kane nodded in to increase Bayern's lead after Kingsley Coman's superb driven effort had put the German champions ahead.

Anthony Caci replied for the hosts before the break but Leon Goretzka's low shot sealed the visitors' win.

Bayern are third in the table, two points adrift of Bayer Leverkusen and a point behind VfB Stuttgart.

Along with Leverkusen and Borussia Dortmund, Thomas Tuchel's side remain unbeaten in the league and are currently five points better off than in 2022-23 at the corresponding stage of the season.

Kane's prolific form since arriving from Tottenham in the summer has also been key to Bayern making their best start to a domestic campaign since 2016-17.

Kane continues superb scoring form



Kane

'Charlton will always be 'a huge inspiration'

MANCHESTER United manager Erik ten Hag says Sir Bobby Charlton will continue to inspire the club following his death aged 86.

BBC SPORT said that, Ten Hag expects an emotional Old Trafford atmosphere on

Tuesday evening when FC Copenhagen visit in the Champions League.

It will be United's first home game since club legend Charlton's death was announced on Saturday.

"He is a huge inspiration for us every day," said Ten Hag.

"He is in front of Old Trafford, with Denis Law and George Best [in the statue]. He is always with us. I am sure it will be a very emotional evening."

The 1966 World Cup winner will be remembered on the cover of Tuesday's match programme, with a wreath laid on his seat in the director's box and players and staff wearing black armbands.

There will also be a minute's silence prior to kick-off, with a commemoration taking place earlier in the day at the club's Uefa Youth League fixture.

While not all details are finalised, United also intend to use Sunday's derby against Manchester City to celebrate the life of Charlton, with a minute's applause and expressions of remembrance on flags and banners inside Old Trafford.

There will be a minute's applause before all of Tuesday and Wednesday's matches in the Football League, with players in those games also wearing black armbands in honour of a man many regard as England's greatest ever player.

On Monday around 1,500 people, including club greats Brian Kidd, Pat Crerand, Gary Neville and Wes Brown, visited the club's stadium to pay their respects and share their tributes to Charlton within a book of condolence.

The 'Holy Trinity' statue outside United's ground has become the centre of the floral tributes to Charlton, who won three league titles and the FA Cup with the club as well as skipping the Red Devils to their first European Cup triumph in 1968, 10 years after the tragedy at Munich which changed his life.

"Bobby was a legend, a giant, not only for Manchester

United but for football. His legacy and the high standards [he set] are what we have to live every day," said Ten Hag.

"Our thoughts are with his wife, his children, and his grandchildren."

Ill health has prevented Charlton from attending games at Old Trafford in recent years but previously he was a regular presence at matches.

Portuguese defender Diogo Dalot met Charlton after joining United in 2018, and his winning goal at Sheffield United on Saturday was the kind of spectacular 25-yard effort Charlton was synonymous with.

"It's a big privilege when you compare Sir Bobby's goals and they relate to a goal of your own," said the former Porto full-back.

"I was fortunate enough to get to know him. Since I arrived at the club, he was always there after the games with us. If we won or lost he was always there to give you a word of appreciation. At times he would even say we had to play a little bit better."

"When I arrived I always tried to know a little more about the history of the club, whether it was close history or the longer history. Hearing about Sir Bobby was something you had to have done."

"He represents the standards of this club. It's something we have to look back [on], and if legends like this won the best titles, won the best games, scored the best goals, we have to follow in



Charlton



Quest



writer

RONÉL RENSBURG, PhD

FRAGMENT

"In Socratic terms, one finds a striking similarity: the moral person does not put money or anything else before virtue". Both Socrates and Confucius base their approaches upon authentic inspirational motivation. Each proposes a transcendent vision of fulfilment, justice, and peace based upon the right ordering of relationships."

RONÉL RENSBURG, PhD

Archbishop Tutu as moral sage

Continued from last week

AUTHENTIC transformational leadership provides a reasonable and realistic concept of self - a self that is connected to friends, family, and community, whose welfare may be more important to them than their own.

Their moral obligations are grounded in a broader conception of individuals within community and related social norms and cultural beliefs. Transformational leadership is consistent with Judaic-Christian philosophical traditions and discourses on the leadership of the moral sage that presuppose a trusting community as the central life context.

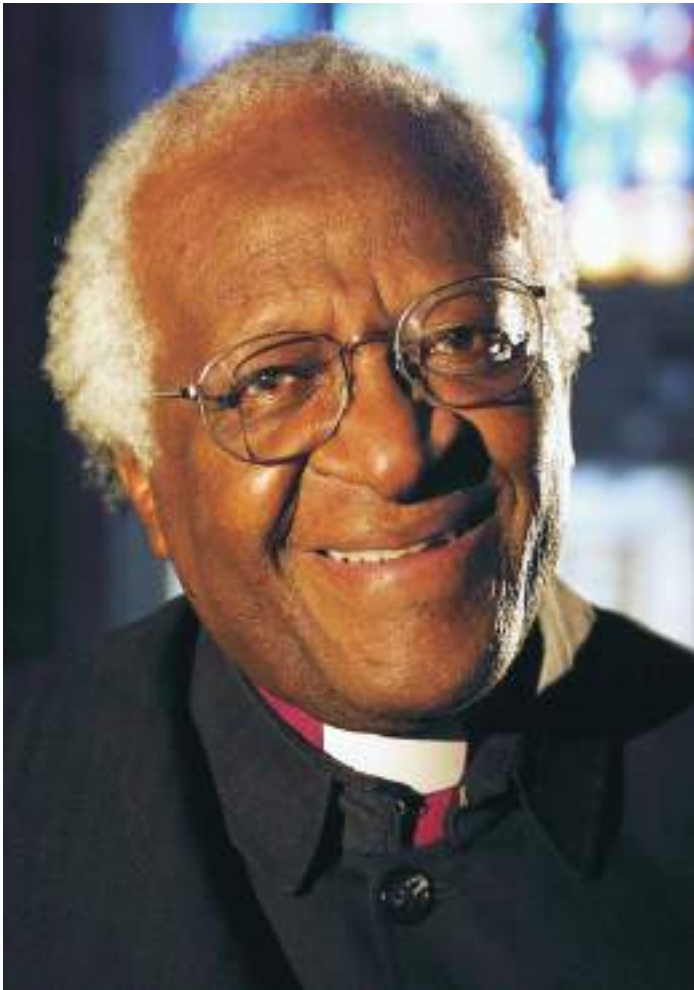
In leadership, character matters. This is not to deny that evil people can bring about good things or that good people can lead the way to moral ruin. Rather, leadership provides a moral compass and, over the long term, both personal development and the common good are best served by a moral compass that reads true.

Here some lessons can be drawn from the traditions of the moral sage and social prophet that have enjoyed prominence in a wide variety of cultures. Whether visionary or ascetic, the moral sage and social prophet have also widely been perceived as agents of change, as well as people to be emulated and as leaders of others, not followers. Both Socrates and Confucius have come to epitomise leaders with authentic idealised influence. There is no doubt that over the centuries they have taken on heroic dimensions.

Their framing narratives underscore a fundamental dynamic of leadership. Each proposed to his followers the highest ethical standards that they themselves implemented in their own lives. More importantly, in terms of authenticity, each was recognised as a moral sage and leader by others, not by self-proclamation.

Historically, the central focus of ethical concern in Chinese traditions manifests a right ordering of personal relationships.

Epitomised in Confucius' five relations" , (Tu 10 Chapter 3; Taylor & Arbuckle 1995) Chinese ethics emphasises personal virtue and specify proper conduct in family, kinship, and friendship



Tutu

relations, as well as among social equals and between superiors and subordinates in socio-political organisations and institutions.

The social and political order has always been seen as a moral issue and it plays a critical role in realising humanity's ethical destiny. The virtue of ren (human-heartedness, benevolence) and the virtue of yi (righteousness) are the grounding virtues of the moral life.

They express the way (dao) that one existentially embraces. The moral person in each tradition would sacrifice anything for the sake of virtue.

For example, the Confucian moral tradition is strikingly clear about the relation of profits to moral virtue. From the Analects (4.5) one reads: "Confucius said, 'Wealth and honor are what every person desires.

But if they have been obtained in violation of moral principles, they must not be kept. Poverty

and humble station are what every person dislikes. But if they can be avoided only in violation of moral principles, they must not be avoided. If a superior person departs from humanity (ren), how can s/he fulfil that name? A

ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU 752 superior person never abandons ren, even for the lapse of a single meal. In moments of haste, one acts according to it. In times of difficulty or confusion, one acts according to it' ..."

In Socratic terms, one finds a striking similarity: the moral person does not put money or anything else before virtue" (Apology 4 A) Both Socrates and Confucius base their approaches upon authentic inspirational motivation.

Each proposes a transcendent vision of fulfilment, justice, and peace based upon the right ordering of relationships.

Each is transcendent and grasps the beyond in our midst", a better future. Each transforms

by invitation, not by coercion. Each manifests consistency between word and deed. The inspiration is simple: virtue is its own reward.

The basic scenario of the moral sage in each tradition emphasises virtue and moral character. In the days leading up to his condemnation, Socrates was taken up with a single question: how to be excellent at being human? He sharply criticised the pseudo-transformational sophists - the purveyors of false wisdom - because they did not know themselves and they abandoned fidelity to the way of truth.

While pretending to be wise, they were foolish. The Socratic enterprise is grounded in a relentless pursuit of the truth, in the development of wisdom and the cultivation of virtue.

Indeed, Socrates himself transformed others precisely because of his fearless commitment to virtue.

For Confucius, the moral sage (shengren) is the key person in bringing about personal righteousness and social justice.

A superior person (jyundz) is a moral person, who walks the moral way and attempts to practice virtue through self-cultivation.

Both the sage and the superior person live under the restraint of virtue and aim to transform society accordingly. A superior person is performe a moral leader (Analects 17:3).

The common, inferior or small person (xiaoren) either does not know or does not follow the way and is not a positive moral force.

In today's world, Socrates and Confucius seem almost naive, offering a vision based on the premise that through personal cultivation, guided by moral leaders, people will develop strong moral character and embrace virtue above all other things and, in so doing, will transform themselves and society. But from this simple framework of truth-wisdom-virtue a vision of the transforming power of the moral sage has flowed down through the ages.

The heart of the moral enterprise is the development of

good character, which is defined by commitment to virtue in all circumstances. This framework was integrated into Judaic-Christian traditions through personages such as Augustine, Aquinas, and Maimonides. In Judaic-Christian traditions, the moral sage (saint, holy. .

The business world is obviously deficient with regards to leadership in the area of sustainability, but the 360-organizational sustainability and former Anglican Arc-Bishop Desmond Tutu famous demands that everyone is in proximity to fill-up a leadership position in society [22]. This implies that a corporate shared value (CSV) norm is needed by those who intend to fill-up the existing leadership vacuum [2 3] .

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. A new language of leadership today is characterised by the prominence of value-based leadership (Crossman 2010; Mandela 1995; Rensburg 2002; Russel 2001). Value-based leadership is an inclusive term referring to leadership traits such as ethical, spiritual, servant and transformational leadership. . . .

Spiritual and ethical transformational leadership: Critical discourse analysis within a practical theology praxisonal" character traits, and, if they do not what is instead responsible for their behavior. These character traits include the classic moral virtues such as compassion, honesty, and courage, along with the classic moral vices such . . .

I present a new challenge to the Rawlsian insistence on ideal theory as a compass orienting concrete policy choices. My challenge, focusing on global politics, consists of three claims. First, I contend that our global ideal can become more ambitious over time. Second, I argue that Rawlsian ideal theory's level of ambition might change because of concrete policy choices, responding to moral.

Concluded