

FG reviews draft policy on local vaccine manufacturing
P 2



We don't want to rely on foreign artisans-NBTE

Page 28

Youth unemployment: Include UYAN in national budget -Irekamba Page 2

Arrest of investigative journalist unlawful

Page 10

THE Nigeria Standard



VOL. 13 NO. 809

WEDNESDAY, November 29, 2023

N200

Email: nigeriastandarddailynewspaper@yahoo.com



Tinubu

Tinubu inherited N6trillion debts in road projects - Works ministry

The Federal Ministry of Works has said that the President Bola Tinubu-led Nigerian government inherited a debt burden of over N6trillion from the ongoing road projects in the country that his predecessor, Muhammadu Buhari,

handed to him. The Dave Umahi-led ministry noted that Tinubu had approved the sum of N300 billion for immediate palliative road works across the 36 states of federation and the Federal Capital Territory. The ministry made this known in a statement on Monday, saying out of the

N300 billion, N100 billion was meant for immediate palliative works in 36 states and FCT while N200 billion was meant for continuation of most of the inherited ongoing projects and few new but critical road projects across the country.

According to the release, President Tinubu has

directed that works in the palliative projects must commence before December 1, while observing all due process. The statement said, "The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is aware of the state of our road infrastructure which he inherited on the 29th day of May 2023. Without

prejudice to all the good efforts of the past administration on road infrastructure development which they tackled within the limit of their resources, the work to be done to change the ugly state of our roads is quite enormous. Mr. President is not complaining of the

Continued on page 2



Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang acknowledging cheers from the mammoth crowd that gathered at Old Airport roundabout, Jos to welcome him back from the Appeal Court Judgement in Abuja last week Saturday
Photo: DANLADI DUK

Mutfwang inspects rehabilitated roads in Jos-Bukuru metropolis

By PETER TITLE

Executive Governor of Plateau State, Barrister Caleb Mutfwang on Monday embarked on inspection of roads that were rehabilitated within Jos-Bukuru metropolis.

Residents of Jos who are beneficiaries of the roads

at any point visited, came out praising him for the developmental strides, particularly on the road projects he initiated.

The first port of call was the Plateau State Specialist Hospital roundabout, leading to Ibrahim Taiwo, Hill -

Station Junction, Rwang - Pam Street. After which Mutfwang in the company of his entourage, took off to Masalacin Juma'a, Zololo Junction, Angwan Rukuba to Millionaires Quarters among others.

Governor Mutfwang who

Continued on page 2

Nigeria, ECOWAS send delegation to Sierra Leone

Following a security breach that occurred in Sierra Leone on Sunday, Nigeria and ECOWAS on Monday sent a delegation to Freetown.

Sierra Leone President Julius Bio made this known in a post on X where he described the delegation

as 'high-powered.'

The delegation included Nigeria's National Security Adviser, Nuhu Ribadu; Nigeria's Chief of Defense Staff, Christopher Musa; Chief of Defence Military Intelligence, Emmanuel Udiandeye, and the President of the ECOWAS

Commission, Omar Touray.

According to Mr Bio, the delegation conveyed a message of solidarity from the Chairman of the ECOWAS Committee of Heads of State and Nigeria's President, Bola Tinubu, as

Continued on page 2

News

Tinubu inherited N6trillion debts in road projects - Works ministry



Continued from page 1

challenges he inherited in nearly all sectors of the economy, especially as it concerns our road infrastructure, but he is quite courageous as he had promised to tackle the problems head-on which he has started to do not minding the debt burden

inherited especially the funding gap of over Six Trillion Naira (N6T) from most of the inherited ongoing road projects.

"Mr. President has since reeled out plans of commitment, consistency, and innovations towards actualizing a sustainable road infrastructure development throughout the country. He has just approved a 2023 Supplementary budget of Three Hundred Billion Naira (N300B) for the Ministry of Works comprising of One Hundred Billion Naira (N100B) for immediate palliative works in 36 States and FCT and Two Hundred Billion Naira (N200B) for continuation of most of the inherited ongoing projects and very few new but critical road

projects.

"Mr. President has directed that works in those palliative projects must commence before 1st December 2023, while observing all due process. On the sections being frequently complained of by the public in all regions of the North and South of the country, Mr. President has equally isolated them and directed immediate actions on them and indeed work has started on all such roads. The public can crosscheck our claims and report back to us.

"The engagements of the Federal Ministry of Works will not be limited to these isolatedly reported cases but shall be holistic in our approach through these approved palliative measures and the interventions of FERMA in all the 36 States and FCT also."

Mutfwang inspects rehabilitated roads in Jos-Bukuru metropolis

Continued from page 1

was elated by the expression of appreciation for the initiative of the road networks, expressed satisfaction with the quality of work executed, emphasizing his administrations commitment to changing the developmental narratives in the state.

Governor Caleb Mutfwang who addressed residents of Masalacin Juma'a and Angwan Rukuba, restated his administration's determination at strengthening unity among Muslims and Christians as well as all the ethnic nationalities in the state.

According to him, the primary focus of his administration was to make roads motorable and construct new ones in order to enhance the beauty of the state capital and to boost the economy of Plateau State. He gave the assurance that plans were in the pipeline to embark on larger projects

in the near future.

"We want to ensure that every nook and cranny of Jos - Bukuru metropolis is improved to make the city a welcomed abode to all visitors and residents", Mutfwang assured.

Expressing satisfaction for the milestones achieved so far in roads projects, the Executive Governor, promised to execute more projects across the 17 Local Government Areas of the



Mutfwang

state. He affirmed that the government has just started. Adding "What you see, is just a tip of an iceberg. Despite financial constraints, we are determined to change the developmental narratives of Plateau State.

Speaking also, the Commissioner of Works, Honourable Bulus Lekshak and the General Manager, Plateau State Road Maintenance Agency (PSRMA), Engr. Luka Davou, assured of the present administration's commitment to improving citizens' living conditions.

They commended Governor Mutfwang for the timely release of funds which they revealed had enhanced the quality of work being executed. He promised not to disappoint the government and people of the state in that regard.

The governor was accompanied on the inspection visit by the Deputy Governor, Ngo Josephine Piyo, and the State Executive members.

NA begins probe of Covid-19 mismanagement funds

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the House of Representatives, on Monday, began a full-scale probe into the alleged mismanagement of COVID-19 intervention funds from 2020 to 2023 under former president, Muhammadu Buhari, as mandated by the House at the plenary session.

Addressing the opening session, the Chairman of the Committee, Bamidele Salam (PDP-OSUN), warned that the committee would not entertain delay tactics from the Ministries, Departments

and Agencies by way of asking for an extension of time.

"The committee is probing over 60 MDAs over several billions of naira in intervention funds allocated to them during the COVID-19 pandemic and we have given them enough time to prepare for this exercise," he said.

The committee will not entertain any extension of time from any of the MDAs. The committee is not after any individual or groups, we are going to be diligent in carrying out our

assignment."

Salam urged the Accountant General of the Federation, whose office he argued is crucial to the assignment, to make available relevant and competent personnel to the committee to facilitate the assignment.

Some of the MDAs that appeared before the committee included Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Teaching Hospital, Bauchi; the Federal Ministry of Communication, Innovation and Digital Economy; the Federal

Nigeria, ECOWAS send delegation to Sierra Leone

Continued from page 1

ECOWAS Heads of State and Government.

He noted that the delegation reiterated the sub-regional bloc's commitment towards preserving democracy and good governance across the sub-region while assuring of their readiness to work with his government towards forestalling any future security occurrences.

"My Government's commitment to democracy, justice, the well-being and safety of

our citizens remains unwavering," he said.

Sierra Leone's government on Sunday announced a nationwide curfew following an attack on a military armoury. The attack saw the abduction of prisoners from a correctional facility.

The government has, however, assured citizens that it is on top of the situation and has arrested some persons responsible for the attack including some senior military officers.

Mr Bio assured that his

government will continue to work towards preserving and promoting the "priceless peace" that Sierra Leone has enjoyed as a country since the end of its decade-long civil war 21 years ago.

The security breach in Sierra Leone is occurring during a period of political uncertainty in many West and Central African countries with the resurgence of military coups. Coups have taken place in countries like Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad and Gabon in recent years.



Climate change: Nigeria fails to implement tree planting project

During the 27th edition of the United Nations Global Climate Summit (COP27) last year, the Nigerian government announced to the world that they would engage vibrant youths in the country to plant and nurture 250,000 trees annually as part of an ambitious effort to accelerate climate action in the country.

But, over a year later, and less than five days to the commencement of the 28th session of the UN COP, preliminary findings by this medium suggest that no concrete move has been made towards fulfilling the ambitious tree-planting pledge.

The initiative, tagged "Project 250k" was launched by Nigeria's former Minister of Youth and Sport, Sunday Dare, at the Nigeria pavilion on the "Youth and Future Generation Day" at the 27th United Nations Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP27) in Egypt last year.

At COP27, the "Youth and Future Generation Day" is dedicated to the youths, in recognition of their crucial

role in achieving effective climate action and justice globally.

Upon announcing the "Project 250k" initiative at the well-attended side event, Mr Dare said they were targeting the youth as part of efforts to get them involved in the country's fight against the devastating impacts of climate change in Nigeria.

"We are launching a 250K project. This means we will be engaging 250,000 youths across the country, to plant 250,000 trees," the former minister said at the time.

He went further to tell delegates that the initiative will ensure that youths are paid for every tree planted and nurtured over the years, assuring that "we have secured global partners already."

In a further interview with our source on the sideline, Mr Dare explained that the goal of the initiative is not just about tree planting but the awareness that would be generated.

"These people (youths) that plant the trees would also

become ambassadors of Climate Change and then they can help spread the awareness and the information that is needed," Mr Dare said.

He said that a lot of activities are tied around the initiative and that his ministry is working with strategy implementation partners to actualise the goal of the initiative.

"We would work very closely with the Ministry of Environment and relevant agencies," Mr Dare said at the time.

When asked about "Project 250k", a top official of the Department of Climate Change (DCC) under the Ministry of Environment, who doesn't want his name in print since he was authorised to speak on the matter, said the last thing they heard about the tree-planting program was an invitation to be part of the Technical Working Group and an inauguration meeting "which my Director nominated me."

"I called the PA/SA to the Minister to confirm the event because we got it late and she said she would let me know once a new date is fixed that they will need us to co-drive the process with them which I assured her. Up until now have not heard anything, probably a change in administration caused the massive delay as the new HM Youths has not even reasoned that," the official said in a response to enquiry on the issue.

The DCC official said: "Maybe the COP28 platform will be used to remind them and get their response or planned action for the implementation as time is ticking fast."

Tree planting is one of the simplest and most effective ways of tackling and reducing the devastating impact of climate change caused by continuous greenhouse gas emissions.

While grilling the acting Permanent Secretary of the



Business & Economy

Why social development should be Africa's heart energy

In many parts of the world – including my home country, Nigeria – social challenges can be a greater barrier to delivering the energy transition than the technical ones. The energy industry has historically been very good at managing complex engineering challenges, but we are still learning how best to manage the more human issues that can hold back our progress in crucial areas. Writers CHIOMA AFE

This was one of the major topics of conversation for the industry, when I was speaking at the Africa Oil Week in Cape Town, in October this year. What struck me was that although local circumstances may vary considerably from market to market, the abiding lesson is that it is very hard for a company to be successful if the communities around it do not share in that success.

I have recently been through a transition myself – coming into the energy sector at an executive level after a career mostly spent in banking and consumer goods. This was eye-opening for me because my expectations were heavily influenced by my childhood in Port Harcourt in the Niger Delta, where my father was working for international oil companies. And my expectations were quite different to what I am seeing on the ground, working for a Nigerian energy business today.

From the industrial heartland of Africa's largest oil producer, it is easy to understand the central role that oil has played in shaping modern Nigeria. Although it is declining in status – from providing over 80 per cent of the federal government's revenue twenty years ago, to a little less than half today – it remains of critical importance to the economy, particularly in terms of foreign investment and exports.

However, oil has not been the driver of development that many had hoped for, over the past decades. Given the nature of the work involved, the industry was never going to create huge numbers of jobs, just tens of thousands of jobs in a country of over 200 million people. Far more seriously, it has not helped to close the gap fast enough on energy access, security and affordability for Nigerians. Over 75 million people still lack access to electricity, and earlier this year Petrol costs tripled, as the government withdrew subsidies.

When I was growing up in the 1990s, my perception of the international oil companies operating in the Niger Delta was that they were focused on taking as much of the value of our national resources as they could for themselves, while giving away not as much as expected back to local communities. Whether it was right or wrong, this perception is one of the major driving forces that has led to a very difficult operating environment. Theft, vandalism and sabotage remain endemic, with estimates that as much as a quarter of production could be getting siphoned.

This has been the cause of environmental issues such as oil spills and responsible for too many life-changing injuries and deaths related to the dangerous practice of illegal refining. Failing to share the benefits with local



communities has led to lost revenues, and increased costs across a range of areas from security to financing. And it is not just fossil fuels that face these issues – solar panel thefts are becoming increasingly commonplace as well.

This is why when I was making the decision to take on my current role at Seplat Energy, I was pleasantly surprised to find that addressing these challenges head-on was at the heart of the company's strategy. As a business based in Nigeria, our (Seplat Energy's) long-term success is linked to a cordial relationship with the communities where we operate and the country as a whole.

This is why we have made accelerating Nigeria's energy transition our number one corporate priority. Oil export remains very important for the economy – the income it provides today will be essential for the longer-term investments needed to move beyond the fossil fuel era. But much more can and should be done to build up the domestic electricity market, making practical use of the large gas resources that are too often just flared, as well as our considerable potential for renewables.

Increasing access to electricity is critical for driving the

development of the Nigerian economy. Reliable and affordable power is an essential precondition for investment in many sectors, from technology to manufacturing. It will also displace the imported diesel generators that are currently choking our homes and cities, and a major drain on the country's foreign exchange through the imported fuel on which they run.

Furthermore, we need to encourage more Nigerians to cook with cleaner energy, not biomass, which is a major source of air pollution, avoidable health problems and unnecessary deaths, as well as driving deforestation and loss of biodiversity. We believe that a switch to LPG or, where possible, electricity, will cut pollution, improve health and most importantly, free rural women from the time-consuming burden of fetching firewood, so they can spend more time with their families and earn valuable income.

For us at Seplat Energy, our business is deeply rooted in a commitment to strong partnership with our host and impacted communities. From inception, we developed a robust community relations model that has guaranteed our freedom to operate and recognises our host and impacted communities as equal stakeholders in their

economic and social development.

It is on this pedestal that, aside from building roads, powering hospitals, and providing communities with clean sources of water, we established other initiatives focused on Health, Education and Economic Empowerment. We implement these initiatives using direct intervention and communication with beneficiaries and ensuring that the initiatives contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Africa Agenda 2063 Aspirations & Goals, as well as Nigeria's National Development Plans.

For instance, in the last decade, our PEARLS Quiz competition has positively impacted almost 60,000 teachers and students from about 12,000 participating schools. We have also contributed directly to the education of students by awarding scholarships to winning secondary school students and contributed directly to improving the infrastructure of secondary schools by awarding prize money of over N100 million to the winning schools.

Under our National Undergraduate Scholarship which started in 2014, we have provided scholarships to 780 Federal and State University undergraduate students, 34% of whom are from our host

communities.

In the last 3 years, the SEPLAT Teachers Empowerment Programme (STEP) has provided 905 teachers and 87 Chief Inspectors of Education with digital teaching skills, leadership training and income diversification, and supported the learning of over 10,000 students in our host States with new teaching skills.

Furthermore, the Seplat Innovators Programme is creating STEAM Laboratories which are collaborative spaces where the study of science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics can be integrated through hands-on experiences in a pure laboratory or combined classroom-laboratory setting. These laboratories with internet facilities teach students computational thinking and focus on the real-world applications of problem-solving. The programme was deployed for the first time in 2023 with two of such fully solar powered laboratories in Edo and Delta States.

Unless energy companies can focus on what society needs, opportunities will be limited. We believe that putting the people and communities at the heart of our strategy will firmly place us on the path to enduring success.

Afe is director of External Affairs & Social Performance, Seplat Energy



Business & Economy

FG approves AfDB's \$1bn loan

THE Federal Executive Council (FEC) has approved a concessional budget support financing of \$1 billion from the African Development Bank (AfDB).

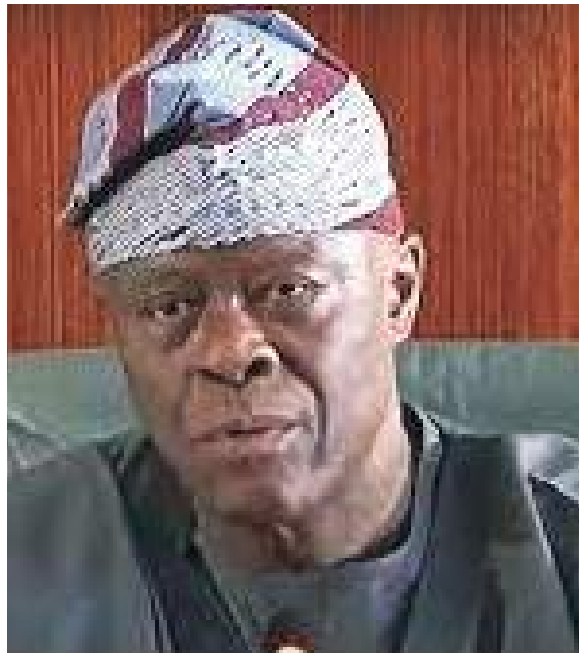
Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Wale Edun, announced this on Monday after the federal cabinet meeting presided over by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu at the Presidential Villa, Abuja.

He said the bank approved the budget to support concessional financing with 25 and eight years moratoriums in recognition of the macro economic measures taken by this administration towards macro stability, restoring revenue and improving the foreign exchange situation.

He said: "There was financing of \$1 billion, concessional financing, 25 years, eight years moratorium at about the same for 4.2% per annum, which was approved by the African Development Bank for this administration."

Edun added that the council also approved a total limit of N2 trillion for the Ministry of Finance to bring down the rate of interest on the current outstanding.

He said it was expected to help save N50 billion or more



Edun

in debt servicing over time by giving back expensive debt refinancing with cheaper funding.

"In order to keep working hard and maximising the ability of the government to use the markets and to take advantage of different situations and improve situations, the Federal Executive Council approved a total limit of N2 trillion to be available for use by the Ministry of Finance in order to go in and out of the market and essentially to, where possible, bring down the rate

of interest on the current outstanding.

The minister also announced approval of funds to be lent to Abia State for waste management and rehabilitation of roads in Umuahia and Aba, in particular.

Edun, while speaking on the briefing by the Fiscal Policy and Tax Reform Committee, said the committee, which had been working for roughly 90 days, had impacted the economy by coming up with initial reforms and signposting the way forward in terms of important targets.

THE Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) has stated that the macroeconomic projections in the Federal Government's (FG) Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) are not sufficient to achieve the \$1 trillion economy target it set to achieve by 2029.

The Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Mr Yemi Cardoso, had, last weekend restated the commitment of the government to realizing the GDP target.

But in a review of the Cardoso's statement the Director General, LCCI, Dr Chinyere Almona, explained that the basis for government's projection contains some inconsistencies that will make it unachievable.

She stated: "LCCI is aware of the enormous challenges and the uphill task before the CBN in ensuring macroeconomic stability and restoring investors' confidence.

"However, we note the inconsistencies between the federal government's vision of achieving a \$1 trillion economy in the next six years and the MTEF.

"The macroeconomic projections in the MTEF state that the economy will grow by 3.76%, 4.22%, and 4.78% in 2024, 2025, and 2026, respectively. We note that the projected growths are sub-optimal to achieve a \$1trillion GDP by 2029, which implies an average growth of 21% over the next six years."

Almona commended the

FG's \$1trn GDP projections not sufficient, may fail, says LCCI

CBN's plan to review the minimum capital base of banks, but cautioned the apex bank to strengthen its banking supervision to avoid "too big to fail" banks.

She, however, stated: "The Chamber appreciates the intellectual humility of the Governor in admitting the errors or mistakes of the past, particularly in the areas of corporate governance failures, diminished institutional autonomy of CBN, deviation from the core mandate of the bank, and unorthodox use of monetary tools and foray into fiscal activities under the cover of development finance activities. As we advance, we challenge the current CBN team to ensure professionalism and integrity and rebuild the trust of the general public.

"On recapitalization of banks, we commend the plan of CBN to review the minimum capital base of banks due to consistent devaluation of the Naira, which has eroded the capital base of banks, attracted significant investment into banks as well as increased the capacity of banks to provide the required support for the economy. However, we caution the CBN to strengthen its banking supervision to avoid "too big to fail" banks.

"Given the sensitivity of monetary policy and price stability, we urge the CBN to ensure transparency and synergy between monetary and fiscal authorities and effectively communicate significant changes in policy direction."



Cardoso

Cooking gas crisis: FG sets up committee

TO arrest the escalating price of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), otherwise known as cooking gas, the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas) Ekperikpe Ekpo, has constituted a committee with the mandate to come up with recommendations on how to boost supplies and crash LPG prices within a week.

The meeting, at the instance of the minister, was held at the NNPC Towers Abuja and had in attendance top officials of Chevron Nigeria Limited, led by Sansay Narasimi; Nigerian Midstream Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) led by the Authority Chief Executive (ACE) and Chief Executive Officer, Farouk Ahmed and the NNPC.

A statement by spokesman to the Minister, Mr. Louis Ibah, said the committee is headed by the NMDPRA ACE/CEO.

Nigerians have in the last three months been confronted with an upsurge in the price of cooking gas with majority resorting to the use of dirty fuel including firewood, a development that has caused a setback to increased cooking gas penetration across the country.

Since the price surge, marketers within the LPG value chain have accused importers of profiteering, saying they were increasing prices at will without justification and consideration of poor Nigerians using gas for domestic and other uses.

The intervention on LPG crisis by the Minister may not be unconnected with the astronomical rise in recent months in the price of LPG per kg from about N700 to above N900 in some parts of the country and over N12,500 for a 12kg gas cylinder.

Key challenges identified as responsible for LPG price increase include FX sourcing for imports and insufficient supply to the domestic market by producers

Ekpo expressed the concerns of President Bola Tinubu, on the price surge and the attendant hardship on majority of citizens.

The minister who noted that Nigeria is abundantly endowed with gas reserves, said the situation where some of the multinational firms were more concerned with gas exports without dedicating enough volumes for the domestic market was unacceptable and should be discouraged.

Managing Director of NIPCO Plc, Mr. Suresh Kumar, recently raised the alarm that only 10 per cent of those living in rural areas have access to cooking gas.

To reverse the downward consumption figure for rural areas, the NIPCO MD said rural area penetration must be improved upon to achieve this, he said, NIPCO plans to deploy 50 skids plants to rural communities within the next two years.

2024 Budget: FEC approves N27.5trn Appropriation Bill

THE Federal Executive Council (FEC) has approved the 2024 Appropriation Bill with aggregate expenditure of N27.5 trillion.

The Minister of Budget and Economic Planning, Alhaji Atiku Bagudu, announced this on Monday after the Federal Executive Council meeting presided over by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu at the Council Chambers of the Presidential Villa, Abuja.

This is just as plans have been concluded for the president to present the budget to the National Assembly on Wednesday.

The minister, who said the proposal was an increase of over N1.5 trillion when compared to the earlier projection of N26.01trillion. put

the targeted revenue for next year at N18.32 trillion.

He said the deficit was also lower than that of 2023.

According to him, further details of the budget will be released when President Tinubu makes his presentation of the budget to the National Assembly.

Bagudu said FEC also approved the revised 2024 - 2026 Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)/ Fiscal Strategy Paper (FSP), which would be submitted alongside the 2024 budget proposal.

According to him, it is four dollars more than the MTET/FSP earlier approved by the National Assembly.

He said: "Today, among other issues, the Federal Executive Council considered the 2024 Appropriation Bill. You may recall that the Medium Term Expenditure Framework was earlier approved and transmitted to the National Assembly, which the assembly graciously approved and that approved Medium Term Expenditure has the exchange rate of N700 to \$1 and equally, the benchmark crude oil price at \$73.96 cent.

"However, in Mr. President's determination to find more money to fund our priorities, today the Federal Executive Council further revised the Medium Term Expenditure Framework and Fiscal Policy Framework and two of the important decisions were to use an exchange rate of N750 to \$1 and also a benchmark crude oil reference price of \$77.96, meaning \$4 more than the earlier approval.

"This will significantly increase government revenue that Mr. President intends to use in further supporting the ministries, departments and agencies in the execution of the eight priority areas, particularly health, education, infrastructure, security and other developmental areas.

"Equally, the Federal Executive Council approved the 2024 Appropriation Bill and the presentation of such to the National Assembly by His Excellency, Mr. President. The bill has an aggregate



Bagudu



Business & Economy

Bakeries shut down due to high cost of flour

A new wave of anxiety is mounting over the high cost of bread occasioned by the ever-increasing cost of wheat such that most bakeries are shutting down. SUNNY IDACHABA Writes.

NIGERIANS love bread and related confectioneries like biscuit and chin-chin a lot such that in the recent past, it has become one of the readily available staple foods on the table of many families in the country especially during breakfast.

These staple foods, according to investigation, are however about to disappear from the menu list of most families because bakers who are the producers of bread and these confectioneries can no longer afford the exorbitant prices of flour, the major ingredient in making bread and all other related foods.

To that extent, Blueprint Weekend investigation has shown that a good number of bakeries have been going through difficult moments in keeping their businesses afloat. As a consequence, they are considering folding up. Not only would the step affect the availability of bread, but to a large extent, many employed individuals would again be thrown out of jobs into the over-saturated labour market.

Likely causes

A number of reasons have been adduced for this abnormal increase in the past. For instance, the Russian-Ukraine war, which started earlier in the year, has been adduced for the global lull in the availability of bread because Ukraine, a major cultivator/supplier of wheat processed into flour and ultimately bread has not been able to produce and supply wheat in the recent past due to the ongoing war between the two countries.

This has resulted in unavailability of sufficient flour all around the world. Aside from that, in Nigeria, insecurity in the northern part of the country has in the last four years impaired the growth and supply of wheat from that part of the country.

In Nigeria today, the only known source of wheat supply, according to Malam Dansauki Condo, a wheat importer, is from Niger Republic and Burkina Faso. However, he said, "Due to the high demand for wheat consumption in Nigeria, coupled with low production in the country, the prices are going up and demands cannot be met."

Concerns

A baker in Kubwa, Abuja, Mr. Ayotunde Salami, told this reporter that the bakers have been at the receiving end of the general economic hardship.

He said, "No one knows what we the bakers have been passing through to ensure the availability of bread on the table of families. Everything we use is grossly affected by the rising economic cost. People only focus on flour, but they have forgotten that even the cost of sugar has gone higher. The same thing applies to butter.

"Transporting them from the factory to other places is cost-intensive. A number of times, we jointly bear the cost with wholesalers who pick them up from the factories and if they don't pick the bread after each day, they can go bad and that is not good for business. The economy is really having a serious toll on businesses."

Another baker, Mr. Justice Anumudu, of Bakery



Confectioneries, said he expects every Nigerian to go out in protest against the soaring prices of flour because it has affected daily food needs, especially for children.

"Something as common like biscuit, the price is no longer the same, not to mention bread, which is the common breakfast for most families. One thing this government and the one before this has not been able to do is failure to stabilise prices, especially consumables. During Jonathan's regime, the inflation rate was less than 12 per cent. Even at that, prices of food items remained stable all year through. That is what everyone expects this government to do, but they seem to concentrate more on strategies for election winning rather than winning the war against inflation wrecking the economy," he said.

Confirming reports

A recent survey by SBM Intelligence Group indicated that Nigerians spend 97 per cent of their monthly income on food. In corroborating this, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said the inflation rate was largely driven by food prices, which quickened in the month of October.

"The soaring prices of bread, fish, eggs and other essential food items have pushed Nigeria's headline inflation to a new 18-year high, worsening the cost-of-living crisis facing many households," according to the report.

It indicated further that it rose to 27.33 per cent from 26.72 per cent in the previous month, according to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which measures changes in prices of goods and services.

"The rise in food inflation on a

year-on-year basis was caused by increases in prices of oil and fat, bread and cereals, potatoes, yam and other tubers, fish, fruit, meat, vegetables, milk, cheese, and eggs."

In his view, Bismarck Rewane, an economist, said flour and sugar, which are major components of bread, were among the commodities that recorded the highest price increases.

"The price of flour has spiked by 46.88 per cent to N47, 000 per 50kg bag from N32, 000 a year ago," he said.

Need to return to cassava bread era

In a swift reaction to the growing concerns over the gradual, but steady rise in the price of flour and its attendant effect on bread/allied products, Dr. Austin Maduka, a former FCT vice-chairman of Nigeria Cassava Growers Association of Nigeria, said the country is passing through all that because of the displacement of credible alternative to wheat.

"In 2013, then administration of Goodluck Jonathan was given a template for the introduction of cassava bread in Nigeria. Not only did the administration buy the idea, but in the life of that administration, cassava bread was baked and publicly served in the Federal Executive Council meeting chaired by Jonathan. A number of agro-allied industries bought into the idea.

"It was becoming a serious boom for cassava farming in the country, but after Jonathan left office in 2015, the immediate past

administration abandoned the idea and all the cassava farms cultivated all over the country were taken over by herders. From that time, the noble idea was jettisoned. Now, we are back to where we used to be predating Jonathan.

"Everyone has forgotten that before the cassava initiative was introduced, the volume of wheat production in the country had dropped due to environmental factors. It has even dwindled lately due to the activities of bandits and general insecurity in the land. To me, what wheat alone could not do, cassava would have complemented it."

The agitation to return cassava bread to the menu table had actually started since last year after bakers association under the aegis of Association of Master Bakers and Caterers of Nigeria (AMBCN) reminded the government about the need to find an alternative to the ever-spiralling effect of wheat costs in the global market which often times triggers an increase in the cost of bread production locally.

Investigation had it that as at that time last year, the bakers had jerked up the price, at least three times from March, through April and June 2022.

Further reports

According to the NBS report that year, bread prices rose with about 35 per cent between May 2021 and May 2022 due to rising food inflation.

Many factors have been attributed the incessant price increase among which are exchange rate, sourcing of foreign

currency; insurgency; high cost of raw materials, and rising energy cost, but principal among the challenges is the increasing price of the raw materials, especially flour occasioned by the Russian/Ukraine war.

In 2021, Nigeria spent about \$2.5 billion from the \$1.5 billion spent in the previous year. The NBS report stated that, "Nigeria imported N124 billion worth of wheat from Russia in the first nine months of 2021. Since the Russia-Ukraine war, prices of wheat have escalated."

It would be recalled that in the year 2013, the entire nation of Greece went wild because of the soaring prices of bread, which is one of the staple foods in the country. In that particular incident, almost every Greek citizen took to the street in protest against soaring prices of bread. For days, the major roads, streets of Athens and major cities in the country were occupied by the protesting citizens who decried the insensitivity of the government towards the daily food needs of the people.

It took the intervention of international finance organisations to bail Greece out of the recession in the form of palliative before the citizens vacated from the streets.

It is, therefore, important to state that as President Bola Tinubu's administration snowballs into the end of the first year; his economic team should be up with skills that can upscale the downgraded economic situation of the country for the betterment of all.

Politics

Embrace inclusive governance, group tells Governor-elect

By PETER TITLE

IT was like a carnival when the Executive Governor of Plateau State, Barrister Caleb Mutfwang on Monday embarked on an inspection of roads rehabilitation within Jos-Bukuru metropolis as citizens of different faiths came out praising him for the developmental strides, particularly on the road projects he initiated.

The first port of call of his visit was the Plateau State Specialist Hospital round about leading to Ibrahim Taiwo, Hill - Station junction, Rwang - Pam street, Masalacin Juma'a, Zololo junction, Angwan Rukuba to Millionaire quarters among others where the Governor expressed satisfaction with the quality of work executed, emphasizing his administration's commitment to changing the developmental narratives in the state.

Governor Caleb Mutfwang who addressed residents of Masalacin Juma'a and Angwan Rukuba restated his administration's determination at strengthening unity among Muslims and Christians as well as all the ethnic nationalities in the state.

According to him, the primary focus of his administration was to make roads motorable and construct new ones in order to enhance the beauty of the state capital and to boost the economy of Plateau State assuring of plans to



Mutfwang

embarked larger projects in the near future.

"We want to ensure that every nook and cranny in Jos - Bukuru metropolis is improved to make the city a welcomed abode to all visitors and residents" Mutfwang assured.

Expressing the milestones achieved so far in roads projects, the Executive Governor, promised to execute more projects across the 17 Local Government Areas of the state affirming the government has just started adding, "what you see is just a tip of the iceberg. Despite financial constraints, we are determined to change the developmental narratives of Plateau State.

Speaking also, the State

Commissioner of Works, Honourable Bulus Lekshak and the General Manager, Plateau State Road Maintenance Agency (PSRMA), Engr. Luka Davou assured of the present administration's commitment to improving citizens living conditions.

They commended Governor Mutfwang for timely release of funds which they revealed had enhanced the quality of being executed and promised not to disappoint the Government and people of the state in that regard.

The Governor was accompanied on the inspection visit by the Deputy Governor, Ngo Josephine Piyo, and some of the State Executive Council Members.

Shaibu: What I'll do if elected governor



Shaibu

THE deputy governor of Edo State, Philip Shaibu, on Monday, November 27, 2023, declared his intention to run for the office of governor of the state on the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in 2024 with a promise to ensure prosperity for the people.

Shaibu, while declaring his intention in Benincity, the Edo State capital, said his campaign would be built upon five core pillars that would be vital to the transformation and prosperity of the people.

He stated that infrastructure

development and economic diversification were the first of the pillars, while education, sports, skills development, and job creation would be second; healthcare and social welfare systems as the third pillar.

The deputy governor added that agriculture, rural development, and poverty alleviation would form the fourth pillar, while security, environmental sustainability, and transparent governance would form the fifth pillar of his agenda.

Shaibu said: "These five

pillars of our agenda, among others, represent the values and priorities that we hold dear as Edolites.

"They represent our commitment to building a prosperous, inclusive, and viable future for all.

To our traditional rulers and religious leaders, we acknowledge your place in the development of our state and we would ensure that under our watch, our ancestral heritage is promoted and preserved.

"Therefore, it is time for us to rise above partisanship, sentiments and unite under the banner of progress and development.

"Let us all come together to build a brighter future for ourselves and for generations to come.

"This declaration is not just a political affair. It's a call to destiny, a call to become the heartbeat of this nation, not just in words but indeed.

"Therefore, I humbly seek your support, your trust, and your nomination in this upcoming election. "Let us embark on this journey together and united in our determination to make Edo State a better place for ourselves and generations to come."

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

DIRECTOR General MuriSam Campaign Council, Isiah Ijele has raised the alarm to the security institutions, the media and general public over plans to burn down the office of the Kogi State Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Lokoja.

Ijele in a statement made available to journalists in Lokoja on Sunday evening, said "It has come to our notice via grave vines that there is an urgent need for security to be beefed around the Kogi State INEC office in order to avert the sinister plot to burn down the office by mandate bandits.

"We are calling on the relevant security formations to swing into action to prevent the burning down of that office and to secure all the electoral materials used in the just concluded gubernatorial election in Kogi State.

They want to burn down the building housing those sensitive materials on the

SDP exposes plan to burn down INEC office



Ijele

guise of a fire outbreak and with the aim of damaging all evidence of rigging.

"We will like the whole world to know that if anything happens to the

sensitive materials as ordered by the court to be inspected by the solicitors of the SDP, Governor Yahaya Bello should be held responsible as the chief security officer of the state.

'Judiciary, just, fair'

From ANENE AIKE, Sokoto

GOV. Ahmed Aliyu has described the Court of Appeal, Abuja Division's verdict upholding his election as the duly elected Governor of Sokoto State as a clear testimony of an unbiased Nigeria's judiciary.

He stated this in a statement shortly after the appellant court in Abuja upheld the earlier judgement of the Governorship Election Petitions Tribunal, reaffirming his victory at the 2023 polls.

Gov. Aliyu said the outcome

at the appellant court has clearly demonstrated to the entire world that Nigeria's judiciary is unbiased, just and fair.

"We see this victory as a victory from the Almighty Allah and we thank him for that.

"We equally commend our judiciary for standing for the truth and what is right.

"Let me use this golden opportunity to renew my call to the opposition in Sokoto State to come and join hands with us so that together we can make the state better," Aliyu urged.

The Governor reassured the people of the state of his administration's unwavering determination to deliver the direly needed dividends of democracy to their doorsteps.

"We will continue to provide an enabling environment that will guarantee the needed development in our dear state.

"We are determined to secure our dear state through sustained military operations until we eliminate bandits and

other criminals by the special grace of God.

"We, therefore, need the unflinching support and cooperation of all and sundry in this direction," he averred.

Gov. Aliyu also harped on the need for the people of the state to continue to rally round the present administration in its quest to transform the state.

He also thanked the people of the state for their support and fervent prayers to his administration, which has helped greatly in achieving the myriad of successes so far recorded in the state.

He solicited for more fervent prayers, suggestions and constructive criticisms aimed at making Sokoto state better.

It could be recalled that the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Sokoto State having lost at the Governorship election petition tribunal rushed to the appellant court challenging the verdict that upheld the victory of Gov. Ahmed Aliyu at the last election.



Aliyu

Politics

2023 Election: Avalanche of court cases and EU-EOM report

When the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) released its final report on the conduct of 2023 general elections in Nigeria, majority of ordinary Nigerians, credible Civil Society Organisations and serious-minded political parties welcomed the report as the undiluted reflection of what actually transpired in Nigeria's 2023 general elections. BARRISTER EMMANUEL ANENE writes.

It is noteworthy that it is only the beneficiary of the electoral heist and their cronies that have naively criticized the EU EOM report.

For the benefit of hindsight, the EU EOM has 50 member countries and it monitors elections around the world in both European Union and non European Union members including Nigeria. EU-EOM has monitored seven (7) general elections in Nigeria since 1999 including the 2015 general elections which saw the opposition party for the first time in the country defeating the incumbent which same EU they are now calling names commended as being free, fair and credible.

This was the election which saw former President Jonathan of Peoples Democratic Party, (PDP) congratulating Former President Buhari even before the official announcement of the presidential election result; a feat that is only obtainable in United States of America and other advanced democracies in the World.

It is on record that EU EOM report has integrity engraved on it based on verifiable facts and that was why Mr Barry Andrew, the EU EOM Chief Observer while presenting the report, noted that the report was based on analysis of compliance with Nigeria's regional and international commitment to democratic elections.

Continuing the Chief Observer stated that there were enduring systematic weaknesses that if corrected would lead to drastic improvements in elections in Nigeria. He noted the following areas of major concerns viz: the PVC collection processes which were fraught with needless difficulties occasioned by patent institutional hiccups and lacking in transparency and lack of credible voters' register to which he suggested inclusiveness and independent audit.

Others include misuse of power of incumbency by governors leading to undue interference, divisive rhetorics based on ethnicity and religion, late arrival of electoral officials and material leading to suppression of voters, lack of transparency in results collation and violence, assassinations, thuggery, and impunity which obstructed the smooth conduct of the election in some areas. He equally noted that public confidence in INEC was severely damaged due to operational deficiencies and lack of transparency.

Andrew however suggested the removal of all ambiguities in the Electoral Act and guidelines, establishing publicly accountable processes for the appointment of INEC Chairman and members, and ensuring real-time publication of and access to election results. Other recommendations of the observer mission also include, providing greater protection for media practitioners, addressing discrimination against women in political life and addressing



Yahaya

impunity regarding electoral offences.

Regrettably, instead of the Federal Government picking up the low hanging fruits from the EU EOM reports with respect to identified challenges and address them so as to foster and engender credible and acceptable elections in Nigeria and unite our polarised country, its official spokes persons unfortunately engaged in idle talks trying to launder the sham election by branding facts and evidence-driven EU EOM reports as poor desk job.

For us at the International Coalition for Democracy and Good Governance (ICDGG), it is a disservice to our democratic aspirations and hypocritical to dismiss with a wave of hand the report of a major critical stakeholder that

spent millions of dollars to support credible elections in Nigeria. Worst still, the Federal Government further accused a non-partisan body like EU EOM of bias for having released a compromised report even as majority of Nigerians are in sync with the position of the body.

It is on this score that we urge President Bola Tinubu to as a matter of urgent national interest to tow the path of Late President Yaradua who humbly accepted that the election that brought him in 2007 was flawed and immediately began a reform and healing process to douse the tension created by that election.

President Bola Tinubu should also call his overzealous defenders to order so as to moderate their language when reacting or responding to issues, especially such that affects unity of the country

Glaringly, what President Bola

Tinubu needs at this critical point in our national life is diplomatic engagements on issues that pertain to 2023 general elections and not idle talks coming from some of his overzealous aides.

It is our firm belief that EU EOM report simply represented what transpired and other international observers and majority of Nigerians witnessed during 2023 general elections. No amount of blackmail can detract from the said report's integrity and forthrightness. It is our enlightened submission that calling our critical development partners names is a disservice to the country and a low score for President Tinubu's administration. It is on this stand that we urge President Bola Tinubu to eat the humble pie and accept the shortcomings that rubbed off on credibility of the 2023 general elections. If we may ask, why has INEC and its cohorts been unable to explain clearly to Nigerians how internet glitch affected only Presidential election results transmission and could not affect both House of Representatives and Senatorial District elections that were all conducted simultaneously.

Regrettably, Inter-party Advisory Council, (IPAC) which ordinarily should be the organized forum of opposition political parties and which core mandate is to act as a check on the ruling party as it affects its policies and programmes, especially election related matters has not only turned out to be a protege of INEC but the mouthpiece through which INEC replies salient and constructive criticisms raised by the critical

stakeholders who mean well for Nigeria. Nigerians watched with dismay when IPAC Chairman Yabagi Sani made a reckless comment that it did not matter what anybody said about 2023 general elections and urged the EU EOM not to cry more than the bereaved and that INEC should be commended for innovation it brought to bear on the 2023 general elections.

This statements to say the least is unfortunate given the avalanche of election petition cases before various Tribunals challenging the conduct and outcome of the 2023 general elections.

Finally, we urge President Bola Tinubu to be a patriot and statesman like Former President Yaradua who openly admitted that the election that brought him to power was tainted with imperfections and in its place promised an enduring electoral reforms and set up Justice Uwais panel, In the same vein, President Tinubu should copy Former President Yaradua's example by openly admitting glaring shortcomings of 2023 general elections.

The several upturned results in the courts though some of them contentious have further worsened the matter. The developments equally shows that our judiciary also needs to be overhauled. Both at the tribunal and Appeal Courts controversial judgements have been delivered indeed our democracy is in danger and needs to be rescued.

IMAGES

Mutfwang received by thousands of PDP supporters

Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang was warmly received by the People's Democratic Party (PDP) stalwarts, appointees and his supporters on arrival after official engagements in Abuja



Governor Mutfwang being received at the Yakubu Gowon Airport by the Deputy Governor, Hon Josephine Piyo, Speaker, PLHA, Rt Hon. Gabriel Dewan and other appointees



Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, flanked by Deputy Governor, Hon Josephine Piyo, PDP Chairman, Hon. Chris Hassan, Sen. Simon Mwadkon and others addressing the mammoth crowd at Government House



Deputy Governor, Hon Josephine Piyo, SGS, Arc Samuel Nanchang Jatau and the PEA to the Governor, Mr. Moses Nwan at the Airport



Cross section of party loyalists listening to the Governor



Hon. Simon Domle with other party supporters and stakeholders



Another section of PDP supporters at Government House Rayfield, Jos



TIC Chairmen of Shendam LGC, Hon. Kemi Nicholas Nshe, Langtang North, Hon. Godwin Nanmwa Kumzhi and the General Manager, JMDB, Arc Hart Rankat



Supporters of the PDP trying to have a glimpse at the Governor at the Yakubu Gowon Airport

Photos: DANLADI DUK

Politics

Restructuring INEC, a national dilemma

Democracy is not the problem of the continent as espoused by some political scientists and scholars, but the flagrant disregard of its tenets and lack of will to seamlessly adapt some local idiosyncrasies and cultural evolutions into its practice. While the political class is almost the same across climes, the transactional nature of the average African politician is ruthless and godless, to say the least. Little wonder that the dividend of democracy equates to a few roads, schools, healthcare centres, bole-holes and ignominious projects tagged legacies which do not last beyond few years after office. DAVE BARO-THOMAS writes.

AWAY from the shenanigans and excesses of the political class who grab electoral victories at all costs, the impartiality of the electoral umpire and the fidelity of the Judiciary – are twin monsters threatening democratic development in the country and continent. While the Judiciary interprets the laws governing elections in light of the spirit and letters of the constitutions and electoral acts, the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, the umpire, administers and manages the entire processes, ecosystems and outcomes of the elections. So, the fate of democracy seems to shift from the hands of the politicians to these institutions that should defend the will of the people – making them midwives or undertakers of democracy.

The outcomes of the February 2023 presidential election pitched over 14 million Nigerians who voted for the Peoples' Democratic Party, PDP, and Labour Party, LP, against the Judiciary on allegations and accusations of impropriety, and the hue and cry over the demand for the total overhauling of the electoral body, INEC.

While little can be done about the Judiciary having no established proof of corruption or miscarriage of justice, the way INEC is constituted and populated has provided grounds for deep concerns among the opposition and keen observers, so, for many, the demand is decouple INEC, reconstitute it, provide stiffer accountability and transparency threshold, or declare Nigeria a one-party state.

Indeed, the electoral umpires remain one of the most weakened political institutions since the dawn of democracy in Nigeria, and that is for obvious reasons. This supposed bastion institution of democratic ethos and development has become the instrumentality to subvert the will of the people and damage democracy across the continent. Ironically, this body touted Independent, but only in a few cases that independence is respected and reflects the wishes of the people leaving most election as a bazaar where the highest bidders take home the auctions.

Nine decades and seven years ago, the British imperialists gave



Yahaya

Nigerians voting rights for the first time to elect representatives into the colonial legislative council, and ever since electoral governance has become a sour point in our national sojourning.

Right from the 1959 general elections that ushered the first republic, under the supervision of the Electoral Commission of Nigeria, ECN, the electoral umpire, elections are said to be flawed, and the opposition cried blue murder. By 1964, the election became a do-or-die affair, and the electoral umpire the Federal Electoral Commission under Eyo Esua, was fingered for miscarriage and connivance with the ruling class. The acrimony were so rife that violence and instability broke the gates of the barracks, and the military overthrew the civilian government in a one-sided bloody coup Nigeria has not been the same since that saga.

With the government of General Olusegun Obasanjo, a new electoral body was constituted

with the nomenclature Federal Electoral Commission, FEDECO, under the belt of Michael Ani (1976-1979), probably with the thought that such a fresh gab would change the outcomes of the election, but how can this electoral boss do otherwise when his appointment was by the Head of State rumoured to have a preferred candidate. By 1983, Victor Ovie-Whiskey, appointed by the incumbent, President Shehu Shagari, was saddled with the responsibility of the elections, but the outcome was no different, triggering another coup that ended the third republic in 1986.

Babangida took the country on an ill-fated ride in 1993, while the dark-goggled maximum ruler, General Abacha, constituted an electoral umpire, the National Electoral Commission of Nigeria, under Summer Dagogo-Jack, that registered the five political parties referred to by Chief Bola Ige, as the five fingers of a leprous hand, again both dictators appointed the

electoral bosses where the outcomes were dead ends and monumental embarrassment.

Since the inauguration of INEC in 1998, every political circle seems to have come off worse than ever as the electoral body practically lived at the president boys' quarters. The matter was so bad that President Yar'adua admitted that the process managed by INEC that brought him to power was flawed. For Goodluck Jonathan, the blood of Nigerians was not worth his ambition, so for the first time, INEC seemed to have some latitude of independence, and the result was different. Historically, an incumbent lost power, but things quickly returned to the status quo under General Buhari and Nigerians, for the first time, realized the enormity of allowing Mr President to appoint the INEC chairman because Buhari was going to his family backyard to pick national commissioners for INEC. He attempted ruthlessly to foist the likes of Lauretta Onochie, a die-hard card-carrying member of the APC as a Commissioner at INEC. Nigerians did not know the extent of his ear problem until confronted with such decisions.

Today, one big issue in the media is the appointment of an electoral commissioner into INEC, a matter already in court and prejudiced, and it presents a concern for the political class to examine more of such issues and test them in the courts otherwise, elections in Nigeria may remain very contentious and anti-climaxed if the Independent National Electoral Commission is not restructured and liberated from the political class.

Why should the incumbent at the Presidency always win except the shoeless man from Otuoke – President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan? Should the Local Government Council polls always be swept by the party at the state government house? At this stage of our democracy, there is still the contemplation of uploading and displaying election results electronically.

Why should Mr President appoint the INEC chairman, even when some say that's what is obtainable in the US? Do we have the water-tight checks and balances like the US?

The Nigerian political landscape and climate present unique peculiarities and the average politician will not only explore any constitutional loopholes but can destroy the entire system to achieve his will and greed. While the current situation of Mr President appointing INEC commissioners and chair has been with us, not one president has shown good faith in engaging non-partisan individuals because their eyes are always on the next election. If they are not on the ballot, the system must work hard to ensure their candidates or fellow party men succeed them. This argument needs no rigour, but the irresponsible attitudes of the actors calling the bluff is inconceivable. The average politician cannot trust his shadow and will not take chances for a free and fair election in the real sense, so scenarios like these will remain with us for a long time until Nigerians firmly demand restructuring.

The INEC chairmanship position, as obtained in South Africa, should be open for people to apply, and independent recruitment agencies like PWC and the like should handle the process otherwise this charade will continue. What stops a reform whereby electoral commissioners can grow from the ranks or the Council of State that has a representation of all political parties take on this all-important employment? The National Assembly, can be trusted to manage this because it will take a godless compromise for the leadership to run away with partisan candidates.

We must go back to the drawing board as a people. We have made some progress with electoral reforms, but the will to do the right thing is lacking essentially because of undue interferences by the ruling party at different times. Until the chairman and national commissioners of INEC are recruited and made independent and protected from the hawks in power, this democracy will die an infant.

When the electoral umpires were truly independent in Zambia, Ghana, Kenya, and most recently Liberia, the results were there for the world to see – so does it presuppose that the incumbent cannot win fair and square when the electoral umpire is independent – this is indeed a long walk to freedom – Nelson Mandela.

“The Nigerian political landscape and climate present unique peculiarities and the average politician will not only explore any constitutional loopholes but can destroy the entire system to achieve his will and greed. While the current situation of Mr President appointing INEC commissioners and chair has been with us, not one president has shown good faith in engaging non-partisan individuals because their eyes are always on the next election. If they are not on the ballot, the system must work hard to ensure their candidates or fellow party men succeed them. This argument needs no rigour, but the irresponsible attitudes of the actors calling the bluff is inconceivable. The average politician cannot trust his shadow and will not take chances for a free and fair election in the real sense, so scenarios like these will remain with us for a long time until Nigerians firmly demand restructuring.”

NEWS

NUJ chairman, emphasizes need for more WASH membership

By JIDAUNA DARING

CHAIRMAN, Nigeria Union of Journalist (NUJ), Plateau State Council, Mrs. Ayuku Pwaspo, has emphasized the need for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, WASH media Network to open up its membership registration so as to enable other journalists join the network in the state.

Mrs. Pwaspo stated this while playing host to WASH media network, Plateau State chapter who paid courtesy visit to her at the NUJ Secretariat Jos, recently.

She appreciated the network for the visit. Pwaspo pointed out that the WASH issues were no doubt of humanity, hence the need for the media to be seriously engaged in championing the course of awareness creation to the public on the importance of good sanitation and hygiene lifestyle in the state.

Mrs. Pwaspo stressed the need for the network to give priority to the issue of organizing workshops for the members so as to give adequate publicity to the network when it comes to the issues of its activities.

She assured of the council's readiness to work with the network so as to promote WASH activities or programmes in the state.

Earlier in his remarks, Coordinating Chairman, WASH Media Network Plateau State Chapter, Mr. Dennis Dateer said that the purpose of the visit was to congratulate the state NUJ Chairman, Mrs. Ayuku Pwaspo and her executives on their recent victory during the council's election in the state.

Mr. Dateer described the victory of Mrs. Pwaspo as a first female chairman of the council, as a welcoming choice which needs to be supported and celebrated too. He also described the chairman's victory as a gender balance election.

He explained that since the inauguration of the Plateau State Chapter of the network in 2020, the network has made a mark among other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) on Water and Sanitation, adding



Pwaspo

that the network has contributed immensely in putting up the 2019 water sector law in the state.

Dateer maintained that the network would continue to be the voice of the voiceless on in writing and reporting on the World SURWASH projects among others.

He also advised the NUJ chairman to leave a mark for posterity to judge. "We are proud that you are one of our members and we pray that the whole executives will work together with you to achieve success".

Dateer thanked the chairman and her EXCOs for the warmed reception accorded them during the visit.

In the same vein, the NUJ Chairman, Mrs. Ayuku Pwaspo was also in audience with the Islamic Counselling Initiatives of Nigeria (ICIN), Plateau State on a courtesy visit. She assured ICIN of the council's readiness to partner with them, particularly on issues that would promote religious tolerance amongst citizens in the state and beyond.

Earlier in his remarks, ICIN Director, Admin & Planning Auwal Muhammad congratulated NUJ executive

member on their recent victory and wished them a successful tenure.

Muhammad said that the reason for their visit was to seek for collaboration with the NUJ to promote girl child education. He added that ICIN is an interfaith NGO that has empowered both Muslim and Christian women, children and youth.

He maintained that the organization has equally given both soft and light skills to the youths, stressing that such gesture has reduced unemployment cases amongst the youth.

THE NIGERIA STANDARD reports that the highlights of the visit include presentations of congratulatory frame and flyers to the NUJ chairman.

A new leadership has emerged for the Association of Senior Civil Servants of Nigeria (ASCSN), Plateau Publishing Corporation (PPC) chapter with Mr. Lengkat Yusuf as chairman while Christy John Zi is the vice chairman.

Other executive officials (EXCOs) include; Daniel Pofi-Secretary, Abigail Luka-Treasurer and Jibrin Musa Dagoro, ex-officio.

Our correspondent reports that PPC is the publishers of **THE NIGERIA STANDARD** and **SUNDAY STANDARD**, Jos.

Speaking shortly after the elections, Returning Officer, Comrade, Mashano Inusa Wase congratulated the new executive members as they pilot over the affairs of the association.

Comrade Wase commended ASCSN members for conducting themselves maturely before and during the election. He urged them to sustain such tempo in subsequent elections.

He told the executive members that the task before them is no other one than the task of fighting for the rights of civil servants. Wase added that the only way to keep the association alive is to carry members along, particularly the executive members.

Earlier in her remarks, Director of Commercial, PPC, Rachael Garos Dusu, thanked God for making the election a huge success, adding that all the positions were returned unopposed.

Dusu also charged the executives to make transparency and accountability to be their watchword so that together they can move the association forward.

Responding on behalf of the new executives, Chairman ASCSN, PPC chapter, Mr.

New leadership emerges for ASCSN, PPC chapter

By JIDAUNA DARING

Lengkat Yusuf, appreciated its members for finding them worthy to serve in the executive in different capacities. He assured their members of the executive's readiness to work diligently and also carry them along.

Yusuf equally solicited for support and cooperation of its members through advise that would be geared towards bringing change.

He promised ASCSN members that with the confidence reposed in them, they would do everything

possible to ensure that they do not disappoint them as far as the mandate given them is concerned.

Also speaking, a member of ASCSN, Mr. Plangnan John Christopher while congratulating the new executives said that the members of the association are abreast at all times, particularly on ASCSN activities, adding that unionism is all about participation.

THE NIGERIA STANDARD reports that the new executive will pilot the affairs of the association for the next two years.



Lengkat

'Arrest of Investigative journalist unlawful'

From JOHN FWAH Kaduna

MANAGEMENT of Daybreak Nigeria Newspapers has described the arrest and incarceration of its Northern Bureau Operations Chief, Mr. Gabriel Idibia as unlawful.

In a press statement signed by its publisher and member, Nigerian Guild of Editors, Dr. Austin Maho, he said, "We the management of Daybreak Nigeria, hereby draw the attention of members of the public, media stakeholders,

lovers of democracy and free press to the unlawful arrest and incarceration of our staff, Mr. Gabriel Idibia by the police in Kaduna over a factual and investigative report published in the Daybreak Nigeria newspaper which the authorities are yet to disprove.

"Gabriel Idibia was first detained on the 26th October

2023, and was subsequently released on bail and asked to report back on the 9th November 2023, when he was rearrested", Daybreak stated.

"The police evidently, on the prompting of powers above, against all known ethics of the profession, wanted him to disclose the sources of his information.

"He rightfully declined and was summarily arraigned before Magistrate Court 2 Daura Road, in Magajin Gari area of Kaduna town, and sent to prison where he spent two days because he could not meet the unusually stringent bail conditions set for him.

"The matter has been rescheduled for mention at the court Tuesday.

"We condemn his harassment and unlawful arrest. Journalism is not a crime. Journalists by virtue of section 22 of the 1999 Constitution as amended are empowered to hold the government accountable to the public.

"It is unfortunate that dissenting voices would resort to jack boot tactics and intimidation when there are laid down processes in dealing with what ordinarily is a civil matter.

"It is further unfortunate that institutions of state, funded with taxpayers money like the police, would allow itself to be used against a citizen and a journalist in the lawful discharge of his constitutional function.

"If democracy fails, we all

perish. If political leaders and those occupying public office can no longer be held to account, it would be the end of democracy and enthronement of tyranny and totalitarianism in Nigeria.

"It was Thomas Jefferson, a former President of the United States who famously in 1786 said "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter"

"This underscores the importance of a free press to keep the government and those holding public office in check. The media provides the avenue through which those holding positions of trust are held accountable to the people.

"The incarceration of Gabriel Idibia in the course of his job, is a gross abuse of his rights, criminalisation of journalism and a violation of the public's right to know.

"Since he started working with Daybreak Nigeria, Gabriel Idibia is the most resourceful investigative journalist in our team. All his reports have followed laid down ethical considerations based on facts, objectivity, fairness and accuracy.

"His arrest and detention is anti-democratic and an affront on press freedom and those responsible for this conspiracy against our staff should be called out for trying to muzzle the free press.

NAF airstrikes hit target on Mandara mountains

By DORCAS PANKYES

IN what could be described as arguably one of the most successful strikes

undertaken by the Air Component of Operation Hadin Kai, Nigerian Air Force (NAF) aircraft, recently

carried out airstrikes on a massing of terrorists in an isolated location consisting of 3 zinced structures amid several trees.

This was disclosed in a report by the Nigerian Air Force, Director of Public Relations and Information, Air Commodore Edward Gagkwet recently in Abuja. The statement revealed that from the footage, it was evident that the terrorists were massing up at the location for either a well-planned meeting or preparing for a major attack on their own troops.

Over 100 heavily armed terrorists were observed throwing banter and moving randomly around the structures which also had 4 troop carriers. The aftermath of the airstrike revealed that 2 out of the 3 structures, as well as the entire troop carriers were destroyed.

There are also indications that Abu Adar, a key figure in

the Ali Ngulde group under Boko Haram, as well as other terrorists like Ibrahim Nakeeb, Mujahed Dimtu, Mustafa Munzir and several fighters were among the several terrorists eliminated in the airstrike.

The Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Hasan Abubakar, has since commended the Air Component Commander and his men while urging them to continue to synergize with the Land Component as they maintain the momentum in, "keeping the terrorists on their toes."

According to him, "We must continue to justify the trust and confidence the Federal Government and our people have bestowed on us by ensuring that we go all out in making life unbearable for these terrorists and criminals until they surrender or are completely eliminated."



Abubakar

News

PLASU meets host communities

SUG on security

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

AN enlarged consultative meeting involving the management of Plateau State University, Boko (PLASU), host communities leaders, landlords and students' union representatives, has been held to proffer solutions and strategies for containing security challenges in and around the university.

This was contained in a press statement signed by the university's Public Relations Officer, John K. Agam, and made available to THE NIGERIA STANDARD in Jos, the Plateau State capital, recently.

The meeting also deliberated on ways of improving the quality of off campus hostel accommodation facilities, electricity supply and handling other social services that would enhance growth and development of the university and its host communities.

Presiding over the meeting which was the first of its kind since his assumption as the Vice Chancellor of the university six months ago, Professor Matur Malau Bernard said, "it has become incumbent on the university to close ranks with the host communities in the face of renewed threats to the security and serenity of the university and the host communities.

"The university wants to sue for your mutual collaboration as the host communities and landlords in tackling an improved quality of accommodation for students staying off campus, issues relating to accessibility, house numbering for ease of locating and securing the environment respectively.

"To this end, the university has secured the establishment of a Police Station opposite the university gate which has eighteen police personnel in addition to a detachment of military men who are also stationed near the



Prof Malau.

university gate to complement the internal security arrangements of the university and the host communities", he assured.

According to him, plans were also fine-tuned for the provision of tunnel trench fencing around the university to mitigate intrusion by unauthorized persons and animals who might want to trespass or rather, force themselves into the university's land.

He also used the occasion to announce that the university health centre would be expanded in order to meet the health needs of both the university and the host communities as part of the university's corporate social responsibility.

Matur added that the intention of the university within available resources was to provide electric transformers for the immediate host communities where a sizable number of students were accommodated in and around the university.

The Vice Chancellor, however, disclosed that with the take-off of the Faculty of Education, the university's Demonstration Primary and Secondary Schools would soon be established by the for both university and the host communities to benefit from it.

On his part, the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Administration and Chairman, Security

Committee, Associate Professor Jurji Nengak Gomos, said, "this is the first time such an enlarged meeting was being convened to bring together community leaders, property owners and students leaders for the purpose of addressing security and social challenges bedeviling the university and its host communities".

Also, the Director of Works, Plateau State University Boko, Builder Serah Demwaka Wayo Tsemwan, pledged her commitment to play an advisory role in fostering building control mechanisms that would guide against the development of slums.

In their separate remarks, leaders of Chikam, Ndar, Ngha ti tandon, youth leaders, landlords and representatives of Students Union Government, appreciated the Vice Chancellor for initiating the meeting and promised to fully cooperate for the progress of all the parties involved.

Meanwhile, as a resolution on the outcome of the meeting, both the leaders of the host communities and landlords endorsed the decision to create a registrar of landlords, house numbering and a standard procedure for documentation to foster easy identification of all tenants occupying their property.

critical stakeholders and policy makers, the opportunity to address critical health care issues, as well as enhance entry of the pharmaceutical sector in the larger African market.

He stressed that the meeting would fast track the achievement of the vaccine policy objectives of the federal government.

The minister assured that his ministry would continue to provide the necessary oversight and work with NIPRD and other stakeholders at all levels to ensure that the desired results are achieved.



Reintroduction of road tax

SOMETIME ago, I had the misfortune of traveling from Jos, the Plateau State capital through Kaduna, Nasarawa, Benue, Kogi to Benin, the Edo State capital. The grueling journey can best be imagined than experienced. Traveling through the roads that traverse these states are not only dangerous, they are extremely strenuous. If anyone dares to undertake such a misadventure, he had better think twice because he must be ready to visit the hospital and pay to have himself fixed in our ill-equipped and understaffed hospitals.

In most parts of these states what passes for our roads are mere death traps. A journey which ordinarily would take about twelve hours can take almost twenty-eight hours barring unexpected breakdown of the vehicle you are travelling in. If you want to gauge the performance of Nigeria's leaders one out of the many barometers is undertaking a road trip. It is here that you would come into contact with the reality that they are bereft of ideas or they are outrightly not interested in working for the good of the ordinary people but are more interested in lining their pockets and those of their cronies.

Roads that were built in the seventies and eighties are the only evidence that Nigeria once had governments that attempted to meet the yearnings of the people. There have been scarcely no projections made about the future. For example, what could be done to sustain and maintain these roads for the benefit of all? What other alternatives could be provided to take off some of the projected pressures off these national assets?

In the early days, toll-gates were built by the governments to collect road tax which were used to maintain these roads. But with the return to democracy in 1999, these toll-gates were done away with because they were considered not to be serving their purpose. Those saddled with the responsibility of managing the resources gotten from this form of taxes mismanaged them and fed fat on them. In scrapping the toll-gates however, no alternatives for the maintenance of these critical infrastructure were put in place. So they were left to their fates.

In the course of the years,

some of these roads were washed away and nothing was done by the government to remedy the situation giving the impression that the leadership had run out of ideas and were helpless and hapless. One would have thought that as an alternative our rail system would have been developed to provide an option and an alternative. But far from thinking in that manner the elites did all they could to kill the railway. This they did to pave the way for their heavy-duty trucks to take over the roads. Sadly, these trucks helped in no small measure to ensure the destruction of whatever was left of our old roads.

From the foregoing, our leaders seem not to be capable of strategic thinking and planning for the future. They seem to be shortsighted and myopic. They are not interested in ensuring that the general good is elevated above their individual interest but would rather amass wealth they truly do not need.

They forget that whatever

“ Some of our past leaders who had left enduring legacies saw beyond the self and their contributions are still referred to years after their demise. Indeed, some of them have become the yardstick for measuring the success or otherwise of administrations after them. And, whether we like it or not, they would never be only footnotes when the history of their states is written. ”

they amass would one day finish. They forget that beneficence leaves lasting impressions and impact on the people and they seem not to be interested in making a name for themselves and their families.

Some of our past leaders who had left enduring legacies saw beyond the self and their contributions are still referred to years after their demise. Indeed, some of them have become the yardstick for measuring the success or otherwise of administrations after them.

And, whether we like it or not, they would never be only footnotes when the history of their states is written.

And to think that the time they spent in power was infinitesimal compared to what we have now make them seem to have been more strategic than the mess we have as leaders now.

The long and short of all the above story is that Nigerians need to be seriously re-orientated. We need to reset our thought patterns and pursue the general good rather than what we have at the moment. We need to attack corruption headlong because corruption is at the root of all of our problems be it kidnapping, insurgency and banditry. We insult leaders yet we do same or worse when given opportunities. We must not put ourselves above the general good. Wherever we find ourselves we must see ourselves as only messengers sent to do the biddings of the majority not the lords. When we put service above self then things would change for the better.

In this regard therefore, we must return the toll-gates and find a way of constantly using the funds generated to repair the failed portions of our roads since government seem to have bitten more than it can chew. On the other hand, our railways and waterways must be developed as quickly as possible to provide alternatives to the roads. Also, government must regulate the number of trucks that ply these roads. They might do this through creating a special tax regime for them. These and a lot others can help give our roads longer lifespans to serve those who do not have the capacity and means to fly

FG reviews draft policy on local vaccine manufacturing

From JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja

THE Federal Government has taken steps to expedite local vaccine manufacturing and halt its importation.

This decision was the fallout of a meeting organized by the National Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development held in Abuja recently.

To achieve this, the government has reviewed and validated the draft national plan for vaccine research and development in the country.

The plan, which was developed in 2021, is the first of its kind in Africa and highlights the role of the relevant stakeholders in the vaccine landscape.

Speaking at the meeting, Minister of State for Health and Social Welfare, Dr Tunji Alausa, disclosed that the efforts of the Federal Government over the years to commence local vaccines production was already yielding the expected results.

The minister noted that the review and validation meeting was timely because it provided

NEWS

First Lady promises to combat violence against women

By Jidauna Daring

IT has been asserted that violence against women and girls has affected individuals from all walks of life, regardless of geographical, culture, or socio-economic status of Plateau State.

Wife of the Plateau State Governor, Barr. Mrs. Helen Caleb Mutfwang made this assertion at the press briefing to flag-off this year's 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence campaign in the state, held at Government House, Little Rayfield Jos, last Saturday.

Mrs. Mutfwang reaffirmed her unwavering commitment as well as that of the captain of this state.

"The time is now" let administration, Barrister Caleb M. Mutfwang. He has resolved to fight violence against women and girls in the state.

She said that the purpose of the briefing with all partners and stakeholders was to emphasize the importance of collective action and investment to eradicate this grave violation of human rights in the society.

The First Lady explained that the United Nations International campaign of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence, usually takes place each year from November 25th to December, 10th.

She maintained that the activism programme was aimed at encouraging action and awareness to end all forms of violence against women and girls. She pointed out that the menace remains largely unreported due to the impunity, stigma, and shame surrounding it.

Mrs. Mutfwang added that the adverse psychological impact, of violence against women and girls affect women at all stages. It continues to be an obstacle to achieving equality, development, peace as well as



Mutfwang

the fulfillment of women and girls' potentials.

"I have dedicated myself to being at the forefront of this campaign, re-echoing for the enforcement of laws and policies that would safeguard women and girls from violence. I want to highlight the active implementation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act in Plateau State.

She remarked that the legislation would serve as a critical tool in preventing and addressing violence against persons, including women and girls to ensure justice for survivors.

The First Lady added that during this 16 days of activism, they will be engaging in various

activities to raise awareness, promote dialogue, and mobilise resources to combat violence against women and girls.

Earlier in her remarks before the press briefing, Plateau State Coordinator, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) (Mrs.) Veronica Abe, appreciated the First Lady for the show of her commitment to fight violence against women and girls in the state.

Mrs. Abe said that the commission would not relent in its effort when it comes to fighting the menace, since it is the responsibility of the commission to protect the rights of the citizens at all times.

Tinubu's reform will bring prosperity to the country- AGF

From JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja

THE Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Lateef Fagbemi (SAN) has explained that the ongoing reforms of President Bola Tinubu will bring economic prosperity to Nigeria.

Speaking with journalists in Abuja weekend, he urged Nigerians to be patient with the president and support the reforms being introduced across the board.

The minister assured Nigerians of the president's commitment to take the country out of the woods. He emphasized that the president is not looking for self aggrandizement but seeking for a better future for the country

Meanwhile, the Economic Community of West Africans States, ECOWAS sitting in Abuja has said section 19 (1) (a)27, and 37 of the Nigerian Press Council Act failed to recognise public interest, media, including the right of online and citizen

journalists.

The court held that the section violated Article 9 (1) of the African Charter on Human and People's Right and Article 8 (1) and 10(2) of the declaration of principle on freedom of

expression in Africa.

The court consequently ordered the Nigerian government to amend these contested sections to align with international practices that promote free, pluralistic and professional journalism.

Increase your investments, NCC boss tells Nokia Networks

By DORCAS PANKYES

THE Executive Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (EVC/CEO) of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Dr. Aminu Maida, has requested Nokia Networks to increase its investments in Research and Development (R&D) to

support the growth of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Nigeria.

Maida spoke when a delegation from Nokia Networks of Finland led by the Deputy Minister, Under-Secretary of State for International Trade from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Jarno Syrjala, visited the Commission in Abuja recently, to explore further opportunities for mutually-beneficial relationship.

He told the delegation that the Nigerian government is keenly interested in harnessing Nokia's capabilities through technology transfer to support Nigerian youths in technical skills.

The Nigerian government is targeting training of three million youths in ICT skills to advance the country's digital economy. "We are keen on getting the youths employed, as our Ministry is targeting three million youths for skills acquisition," the EVC said.

Maida informed the Nokia

contingent that the Commission places primacy in R&D as the bedrock of any knowledge economy, and for advancement of innovation.

He therefore urged Nokia and other Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), to explore R&D opportunities to deepen local content development in Nigeria.

While congratulating Maida on his appointment by President Bola Tinubu as Nigeria's chief telecom regulator, Syrjala said the purpose of the visit was to explore areas of collaboration to support Nigeria's digital economy agenda.

Syrjala recalled Nokia's continued partnership with communications service providers in Nigeria, as well as cable and other operators to deliver critical network systems with high performance, reliability, and security.

He noted that Nokia already has an R&D centre in Nigeria, and would target greater investment in this

NAWOJ elects new executives



Bura

THE Nigeria Association of Women Journalists, NAWOJ, has elected new executives to manage its affairs at the national level for the next three years.

The 3-day elections took place during the 11th Triennial Delegates Conference of NAWOJ tagged "Abuja 2023", at the Maryam Babangida National Center for Women Development, Central Business District, Abuja from 22-26 November.

Aisha Ibrahim Bura, from Borno State won the position of the National President to defeat the incumbent, Ladi Bala while Adeola Adekunle from Adaba FM in Ondo State clinched the Vice Chairperson position.

The election process which took place at Mariam Babangida Women Development Center, Central Area Abuja, was monitored by some members of the National Executive of Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), including the National President, Chief Chris Isiguzo.

The forum attracted NAWOJ delegates from the 36 states in Nigeria, including the Federal Capital Territory. Plateau State delegates were led to the conference by the state Chairperson, Nene Dung and her executive members to participate fully in the epoch-making event.

The President of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Chris Isiguzo, in his remarks at the opening ceremony, commended the outgoing NAWOJ executives for performing well and called on the new leadership that emerges to embrace peace and cause development of the

association in line with the mandate of the establishment of the body.

He noted that the theme for the celebration, "Activism to end violence against women and girls: The role of the media" is timely, of global significance, and coincides with the International Day of 16 days activism of Violence Against Women.

While saying that NAWOJ occupies a unique position at the NUJ, Isiguzo urged the new leadership to be committed to unity, progress and advancement of women's rights.

He appreciated former Presidents like Moji Makanjuola, Evelyn Onyilo, Ifeyinwa Omowole who are still giving the necessary support so that the association will not die.

Chairperson of the conference, Mrs. Moji Makanjuola, urged the leadership to remember the foundation on which the association was formed, which is promoting women rights so that they could be counted as an integral part of the country.

Makanjuola, who is also the Chairperson, Board of Trustees of NAWOJ, noted that although the formation of the association was with challenges, she tasked the leadership of the association to strive more to meet its expectations which deals with impacting on the social life of women, girls and vulnerable groups in the society.

"NAWOJ is a congregation of women with same purpose to show that women can deliver," she stated.

Guest speaker, Mrs Ene Ohi, who spoke on the theme 'Unite, invest to prevent violence against women and girls: The role of the media', commended the media for the role it plays in promoting gender issues and exposing gender based violence.

She said during her work as head of Action Aid, a component and programme was designed for women organisations and after a partnership assessment of its records, NAWOJ was enrolled as one of its partners.

Ehi said she was glad that with what Action Aid did with NAWOJ, FIDA, and other women groups like setting up an office, they have been able to secure multi-million Naira development projects.

Representative of the Country Director of ActionAid, Nigeria, Prince Egba, applauded NAWOJ for its commitment to deliver and the partnership it shares with his organisation.

While calling on NAWOJ to

engage in more partnerships with his organisation, Egba said that his organisation is known for transparency. He noted that its target is to ensure that women and children in Nigeria are respected even as he stressed that the past NAWOJ leadership had exhibited passion and commitment to changing the lives of members.

He pointed out that ActionAid has worked with over 150 women groups in which NAWOJ is a beneficiary.

The Chairman, NAWOJ 2023 Electoral Committee, Mr. Mike Ikeogwu who declared the New President Aisha Bura winner on Sunday, November 26, 2023, said NAWOJ had spoken through the ballot.

Ikeogwu stated that the margin was a clear picture that NAWOJians desired a change of administration at the national level.

Other candidates elected were Lilian Ogbu Okonkwo, who won Deputy National President, Waslia Ladan got National Secretary and the Assistant Secretary office was won by Aisha Cole. Others are Fatima Rasheed, National Treasurer and Jemila Chinwe Abubakar, National Auditor. Ifeoma Aka emerged unopposed as the Financial Secretary, Amaka Agbo, Vice President Zone C, Cizoba Ogbache Vice President Zone D and Stella Macauley Vice President Zone F.

In her acceptance speech, Aisha Bura who henceforth asked to be addressed as National Chairperson pledged to protect the interest of the women journalists while carrying out reforms that will take NAWOJ to the next level.

However, speaking earlier at the opening ceremony, NAWOJ outgoing 10th President, Ladi Musa said "Today I feel happy with my team to mark an end to our 3 year tenure".

She said she is so happy with the achievements her leadership has recorded especially securing an office for the body through partners like Action Aid, Ministry of women Affairs, and other partners.

She encouraged state chapters of NAWOJ to put their records and activities straight to show transparency and work hard to attract the support of donor agencies.

NAWOJ, the umbrella body of women journalists in Nigeria was formed in 1989 to address gender and social rights and promote the professional development of women journalists in Nigeria.



Lateef

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

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first Column hereunder died into on the date and place state in the said column.
AND WHEREAS the person whose name(s) and addressed and relations to the deceased are set out in second column here onto has/have applied to High Court of Plateau State if grant of letter administration of the Real and personal properties/ estate of the said deceased NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that letters of Administration will be granted to such person/persons unless a "NOTICE TO PROHIBIT the grant is filed in the Registry within twenty one (2) days from the date hereof.

NAME OF DECEASED PERSON	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT
Joseph Kiku Amock late of Plateau State died on the 12th Sept., 2023 at JUTH, Plateau State.	Joseph Idima of Achasara Mafara Districk Bass LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	Lotson Peter Ibrahim Late of Plateau State died on the 24th July, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	Peter Mbwehali Mapis of Opp. Police Staff Collage Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	Adi Matswende David late of Plateau State died on the 24th October, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	Adi Daniel David of Gurra Topp Jos South LGA, Plateau State. The lawful son of the said Deceased.
Bala Joshua Bermang late of Plateau State died on the 22nd May, 2023 at Gindiri, Mangu LGA Plateau State.	Oliver Joshua Bermang of Behind FCS Building Material Jos South LGA, Plateau State. The lawful brother of the said deceased.	Philip Jang Kim late of Plateau State died on the 27th October, 2015 at SRC, HOSP. Jos.	INSP. Pius Kim St. Joseph's Catholic Church Du Jos South LGA, Plateau State. The lawful son of the said deceased.	Oche George Ogenyi late of Benue State died on the 19th July, 2022 at Makurdi.	Oche Victor Sunday of Angwan Jarawa Farin-Gada Jos North, Plateau State. The lawful brother of the said deceased.
Joseph Chung Pam late of Plateau State died on the 21st March, 2023 at Mshemite Kingdom of Jordan, Jos South LGA Plateau State.	Charles Pam Chung of Sparkling Junction Dadin Kowa Jos South LGA, Plateau State. The lawful son of the said deceased.	Nannim Gonji (Also known as) Gonji Nannim Nimyel late of Plateau State died on the 4th August, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	Gonji Sarah Nannim & Gonji Best Elika of House 31 Govt. Quaters Bauchi Road Jos North LGA, Plateau State. The lawful widow/son of the said deceased.	Etim Adiaha Joseph late of Akwa-Ibom State died on the 9th Feb., 2021 at Uyo State.	Afonime Joseph Etim of No.14 Hospital Road Ikot Eboietinan LGA, Akwa-Ibom State. The lawful son of the said deceased.
Sunday Gyang late of Plateau State died on the 7th Jan., 2022 at Jos, Plateau State.	Sunday Daniel Gyang of Opp., St. William Catholic Church Zawan Jos South LGA, Plateau State. The lawful son of the said deceased.	Capt. Samuel Bala Shok Dong late of Plateau State died on the 28th Sept., 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	Shok Daniel Mali of Area 8 Garki FCT Abuja. The lawful son of the said deceased.	Gungs Emmanuel late of Plateau State died on the 19th October, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	Nansik Lar of Deeper Life Church Abattior Jos South LGA, Plateau State. The lawful widow of the said deceased.
Francis Abbas late of Plateau State died on the 9th May, 2023 at Zaria..	Francis Felicia Abbas of Chalyfield Rayfield Jos South LGA, Plateau State. The lawful daughter of the said deceased.	INSPR. Maikayi Kukah late of Kaduna State died on the 15th August, 2023 at Damakasuwa, Kaduna State.	Victoria Samuel of Damakasuwa, Kaura LGA, Kaduna State. The lawful widow of the said deceased.	Bibot Hannatu late of Plateau State died on the March 14th, 2015, at Jos Plateau State. Plateau State.	Bibot Yusuf Yakubu of COCIN Church Tongzong Gindiri Mangu LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased
Dr. Ndampon Peter Kazi, late of Plateau State. Died on the 14th April, 2023, at Jos, Plateau Stat.	Mrs. Felicia Karmicit Kazi of Pankshin LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.	Ahmad Musa, late of Plateau State. Died on the 17th March, 2020, at JUTH, Plateau State.	Fatima Ahmad, Dadin Kowa Jos Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful Daughter of the said deceased.	Ngo Naomi Vou Jugu, late of Plateau State. Died on the 28th June, 2022, at Jos, Plateau State.	Jugu Chung Dalyop, No.2 Na'omi Jugu street Opp. Old Gov. House Rayfield, Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased
Ibrahim Hassan Garba late of Katsina State. Died on the 23rd May, 2023, at Jibiya, Hosp. Katsina State.	Nokshwan Fatima Garba, of Dong in Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful sister of the said deceased	Thomas Yak, late of Plateau State. Died on the 23rd September, 2023, at Kunet, Barrack Bokkos LGA, Plateau State.	Lucy Toma of Kunet Barrack Bokkos LGA, Plateau State.. Lawful widow of the said deceased.	Simpe Mandar (Also known as) Simpe Mandar Arzak, late of Obere, Ogun State. Died on the 18th December, 2021, at Ogun State.	Samson Arzak of Dangote Sugar Refinery Apapa Port Complex, Lagos State . Lawful brother of the said deceased
Olawi Jumma late of Plateau State. Died on the 3rd March, 2023, at PSSH Jos.	Jimoh Hamza Mallam of Yelwa Shendam LGA, Plateau State.. Lawful son of the said deceased.	INSP Sunday Gyuks late of Plateau State. Died on the 12th July, 2023 at Lagos State.	LUCY BLESSING SABO & GIFT NANSHU RANCIES, ALL OF ANGWAN DOKI BUKURU JOS SOUTH LGA, PLATEAU STATE. lawful widow/ daughter of the said	Space for sale	

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

Foreign News

Philippine government, communist rebels to revive peace talks

THE Philippine government will resume peace talks with the country's communist rebels, in a bid to end decades of civil strife.

Authorities will re-engage with the New People's Army (NPA), the military wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), for the first time in six years, both parties and

"The parties agree to a principled and peaceful resolution of the armed conflict," the two sides said in a joint statement, adding that the peace talks will address "deep-rooted socioeconomic and political grievances".

If negotiations succeed, the rebels will end their armed struggle and transform into a political movement, according to Norway, which has mediated the island nation's peace process for around 20 years.

Despite the progress, the government announced no immediate ceasefire and said operations against the armed group would continue.

However, military chief Romeo Brawner was hopeful an eventual peace deal would enable the armed forces to fully focus on "external or territorial defence", rather than domestic conflict.

The Philippine government's conflict with the NPA has raged for over 50 years, peaking in the 1980s, and killed more than 40,000 people.

Today, the NPA has only a few thousand fighters, compared to some 26,000 at its height, with many rebels surrendering in exchange for financial assistance and livelihood opportunities, according to the government.

However, NPA rebels continue to engage in deadly clashes in some parts of the Philippines, staging ambushes against those perceived as state collaborators.

Successive Philippine administrations have held talks with the communists aimed at ending the violence since 1986, negotiating with their Netherlands-based political arm, the NDF.

Formal talks were last held in 2017 when they were acrimoniously terminated by then-President Rodrigo Duterte.

Duterte left office in mid-2022 and was replaced by Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

The announcement of renewed peace talks comes less than a week after Marcos Jr issued an order



Duterte

granting amnesty to several rebel groups, including former members of the communist movement.

Under the amnesty order,

N Korea defends satellite launch, Kim 'studies' Pentagon images

NORTH Korea's ambassador made a rare appearance at the United Nations Security Council to defend his country's launch of a spy satellite, as Pyongyang's state media said leader Kim Jong Un received satellite images of the White House and Pentagon.

Western powers, Japan and South Korea have said North Korea violated Security Council resolutions by launching the satellite last week.

At the Security Council on Monday, Kim Song, North Korea's ambassador to the UN, complained that other countries faced no restrictions on satellites.

"No other nation in the world is in the security environment as critical as the DPRK," said Kim, using the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

"One belligerent party, the United States, is threatening us with a nuclear weapon," he said.

"It is a legitimate right for the DPRK as another belligerent party to develop, test, manufacture and possess weapons systems equivalent to those that the United States possesses or is developing."

The country has said that its new eye in the sky has already provided images of major US and South Korean military sites, as well as photos of the Italian capital Rome.

On Monday, Kim received "in detail" images of the White House and the Pentagon, which he later studied, according to North Korea's state-run KCNA news agency.

The North Korean leader also counted the number of aircraft

former CPP, NPA and National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) members would be absolved of crimes they committed "in pursuit of political beliefs".

carriers at a military base and a shipyard in the state of Virginia, the agency said.

The US ambassador to the UN, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, rejected North Korea's assertion it was acting in self-defence and said that joint US-South Korean exercises were "routine" and "defensive in nature".

"We intentionally reduce risk and pursue transparency by announcing the exercises in advance including the dates and the activities, unlike the DPRK," she said, adding that the drills did not violate Security Council resolutions.

South Korea's spy agency said that Russia, eager for assistance in Ukraine, helped North Korea on the satellite following a summit between Kim and President Vladimir Putin.



Jong Un

ELEVEN workers at a South African platinum mine have been killed and 75 others injured after a lift bringing the workers back to the surface dropped about 200 metres (656 feet), according to the mine's operator.

Impala Platinum said the "serious accident" happened on Monday in the late afternoon at its mine in Rustenburg, northwest of Johannesburg, as employees were leaving one of the shafts at the end of their shift.

"Our hearts are heavy for the lives lost and the individuals affected by this devastating accident," Impala Platinum's (Implats) CEO, Nico Muller, said in a statement on Tuesday. "We are deeply shocked and

Eleven killed in accident at platinum mine

saddened by the loss of our colleagues and are in the process of ensuring all next of kin have been contacted".

The company said 75 workers were injured and were transferred to local hospitals and admitted for treatment.

Implats spokesman Johan Theron told the AFP news agency some were severely injured, most suffered from ankle and leg fractures, and others walked out with minor scratches.

The accident happened shortly before 5pm (15:00 GMT) on Monday as the hoisting employees

"unexpectedly started descending", according to the company. "Its rapid descent was stopped by the

conveyance counterweight becoming trapped by the jack catches," it said in a statement.

South Africa is the world's largest producer of platinum.

The country had 49 fatalities from all mining accidents in 2022, a decrease from 74 the year before. Deaths from South African mining accidents have steadily

decreased in the last two decades from nearly 300 in the year 2000, according to South African government figures.

Parthenon marbles row derails talks between UK's Sunak

DIPLOMATIC sparks are flying after Britain's prime minister abruptly cancelled a meeting with his Greek counterpart in which they were due to discuss long-contested artefacts.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was scheduled on Monday to meet visiting Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, who planned to raise the status of the Elgin Marbles, a set of 2,500-year-old Greek sculptures that Athens wants Britain to return.

Greece asserts that the marbles, taken from the Parthenon temple by British



Mitsotakis

diplomat Lord Elgin in the early 19th century, were stolen - an assertion denied by Britain.

The issue has been a source of contention between the countries for decades.

Mitsotakis, in a statement, expressed "displeasure" that the British prime minister had cancelled their meeting at the last minute, accusing him of sidestepping the issue.

"Greece's position on the issue of the Parthenon friezes is well known. I had hoped to have the opportunity to discuss them with my British counterpart," Mitsotakis lamented.

"Those who believe in the rightness and validity of their positions are never afraid to confront the arguments," he added.

Mitsotakis reportedly declined a UK offer to meet Deputy Prime Minister Oliver Dowden instead.

A Downing Street spokesperson, responding to Mitsotakis's statement, said "the UK-Greece relationship is hugely important", citing joint work within NATO and "tackling shared challenges like illegal migration" and the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East.

"The deputy prime minister was available to meet with the Greek PM to discuss these important issues," the spokesperson added, without referencing the marbles issue.

The sculptures were taken from the Parthenon temple at the Acropolis in Greece in the early 19th century by British diplomat Thomas Bruce, the

earl of Elgin. Britain maintains it acquired the scriptures legally.

According to the Greek news agency ANA, citing sources within the Greek government, the British prime minister was apparently upset by comments made by his Greek counterpart to the BBC on Sunday.

In his comments, Mitsotakis likened the collection being held at the British Museum to the Mona Lisa painting being cut in half.

A source from Britain's ruling Conservatives told the broadcaster on Monday that "it became impossible for this meeting to go ahead following commentary regarding the Elgin Marbles prior to it".

Britain's government has always ruled out giving up ownership of the marbles, which include about half of the 160-metre (525-ft) frieze that adorned the Parthenon.

However, Athens has recently been pushing for a deal that would return the sculptures under some kind of loan arrangement.

The Financial Times last week reported that British opposition leader Keir Starmer would not block a "mutually acceptable" loan deal for the sculptures.

A meeting between Mitsotakis and Starmer went ahead on Monday as planned.

But Sunak's spokesperson said on Monday the UK government had "no plans to change our approach, and certainly we think that the [British] museum is the right place" for the marbles.

Feature

NLC moving on a slippery slope

It is one thing to advance critiques on government. It is another thing to express those critiques into productive advocacy and policy change for the benefit your members that you represent. It is true, the Federal Government have been creating Negotiating Space for social dialogue and social democratic trade unions to negotiate to their advantages on the basis of the fuel subsidy removal but the Organized Labour have failed to utilize the opportunity given to them, instead, the Organized Labour opted to change their collective bargaining structure by using state councils to negotiate the miserable N 35,000 temporary wage awards for only Federal Government workers excluding the states, the organized private sector workers and local government council workers to battle with their employers. CHINDABA NGOB writes.

QUITE telling in this regards, it is very clear that there is no wage solidarity in the movement. It does also appear, with the way things are going, in the next 20 years if care is not taken, there would be no centralized bargaining structure to negotiate workers welfare in Nigeria. The leadership of the two labour centres, the NLC and TUC for long have assigned a little or very low priority to addressing the problems that affect their members in the 36 states of the federation.

Nigerians, most especially workers have been going through the most traumatic times in the history of their lives in the country. Nothing is the same for workers and every household soon after the introduction of what can best be described as "weapons of mass destruction", the subsidy withdrawal on fuel by the Federal Government in May 2023.

Responding to this crisis, the Organized Labour is under heavy criticism. They have been accused of being part of workers problems because, series of meetings and negotiations with the Federal Government have all failed to yield any meaningful result.

Ruinously, the conducts of the unions leadership have repeatedly put workers in less advantage position. Their recent action in Imo State have constituted a gross absurdity for the image and progress of labour movement. There is no doubt the Organized Labour is now loosing public legitimacy.

In an unclear circumstances, of recent, the Nigeria Labour Congress, under the leadership of Comrade Joe Ajaero was caught meddling into the politics and internal affairs of Imo State claiming he was there in solidarity with the state workers welfare.

Recall that the President of the Nigeria Labour Congress was billed to be at the state secretariat in Oweri the state capital of Imo State to address and mobilize workers to kick-start the planned protest/strike to press home their demands on the plights of workers over the state government failure to fulfilled an agreement signed in 2021 and other sundry labour issues but Ajaero was allegedly manhandled by suspected thugs and men of the Nigeria Police, Imo State command. It is being reported that Ajaero was accused of attempting bossnapping at the Sam Mbakwe Airport which was promptly resisted by some Airport workers. And in what appeared to be a declaration of a 'wildcat strike' at the state secretariat. The Imo State council of NLC was said to have sidestepped on their planned strike and protest because of the political implications.

Despite the public condemnations of the treatment meted on the labour leader, pundits are asserting that Comrade Ajaero was hiding under the guise of labour to achieve his political agenda while using the police brutality as a smokescreen to gain sympathy from workers and Nigerians. To declare a nationwide strike even when the police spokesman in Imo, Henry Okoye had debunked Ajaero's claim of being manhandled by Police and Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kayode Egbetokun had acted swiftly in removing and redeployed the state police Commissioner, Mohammed Barde and ordered for an immediate investigation



Ajaero, NLC President



Osita, TUC President

Recall that the President of the Nigeria Labour Congress was billed to be at the state secretariat in Oweri the state capital of Imo State to address and mobilize workers to kick-start the planned protest/strike to press home their demands on the plights of workers over the state government failure to fulfilled an agreement signed in 2021 and other sundry labour issues but Ajaero was allegedly manhandled by suspected thugs and men of the Nigeria Police, Imo State command. It is being reported that Ajaero was accused of attempting bossnapping at the Sam Mbakwe Airport which was promptly resisted by some Airport workers. And in what appeared to be a declaration of a 'wildcat strike' at the state secretariat. The Imo State council of NLC was said to have sidestepped on their planned strike and protest because of the political implications.

into the matter.

In public debate, doubts were and still cast on the rational and justifications for the two labour centres to contemplate embarking on a nationwide strike in the first instance. It is hard to convince government and labour radical critics that the nationwide strike was not politically motivated.

Certainly, if Ajaero's mission to Imo State was genuinely for the welfare of the Imo State workers then why was Ajaero in Imo State without his counterpart from the Trade Union Congress, TUC, Comrade Osifo?

It was alleged that the Imo State chapter of the NLC was not strongly in support of the protest/strike but the NLC President under the umbrella of the NLC insisted on the industrial action.

Moreover, civil servants in the 36 states and the Organized Private Sector (OPS) workers are still expressing their displeasure over the way and manner in which the Organized Labour handled the negotiations of the post - subsidy removal palliatives for workers and Nigerians.

There is no gain saying the NLC President, Comrade Ajaero had declared his support for Labour Party Presidential candidate, Peter Obi and was calling on all Nigerian workers to vote for Labour Party in the last elections. Therefore, the action of the President of NLC in Imo State was viewed as NLC is being partisan and sympathetic to LP candidate in last governorship in the state. Government perhaps viewed Ajaero's sudden appearance in Imo State was for a

political rally in support of his preferred candidate rather than protest for the demands of workers welfare which has been there for more than 3 years.

NLC under the leadership of Comrade Joe Ajaero has failed woefully to protect the interest of the majority of its members. Hence, there are still states and Local Government in the states and Local Governments in the Federation that have not even implemented the N 18,000 and N 30,000 minimum wage. Yet the NLC leadership have not deemed it necessary to organize strikes and protests in such states.

For some radical critics of Labour, Ajaero deserves no sympathy and solidarity because prior to his assumption of office as the President of this highly respected Labour centres, NLC, he has never shown maturity and decency in his conduct.

One of the striking examples is that Comrade Ajaero in the past blackout of planned strikes to halt hike in petroleum pump price, organized by the former NLC President, Comrade Ayuba Wabba faction because he contested in the 2015 labour election and did not win. In fact, Ajaero went further to create another labour centre called United Labour Congress of Nigeria (ULC). Ajaero compromised the unity of labour movement by creating a labour centre. According to Ajaero, the formation of the new labour centre that died on arrival was to end what he called years of 'docility'.

The formation of Labour Party is good in shaping the future of the labour movement, hence, it could serve as a roadmap to political power where at a

policy level, trade unions can demand for "a place at the table" to influence the decision making process. But Labour should not forget that this change will not be achieved without a price.

Of course, the Organized Labour can extend their interest beyond workplace mandate but labour should be able to separate politics and labour rights for them to achieve Labour friendly outcomes. Government have described the action of the Organized Labour in Imo State that led to the declaration of a nationwide strike as "Ego tripping" action to paint the Imo State government in bad light.

Some critics have also accused Labour leaders of being bribed each time they threaten to embark on strikes and protests which are always limited to television talkshows to betray the course of their members.

These planned strikes and protests are always suspended before the night fall. The organized labour needs a "self-reassessment" and self-reinforcement in other to overcome the challenges facing their members.

In sum, given the scale of the crisis resulting from the fuel subsidy removal the topmost priority of labour now should be the welfare of Nigerian workers both in the public and private sectors of the economy by ensuring that Federal Government and States implement the 15 - point Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) which was signed on October 2' 2023 and revisit all unresolved labour related issued in all the states of the federation.

EYE'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Relationships

8 steps you need in underarm care routine

MOST of us shower, slap on deodorant, and rush out the door without thinking about our armpits... until we catch a whiff of them at the end of the day. Our underarms are rarely visible, so it's common to overlook them in terms of a daily care routine.

But did you know that bacteria, dead skin, and clogged pores all contribute to underarm odor? And unfortunately, a simple shower won't rinse it all away. So, establishing an underarm care routine ensures you've got a clean slate each day.

These tips work for both men and women alike, only varying in the specific products you chose to fit your needs. Below are eight tips to help you get started with a proper armpit care routine.

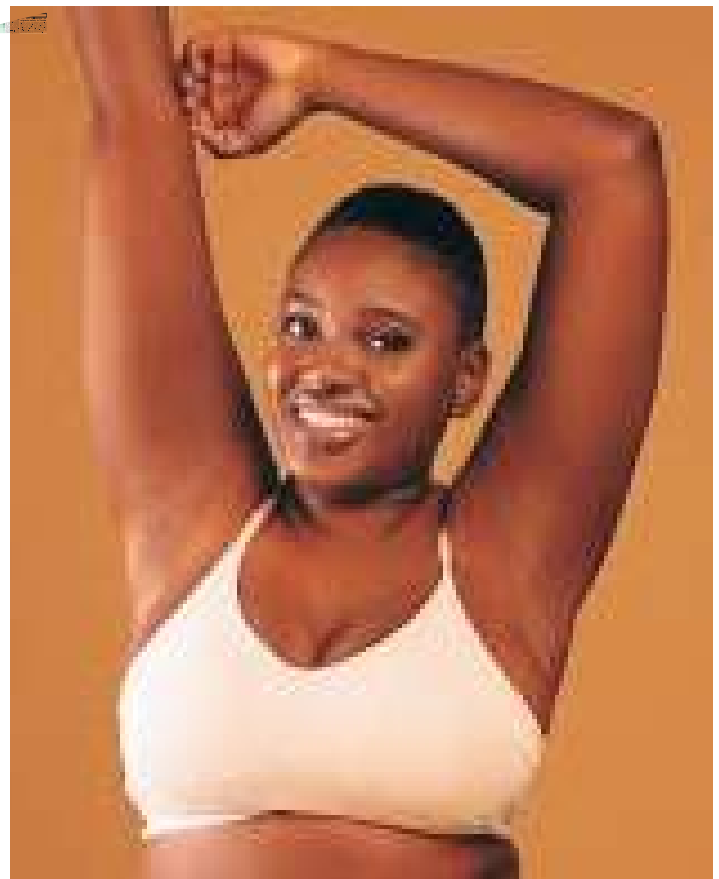
1. Cleanse (daily)

Step one in your daily underarm care routine is cleansing. Sweat mixes with bacteria and produces body odor. Over time, bacteria and odor will build up if it's not cleaned daily. It only takes using soap and water to wash off the germ build-up.

Even if you don't shower every single day, at least make sure to cleanse your armpits. Keep in mind that your armpit skin is sensitive. Therefore, use a mild soap and be careful to not rub too hard. (If you have problems with body odor, consider using an antibacterial soap.)

2. Tone and moisturize (daily)

After washing your armpits, it's important to apply toner. Toner works to gently remove bacteria as well as leftover residue from deodorants and antiperspirants. Some toners are healthier for your skin than



others, so make sure to look for one that fits your skin's needs. Check out this alcohol-free Clarifying Toner from Oleavine (buy on Amazon).

Once you've dried your armpits from washing, gently massage the toner onto your underarm skin. After the toner has dried, apply a gentle moisturizer to keep your skin hydrated and healthy.

3. Use a natural deodorant (daily)

To help neutralize or mask odors, use a natural deodorant. Unlike commercial deodorants and antiperspirants, natural products are chemical-free and won't plug your pores. If you are new to natural

deodorants, be sure to plan for a transition period - or detox phase - of about a month. All of these underarm care tips help your body adjust while switching to a natural deodorant. Use the product only as directed and apply to dry skin.

4. Shave (2-3 times a week)

Part of your underarm care routine should include shaving 2 to 3 times a week. (Yes, guys... we mean you!) Shaving your underarm hair is beneficial for numerous reasons:

- Sweat doesn't get trapped in the hair, which prevents it from evaporating.
- Soaps can reach the surface of your skin, thereby killing bacteria that hide in the recesses.
- The lack of hair allows deodorants or antiperspirants to penetrate your skin, making them more effective.

If you are shaving with a razor, make sure you lubricate your armpits. For best results, use shaving gel or cream. The hair in your armpits grows in all directions, so be sure to shave in all directions: up, down, and side-to-side.

5. Exfoliate (weekly)

An important part of underarm care is exfoliating once or twice a week. This is an important step because it removes the dead skin cells

from the top layer of skin, which prevents odor-causing build-up. You can either use an exfoliator cream, such as Pacifica Coconut and Charcoal Underarm Detox Scrub (buy on Amazon) or a wet washcloth or loofah with body wash.

Remember, your underarm skin is sensitive so if using an exfoliating product, be sure to select a gentle one. You can even use the same one you use on your face. Gently rub in a circular motion and rinse.

6. Use an armpit mask (weekly)

Did you know there is such a thing as armpit masks? Just like facial masks, armpit masks detoxify your skin from all the nasty build up. There are several benefits to using an armpit mask:

- It helps with body odor by stripping away build up.
- It removes any deodorant or antiperspirant residue that doesn't come off from washing.
- It supports the transition to natural deodorants.

For best results, use an armpit mask once a week. Need a suggestion? Check out this highly rated product: Aztec Secret Indian Healing Clay Mask (buy on Amazon).

7. Maintain your razor (monthly)

It is very important to use well-sharpened razors when shaving. If you don't, it creates

opportunities for micro-tears in your skin, which can lead to infections. The best way to prevent micro-tears is to switch to a new blade about every five uses or so. Keep the blade out of the shower so that it can dry thoroughly and avoid rust stains. Want to treat yourself? Check out the Gillette Heated Razor (buy on Amazon) for the ultimate shaving experience.

8. Wear Breathable Fabrics

The last of our underarm care tips is to wear breathable fabrics. Fabrics that are breathable allow air to easily flow through them, which speeds up sweat evaporation. In turn, this also helps prevent potential odor. Most natural fibers will do the trick, though a few synthetic fabrics are lightweight and breathable.

Now that you know how to start an underarm care routine, you are destined to feel fresher at the start of each day. Just a few extra steps will immensely improve the overall health of your underarms.

Take Control of Sweat Stains and Odor

To help reduce the appearance of sweat and the occurrence of underarm odor, check out our line of sweat proof undershirts (buy on our shop or on Amazon.) Pair your pampered armpits with an Ejis undershirt to experience "wearable confidence" instead of worrying about ruining your clothes with sweat and odor.



EVER'S WORLD

With **Henrietta Gonzuk**

Health

Parenting guide: Healthy principles that work

Introduction to healthy parenting

Raising happy and healthy children is a tough job. Parenting involves not just relying on our instincts or doing what our parents did before us, but knowing what works best for our children, and why. In *The Ten Basic Principles of Good Parenting*, author Laurence Steinberg, PhD, a professor of psychology at Temple University in Philadelphia, gives practical advice on how to raise confident and well-adjusted children.

What you do matters

Parents are important role models for their children, who learn how to behave by watching mom and dad. "This is one of the most important principles," Steinberg explains. "What you do makes a difference...Don't just react on the spur of the moment. Ask yourself, What do I want to accomplish, and is this likely to produce that result?" Whether it's eating healthy foods, exercising, treating others kindly, or being honest, children are paying attention and look to their parents for cues on how to behave.

You cannot be too loving

There is no such thing as "too much" love. Remember that material possessions or lack of rules and limits is not the same thing as love. "It is simply not possible to spoil a child with love," Steinberg writes. "What we often think of as the product of spoiling a child is never the result of showing a child too much love. It is usually the consequence of giving a child things in place of love -- things like leniency, lowered expectations, or material possessions."

Be involved in your child's life

Parenting involves a lot of responsibility. "Being an involved parent takes time and is hard work, and it often means rethinking and rearranging your priorities. It frequently means sacrificing what you want to do for what your child needs to do. Be there mentally as well as physically," writes Steinberg.

At the same time, while parents need to be there for their children, they should not do everything for them, including homework. "Homework is a tool for teachers to know whether the child is learning or not," Steinberg says. "If you do the homework, you're not letting the teacher know what the child is learning."

Adapt your parenting to fit your child

The age of a child can greatly affect how he or she behaves. Know what behavioral changes are normal and help support them in their personal growth and development.

"The same drive for independence that is making your 3-year-old say 'no' all the time is what's motivating him to be toilet trained," writes Steinberg. "The same intellectual growth spurt that is making your 13-year-old curious and inquisitive in the classroom also is making her argumentative at the dinner table."

Establish and set rules

When a child is younger, it's important to help manage his behavior, which teaches him how to manage himself. "If you don't manage your child's behavior when he is young, he will have a hard time learning how to manage himself when he is older and you aren't



around," Steinberg says. "Any time of the day or night, you should always be able to answer these three questions: Where is my child? Who is with my child? What is my child doing? The rules your child has learned from you are going to shape the rules he applies to himself."

As children age, parents should be involved while allowing their children independence. "...you can't micromanage your child," Steinberg writes. "Once they're in middle school, you need to let the child do their own homework, make their own choices, and not intervene."

Foster your child's independence

Boundaries for children are important. "Setting limits helps your child develop a sense of self-control. Encouraging independence helps your child develop a sense of self-direction. To be successful in life, he's going to need both," says Steinberg.

"It's normal for children to push for autonomy. Many parents mistakenly equate their child's independence with rebelliousness or disobedience. Children push for independence because it is part of human nature to want to feel in control rather than to feel controlled by someone else." These behaviors may be challenging for parents, but they are an important step for childhood development.

Be consistent

Set rules and be consistent in applying them. "If your rules vary from day to day in an unpredictable fashion or if you enforce them only intermittently, your child's misbehavior is your fault, not his," says Steinberg. "Your most important disciplinary tool is consistency. Identify your nonnegotiables. The more your authority is based on wisdom and not on power, the less your child will challenge it."

Avoid harsh discipline

Physical discipline is never an option. "Children who are spanked, hit, or slapped are more prone to fighting with other children. They are more likely to be bullies and more likely to use aggression to solve disputes with others," Steinberg writes.

"There are many other ways to discipline a child -- including 'time out' -- which work better and do not involve aggression."

Explain your rules and decisions

Have clear expectations that are age-appropriate and make sure they are clear to the child in a way he understands. "Good parents have expectations they want their child to live up to," Steinberg writes. "Generally, parents over-explain to young children and under-explain to

adolescents. What is obvious to you may not be evident to a 12-year-old. He doesn't have the priorities, judgment, or experience that you have."

Treat your child with respect

Treat children with respect and they will learn to respect others, including their parents. "The best way to get respectful treatment from your child is to treat him respectfully," Steinberg writes. "You should give your child the same courtesies you would give to anyone else. Speak to him politely. Respect his opinion. Pay attention when he is speaking to you. Treat him kindly. Try to please him when you can. Children treat others the way their parents treat them. You are modeling behaviors that your child will emulate. Your relationship with

your child is the foundation for her relationships with others."

Rewards of good parenting

The more you practice good parenting skills, Steinberg says, the more natural it will be even in the times you respond instinctively. For Steinberg, good parenting fosters healthy psychological adjustment and it promotes positive behaviors and attributes such as honesty, empathy, self-reliance, kindness, cooperation, success in school, intellectual curiosity, motivation to learn, and the desire to achieve. Steinberg states good parenting also helps deter children from antisocial behaviors, drug and alcohol abuse, anxiety, depression, and eating disorders.



Editorial

Nigeria's declining oil fortunes, a road to precipice

NIGERIA'S oil output has within the past ten years been on a steady decline where crude oil production fell below 1million barrels per day made it lost its number one spot as the highest crude oil producer in Africa.

APART from lack of meeting its domestic daily supplies, removal of petroleum subsidy and hike in the prices of petroleum products coupled with latest data from the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries [OPEC], showed that since early September this year, Angola and Libya have overtaken Nigeria as Africa's major oil players in the oil market is a major cause for alarm.

UNFORTUNATELY, bad Government policies by successive administrations, the rot and corruption in the nation's oil sector has rendered as, moribund the three of its major petroleum Refineries in PortHacourt, Warri and Kaduna likened to patients in the Intensive Care Unit with little or no hope in sight.

PERHAPS, the recent assurance by President Ahmed Bola Tinubu that the three refineries will soon be back on stream is coming as a result of an MoU signed between the Federal Government with Saudi Arabia's oil company, [ARAMCO], is an indication that there could be light at the end of the tunnel and a respite to millions of Nigerians going through excruciating pains as a result of hike in the prices of Petroleum motor spirit [PMS] and other domestic products like cooking gas.

WHILE WE commend the Federal Government for the initiative, it must also be reminded that, this is the time to walk the talk and to go beyond rhetoric by breaking the jinx of the past administrations that had reneged on lack of Turn Around Maintenance [TAM] of the refineries that were kept in the state of comatose.

WORTHY OF NOTE is the fact that Nigerians are suffering at an unprecedented level. The cost of buying a litre of petrol which now sells at N700 and may likely clime upward in the coming weeks due to the Christmas festivities with the likelihood of adding salt to injury.

THESE REALITIES, have adverse affected on every fabric of the economy leaving a dare consequence on ordinary citizens to bear all manner of hardships particularly when taking into cognisance the high costs of transportation, food commodities and other household products that has forced families to think outside the box just to survive the present hardships.

NO DOUBT, Nigerians have no reason to be in such a miserable state considering the vast oil reserves underneath its shores which can guarantee a modest lifestyle for the populace if only there will be a sincere, purposeful and accountable leadership across board.

INDEED, the people deserve a better deal and all that is required now is, government must introduce a multifaceted approach that would cushion the ravaging effects of the hardship where nothing appears to proffer solutions to the challenges. Even the so-called palliatives where billions of naira said to have been approved and released to the 36 states of the Federation and the FCT have not yielded the desired results.

OUR STAND IS, the Federal Government must encourage local content production of petrol through the award of license to modular Refineries operators at the same time, giving serious attention towards bringing the ailing refineries back on stream which will at the long run meet the local demand of the populace.

FURTHERMORE, It is incumbent for this administration to shift from the present mono-economic policies to that of reforms that would leverage on diversification of the economy and also encourage Private sector participation that can propel infrastructural and Human Capital development while laying the basic framework for transparency and accountability as the only option left for the nation's progress.

Education is key and crucial to individuals, community and national development. Education is the yardstick that leads to a nation's success. It has that power to eradicate poverty, provide good leadership and transform individuals and the countries.

Teachers are the bedrock and the channel through which people get educated, and they are those behind this big task, working tirelessly day in and day out so as to give and shape this country to a path of prosperity. However, governments and institutions build by teacher's work do not give teachers the respect and dignity they deserve. They are poorly paid and not seen as critical stakeholders in national development.

The government through its ministries and parastatals, legislatures, non-governmental organisations, and all major

stakeholder should come together to transform the lives of Nigerian teachers, Teacher's are among those who live simple life and they deserve our attention.

Many young people who want to become teacher usually change their minds once they realize how badly teachers are treated and because there is no motivation and incentive to drive one into the

NEED for proper welfare for teache

profession.

Imagine there are teachers who are even paid less than 10 thousand Naira, what will they use to pay their needs and their childrens wants and needs? They have to buy food, clothes and shelter and all of this require money.

Also there are teachers who work for months but are not paid, for some reasons. How does government want them to



survive the hardship with the prices of things in the market getting more expensive?

Nigerian leaders are supposed to realize that quality education is the most important indices of development without which our nation cannot stand on its feet. Hence, the need for the country to prioritize education and improve the well-being of teachers.

If possible Government

should even increase salaries and wages of teachers as prices of things get high in the market and they should try and pay off their salaries because they owe people and also there should be a place in Nigerian's constitution that states the amount that teachers are to be paid on of monthly bases.

SHANGMI BRIDGET MATHIAS
IT student with Federal Polytechnic Bauchic

Contentment: The great virtue

CONTENTMENT is said to be the state of happiness and satisfaction and also being grateful to what one has.

However, some individuals take to crime and other vices as a result of discontentment.

Parents should inculcate a habit of talking to their children as they grow on the need to be contented and also share the little they have with others for there is great gain in Godliness with contentment. For we brought nothing into the world and cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and do good, we will be contented.

A Jerad Anthony Higgins, An American rapper popularly known as JuiceWorld in his song titled, anxiety, he expresses gratefulness for the gift of life, he said money doesn't really matter to him,

although he has money, but still struggling with anxiety heartbreaking and substance abuse.

My point is, despite his wealth he is still facing issues. We often envy celebrities and people who are living in affluence without considering the fact that they are human like us as also have physical, psychological and emotional issues.

Furthermore, Bible verses should be read in Christians homes in order to help children in their spiritual growth, which include Hebrews 13:5, and I Timothy 6:6-8, Luke 12:15 and so on.

The spirit of contentment often results to true happiness therefore, it is expected that for one to strive be contented, no significant amount of gratification can be compared to being happy. While being

contented brings about peace of mind, most especially with one's dear ones.

Pause for a minute and have a deep thought to see how misappropriation of public funds are being done by public officials due to discontentment. Does it mean they do not have enough? With all the assets they have in their possession, what else do they want to acquire?

All these is due to their selfish interests without even considering the poor who are living in object poverty and feeding from hand to mouth and do not have any hope of getting their next meal.

We often talk about ways to eradiating corruption in Nigeria, when the monster behind it is discontentment.

Sensitizing the general public on the damaging

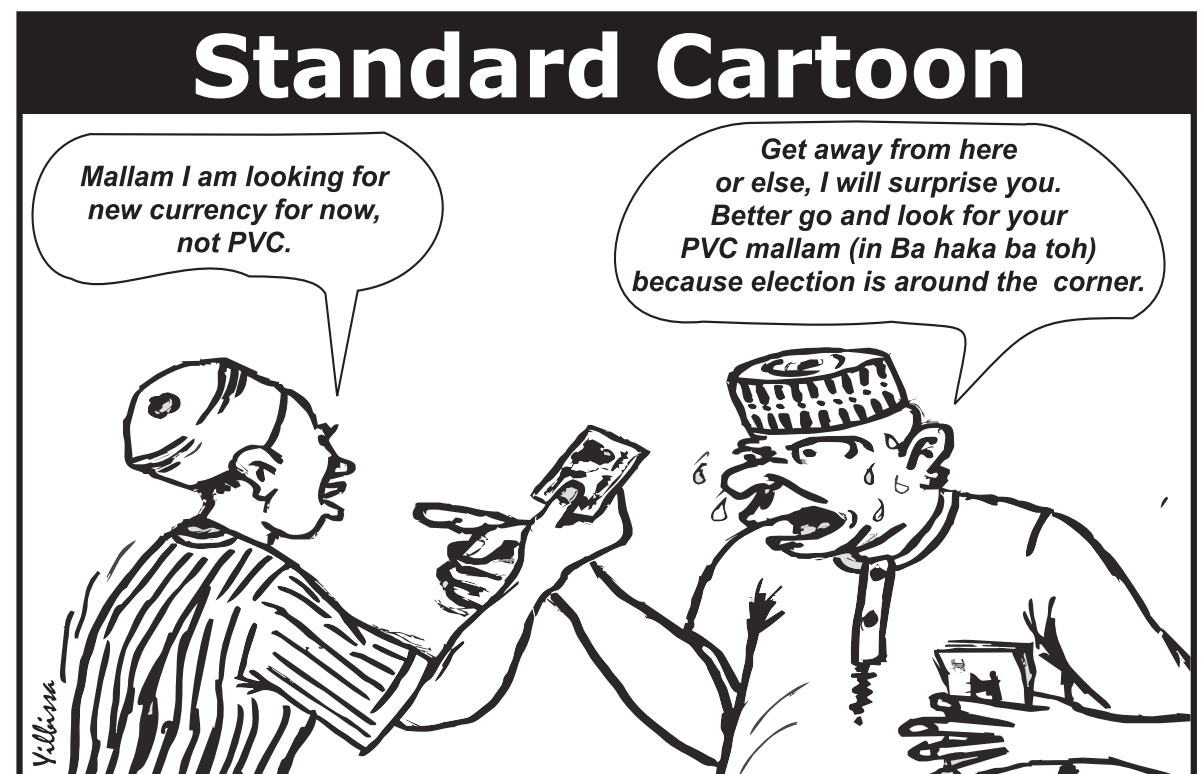
effects not such vices can go a long way in eradicating corruption in Nigeria.

Furthermore, when we settle for unhealthy and unfulfilling limitation of what we really desire our appetite can begin to get out of control whose consequence forces us to either give in or indulge in social vices that will lead to a bitter end.

But the truth is if you chase money in order to be contented it will only plunge you into destruction and will alienate you from God and people around you little by little until strangles you.

Let us try to focus our attention on doing good such as helping people improve in the overall interest of our society.

Jonathan Rabo Dammo, writes from the Plateau State Polytechnic Jos, Department of Mass Communication.



Opinion

Exploring your sweet spots for performance

Olayinka Opaleye

AS a workplace wellness strategist, clients expect me to be on the lookout for their employees' well-being, which I do well. However, I often find myself conflicted on one topic – Work-Life Balance. Although balance is one of the markers of workplace psychological health and safety, I always wonder why it's the most discussed and sought-after out of the fourteen factors. Aside from the fact that it seems overused with its purpose over-flogged, people need to start putting it in the right perspective and context.

For example, if I have a job that I love and enjoy so much, such that positively drives me to bring the best out of me, a job that I'm not only interested in but also well equipped to do. If my work is both psychologically and physically safe, if I've been able to align my personal goals with those of the organization, and if I sometimes enjoy the flexibility of working from home with healthy boundaries in place, among other things, then I may not feel I've worked for a day in my life.

A few weeks ago, I had an opportunity to be in a meeting where a CEO of a Fortune 500 company was asked about how she's been able to balance life, family, and work. Her response to the question was spot on, just like every other one she gave.

Paraphrasing her, "Work and life are not meant to be on a balance scale which you must constantly monitor to ensure one isn't skewed against the other. I adopt a form of synergistic approach where, if necessary, work can come home with me, and home can be brought to work so that nothing suffers."

So, someone may say, "It's easy for her to have it that way because she's a CEO. After all, she calls the shots where most employees may not dare to do likewise". Even though that style works beautifully for her and many others, there are other ways to achieve work-life balance with a synergistic approach. For today's topic, we will use a Netflix series titled *Emily in Paris* as a case study.

Emily, an American luxury brand marketing guru, and a social media influence expert resumed work in Paris after being seconded from their headquarters in Chicago. She experienced her first rude work culture shock when she got to the office two hours ahead of Savor's resumption time. She was probably used to having early day starts, which could be a great time for creativity and productivity.

Another difference in the work culture is not discussing ideas and anything work-related over lunch or at business parties or events. Americans organize parties to network and discuss

work, whereas the French try hard to separate them. Another shock came when voicing her ideas on the spot was perceived as an act of rudeness or competition which stirred up jealousy and strife among colleagues instead of being taken as a teamwork effort. Anyone who constantly and deliberately tries to separate work from life or life from work has not discovered self and uncovered their sweet spots.

No one can dim your light if you are excellent at what you do Working a job that continually inspires, accentuates one's strengths, and recognizes one's work is easier than you think. Having a job that keeps you highly engaged without being at the detriment of your health or family is also very much achievable. Achieving all these starts with self-awareness. It's funny how people would go through senior high school, college, and work for years, yet they do not truly know themselves.

It's important to identify your core character and skill strengths. This information will reveal what comes to you easily and why. You will also be aware of your weaknesses, which can be improved upon or complemented. This exercise also makes you see colleagues and other people as imperfect, just like you, which spurs you to find better ways to work

together to achieve the organization's goals. Here are a few other lessons from the *Emily in Paris* series.

Never see any difficult colleague, boss, or client as an enemy of your progress. It's nothing personal, as Slyvia would say. No one can dim your light if you are excellent at what you do. Also, be sure to have and know what you bring to the table that sets you apart. Your unique value will create an undeniable void at the table whenever you are not there or invited.

Another point is to respect people's culture without compromising your great work ethic. Moreover, who says you can't be the one to change the toxic culture in your workplace? It may be faster to drive culture through leadership; however, anyone can bring about or inspire the desired change.

Weave life and work together so that no one can fault your quality of work or doubt your need for some time off. Yes, you can have the best of both worlds. Disequilibrium usually does not emerge from work itself but from how enjoyable your job is. It is important to hone your skills, especially those required to bring on your A-game. To be a high performer, talents and gifts are not just enough. Training, certifications, and regular practice will amplify your abilities in a way people

would seek in exchange for top dollar. Also, don't struggle to impress anyone. If you are genuine and passionate and have put in the work, your work will precede you.

Learn, unlearn, and relearn saying no. Boundaries are necessary for a reason, and by that, I don't mean just saying no to any task or request that doesn't suit you. More importantly, find ways to decline tasks or requests that are not self-sabotaging. Pick up opportunities to learn more and grow. Identifying your weaknesses, even if it's a language, and doing something about it is critical. You never know where this may lead you.

Ultimately, be happy with what you do to the point that you are proud of doing it. This doesn't only boost your confidence but also increases your engagement level.

Call to action

Identifying your sweet spots goes beyond knowing your talents and gifts. It transcends finding your passion and interests. It requires some technicalities that juxtapose what you are great at and what you truly want to do at that point in your career or at that growth stage of your organization. You can learn this and more by enrolling for the upcoming Ride To Leadership Program organized by Rise and Lead Women. For more information,

Still on sectoral debate on security

AHMED ADOKE

THE attention of the public has been drawn to the widely publicised sectoral debate with Nigeria's service chiefs of over the lingering issue of insecurity across the country. The debate which was organised by the House Representatives towards finding lasting solution to insecurity in the country is welcome, even though security matters are not necessarily for public debate/consumption.

However, kudos to the organisers and participants at the sectoral debate, at least, for efforts to find solution to insecurity. It is hoped that the outcome of the exercise will be effectively channeled towards achieving the desired results. I wish to observe that issues of security, when tabled for discussion, must be done with caution, unbiased facts and objectively as politicising it for whatever reason will not yield the desired result.

The sectoral debate was an avenue for the heads of each participating security outfit to provide excuses to defend their various agencies and absolve the

agencies of blame for the deteriorating security situation in the country. It is a fact that security departments or para-military sectors that were not opportune to be present at the exercise, were those singled out for blame. While arms like the army, navy, police and airforce that were represented were absolved of any direct blame. This is why I sympathise with the Nigerian Correctional Centre which officials (warders) were singled out for blame over the unending activities of terrorists and Boko Haram in Nigeria.

To be specific, the Chief of Defence Staff blamed the prison warders for being responsible for the continued operations of Boko Haram because they allow Boko Haram elements detained in their facilities across the country to carry out their plans and sponsorship of such plans while in detention in our prisons. He stressed that it is with the knowledge and aid of prison warders whom the detained Boko Haram elements paid to use their bank accounts to transfer funds for the execution of their activities.

I beg to disagree with this assertion or selective apportioning of blame. In my long experience in security matters, no

particular security or para-military outfit can be singled out for being responsible for the yet to be resolved issue of insecurity in Nigeria. While I am not totally dismissing the allegation of compromise on the part of prison warders as unfounded, I wish to mention that there is no security outfit that is free of bad eggs.

For instance, there were allegations where commanders' troop leaders on operation leak (sell) information to Boko Haram, ending in the ambush/killing of Nigerian soldiers, or have we not heard of moles among Nigerian soldiers? The same goes for the Nigeria Police Force, where there are cases of some police officers selling the identity of informants to culprits or convicts.

The public was informed on several occasions by the security chiefs that they know the sponsors of Boko Haram/terrorists yet failed to disclose them or effect their arrest. Is it not funny that sector heads that participated in the debate, instead of accepting weakness or failure in clamping down on insecurity decided to shift the blame to paramilitary outfits such as Nigerian Correctional

Centres, as being responsible for their failures, while also turning around to complain of underfunding or inadequate budget allocation to their various sectors.

One would have expected the Chief of Defence Staff, who said some Boko Haram elements in North-east revealed to him the compromising activities of some warders, to have swiftly set up machinery to investigate the matter in order to halt the trend instead of making public such allegation. One also recalls series of attacks on Nigerian Correctional Centres like Kuje Prison by terrorists/Boko Haram, yet the attackers passed through security checkpoints, police/military to carry out the attacks on the prisons. In essence, it is high time our security outfits stopped chasing shadows and buck passing.

Adoke, managing director, Duniya Agencies Nig. Ltd, writes from Km8, Okene-Lokoja Road, Nagazi Uvete, Adavi LGA, Kogi state via 08109398927, duniyaintelligence@aol.com

Change of Name

<p>DANLAMI</p> <p>I, formerly known as FELIX MARY, now wish to be known and addressed as DANLAMI MARY TONGSHMWA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NUHU</p> <p>I, formerly known as NUHU GWOTPIUS BILAGWAT, now wish to be known and addressed as NUHU GOWPIUS SANGLONG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ZAKARI</p> <p>I, formerly known as ZAKARI SHUAIBU, now wish to be known and addressed as ZAKARI SAIDU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>TAIYE</p> <p>I, formerly known as TAIYE OJO JOSEPH, JOSEPH TAIYE OJO, now wish to be known and addressed as TAIYE REBECCA JOSEPH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>NASIR</p> <p>I, formerly known as NASIRU SALEH, now wish to be known and addressed as NASIR SALEH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>YAMIKAT</p> <p>I, formerly known as BLESSING SUNDAY, now wish to be known and addressed as YAMIKAT BLESSING SAURI. Correct date of birth is 6/6/2003 not 6/6/1999. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>RANGMUK</p> <p>I, formerly known as MISS. LONGDIEM RANGMUK JOAN, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. RANGMUK JOAN JOSHUA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DAGONG</p> <p>I, formerly known as MILAT KYENMUN, now wish to be known and addressed as DAGONG KYENMUT MILAT. Correct date of birth is 08/06/2000. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>	<p>KWAN</p> <p>I, formerly known as MUSA NANDONG, now wish to be known and addressed as KWAN NANDOM MUSA. Correct date of birth is 27/08/1995 not 1/1/1991. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>BELLO</p> <p>I, formerly known as MARY IBRAHIM AGAH, now wish to be known and addressed as BELLO MARY JOSEPH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>ESTHER</p> <p>I, formerly known as ESTHER OZIOFU instead of ONYEKWELU ESTHER OZIOFU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>JORO</p> <p>I, formerly known as YENNAAN NAANYIL, now wish to be known and addressed as JORO YENNAAN NAANYIL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>DAUDA</p> <p>I, formerly known as DAUDA NAOMI ARIN, now wish to be known and addressed as DAUDA NAOMI AFE. Correct date of birth is 28/4/1997 not 1/1/1992. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DAUDA</p> <p>I, formerly known as DAUDA AJIJI ARIN, now wish to be known and addressed as DAUDA JACOB AJIJI. Correct date of birth is 7/4/2001 not 7/4/2000. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>DAUDA</p> <p>I, formerly known as DAUDA JONATHAN ATANG, now wish to be known and addressed as DAUDA JONATHAN ARIN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>NGAOBIWU</p> <p>I, formerly known as OKWUCHI CHRISTIANA NGAOBIWU, now wish to be known and addressed as NGAOBIWU, CHRISTIANA OKWUCHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>ADINDE</p> <p>I, formerly known as ASOGWA CHINAZA PATIENCE, now wish to be known and addressed as ADINDE CHINAZA PATIENCE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>LEVINUS</p> <p>I, formerly known as LEVINUS JAMES SANENE, now wish to be known and addressed as LEVINUS JAMES HOOMTUAM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>DUNG</p> <p>I, formerly known as DUNG ESTHER SAMBO, now wish to be known and addressed as JOSEPH ESTHER STANLEY. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ABDULJALAL</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABDULDALA MURDANATU, now wish to be known and addressed as ABDULJALAL MURJANATU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>ANI</p> <p>I, formerly known as OKEKE LUCY ANI, now wish to be known and addressed as ANI LUCY OLUCHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>WILLIAMS</p> <p>I, formerly known as WILLIAMS GODSWILL IFEOLUWA OLUWAPELUMI, now wish to be known and addressed as WILLIAMS IFEOLUWA GODSWILL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>KUMLUNG</p> <p>I, formerly known as KUMLUNG GONO KARNAP, now wish to be known and addressed as KUMLUNG KARNAP. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ANTHONY</p> <p>I, formerly known as ANTHONY MARCUS AGI, now wish to be known and addressed as ANTHONY MARKUS AGI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>PATRICK</p> <p>I, formerly known as DUNG JUDE PAM now wish to be known and addressed as PATRICK JUDE AZI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MARY</p> <p>I, formerly known as MARY PHILIP BATURE, now wish to be known and addressed as MARY PHILIP UYATO. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>JORO</p> <p>I YUSUFU JORO ATANG wish to notify the public and the authorities concerned that my name was wrongly spelt in my BVN as ATANG JORO YUSUF instead of the correct and authentic name as YUSUFU JORO ATANG. The authorities concerned and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>JOY</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOY DANJUMA FALE, now wish to be known and addressed as JOY SAMUEL NIMMAK. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>YUSUF</p> <p>I, formerly known as YUSUF OSENI KEHINDE, now wish to be known and addressed as YUSUF OSENI OJONEKECHE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>LEKKOP</p> <p>I, formerly known as GOFWAN ROBERT ARBER, now wish to be known and addressed as LEKKOP ARBER ROBERT. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>ISAAC</p> <p>I, formerly known as MISS WILLIAMS FREEDOM KADUNA, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. ISAAC FREEDOM WILLIAMS. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MIRI</p> <p>I, formerly known as MIRI NANKAR, now wish to be known and addressed as MIRI NANKAR NIMZE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>JIBRIL</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABDULLAHI ZAINAB, now wish to be known and addressed as JIBRIL FARIDA LAWAL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MOSES</p> <p>I, formerly known as MOSES SAMSON, now wish to be known and addressed as MOSES ANANAH SAMAKA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>GODDAY</p> <p>I, formerly known as ROHVEN GODDAY, now wish to be known and addressed as GODDAY AHMED. All former documents remain valid. Correct date of birth is 2/3/1998 not 11/4/1980. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NIMDIR</p> <p>I, formerly known as NIMDIR KONGKO, now wish to be known and addressed as NIMDIR KONGKO DANJUMA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>CORRECTION OF DATE OF BIRTH</p> <p>I, MUHAMMAD, AISHA IDRIS wish to state that , my correct date of birth is 1st January, 1996 not 2nd January, 1992. All former documents remain valid. Keystone Bank and the general public to take note</p>	<p>AJANG</p> <p>I, formerly known as DORIS ANYA HANANIAH, now wish to be known and addressed as AJANG, DORIS ANYA . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>IZANG</p> <p>I, formerly known as LYDIA HANANIAH AKARE, now wish to be known and addressed as IZANG, AKARE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>AMAGAM</p> <p>I, formerly known as YOHANNA ANDAWUL CHRISTOPHER, now wish to be known and addressed as AMAGAM YOHANNA CHRISTOPHER. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ANDREW</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOHN ANDREW, now wish to be known and addressed as ANDREW JOHN KWA'ALLA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SARAH</p> <p>I, formerly known as SERAH TOMAS, now wish to be known and addressed as SARAH TOMA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>HARUNA</p> <p>I, formerly known as MAIMAKO ROSE, now wish to be known and addressed as HARUNA ROSE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DAKOGOL</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOSEPH DAKOGOL, now wish to be known and addressed as DAKOGOL JOSEPH ELIAS . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>GLADYS</p> <p>I, formerly known as GLADYS NNAJI NJIMOGU, now wish to be known and addressed as GLADYS NJIMOGU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>KENNETH</p> <p>I, formerly known as FRANKLIN BAKO KENNEDY, now wish to be known and addressed as KENNETH FRANKLIN ZUMGAK. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SHEDRACH</p> <p>I, formerly known as AMOS PONJING, now wish to be known and addressed as SHEDRACH PONJING AMOS. Date of birth 1/1/1997. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>BALA</p> <p>I, formerly known as BALA SUMAIYA, now wish to be known and addressed as BALA SUMAYYA. Correct date of birth 25/1/1989 not 24/1/1989. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>JOSEPH</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOSEPH FAVOUR, now wish to be known and addressed as JOSEPH FAVOUR NENRIT. Correct date of birth 7/1/2004 not 7/1/1999. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NANPAN</p> <p>I, formerly known as DANLADI KUMCHI, now wish to be known and addressed as NANPAN DASIHI DAOK. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>FORKA</p> <p>I, formerly known as FOTKA NENPIN ISHAYA, now wish to be known and addressed as FORKA NENPIN ISHAYA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>PETER</p> <p>I, formerly known as PETER UNBEAT ATANGS, now wish to be known and addressed as PETER ATANGS. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DANIEL</p> <p>I, formerly known as OLUCHI FAVOUR IROKANULO, now wish to be known and addressed as DANIEL FAVOUR OLUCHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>GBATAR</p> <p>I, formerly known as IORSHE DOOIOR DONALD, now wish to be known and addressed as GBATAR DOOIOR DONALD. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>DARIUS</p> <p>I, formerly known as DACHUNG BULUS SHUT, now wish to be known and addressed as DARIUS SHUT BULUS. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SAJE</p> <p>I, formerly known as EZEKIEL NUHU MAISAJE now wish to be known and addressed as SAJE EZEKIEL NUHU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DAMFAK</p> <p>I, formerly known as HABILA LAITU, now wish to be known and addressed as DAMFAK LAITU HABILA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DUNG</p> <p>I, formerly known as LUKA DALYOP DUNG, now wish to be known and addressed as DUNG DALYOP DOMBEN. Correct date of birth is June 26, 1979 not February 5, 1972. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>PLANGDES</p> <p>I, formerly known as PLANGKYES GIMBA FWANGDEN, now wish to be known and addressed as PLANGDES GIMBA FWANGDEN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>YAKUB</p> <p>I, formerly known as YAQUB HAFSAT ALKASIM, now wish to be known and addressed as YAKUB HAFSAT IDRIS. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>

News

FIDA to collaborate Kogi govt on gender responsive services

From DORCAS PANKYES

THE International Federation of Women Lawyers, (FIDA) has expressed its readiness to collaborate with the Kogi Government towards implementation of Gender Responsive Services.

FIDA also vowed to join hands with relevant stakeholders in the fight against Sexual and Gender Based Violence, (SGBV) including Child Early Forced Marriage, (CEFM)

The Country Vice President/National President of FIDA, Amina Suzannah Agbaje gave the assurance in Lokoja recently, at a stakeholders consultative forum on implementation/status of gender responsive services for women and girls which was supported by Nigeria Civil Society Situation room with funding from UK International Development.

Agbaje lamented that Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and Child Early Forced Marriage (CEFM) remain challenges that significantly constrain women especially those marginalized and facing intersecting forms of discrimination or multi-deprivation.

Represented by the Kogi State Chairperson of FIDA, Barr. Lilian Okolo, she posited that the menace of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) requires a holistic and collaborative effort as survivors deserve to be treated delicately and with empathy at all stages of the criminal process, taking into cognizance their traumatic and psychological state.

While noting that there is poor awareness on the VAPP law in Kogi State, Agbaje stressed that, "This Stakeholders Consultative Forum is intended to foster collaboration, partnerships, and experience shared learning on best practices for gender responsive service delivery for women and girls by state actors and service providers through a coordinated approach.

"This consultative forum is aimed at also improving networking by Civil Society Organisations in the state towards an improved GBV programming, prevention and response, while providing a platform for state and non-state actors to strategically unify strategies in mitigating cases of Gender Based Violence (SGBV) through policy influencing," she stated.

"At the end of this training,



Amina

what we intend to achieve is to build the capacity of every participant for them to understand what a gender responsive budget is all about. As we know, Sexual and Gender Based Violence has become a menace in our society. We actually want to see preventive measures to forestall future occurrence".

Agbaje also pointed out the need for the Kogi State Government to immediately declare a state of emergency on Gender and Sexual Based Violence in the state.

She listed poor funding, poor awareness, and lack of Sexual Assault Referral Centre, (SARC) as some of the challenges confronting the implementation of VAPP laws in the state. And added that the government should be responsive in helping to institutionalize the law in Kogi State.

Earlier in her remarks, the Assistant Programme Manager of FIDA, Ezinwa Obiajunwa, admonished the Kogi State Government to gazette the VAPP law in Kogi State.

Obiajunwa said "The fight against Sexual and Gender Based Violence, (SGBV) has been a case of one step forward and ten step back in the sense that we have a lot of political will by the government to enact responsive policies in the state. We have lack of interest in adopting VAPP laws.

" Since the Governors in Nigeria declared a state of emergency on Gender and Sexual Based Violence in 2020, that changed things. Many State Governors adopted the VAPP law and that has helped us

a lot in trying to handle and respond to cases of sexual based violence. But it is very unfortunate that the VAPP law has been adopted in Kogi State, but has not been gazetted. If you already adopted a law, what is now the big deal to gazette it? "Gazeting it will enable people to have access to it and know the law that is protecting them. It will also help in the testing of the law. If the law is gazetted in Kogi State and people are aware that these are what the provisions are, it will increase reportage.

what we intend to achieve is to build the capacity of every participant for them to understand what a gender responsive budget is all about. As we know, Sexual and Gender Based Violence has become a menace in our society. We actually want to see preventive measures to forestall future occurrence".

NBS digitizes CPI in landmark achievement

By DORCAS PANKYES

In a groundbreaking achievement for Nigeria's economic data landscape, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) has successfully completed the pilot phase of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) digitization project.

The initiative, generously supported by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), marks a transformative milestone in the country's pursuit of accurate and timely price statistics.

Prince Adeyemi Adeniran, the Statistician General of the Federation and Chief Executive Officer of NBS, expressed great pride and enthusiasm during his keynote address at the closing ceremony of the pilot phase. He commended the hardwork and commitment of the NBS and UNECA staff involved in the digitization process.

The CPI is a vital economic indicator that serves as a guiding compass for Nigeria's

BY PETER TITLE

DR. Solomon Arase, the Chairman of the Police Service Commission and retired Inspector General of Police, has been honored with an award of excellence by the Alumni of the University of Ibadan.

The award, presented by the President of the University's Alumni, Prof. Gabriel Nyityo, was given to Dr. Arase in recognition of his distinguished achievements as an alumnus of the institution.

Due to his busy schedule, Dr. Arase was unable to attend the awards ceremony held last week in Lagos. As a result, the delegation from the university's Alumni decided to present the award to him in his office recently. The President of the Alumni, accompanied by past presidents Prof Elsie Adewoye and Mr. Hyacinth Kyaagba, expressed their appreciation for Dr. Arase's positive representation of the university.

Upon receiving the award, Dr. Arase expressed his humility and gratitude for the recognition, stating that the award holds a special significance for him. He attributed his successful career path to the training he received in Strategic Studies, which fostered a fertile mind and critical skills.

In addition to accepting the award, Dr. Arase also voiced

UI Alumni honour Arase with Award of Excellence



his hope that the government would prioritize stabilizing titled "Readings on Election university education in Security Management," which Nigeria. He emphasized the he had edited, to the visiting importance of a stable delegation. academic calendar, which The University of Ibadan would enable parents to plan Alumni's recognition of Dr. for their children's education Solomon Arase serves as a and allow universities to testament to his notable function effectively. contributions and positive impact on the society.



Adeyemi

economic policies. It influences decisions that impact businesses, consumers, and the overall well-being of society. Accurate and comprehensive price data is essential, especially in a global landscape of economic uncertainties.

The digitization of the CPI data collection introduces a new era of quality refinement and aligns perfectly with NBS's agenda to enhance technical operations through modern methods and techniques. By automating the data collection process, potential errors and inconsistencies inherent in the manual process are significantly reduced, ensuring the highest quality information for policy formulation.

The digitization initiative incorporates automated checks and validations, ensuring a level of precision previously challenging to achieve. This results in a CPI that accurately reflects market price fluctuations, empowering policymakers to make decisions that align with Nigeria's economic realities. The ongoing effort to rebase the CPI by completely reconstructing the consumer basket of items and digitally updating the list of market outlets, is expected to revolutionize price statistics in Nigeria.

Other members of the Seplat Energy team present at the event were: Manager, Corporate Communications, Stanley Opara; CSR Lead, Charles Ifediba; and Senior CSR Adviser, Josephine Kola-Ajibade.

statistics in the field, enabling faster reporting of data. This timely data empowers policymakers to respond swiftly to economic shifts, make proactive decisions, and mitigate the impact of inflation while fostering sustainable economic growth.

Prince Adeyemi Adeniran also mentioned the Bureau's consideration of web scraping for the production and reporting of price data. This additional initiative aims to provide more comprehensive prices information to users, further enhancing the accuracy and availability of economic data.

The Statistician General of the Federation emphasized the Bureau's commitment to developing and modernizing Nigeria's statistical landscape in line with global trends. He called for collaboration, partnership, and support from all stakeholders to ensure the nationwide scaling and operationalization of the digitization process.

Prince Adeyemi Adeniran expressed profound gratitude to UNECA for their strong support and commitment to the project. The Bureau's federated structure, coordinating 36 independent sub-national statistical offices, ensures that the benefits of the digitization process will be cascaded down to all levels.

The success of the pilot phase was attributed to the hardwork and dedication of the Prices and Trade Department and the ICT Department of the Bureau. Their efforts in scaling up and operationalizing the initiative nationwide were commended, with the assurance of continued support from the Statistician General of the Federation.

The digitization of the Consumer Price Index represents a significant step forward for Nigeria's statistical system, enhancing the accuracy and availability of economic data for evidence-based policy decision making and program monitoring.

Seplat energy wins SISA's CSR award

From DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja

Seplat Energy Plc, a leading Nigerian independent energy company listed on both the Nigerian Exchange Limited and the London Stock Exchange, has won the Social Impact & Sustainability Awards (SISA)'s CSR Award for Education Empowerment organized by CSR Reporters.

According to a release by the company recently in Abuja which says that CSR Reporters is Africa's premier all-Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Sustainability publication; and the SASA, which is now in its fourth year, recognises initiatives of companies in promoting sustainable economies in Nigeria and in serving the needy public.

Speaking at the ceremony, Dr. Eustace Onuegbu, member of Trustees, Sustainability Professionals Institute of Nigeria and President, International Network for Corporate Social Responsibility, she said the awards are targeted at recognising, honouring and celebrating the

outstanding efforts of organisations and individuals that have made a transformative impact on Nigerian society in the year under review.

The award recognises the organisations that have integrated globally recognised and measurable sustainability standards including ISO 37101 Management Standards on Sustainable Development in Communities (MSSDC), ISO 26000 Social Responsibility, ISO 14001 Environmental Management, ISO 9001 Quality Management, ISO 20400 Sustainable Supply Chain Management, ISO 45001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Standards, among others.

It also recognises organisations that have followed best reporting standards such as GRI and IIRC Standards. Other categories include specific initiatives in support of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and individual philanthropic efforts for the year under review.

The organisers of the awards commended Seplat Energy's commitment to educational advancement and effective stakeholder

engagement. They also lauded the company's educational CSR initiatives like the Seplat Pearl's Quiz, National Undergraduate Scholarship, SEPLAT Teachers Empowerment Programme (STEP), and Seplat Innovators programme.

Seplat National Undergraduate Scholarship started in 2014 for host states, and the nation. Since then, the company has provided scholarships to 780 Federal and state university undergraduate students of which 34 per cent are from our host communities.

SEPLAT Teachers Empowerment Programme (STEP) started in 2020 for host states. And since then, it has provided 905 teachers and 87 Chief Inspectors of Education with digital teaching skills, leadership training, and income diversification; and supported the learning of over 10,000 students with new teaching skills.

The Seplat Innovators Programme is creating STEAM Laboratories which are collaborative spaces where the study of science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics can be integrated through hands-on experiences in a pure laboratory or

Change of Name

RINGPON
I, formerly known as **WUYEP NANZING YOKRE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **RINGPON JULIET GAMBO**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

DAKAS
I, formerly known as **DAKAS, BEATRICE CLEMENT**, now wish to be known and addressed as **DAKAS, BEATRICE CLEMENT JAMES**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

DASHEN
I, formerly known as **PLANGLONG SHWARBEN**, now wish to be known and addressed as **DASHEN PLANGLONG SHWARBEN**. Correct date of birth is July 1, 1996. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

DAKAHAR
I, formerly known as **KILOBAS POKYES**, now wish to be known and addressed as **DAKAHAR POKYES KILOBAS**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

PRECIOUS
I, formerly known as **PRECIOUS USMAN** now wish to be known and addressed as **SoIPRECIOUS SOLOMON**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.

JANET
I, formerly known as **JANET JAMES GARBA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **JANET YOHANNA BADUNG**. National Space Research and Development Centre (NASDA) Ministry of Science and Technology, National Centre for Remote Sensing Jos, and the general public should please take note.

AIYE
I, formerly known as **AIYE D. JOHN RWANG** now wish to be known and addressed as **AIYE DANIEL**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

SUZANA
I, formerly known as **SUZAN JACOB**, now wish to be known and addressed as **SUZANA UMARU YANG**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

SUMI
I, formerly known as **OMOTOSHO SABINA** now wish to be known and addressed as **SUMI SABINA**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

RABONI
I, formerly known as **RABONI PIONDUN**, now wish to be known and addressed as **RABONI PONDUN**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

NANJI
I, formerly known as **NANJI KOPPA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **NANJI KUNFA**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

IDRISU
I, formerly known as **IDRIS MUHAMMAD SAMBO**, now wish to be known and addressed as **IDRISU SAMBO MUHAMMADU**. All former documents remain valid. First Bank Plc, other concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

IZANG
I, formerly known as **MISS. AZI MARY NYAM**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS. IZANG MARY NYAM**. All former documents remain valid. First Bank Plc, other concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Nigeria Police force, Plateau State Command under the leadership of CP **Okoro J. Alawari**, psc wishes to inform the general public that the under listed abandoned/recovered items/properties which are in Police custody are due for auctioning. Therefore, anybody with genuine claims of ownership should come forward with relevant particulars.

Description of items			
S/No	Chassis/ Engine No	Description of exhibit	Division
1	8488XOF/4T32F13C414379259	One Siena Bus 26/2022	Nass/ Gwong Division
2	19/2000	One Sharp Television	Nass/ Gwong Division
3	20/2005	One Panasonic Television	Nass/ Gwong Division
4	MD2A18AZFWC36220/ DUZWFC33510	One Red Boxer Machine	L/North Division
5	KMC337YK	Burnt Mercedes Truck 2021	Rantya Division

The Command wishes to state that failure to come forward within 10 days of this publication for claims, the Command will have no other option but to dispose the items by Auction.
Auctioneer, **Alh. Nuhu Ismaila Ventures**
DSP ALFRED ALABO
Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO)
Plateau State Command, Jos

IZANG
I, formerly known as **MISS. AZI MARY NYAM**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS. IZANG MARY NYAM**. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.

News

Maiden matriculation: Karl Kumm enrolls 61 pioneer students

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Karl Kumm University Com, a project conceived by Church Of Christ In Nations (COCIN), has matriculated over sixty-one (61) pioneer students for the 2023/2024 academic session to pursue their various academic goals and aspirations.

Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof. Audu Nanven Gambo, disclosed this on the occasion marking the maiden matriculation of Karl Kumm University students, held at the university's premises, Vom, Jos-South Local Government Area of Plateau State yesterday.

He said, "Today is indeed, a watershed in the the Karl Kumm University project, carefully and strategically conceived and implemented by the Church Of Christ In Nations (COCIN). Today marks a celebration knowing God's faithfulness as the university is by the grace of God

matriculating its pioneer set of students, hereby marking commended the Board Of the end of admission for the Trustees and the Governing 2023/2024 academic session. Council, describing them as a

"We are witnessing today, blessing to the university the formal enrollment of 61 because they have high profile young, enthusiastic and personalities and are achievers promising set of pioneer students into Karl Kumm KKU is truly blessed," he conc University to pursue their various academic goals and aspirations. Permit me to heartily congratulate these pioneer students on their admission to study in Karl Kumm University.

"All of you were critically and carefully screened and found suitable for admission into your preferred academic programmes. It may interest the audience to note that the university is taking off with 14 cutting edge programmes structured into eight departments and domiciled in two faculties (Arts, Management and Social Sciences and Science and Computing)", he highlighted.



Gambo

Advertorial

DISOBEDIENT OF A COURT ORDER BY STATE SECURITY SERVICE (SSS), PLATEAU STATE COMMAND FOR THE RELEASE OF ABDULRAHMAN SHUAIBU

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE OF PLATEAU STATE OF NIGERIA,
IN THE PLATEAU STATE JUDICIAL DIVISION.
HOLDEN AT JOS.
THIS THURSDAY 9th DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2023
BEFORE HIS LORDSHIP HON. JUSTICE B. S. NGYOU - JUDGE
SUIT NO. PL/D/1565/2023**

BETWEEN:

ABDULRAHMAN SHUAIBU.....APPLICANT

AND

STATE SECURITY SERVICE (SSS).....RESPONDENT

ENROLLED ORDER

Upon the consideration of Motion on Notice dated 9th October and filed the same date brought pursuant to Order 2 Rule 1 of the Fundamental Rights (Enforcement Procedure) Rules, 2009, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended) and Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (Ratification and Enforcement) Act CAP . A10 Laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, praying for the following reliefs:

- A DECLARATION** that the arrest and continuous detention of the Applicant by the Respondent in her custody since on the 9th September, 2023, is a violation of his Fundamental and Constitutional Rights to dignity of human person guaranteed by section 34 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended).
- A DECLARATION** that the arrest and detention of the Applicant, by the Respondent is a violation of his fundamental and constitutional rights to personal liberty guaranteed by section 35 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999.
- A DECLARATION** that the arrest and detention of the Applicant, by the Respondent is a violation of his Fundamental and Constitutional Rights to freedom of movement guaranteed by section 41 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended).

- TEN MILLION NAIRA (N10, 000,000.00)** against the respondent for general and/or exemplary damages for the compensation for the breach of the applicant's fundamental right. (sic)
- AFTER HEARING N. A. Idoko Esq with N. O. Ogudu Esq** for the Applicant.



IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the application is granted in terms of reliefs 1, 2 and 3.

It is hereby declared that the arrest and continuous detention of the Applicant by the Respondent in her custody since on the 9th September, 2023, is a violation of his Fundamental and Constitutional Rights to dignity of human person guaranteed by section 34 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended).

It is also declared that the arrest and detention of the Applicant, by the Respondent is a violation of his fundamental and constitutional rights to personal liberty guaranteed by section 35 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999.

It is further declared that the arrest and detention of the Applicant, by the Respondent is a violation of his Fundamental and Constitutional Rights to Freedom of movement guaranteed by section 41 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended)

As regards relief 4, it is hereby ordered that the sum of **N200, 000.00 (Two Hundred Thousand Naira only)** is awarded against the Respondent as exemplary damages.

Dated this 9th day of November, 2023



REGISTRAR

Making secondary education unattractive



By YVONNE ISHOLA

IN Nigeria, our secondary education has been made unattractive to students due to man-made issues peculiar to Nigeria. To many students especially boarding school students, education is synonymous to hunger. This is because school food is either badly cooked, rationed to go round in very small amounts or served with weevils or anything that finds itself into it.

One has heard of cases where dry frog was found in students' food. The commonest find is cockroaches, flies and in some cases, rats. What usually obtains is that it is only the student who finds the bonus inside his/her food that will forfeit his /her food. Others would sympathizers, forgetting that the food all came from the same pot. This scenerio is a common sight in public schools where the population of students is usually over one thousand. Students would either quietly remove the contaminant

and eat the food. Or announce and display the contaminant, in which case, one would be forced to go hungry, a condition so many can't afford.

During our secondary school days, it was okay to come along with delicacies that served as snacks inbetween food. We used to refer to them as provisions. Even with that arrangement, we were not immuned to hunger. Anytime our provisions were finished, hunger used to become the order of the day. I used to detest school at such times and concentrating in class used to become a herculean task. It was usually at such times that students used to engage in the worse kind of vices if only to lay their hands on anything edible.

What does this then tell one? One of the major issues mitigating against education in Nigeria is hunger. If this is taken care of, more students will begin to love school environment and even enjoy it. A situation where schools either monetize provisions or ask students to come along with specific provisions and these are collected and kept by the school who decide when to serve the students either cornflakes or garri, is not popular with students. " You should see the Cornflakes they serve us, the milk is usually too little and so is the sugar, " lamented a student in a boarding school in Kwang. " I would prefer they gave me my provisions to enjoy. This is only benefitting the school and those saddled with the responsibility to distribute to students" another student opined. They both said the weight gained by those in charge of distribution of any provision gives credence to their claims.

Unfortunately, in spite of having their provisions kept and distributed by the school at will,

students are still at the mercy of hunger. A parent said she thought the school keeping students' provisions and being responsible for the distribution, was a good idea until she saw her children on Visiting Day. They were looking so bad that she didn't recognise them. One was very sick due to poor nutrition and their grades were not good. They blamed everything on hunger and bad food. Considering the exorbitant fees they were paying, the parent said, she immediately changed their school.

The new school was cheaper and students were allowed to keep their provisions. On top of it, the school food was delicious. Students were also allowed to buy snacks and drinks from the school shop. It was a very comfortable arrangement and her children graduated with flying colours.

Another parent told the story of her daughter who was always ill when she was in a school that refused to understand that there are people whose stomachs don't agree with some foods. She was forced to eat food that she was allergic to, which almost cost her her life. She said she needed no one to tell her that her daughter needed to be alive to go to school. So, she changed the environment for her to a private school in Nasarawa State. This school makes it mandatory for every student to pay a certain amount in the tuck shop. This means anytime a student needs a snack or drink outside their provisions, they can easily go and purchase and the amount would be deducted from what they have paid.

Today, her daughter is happy in school and the mother is at peace. The issue of allergic food or hunger has become history.

Come to think of it, what has



hunger achieved but to bring out the worst in students. Some have resorted to stealing from school kitchen or staff. Students sneak from school to satisfy their hunger. A worse case scenario is 'giving what they have to get what they want'. Is it not better to be a little flexible by opening the school tuck shop and or allowing students to keep their provisions? It behooves all boarding schools to feed their students very well to make sure this challenge becomes history.

Students have been known to eat raw mangoes, help themselves to their staff chickens (we did that) which is roasted on charcoal iron or given to a day's student to prepare at home and come along with the next day. Security guards, who see the conditions of the students, usually become sympathetic and become their errand boys, leaving their duty post which is dangerous. That was how we survived and ours was an all girls school.

A story is told of 3 friends who were driven by hunger to do the unthinkable. One of them was a typical village boy and he suggested that they go snake hunting in the bush surrounding their school. He had told them that snake meat was a special delicacy which tasted like fish.

The local boy had told his 2 friends that he would stick his hand into a hole that houses a big snake to grab one. Their own part was to put an end to the tuck of

war that was sure to ensue by slaughtering the snake. And true to his word, immediately he put his hand in a hole, he pulled out a gigantic snake which was fighting for its life by tightening the local boy's hand.

Urgently, he called out to his friends to use the knife to injure the snake so as to loosen its grip. But anytime local boy took a step, his 2 friends took 2 steps away from him. Local boy began to sweat because the snake was tightening its grip, fighting for its life but fear would not allow his friends to do their part to save him. What they didn't know was that his life depended on it.

Seeing no way out, local boy began to run after them promising to kill them himself if he survived the battle with the giant snake whose grip by this time was miserably too tight.

Starring death in the face, local boy was crying as he ran after his friends because the snake was almost winning. It was the timely interference of a farmer that saved his life and afterwards, the lives of his friends from the force of vengeance.

All of this happened as a result of hunger. Imagine the tragedy that it would have resulted to.

Our strategies to ensure hunger is part of education, has done us no good. Instead, it has brought out the worst in students who also strategies to survive. Please, schools should revisit the issue of feeding. Be flexible enough and open up a tuck shop.



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

The danger of litigations in electoral process

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 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 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.

Therefore, it may be another big trouble for democracy if this is the kind of scenario the nation's electoral process is coming out with. This also suggests that the narrative is unpalatable looking at the entire process itself which is already indicative that the

elections right from the party primaries to the elections proper were fought on the basis of outright rigging and also hinges on the lack of internal democratic culture and the lack of political sagacity and maturity to accept defeat by the political 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,

By PETER TITLE

PEOPLE from all walks of life thronged the Yakubu Gowon Airport, Heipang, Plateau State, as early as 7:00am. The atmosphere was tensed. Politicians, business men, artisans, peasants, well-wishers and all who you can described were at hand to welcome the man who had not been in the state for some weeks. The day and date was Saturday 25th November, 2023.

The long awaited plane by the mob finally landed at exactly 2:33pm despite the weather which had defied his earlier landing. Then came the man that the people of the state had anxiously waited for, the people's Governor, Barrister Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang who since the nullification of his election at the Appeal Court in Abuja had not returned in the state.

Accompanied by the State Chairman of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Honourable Chris Hassan, the ousted Senator, Mwakon, House Representatives Members, Hon. Peter Gyendeng, Hon. Bagos. Handy to receive them were the Deputy Governor of the state, Hon. Josephine Piyo, the state executives of PDP, the Speaker, Plateau State House of Assembly, Rt - Honourable Dewan and members amongst many other dignitaries.

When the Executive Governor, Barr. Mutfwang finally disembarked from the plane marked 5N-BZP, then came the rain. The crowd chanted Mutfwang gida, gida, we are the structure, God be with you, God bless you, eight plus eight, saikayi, bamaitabaka, yanzu ne munsamu Gwamna akwarai, among many slogans.

The unprecedented crowd that heralded the return of the Governor stretched over fifteen kilometers in a motorcade, defied the heavy downpour to express their unwavering support through songs while people in communities lined up chanting similar support to the Executive Governor of Plateau State.

Security operatives had a hectic day controlling the crowd right from the Yakubu Gowon Airport, Heipang up to the Governor's destination which was the government house and it took him and his entourage over three hours before arriving. A journey that ordinarily would not have been more than twenty minutes to Jos took that long.

Addressing Journalists on arrival, the Executive Governor of Plateau State, Barrister Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang referred to the recent events as a temporary setback, assuring the people that with God on their side, the people's mandate would be restored.

According to him, they bear no grudges against anybody and expressed gratitude to Plateau citizens cutting across all strata for their unwavering support saying "I am excited to be back home, feeling loved by the people. I thank the good people of the state for their prayers and steadfastness. We began this project with God on our side and by His grace, Plateau will rejoice. We bear no grudges, we have confidence in the judiciary".

Encouraging unity, the Governor emphasized, "There are people not happy with our unity and so

want to see us in disarray for their selfish interest. I advise that we stay together because I am happy and proud of Plateau's diverse support which cuts across faith and demographic settings. I urged us all to remain united and peaceful. Our journey has hiccups, but they are temporary and by God's grace, we shall reach the promised-land".

Our Correspondent can only described such entry as "Triumphant" because of the people's prayers, defying the rains to receive him as well as taking him to his abode.

Despite the gridlock, the

Governor took time and addressed his party faithfuls and supporters at the New Government House, Little Rayfield Jos, where he particularly encouraged them not to lose faith, encouraging them that in the journey of life, there are some delays and distractions at some points but he noted were temporary.

Governor Mutfwang never hid the fact that they were hit by unnecessary blows on their journey but assured them that those blows would never make them to fall and promised to leave the state far better than he met it.



Crowd receives Mutfwang amidst cheers as he returns



IMAGES

Mutfwang inspects rehabilitated township roads

Plateau State Governor, Barr Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang on Monday inspected roads rehabilitated by his administration. The roads were done by Plateau State Roads Maintenance Agency (PSRMA)



Governor Mutfwang, SGS, Arc Samuel Nanchang Jatau, General Manager, PSRMA, Engr. Luka Davou and others listening to explanations from the Commissioner of Works, Hon. Lekshak Bulus Adams (left) at the first point of call by Governor Mutfwang



Liberty Boulevard road inspected by the Governor and team



Plateau Hospital roundabout to DB Zang road



Commissioner of Information, Hon. Musa Ibrahim Ashoms with the Director of Press and Public Affairs, Mr. Gyang Bere during inspection of Nassarawa Gwong and Angwan Rukuba



Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang giving handshake to some school children at Nassarawa Gwong



Road around Gaskiya Highland School, West of Mines to Tafawa Balewa way



Jos Central Mosque, Zololo Road rehabilitated by PSRMA



Hon. Dr. Timothy Golu, Hon. Beni Lar, Hon. Joshua Laven Ubandoma, Hon. Timothy Dantong and Engr. Luka Davou

Photos: DANLADI DUK

Odd World

'My kids don't wear shoes, don't judge me'

WHEN it comes to raising her two children, Alex Tucker is the first to admit her techniques are far from conventional. The 25-year-old and her boyfriend Paul have been criticised for many of their decisions about bringing up Berkley, two, and Freya, one.

The couple don't use prams or high chairs, and won't let the two children wear shoes. They've also decided not to teach them how to swim, even though they live by the water.

However, the couple claim their controversial choices fit in with their rural lives and urge people not to judge their lifestyle.

Alex's children don't go to day-care and she instead takes them to work with her. Sometimes the couple even sack off going to work to look after the little ones.

The rural mum refuses to teach her children to swim, despite living on the waterfront, and they both roam around their land barefoot.

Alex shared her rules online, and has since received plenty of criticism from other parents, with one commenting that social services should be called.

Despite the backlash, she's defended her position by claiming shoes distort feet shape and prams and high chairs are not essential to their way of living.

Defending her choice not to give them swimming lessons, she said they would encourage her water-fearful kids to get into dangerous water to swim.

Alex, who works in the fishing industry with her boyfriend Paul, and lives on the Hawkesbury river in New South Wales, said: "I'm not bothered by people who don't agree with my 'controversial' rules. Mothers are criticised no matter what they do, and especially online.

"I'm opening the conversation for everyone to start thinking outside the box before straight up criticising someone's parenting when they don't know how different someone's lifestyle can be. I'm not preaching 'my ways' - this isn't a 'how to' manual. This is what works for our family."

They spend a lot of time on the water - but neither of the children can swim

Mum goes on pricey tropical holiday alone to teach her kids 'vital lesson'

Passenger slammed for jumping queue at airport - but he thinks he's in the right

Mum blasted for letting young son play in the garden at 'unacceptable' time

People think 350-year-old painting is 'proof' time travel is real after spotting iPhone

The kids even roam barefoot across the beach, on pavements and even go shoeless when the family embark on 8km hikes.

Even though some parents may question the choice, the mum insists going without shoes is better for her kids.

She said it "shocked her" that so many people saw it as a big issue, as she claimed it's "pretty normal" not to wear shoes in Australia.

Alex continued: "Even then, if you are from a coastal town like us, it's normal to not wear shoes at the shops, and working on boats, it's also common to not wear shoes.

"Shoes serve purpose, like if the ground is too hot or too cold, or if snakes and wildlife is a valid threat, or if something hurts to walk on."

She said when you don't wear shoes it can cause your feet to toughen, which enables you to learn how to walk on rough surfaces.

The mum said it's just a part of the family's "way of life."

Alex's boyfriend Paul owns a fishing business and Alex, who has experience working as a fisherman and commercial captain, often helps on the boat when he's in need of extra crew members.

The couple often take their kids along to work, with Paul having them by himself if Alex is needed to help on another boat.

If the weather conditions are too bad for the children to join Paul on the boat, and Alex is busy, the dad will miss his day of work entirely rather than send their kids to day-care.

Alex said: "We are a rural family working in primary production - I am a stay at home mother out of necessity, like most rural mothers.

"I'm needed at home for more than childcare and housework - we are the people at the frontline of feeding the nation.

"If it is not a desirable day for them to come to work, one parent stays home, that's rural life."

One of the main rules that has concerned other parents is said to be the decision to not teach the kids how to swim.

Some parents have deemed this as "dangerous", but Alex has said there is a strong difference between water safety and swimming.

Alex said: "Swimming lessons was a difficult one to decide on, but I came to the conclusion that a toddler probably couldn't swim out of the river on their own.

"In the river here, currents and submerged objects are a huge factor for drownings, and while they have a healthy fear of the water, I won't encourage them to enter it by doing swimming lessons.

"We play by the river a lot, and when a toy falls in, they freak out and come ask me to get it."

She also said she doesn't know if she would call her methods "rules", as the mum

Culled from The Mirror



Kano Appeal Court debacle and sustainable democracy

LAST week will perhaps go down in history as the most embarrassing and disturbing moments for Nigeria's judicial proceedings following the huge scandal that marred the credibility of the Appeal Court ruling in Kano between the incumbent Governor of the state, Peoples Party, (NNPP) and Dr Nasir Yusuf Gawuna of the All Progressive Congress, (APC). The judgement was necessitated by this contestation following the conduct of the March 18th 2023 Governorship elections held in the state where both contestants including some from other political parties slugged it out. During the ruling, the appellate court in its verdict upheld the decision of the Kano State Governorship Election Tribunal which upturned the victory of the incumbent and gave it to his close opponent during the polls.

judgement, the ancient city of Kano has continued to witness one form of stalemate and or the other. Various groups have continued to protest claiming that the ruling by the Appeant court fell short of the expectations of the citizens of the country. Beyond this, it also protrayed the alledged inefficiency of the courts in handling complex cases as such. Though one cannot totally condemn the ruling in it's entirety, the technic of using technicalities to upturn elections in Nigeria has of recent generated great concern. So far, many stakeholders have suggested that it would be a great tradgey to thwart the will and aspirations of the majiory for selfish reasons and or acts of personal aggrandizeme nt.



Surprisingly, when the certified true copy of the judgement came out in public domain, it was subsequently discovered that the ruling favoured the incumbent governor of the state. In a move to save its face, the Appeal Court later attempted to acknowledge that the certified copy of the judgement was marred by significant errors urging all concerned to return these documents for correction. Now that the Kano elections petition case will be entertained by the Supreme Court, all Nigerians need is a judgement which would restore judicial confidence on the citizenry. In fact, stakeholders in the judiciary must come to terms with the reality of the fact that some judges have deriailed and dragged the integrity of the system through the mud.



Surprisingly, when the certified judgement came out in public domain, it was subsequently discovered that the ruling favoured the incumbent the reality of the fact that some judges have deriailed and dragged the integrity of the system through the mud. We must all put Nigeria and the expectations of the common man first before we can put the nation back on track on the path to national development and integration.

View Point

Triennial Conference: NAWOJians display electoral prowess

Recently, all roads led Nigerian female journalists under the auspices of Nigeria Association Of Women Journalists (NAWOJ) from across the country to Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja for their 11th Triennial National Delegates Conference. The conference witnessed a change in leadership. PALANG KASMI writes.

THE 3-day event from November 24-26 tagged "Abuja 2023", took place at the Maryam Babangida National Centre for Women Development, Central, Business District, Abuja with the theme, "Activism to end violence against Women And Girls: The role of the Media".

Past Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) and NAWOJ Presidents and officials, who pioneered the unions since its early existence graced the occasion with excitement. They reminded participants that NAWOJ, which stated as an arm of NUJ is a vibrant body for change and social development of women, girls and vulnerable in the society. They spoke and called for unity even as they pleaded with all contestants to accept the outcome of the elections in the spirit of sportsmanship, devoid of bitterness and rancour.

In their separate remarks, the pioneer leaders said, what is of interest to every delegate and participant is the growth of the association, which has a role to play in social advocate for the rights of girls, women, and vulnerable groups in the society.

The conference attracted female journalists from 36 States of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), including other stakeholders.

The sight of the women, clad in different customised attires and T-shirts made them stood out of the crowd. While some of them wore their special state attires, others wore the general national 'asheobi' which carried the NAWOJ colours, logo and inscription.

At the event center, the sight of petty businesses flourishing filled the atmosphere. Souvenirs with NAWOJ inscriptions was sold, while photographers seized the opportunity to do snap-and-wash photographs of people at the forum, some petty traders displayed and sold their wares



like turbans, scarfs, men's wears, wrappers, jewelries, drinks, food and other accessories. While the delegates patronised them, the sellers made quick sales.

The event had different sessions.

Day one, Friday 24th was arrival at the Maryam Babangida Women Development Center, Central Business District, near Central Bank of Nigeria Headquarters, Abuja. As soon as delegates arrived they were received and welcomed by organisers from the host state, who ushered them to their accommodations. Day two, Saturday, November 25 was the opening ceremony, public lecture, business session, and elections. Elections however ran through

the night, making the inauguration of the newly elected executives and National Officers to take place on the morning of Sunday 26th September, followed by departure of delegates. The elections was supervised by National President of the NUJ. Chris Isigbuzo. Earlier, during the opening ceremony, he commended the outgoing executives under the leadership of Ladi Bala for their impactful leadership that saw the advancement of the association with laudable projects. He tasked the new Leadership that emerges to carry everyone along and work with commitment to turn around the fortunes of the

Association. NAWOJ Plateau State Chairperson, Mrs. Nene Dung led 20 delegates and over 10 observers to participate in the convention. In her goodwill statement after the keenly contested elections, Dung congratulated the newly elected National President Aisha Bura for emerging winner. Bura was declared winner and sworn in after beating the incumbent, Ladi Bala.

"We believe that your victory is victory for all NAWOJians and we are hopeful that the our noble association will thrive under your leadership to sustain the gains made through the years" she said.

While promising to cooperate and work with the new executives, Dung also felicitated with the re-elected Deputy President Lilian Okonkwo Ogabu, the National

Secretary Wasilah Ibrahim-Ladan, Treasurer, Fatimah Rasheed, Financial Secretary, Ifeoma Aka, Assistant Secretary Aisha Cole, Auditor Jemilah Abubakar, Adeola Adekunle Vice President (VP) zone B, Amaka Agbo VP zone Zone C, Chizoba Ogbeche VP Zone D, and Stella Macauley VP Zone F on their victory at the polls.

"Our congratulations also goes to all the newly elected Zonal officers and hope you will all work together as a team towards a more united, purposeful and Vibrant NAWOJ, said the Plateau State Chair".

In her closing remarks, outgoing NAWOJ National Secretary, Helen Udofa commended the female journalists for coming from all over the country to be a part of the conference



News

BSEMA boss tasks journalists on unity of purpose -Ahmad

From **TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi**

THE Executive Secretary, Benue State Emergency Management Agency, Sir James Iorpuu has sued for unity of purpose among media practitioners in the state. He charged them to work as a team in order to serve people of the state better.

Sir Iorpuu made the call recently in his office in Makurdi, the state capital during a courtesy call on him by members of Credible Correspondents of Nigeria Union of Journalists.

The BSEMA boss said it was incumbent on media practitioners to resolve their differences as members of one family and work as a team.

He said it was better to work as a united house and promised that as a friend of the media in the state, he will liaise with leadership of the media in the state with a view to ensuring that all gray areas are addressed to ensure that media practitioners in the state work as a team.

The BSEMA executive secretary who described journalists as major development agents in nation building the world over, lamented that there will be no meaningful development if there were cracks within the media practitioners. He said this was so because there will be no information sharing among them for adequate reportage.

The executive secretary who gave insight on the humanitarian situation in the state, explained that he discovered on assumption of office that the state does not have verifiable data on the Internally Displaced Persons since the information he was presented with was a stagnated figure.

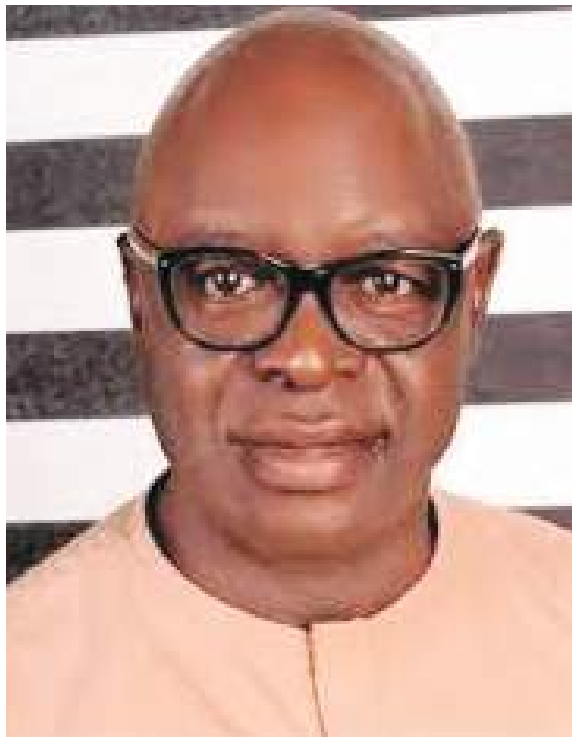
He told the group that he has met with some development partners including the United Nations High Commission For Refugees (UNHCR), Community Links and the International Organisation for Migrants (IOM) whose team is in the state to capture the biometrics of the IDPs.

He said the team was expected to spend two weeks in Agatu Local Government Area of the state to ensure that each and every IPD was captured. According to him, about seventy percent of IDPs from Agatu Local Government Area are taking refuge in Wadata area of Makurdi Local Government Area.

While disclosing that the international community was aware of the humanitarian situation in the state with the biometric data capturing, Sir Iorpuu announced that the United States of America was also interested in the humanitarian situation in the state and has agreed to visit the state in January, 2024.

According to the BSEMA executive secretary, the state through the biometric exercise has been launched by the global community while the federal government has also shown willingness to assist in managing the humanitarian situation in the state.

He announced that the state was in receipt of allocation of six trucks of food and non food items from the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).



JAMES

Earlier, leader of the group and state correspondent of Vanguard newspaper, Sir George Okoh told the BSEMA executive secretary that the group was in his office as part of its efforts to create synergy between it and his agency for a better working relationship.

Sir Okoh said the group was a combination of reporters from credible media organisations and pledged

accurate, comprehensive and adequate reportage of the agency's activities.

In a remark, the Benue State correspondent of Aljazeera newspapers, Elder Henry Ibya said the media community was aware of the humanitarian crisis confronting the state and promised that journalists will ensure accurate and sustained reportage of the agency's activities.

Youth unemployment: Include YUAN in national budget- Irekamba

From **DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja**

IN the just concluded National Executive Council, NEC of Unemployed Youth Association of Nigeria recently, the National Executive Council of Unemployed Youth Association of Nigeria, (UYAN) elected Comrade Casmir Irekamba as National President of the association for the next four years.

Other executives elected at the National Executive Council are Comrade Yakubu John as General Secretary, Comrade Shehu Adamu, Deputy President, Comrade Chidi Leo Chiolo, National Treasurer, Comrade Daniel Margima, National Publicity Secretary.

Comrade Hallimatu Ibrahim emerged the National Financial Secretary, Barr Tony Akhigbe, National Legal Adviser, Comrade Segun Olawale, Deputy General Secretary and Kemi Adebayo, National Welfare Officer.

Addressing journalists immediately after taking oath of office, the new elected National President of Unemployed Youth

Association of Nigeria, Comrade Casmir Irekamba stressed the need for inclusiveness of Unemployed Youth Association of Nigeria (UYAN) in the national planning and budgeting to achieve economic growth and stability.

He charged the government and the private sector to encourage entrepreneurial mindset through mentorship programmes, access to finance schemes, and business incubation and support that can empower

youths to create their own employment opportunities while contributing to economic growth of the country.

According to the YUAN president, Nigeria's youth population unemployment is a pressing issue that demands immediate attention. With the nation's largest demographic group facing limited job opportunities and an uncertain future, he said it is crucial that YUAN under his leadership key-in government initiatives and programs aimed at creating



IREKAMBA

Willie Attah, Gombe

We don't want to rely on foreign artisans - NBTE

AUTHORITIES in the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) says they are working on improving Nigeria's technical skills sector so as to discourage reliance on foreign artisans for the country's local and small scale industries.

Director of Human Resources, NBTE, Lawan Hafis, stated this in an interview with newsmen shortly after the opening ceremony of a five day training for Master Craft Persons on Pedagogy, Digital Literacy, Health and Safety, Environment and Social Safeguard, and Soft Skills for young people from North East held at the Federal College of Education (Technical), Gombe.

Lawan Hafis represented the Executive Secretary of the National Board for Technical Education, Professor Idris Bugaje at the opening ceremony of the training.

The training which commenced Monday (27/11/23) morning was organized by Innovation, Development and Effectiveness in the Acquisition of Skills (IDEAS), a World Bank project, in conjunction with the NBTE.

Speaking about the training, Mr. Hafis said, "We are covering both formal and informal to ensure that we no longer rely on artisans coming from neighbouring countries. This is a standardized training so that wherever you go, you are already certified under our training and you will be properly placed".

He stated also that the training will go a long way in addressing unemployment so that as long as people are ready to learn a trade, they



LAWAN

don't need to rely on government employment anymore.

Gombe State Commissioner for Education, Professor Aishatu Umaru Maigari, said the youths trained will be a resource for the multi billion naira Muhammadu Buhari Industrial Park even as human capital development has remained one of the pillars of the State's development agenda, DEVAGOM.

According to her, "this is part of Governor Inuwa's mandate to the people of Gombe State, training human capital, so that

when the industrialists come to the industrial park, they will bring their technical expertise and we have the technicians on ground.

"With the industrial park and this kind of training, the sky is just the starting point for people and we are moving more to skills and certification.

"This is one of them because sometimes no matter the skills you have, if you are not certified, you will not get employment. These youths are going to be certified by NBTE and so wherever they go, the certificate is going to be of international standard", she stressed.

Engineer Mohammed Suleiman Yusuf of the IDEAS Project Management Unit, NBTE said IDEAS is a World Bank supported project received by the Federal Ministry of Education to support skills education delivery.

He said the system and the project coordinating unit in Gombe State has been very active and has received the full support of the Commissioner of Education and the Governor of the State, which makes it easy to commence the programme in Gombe State. Other States where the project is ongoing are Benue, Kano, Edo, Abia and Ekiti.

"Skill is now the global currency. If you have a recognized certified skill, you can travel anywhere in the world. Now employers are not looking for certification, they are looking for what you can do for them before they can pay you.

"We have five major areas that we are going to touch on during the training. The first one is methodology, digitalization, they need to know how to market themselves and communicate with digital systems and all those things and then we have the issue of environment.

"Remember we are affecting our environment, so we have a programme on that and then occupational health and safety, which is very critical.

"That is why all major employers or contractors are coming to Nigeria. if you don't have certification of occupation and health, whatever the level of competence you have, you'll not be accepted", he emphasized.

Sports

'Messi is 'gripping' United States'

Roll up, roll up and welcome to the Lionel Messi show, currently the hottest ticket in the USA. A flash in the pan or finally a changing of the guard in American sport? America is in the grip of Messi madness after he signed for Inter Miami from Paris St-Germain in the summer. Football in the country has been here before. But never quite like this. GUILLEM BALAGUE writes.

HIS move to the United States was as reasoned, calculated and well planned as his departure from Barcelona to Paris was clumsy, rushed and unwelcome.

The timing could not have been better with the Copa America taking place there next year and the final set to be played in Miami at the Hard Rock Stadium on July 14. The Club World Cup is due to be held in the States in 2025, and what will be the biggest World Cup yet is coming to the USA, Canada and Mexico in 2026.

When it comes to a well-oiled machine looking to promote and grow a brand, nobody does it better than the USA. With all this marked in, plus the possibility that the country could also be hosting the next Women's World Cup in 2027, it's safe to say that if football - sorry, soccer - doesn't take off in the USA after all that, then it is difficult to imagine when it ever will.

Will the arrival into Major League Soccer of Messi, regarded by many as the greatest player in the history of the game, finally burn an indelible brand into America's sports-mad psyche and establish its place alongside team sports like American football, basketball or baseball, or will it turn out to be another false dawn?

If there's one thing American sports fans adore more than the teams they support it is the passion they feel for superstars playing for them. Think Michael Jordan, Tom Brady, Wayne Gretzky and you get the idea. Now add the name Lionel Messi.

The New York Red Bulls have offered a special offer holiday ticket promotion involving next season's home opener and the derby against rival New York City FC. But there's a catch. If the first match sees them drawn against Inter Miami, it won't count as part of the deal. Written in small print alongside the offer are the words, "If RBNY plays Inter Miami CF in the home opener, each home opener ticket will be replaced with a ticket to RBNY's 2nd home match."

The name 'Lionel Messi' doesn't feature but then it doesn't really have to. Surely no team will be including Inter Miami tickets in cheap seats deals in the new season.

No-one at club or league level was prepared for the effect Messi's signing would have on them.

Season ticket packages for next season are coming out at double what they were in 2023, which makes Inter Miami one of the most expensive tickets in the world - and this for a league not generally considered to be among the top level worldwide.

The club's Instagram account has gone from one million followers to 15 million.

If you want to catch the little magician when Inter Miami play away from home be prepared to dig deep.

For example, if you had wanted to watch Columbus Crew this year you could do so for as little as \$40. Next season they will be charging a minimum of \$382 for a seat in the 'nosebleed' section for the visit of Inter Miami, going up to \$680.

If you happened to be in Orlando visiting Mickey Mouse and fancied catching a game, then last season you could have watched the locals for around \$97. If you're in town when Leo visits Orlando City next season, be prepared to shell out more than \$1,500 for a seat on the secondary market.

The atmosphere at games



Ticket prices have skyrocketed in the MLS as fans have flocked to watch Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi

borders on the surreal. No-one is really watching the game other than through the participation of Messi.

If he is 50 metres from the ball everyone is still watching him. When he walks up to take a corner it is celebrated almost like a goal. It is almost like watching an event, a happening, that is occurring within another event.

Such is the frenzy for buying replica shirts that Adidas are struggling to meet demand in certain sizes. Even for next season.

And if you can find a shirt - and apparently even Inter Miami co-owner David Beckham has been finding it tricky to get some to give to people as gifts - there is logically a dearth of the numbers 1 and 0 and the letters M, E, S and I.

Pre Messi, Inter Miami had a stadium with plenty of empty seats. An extra stand was built to accommodate demand for when he arrived.

New stadium and new approach from all involved with Inter Miami

Construction has now begun on the Inter Miami CF stadium, set in a 58-acre public park, and scheduled to open in 2025.

The team's budget has gone from \$60m to \$300m and tickets are sold out within minutes whenever Inter Miami play - home or away.

Michelle Kaufman has been a sportswriter for around 35 years, most of which has been spent writing predominantly about soccer for the Miami Herald.

"My life was a lot quieter and less complicated before this man arrived in my life," she told me when we met up recently in Miami at a Soccerex exhibition.

"I'm spending about as much time focusing on him as I am my husband which is probably not a good thing.

"There is a Messi cult following

that I have never seen before. I am doing a podcast on him and I have people watching it from Gabon, from Tangier [in Morocco]. I'm looking at the map and wondering where these countries are."

The Inter Miami press office has never had to deal with anything like it - not only the best player in the world, but also a celebrity.

In front of a capacity crowd of 20,000, including the likes of LeBron James, Serena Williams and Kim Kardashian watching on from luxury suites, he scored a stoppage time free-kick winner to seal a 2-1 win over Liga MX side Cruz Azul.

When he arrived the team were languishing at the bottom of the MLS table.

Less than a month after his arrival, he scored a screamer to earn a draw against Nashville in the Leagues Cup final to secure the club's first piece of silverware after a 10-9 win on penalties.

Buoyed by cup success, Messi's Miami went on a 12-match unbeaten run to force themselves into contention for a play-off place that would have been almost unthinkable when he arrived.

In the end it was a bridge too far, especially after a muscle injury caused Messi to miss six games in September and early October.

This is now a side transformed after a roller coaster of a campaign. Failure to make it into the play-offs means he can now look forward to the longest holiday break he has ever had.

He will have about a month and a half off, although that will be interspersed with games for his country. The dream for many football fans is that Messi will remain in contention for Argentina at the 2026 World Cup.

Off the pitch, things are going well, although the US media expected more appearances from

him.

He did only one press conference when he arrived and sports media are used to more regular contact. That said, he has spoken more than ever, twice after a game for Apple TV, five individual interviews after the August press conference, as well as in the big presentation on his arrival.

He now has the captain's armband, although it was not what he wanted but rather something that was thrust upon him.

And with the surging demand for anything Messi-related that can fill column inches and air time, going out in public is proving difficult. When he first arrived he was pictured visiting the supermarket. This is no longer possible because everybody knows he is in town, even those that do not follow football.

Meanwhile, he is committed to the Miami cause. He flew to Paris for the Ballon d'Or ceremony, arriving at 8am on the Monday and flying back to Miami immediately afterwards in the first minutes of the Tuesday to be back for training.

He has also joined the players' Whatsapp group, where he has shared some of his match tickets with those that need them. He even handed a penalty to his team-mate and forward Josef Martinez because he had been going through a spell without scoring.

At home, his wife Antonella is helping him settle, finding things out about Miami, such as the best places to eat and enjoy, as well as honing his look and his image off the pitch. He is more confident these days, he has found his place in the world.

They were no strangers to Miami and the Messis have got an impressive property in the area that they have rented for years.

He has been reunited with former

Barca team-mates Jordi Alba and Sergi Busquets, while Luis Suarez will almost certainly also soon join them.

His time in Paris was not the happiest of his life. The fans didn't get him. But now things are different and his next club target will be to go looking for victory for Inter Miami in MLS.

Despite great personalities and events like the 1994 World Cup, football has never really 'arrived' in the USA to the extent that many thought that it would.

How big is the arrival of Messi in MLS? Fernando Palomo, ESPN sports anchor and one of the most respected commentators on football, has no doubts: "It is one of the biggest revolutions in the world of sport that this country has seen in decades," he said.

But even he stops short of confirming that the Argentine superstar's arrival into MLS will prove to be the game's upward tipping point.

He said: "I live in a small town in Connecticut and people that don't talk to me about football have approached me not only to talk about football but to tell me that they have already bought the Messi jersey, which kind of tells you where it's landed and how it's impacted this game."

Palomo adds it is much bigger than when Beckham came over but that "time will tell" if it really makes football in America take off.

"At least the game is in a better place than it ever has been," he said.

Ultimately, American sports fans' emphasis on the individual rather than the team could make it difficult for the game to grow to where many believe it should in the United States.

Sports

CAF Awards: Oshoala leads others into final phase

THE Confederation of African Football (CAF) has announced the shortlists for the women's categories of the CAF Awards 2023, with four Nigerian players in the final rounds of different categories.

Premium Times said that, the awards ceremony is scheduled for Monday, 11 December, at the Grand Palais des Congrès, Movenpick, in Marrakech, Morocco. It will witness Asisat Oshoala leading the race for her sixth award, with three other Nigerians nominated in different categories of the specified awards.

Two of the 10 contenders who emerged as finalists vying for the Player of the Year accolade, are Nigerians: Oshoala, who plays for Spanish club Barcelona Femeni, and Paris FC goalkeeper Chiamaka Nnadozie.

Other categories such as Goalkeeper of the Year, Young Player of the Year, Coach of the Year, and National Team of the Year also have Nigerian nominees.



Oshoala

Okocha, Amokachi warned against attending Tournament in Cameroon

THE Ambazonia Interim Government is urging international footballers who intend to visit the region for a football event to exercise caution and reconsider their involvement.

Premium Times said that, the Interim Government (IG) of Ambazonia has issued a strong warning against a planned football gala tournament scheduled to take place in Victoria, Ambazonia, on Thursday, 30 November.

In a statement issued over the weekend and signed by its President, Chris Anu, the IG declared a total lockdown for Victoria and all of Fako County on that day, urging all businesses and transportation services to cease operations.

The IG's decision stems from concerns that the tournament could exacerbate tensions and jeopardise the local population's safety.

Victoria, Ambazonia, is a coastal city in southwestern Cameroon.

It is the capital of the self-proclaimed Federal Republic of Ambazonia, a state seeking independence from Cameroon.

The region has been embroiled in a protracted and devastating conflict for nearly eight years, and the IG believes that organising a football match during such a volatile period is insensitive to the plight of the people.

"We understand the desire of colonial La Republique du Cameroun to promote normalcy through sports,"

stated Mr Anu. "But we firmly believe that the current circumstances in Ambazonia demand a different approach. We cannot ignore the fact that the underlying motivation appears to be driven by political agendas rather than genuine love for football."

The IG has also issued a direct appeal to the international footballers invited by Samuel Eto'o to participate in the tournament, including Austin Okocha, Emmanuel Amunke, Garba Lawal, Daniel Amokachi, and Victor Ikpeba, urging them to reconsider their involvement.

The IG emphasises the potential risks associated with holding the tournament in Victoria, warning that the safety of the players cannot be guaranteed.

"We urge the visiting international footballers to exercise caution and reconsider their involvement in this event," President Anu stated.

"The risks associated with holding the tournament in Victoria are simply too high, and the potential consequences are far too severe to want to ignore."

The IG's stance reflects the deep-seated concerns of the Ambazonian people, who have endured immense hardship and loss because of the ongoing conflict.

The IG maintains that the priority now is to support the pursuit of freedom and justice fully and not to engage in activities that could be perceived as undermining the struggle for self-determination.

"Ambazonians will not

CRISTIANO Ronaldo is known for his goalscoring exploits but on Monday night the Al-Nassr forward convinced the referee not to award him a penalty.

The 38-year-old went down in the second minute after a challenge in his side's Asian Champions League 0-0 draw with Iranian side Persepolis.

But when Chinese referee Ma Ning awarded a penalty, Ronaldo argued the case for the decision to be overturned.

Ning was sent to the pitchside monitor and ultimately changed his call.

A combination of the video assistant referee and Ronaldo's honesty came to Persepolis' rescue. The match went on to finish goalless, with Al Nassr's Ali Lajami sent off in the 17th minute.

Al-Nassr had already qualified for the knockout stages before the match in Riyadh. The Saudi Pro League side are top of Group E with 13 points after five matches and five points ahead of Persepolis in second.

Meanwhile, Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola has emphasised the importance of his team locking down top spot in their Champions League

Ronaldo asks referee to overturn penalty he won



Ronaldo

group.

BBC SPORT said that, the holders take on RB Leipzig at Etihad Stadium on Tuesday in their fifth Group G game,

having won four out of four so far.

They and Leipzig have already clinched spots in the knockout stage, but first place in the pool remains up for grabs.

"We have to win or draw," said Guardiola.

"The first step is done for both sides so congratulations to RB Leipzig to qualify for the next round in February.

"It is important to finish first. We believe that when we play the last 16, [having] the second leg at home is not decisive but an advantage and we have to take it."

City beat Leipzig 3-1 on matchday two. That result and City's three-point cushion over Leipzig makes the permutations as straightforward as Guardiola laid them out.

Avoiding defeat will do the job and eliminate the potential danger of City finishing second and having to face the winner of another group in the last 16.

City have every reason to be optimistic. Leipzig are fifth in the German Bundesliga, 11 points behind league leaders Bayer Leverkusen, while City have not lost at home since November 2022.

Guardiola delivered a pessimistic message about a number of fitness issues affecting his squad.

Jack Grealish, Mateo Kovacic, Sergio Gomez and Matheus Nunes are doubts.

Kevin de Bruyne is a long-term absentee, but there is positive news in the case of John Stones.

Stones suffered an injury in City's win over Young Boys on November 7 but is "really close to coming back", Guardiola said.

Grealish missed Saturday's 1-1 draw with Liverpool through illness.

"I'm not optimistic about some people coming back but we will see," Guardiola said.

"I think it will be the same people who played against Liverpool. John Stones is getting better. He's not for playing but maybe a few minutes."

allow themselves to be used as pawns in a broader political agenda that disregards our suffering and aspirations," declared President Anu.

The Interim Government of Ambazonia calls upon all parties involved to exercise caution and prioritise the

safety and well-being of the local population.

The IG urged the organisers of the football tournament to reconsider their plans and seek alternative venues that do not pose a threat to the peace and stability of Ambazonia.



Coach Paul Offor's side have been poor on their travels, securing just one point from a possible twelve this term

NPFL: Sporting Lagos fall to defeat at Akure

A lone goal from Moses Omodumeke was enough to secure all three points for Sunshine Stars at home against Sporting Lagos, Soccer.net.ng reports.

Udoh Godwin started in place of Sporting's highest goal scorer, Jonathan Alukwu who missed the game due to personal reasons while Junior Lokosa started the game from the bench.

Sporting were still shaken from the 1-1 draw against Heartland last week and were almost pegged back just three minutes into the game, but a stunning Christian Nwoke stop kept the scoreline goalless.

Twelve minutes into the game, an injury forced Coach Offor into an early substitution as Chisom Orji made way for

Saturday Okon.

Twelve minutes later, Sunshine stars broke the deadlock, thanks to Moses Omodumeke, who slot the ball past Christian Nwoke to give the home side lift-off.

Another injury forced Coach Paul into a second change as Godwin Odibo went off and was replaced by Akpesiri Naibe.

The noisy Lagosians came firing on all fronts in the second half, but efforts from Emmanuel Odafe and Emeka were all thwarted by the Sunshine stars defence.

Lokosa was sent on by the coach with the hopes of securing at least an equalizer, but it was the hosts who nearly doubled their lead, but were again denied by Christian Nwoke.



Sports

Cash strapped Nigeria cannot fire its coach -Idah

AFTER two poor performances in the World Cup qualifiers, the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) would happily fire its coach José Peseiro if it had the money to pay compensation, according to NFF member Nse Essien.

"If we had the money (to pay his compensation), we would be ready to dismiss him from his functions, we are not happy," Essien, who is part of the NFF executive committee, told the media.

Nigeria's qualification for the 2026 World Cup is already seriously compromised after the Super Eagles' two draws against lowly Lesotho and Zimbabwe in their first two qualifying matches.

"Everyone is calling for the dismissal of the head coach. Out of six possible points, we only have two. It's regrettable and we are in a very precarious situation," Essien continued.

Portuguese coach Peseiro is singled out for the poor start to qualifying while Nigeria, which had failed to qualify for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, will host South Africa in Uyo in June 2024 in the south of the country, before a delicate trip to Benin.

In Group C, South Africa leads with three points and a game in hand. Bafanas Bafanas could widen the gap on Tuesday during their trip to Rwanda.

The first in the group qualifies directly for the World Cup, while the second competes in the play-offs.

One of those calling for the sack of Peseiro is former Super Eagles goalkeeper Peterside Idah has called on the Nigeria Football Federation to relieve Jose Peseiro of his duties as the head coach of the Super Eagles, Soccernet.ng reports.

Idah made the call following Nigeria's unimpressive start to the race for qualification for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Led by Peseiro, the Super Eagles drew against lowly Lesotho in Uyo and stumbled to another uninspiring 1-1 draw against Zimbabwe in Rwanda last week.

The draws leave Nigeria with two points from three games and place the former African champions in third place in Group C behind Rwanda and South Africa.

Nigeria did not qualify for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, and Idah is convinced that the Super Eagles will miss the next edition of the Mundial if Peseiro remains in charge of the team.

"First, fire the coach. He has to go because he will lead us nowhere," Idah told Vanguard.

"Jacob, if you are at the airport and you are being checked in for a flight and suddenly, they announce that Bishop Peterside Idah is the pilot, would you want to enter the plane? No matter how much you like me, you will not want to commit suicide.

"The Super Eagles need a coach. We cannot afford not to be at the next World Cup."

Idah opined that a coalition of several former Nigeria internationals should be



Peseiro

commissioned to take charge of the Super Eagles in the event of Peseiro's departure.

The one-time Moroka Swallows goalkeeper believes former Ajax midfielder Sunday Oliseh, with ex-Everton star Daniel Amokachi and former Lille shot-stopper Vicent Enyeama, would secure a World Cup ticket for Nigeria without trouble.

"We are in an emergency situation," Idah added.

"The Minister of Sports Development should, as a matter of urgency, step in. His intervention can save Nigeria from further embarrassment.

"Call Sunday Oliseh, Daniel Amokachi, Vincent Enyeama, Barrister Green, Paul Bassey, and myself and hand over the team to us with a mission statement, 'We must qualify for the World Cup' and empower the team with everything that is required.

"You will see qualification for the World Cup accomplished."

Born in Port Harcourt, Idah played for BCC Lions, Enyimba, Temba Classic, and Moroka Swallows.

Now a Bishop, the 49-year-old pastors at Christ Ambassadors Church based in Kempton Park, east of Johannesburg.

South Africa withdraws 2027 women's World Cup bid

SOUTH Africa announced on Saturday that it was withdrawing its bid to host the Women's World Cup in 2027, preferring to avoid showing a "rushed presentation" to Fifa in December.

The deadline for submitting precise plans from candidates to host the competition was set by Fifa for December 8.

"We felt it was better to present a better prepared bid for 2031, rather than show a presentation made in haste," said the head of the South

African Football Association, Lydia Monyepao.

Following this withdrawal, three bids remain in the running to host the 2027 World Cup: one from Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany; another from the United States and Mexico; and finally, one from Brazil.

The country or countries selected will be decided at the Fifa Congress to be held in Bangkok in May.

The last Women's World Cup

Oshoba emerge new IBO super-featherweight champion

THE 2022 Commonwealth Games silver medalist, Elizabeth Oshoba, has emerged as the new International Boxing (IBO) female super-featherweight champion.



Oshoba

Oshoba gained the feat after defeating Italian boxer, Martina Reighi on Saturday.

In what was her first title fight in her sixth professional bout, Oshoba secured a unanimous decision win over Reighi at the MECA Regent Circus in Swindon, Wilshire, United Kingdom.

The 23-year-old has now improved her unbeaten record to six victories and three knockouts.

The Nigerian-born Oshoba, also fresh from her victory over Italian Nadia Flalhi (6-3-1-1KOs), stepped into her first professional title fight merely a year after transitioning from the amateur ranks.

Her exceptional performance at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham marked her entry into the professional circuit.

FORMER Rivers United goalkeeper Sunday Rotimi has admitted that the Nigeria Premier Football League is better organized now than in his days, BSNSports.com.ng reports.

Rotimi started his professional career with Plateau United in 1997 before joining Enyimba International in 2001.

He later joined Dolphins (now Rivers United) from 2006 to 2015 and still stayed with the team after they metamorphosed into Rivers United in 2016.

The former Nigeria International confirmed the statement while speaking to the Eagle FM radio, he said the league is better now in all ramifications.

"The league is better now than our days in terms of everything.

"The encouragement, facilities and welfare are better now than our days", he said.

Apart from Plateau United,

NPFL is better now compared to our time -Rotimi



Rotimi

Enyimba International and Rivers United, Rotimi also played for Sunshine Stars and El-Kanemi Warriors.

Rotimi who has five (5) caps for the Super Eagles also

played in the Israeli league with Ironi Rishion and Hapoel Ashkelon before joining Ethiopian side Mikkelle 70 Enderta in 2018 where he finally retired.

Canoe sprint, para canoe qualifiers end in Abuja

CANOEISTS from over 15 countries competed at the Confederation of Africa Canoe Sprint and Para Canoe qualifiers in Abuja, Nigeria with many hoping to land a spot in the 2024 Paris Olympics.

The president of the International Canoe Federation commended the organization.

"As a host, Nigeria is doing a really good and professional

job to provide a stage for the best athletes from Africa," Thomas Konietzko said. It is an important political sign within the continent in Africa that we are going also in new areas where we've never been before."

Athletes took part in 18 races for men and women, including singles, doubles, and mixed double categories, with eight qualifier tickets up for grabs from Thursday (Nov.23)

until over the weekend.

The competition was fierce. The African qualifiers were the first continent qualifiers for next year's Olympics.

"I competed for C2 (Canoe for 2 people) 500-meter, which is an Olympic event and we qualified," Bello Ayomide Powei, Nigerian canoe athlete said. "If there are coaches that stand by me and train me, I believe I am coming back with something. I believe I am going to make the nation proud."

"It's a little bit challenging because there are lots of the best athletes. I want to win but only God knows my position on the water," Drevor Lespoir from the Seychelles said.

Finally, Angola, Tunisia, Nigeria, Morocco, Egypt and South Africa emerged triumphant and secured their tickets for the Olympics.

Also competing were athletes from: Djibouti, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, São Tomé, Senegal, Seychelles, Uganda.

The president of the International Canoe Federation hoped to see further development of the sport in the continent.



South Africa

was co-hosted by Australia and New Zealand in the summer of 2023, and was won by Spain.

Meanwhile, The Nigeria Boxing Referees/Judges Association (IBA)

"That we have not joined nor do we intend to join the so-called 'World Boxing'." "That if a few persons parading themselves to represent this association does so, they do that representing their parochial interest and not the generality of this association.

"That at no time was a meeting or form of plebiscite conducted to ask where we will like to federate under."

The members of the association stated unequivocally that they were totally and wholly with the administration of Omo-Agege.

The News Agency of Nigeria reports that Omo-Agege is the interim President of the NBF and Vice-President of the African Boxing Confederation and IBA.

"That we have not joined nor do we intend to join the so-called 'World Boxing'." "That if a few persons parading themselves to represent this association does so, they do that representing their parochial interest and not the generality of this association.

"That at no time was a meeting or form of plebiscite conducted to ask where we will like to federate under."

The members of the association stated unequivocally that they were totally and wholly with the administration of Omo-Agege.

The News Agency of Nigeria reports that Omo-Agege is the interim President of the NBF and Vice-President of the African Boxing Confederation and IBA.



Nigeria canoeist facing race against time to reach tokyo 2020 olympics



Quest



writer

FRAGMENT

"This is because corruption pervades all segments of Nigeria's national life. Despite enormous oil and gas wealth at the disposal of the country, basic things of life such as food, shelter, portable water, electricity, good roads and education have become luxuries to the citizens. However, people at the various levels of governments and their agents wallow in enormous financial and material wealth."

N. S. OKOROMA

ADVERTORIAL

DISOBEDIENT OF A COURT BY STATE SECURITY SERVICE (SSS), PLATEAU STATE COMMAND FOR THE RELEASE OF ABDULRAHMAN SHUAIBU

Page 22

N. S. OKOROMA

Educational policies and problems of implementation in Nigeria

Continued from last week

THE implementation of universal basic education in Nigeria started in 1976 under the name Universal Primary Education (U.P.E.).

The acronym U.B.E. became operational in 1999 when President Olusegun Obasanjo, dissatisfied with the result of the U.P.E., renamed and relaunched the program. However, four years later it has been established that the U.B.E. and U.P.E. are identical twins and that what was relaunched was old wine in an old bottle. The implementation problems that lead to the abandonment of the U.P.E. have also saddled the U.B.E. and are about to cripple the program.

As early as 1977, just barely one year after the U.P.E. was implemented, the following picture, according to Taiwo (1980:174), emerged:

- the figure of 2.3 million children expected in primary education rose to 3 million (an increase of 700,000 additional children who had not been budgeted for), and
- instead of the N500 million earmarked initially for the project, the Federal Government had actually spent a little over N1 billion on primary education while the scheme was just one year old.

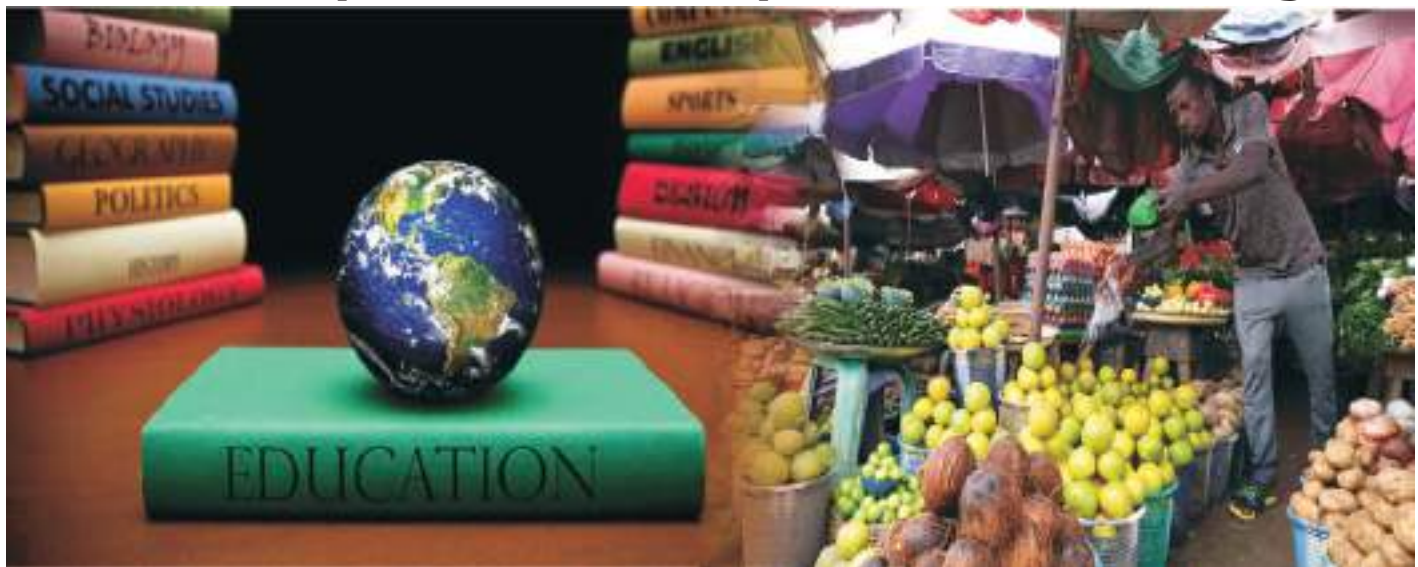
Taiwo saw this situation as a short-sightedness in planning on the part of the Federal Government. This trend continued until the program was jettisoned in 1999. Adesina (1977) was *abinitio* apprehensive about the success of the scheme unless adequate resources were made available for its effective implementation. This fear was continued within the first year of the scheme. Onabamiro (1974) and Nwankwo (1974) have given 'recipes' for the successful implementation of the U.P.E. They included: accurate statistics of children of school age

- adequate number of school buildings
- adequate number of qualified teachers
- sufficient financial provisions, and
- adequate publicity to create awareness about the scheme.

Despite being equipped with these implementation recipes, the Federal Government acted inconsistently and everything required for the effective implementation of this aspect of the national education policy was in short supply. The scheme, therefore, did not fully achieve its goals.

Then the U.B.E. came into existence in September 1999. So far, available records have not shown any departure from the U.P.E. trend. The situation appears even worse due to the entrenched corruption in Nigerian society today. A recent study conducted by Okoroma (2003) to assess the effective implementation of the U.B.E. program revealed significant inadequacy in the implementation efforts. Among the constraints that impede effective implementation are:

- inadequate qualified teachers
- insufficiency of funds



- inadequate teaching and learning facilities
- poor motivation of teachers, and
- lack of guidance and counselling services.

These problems are the same as those that handicapped the implementation of the U.P.E. This indicates that the relaunching of the U.P.E. with the new nomenclature of U.B.E. did not result from any lesson that was learned from the failure of the U.P.E. The quality of education at the primary level today is worse than the pre-1976 era.

The implementation of the 3-3 aspect of the national education policy has equally been very contentious. Some states of the Federation started implementing the policy in 1982 while others followed gradually. Almost 22 years later, there are cries of a poor standard of secondary education in Nigeria. The policy which was initiated to guarantee functional education after the American model has become even worse than the British system that was adjudged non-developmental. Studies, seminars, conferences and individuals have confirmed that the goals of the secondary education policy have not been achieved due to ineffective implementation.

A study by Okoroma (2001:95) on the evaluation of the 3-3 aspect of the National Policy on Education in Rivers State revealed that effective implementation of the policy has been hindered by the following factors:

- inadequate teaching staff
- lack of adequate workshops
- inadequate laboratories and libraries
- insufficient funds, and
- non-availability of guidance and counselling services.

These factors are similar to those that presently handicap the implementation of the U.B.E. scheme. The same factors constrain the effective implementation of policies in other forms of education including tertiary education.

Nigerian factors that militate against the implementation of educational policies

Efforts have been made to develop education in Nigeria since independence in 1960. Various policies in the interest of education have been formulated, some of which have been presented in this paper. Unfortunately, these efforts have not produced the desired effect. The state of education in Nigeria is still deplorable. It is so bad that some resourceful Nigerians prefer to send their children to Europe, America and even small African countries such as Ghana that has only two universities as against over sixty universities in Nigeria that lack adequate learning facilities.

Apart from the general problems of policy implementation common to most countries, especially those of the third world, some factors have been identified as peculiar to Nigeria and inhibiting her educational growth. It is no longer news that Nigeria is the giant of Africa in terms of resourcefulness as a major oil and gas producer. Ironically, most Nigerians live below the poverty line of one dollar per day. The following reasons, among others, account for this deplorable situation.

Lack of political will

Ordinarily, Nigerian leaders would want the country to stand out best in everything, including education. However, political will has been lacking. Perhaps this is as a result of instability of governments or lack of continuity. Between 1960 and 2005, the country has had several governments led by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe (late), General Aguiyi Ironsi (late), General (Dr.) Yakubu Gowon, General Murtala Mohammed (late), General Olusegun Obasanjo (as Military Head of State), Alhaji Shehu Shagari, General Mohammadu Buhari, General Ibrahim Babangida, Chief Earnest Shonekon, General Sani Abacha (late), General Abdusalam Abubakar and Chief Olusegun Obasanjo (Current President). In 45 years, Nigeria has had twelve heads of state out of which only three were democratically elected. Others came through military groups.

This shows that most Nigerian leaders have never had time to draw-

up plans of action before they drafted themselves or were drafted into leadership and therefore have been ill-prepared for any development efforts whether in education or other spheres. Most of their actions were not patriotic but for personal aggrandizement. Even Chief Olusegun Obasanjo (the Current President) had no program of action before he was drafted to become president in 1999. Chief Obasanjo was jailed for life by the late General Sani Abacha on treasonable charges.

The demise of General Abacha installed General Abdusalam Abubakar who released Obasanjo from jail, granted him presidential pardon and supported him to become president. So, Chief Obasanjo really had no political programs for education or anything else. His dismal performance, especially in the area of education, may not really be surprising. The points canvassed here are supported by Hodges (2001:26) when he noted: In the final analysis, Nigeria's development failures have sprung from the lack of success in achieving an effective model of governance. At the head of this problem has been the instability generated by the rivalry for control of the huge resources accruing to the State from the oil industry, and the use of political power to milk the state for personal gain rather than promote economic and social development.

So, educational policies were formulated by various governments but political instability stalled or discouraged the political will to implement such policies. As new governments came in quick succession and with relative uncertainty, continuity in policies could not be guaranteed. Every political player was in a hurry to help himself before he was displaced by another group. This has affected educational policy implementation in Nigeria.

Corruption

If anything has contributed greatly to the stagnation of corporate development of Nigeria, it is this virus called 'corruption'. It is found in

all aspects of human endeavour in Nigeria. Its prominence in Nigeria has earned our nation a place of negative prominence in the world. Adesina (2004:16) noted:

The 2004 Corruption Perceptions Index, released by Transparency International (TI), the watchdog on global corruption, ranks Nigeria as the third most corrupt country in the world. In 2003, the organization ranked Nigeria second, a one-step improvement from the previous position as the most corrupt country in the world.

Although President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria was uncomfortable and disputed the rating, many Nigerians agreed that it was correct. This is because corruption pervades all segments of Nigeria's national life. Despite enormous oil and gas wealth at the disposal of the country, basic things of life such as food, shelter, portable water, electricity, good roads and education have become luxuries to the citizens. However, people at the various levels of governments and their agents wallow in enormous financial and material wealth.

Corruption has contributed to stagnate the development of education in Nigeria. Some good educational policies have been put in place. An example is the National Policy on Education already discussed. The designers of the policy, from all intents and purposes, were quite visionary. The objectives of most policies in Nigeria are often derailed at the implementation stage due to a number of reasons: (1) the budgets for the implementation of the policies are often passed by lawmakers with strings attached to them; (2) even when the budgets are passed, the executive arm of government is often reluctant to release the funds to facilitate implementation, and (3) the inadequate funds often released to the operators of the education system (primary schools, secondary schools and tertiary institutions) are not honestly and fully utilised to promote the cause of education.

To be continued